

**S. 6. 5. – THE PORTUGUESE AND WAR AT SEA IN ASIA THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES**

**Chair: Renu Abraham**

(O. P. Jindal Global University)

**Panel Abstract**

It is well known that the Portuguese empire in Asia in the 16th and 17th centuries had an important naval component. Consisting of several positions in East Africa and Asia that were for the most part small coastal enclaves, it depended to a crucial extent on its fleets for supplies and defence. Naval force was also a significant factor behind the predominant position that the Portuguese were able to gain in important parts of Asian maritime trade. When this essentially thalassocratic empire entered a period of contraction and decay in the 17th century naval decline was inevitably part of the process. This panel will bring together three papers dealing with different aspects of Portuguese naval history in Asia during the 16th and 17th centuries.

**Keywords**

European overseas expansion; Naval Warfare; Portuguese in Asia

## *Sending Warships from Europe to Asia – Shipping Logistics in the Dutch-Portuguese War in Asia in the 17th Century*

ANDRÉ MURTEIRA (CHAM (NOVA))

### **Abstract**

This paper will focus on the shipping logistics of the naval warfare in Asia between the Portuguese and the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Asia in the 17th Century. While it was a conflict carried out mostly in Asian waters, most of the full-rigged round ships employed by both sides were built in Europe and sent to the East by way of the Cape of Good Hope route. Both sides were therefore heavily dependent on the supply of shipping from the Atlantic. The Dutch were much more successful at this massive transfer of naval resources from the Atlantic to Asia, making them the best-armed side in terms of full-rigged round ships. As a consequence, from a certain point on the simple imbalance of naval resources between the Portuguese Estado da Índia and the VOC was enough to determine alone the outcome of the conflict. I propose to look at the roots of this difference by relating them to the problems that afflicted the shipping of the Portuguese route to Asia (the Carreira da Índia) in the period.

### **Biography**

André Murteira is a member of Centro de Humanidades (CHAM), from the New University of Lisbon, Portugal. He has a MA in History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion by the New University of Lisbon on the subject of Dutch privateering against Portuguese navigation between Europe and Asia from 1595 to 1625. His MA dissertation was the basis for his published book, *A Carreira da Índia e o Corso Neerlandês, 1595- 1625* (2012). He has recently finished his PhD in History by the New University of Lisbon on the subject of Dutch privateering against Portuguese navigation in Asia in the first quarter of the 17th Century (2016). He benefited from a grant from Fundação Oriente (Portugal) to do his MA and from another from Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia – Ministério da Educação e Ciência (Portugal) for his PhD. He is interested in the maritime history of the Portuguese in Asia in the 17th Century and in the history of Dutch-Portuguese conflicts in Asia in the same period.

## *Reassessing Portuguese naval warfare in Asia (16th century)*

ROGER LEE DE JESUS (CHAM (NOVA) and CHSC (University of Coimbra))

### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to reassess Portuguese military superiority in naval warfare in the Indian Ocean during the 16th century. Portuguese presence in the region had an important naval dimension since the beginning due to the quick escalation of the first clashes between the newly arrived Europeans and local powers. This paper will attempt to evaluate the impact of Portuguese warfare in Asia through the analysis of both military conflicts and political relations between the Portuguese Estado da Índia and local powers. It will also consider the adaptation to Asian warfare on the part of the Portuguese, and the evolution of their use of gunpowder weapons and European-type ships. Ultimately, it will try to understand how the Portuguese managed to impose their presence through naval warfare and how that reflected in the policies they carried out during the 16th century.

### **Biography**

Roger Lee de Jesus is a PhD student in the University of Coimbra. His current research examines the governance of the “Estado da Índia” by D. João de Castro, the governor and viceroy between 1545 and 1548. He aims to understand the Portuguese “Estado da Índia” not only as one part of the Portuguese Empire, but also as an important connected space. He is interested in the history of Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean, from political to military history, especially in the implementation of European institutions and warfare in the Portuguese “Estado da Índia” (16th century).