



THE PORTUGESE

0252-90060

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First Published 1997

GOODMARK **Malaysia History Series**

ISBN 983-9849-64-6 (SET)

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904262

Printed by:

PERCETAKAN SEASONS SDN. BHD.
KUALA LUMPUR

3 DEC 1997
Perpustakaan Negara
Malaysia

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9849-64-6
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PREFACE

Our country is well known as a country which was colonized. The colonialists had brought about some good and bad effects to the people of Malaysia today.

Besides that, there are immigrants of various races who have now become part of the people of this country.

These impact of colonialism and the migration of people of various races have made Malaysia unique.

This historical series is published to help students of primary and lower secondary schools to enhance their understanding of the history of our country.

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THE PORTUGUESE

The Portuguese were the first European to come to the East. They came from a country called Portugal. Portugal is a small country situated in the south west of Europe.

The Portuguese came to Southeast Asia with two aims. First, they wanted to seek wealth and second, to spread the Catholic faith.

The Portuguese wanted to seek wealth through the spice trade. Spices were found in the Archipelago of Spices. Do you know where

the Archipelago of Spices is?

The spice trade in the East was controlled by the Muslims. Indian Muslims bought spices from the Archipelago of Spices and brought them to Malabar or Gujerat in India. The Arabs then brought the spices to the ports in West Asia like Alexandria and Baghdad. From there, the Venetian and Genoan merchants brought the spices to Europe.

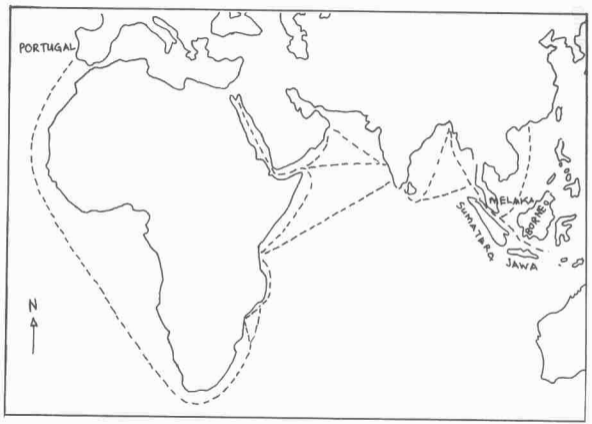
The Portuguese had to buy spices from the Venetian and Genoan merchants. They knew that the Muslims were reaping a great profit from the spice trade. Therefore, they wanted to buy the spices themselves from the Archipelago of Spices.

A prince of Portugal, Prince Henry (1394-1460) encouraged voyages to the East. He set up a research centre in Sagres. Ships were built at this centre. Then, a few fleets were instructed to find the route to the East.

Portuguese navigators managed to sail along the coast of Africa until they reached the South. In 1488, Bartholomew Diaz managed to reach the end of a cape in the south of Africa. This cape was the Cape of Good Hope. It was named the Cape of Good Hope because they hoped to continue the voyage further on.

In 1498, Vasco da Gama managed to continue his voyage beyond the cape. He reached the coast of India, that is, Calicut, after sailing across the Indian Ocean. Later, the Portuguese managed to set up a new trading settlement in Cochin, India in 1503.

On 25 November 1510, the Portuguese captured Goa. Goa was used as a base for the expansion of their influence. They also strengthened their relationship with the Muslim traders in the Archipelago of Spices. Besides that, Goa was also used to regulate the Portuguese trade with China.



The map showing the Portuguese route to the east and to India

The Portuguese carried out trading in the East. In 1509, Lopez de Sequeira was instructed by the King of Portugal to go to Melaka. The king wanted to have a peaceful trading relationship with Melaka.

When the Portuguese arrived in Melaka they realized that it was the biggest commodity emporium in the region. The Portuguese were very interested in taking control over Melaka.

In the beginning, their arrival was welcomed by Sultan Mahmud Syah. Then, Lopez de Sequeira and his men were attacked under the instruction of Bendahara Tun Mutahir. The Bendahara had been instigated by the Gujerati and Javanese traders who were anti-Portuguese.

The Gujerati traders from India did not wish to see the Portuguese taking control of the trade in Melaka. They knew that the Portuguese had been ruthless in India.



Lopez de Sequeira

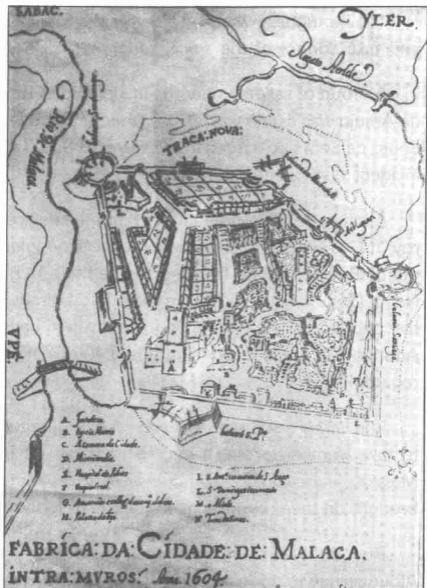
The Portuguese wanted to defeat the Muslims and take control of the spice trade.

A group of sailors under the leadership of Ruy de Araujo was captured and imprisoned. However, Lopez de Sequeira managed to escape to Goa. The incident enraged the Portuguese in Goa.

Alfonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese vice-roy in Goa, received letters which were smuggled out by Ruy de Araujo. The letters were brought by Naina Chetu, an Indian Muslim who had betrayed his people. In his letters, Ruy de Araujo gave Alfonso de Albuquerque important information regarding the defence of Melaka.

The letters also urged Alfonso de Albuquerque to take immediate action to free the captives in Melaka. They could no longer bear the torture brought on them by the prison guards of Melaka.

Ruy de Araujo also requested Alfonso de Albuquerque to bring a strong war fleet from Goa.



The Map of Melaka

The fleet was to threaten Bendahara Tun Mutahir that the Portuguese would go to war if the captives were not released.

In 1510, Diego Monaez de Vasconcelos was directed by the Portuguese government to seek revenge on the people of Melaka. They had treated the captives who were under the leadership of Lopez de Sequeira badly.

The Diego Mondez de Vasconcelos fleet went off course and did not reach Melaka. They only managed to reach Goa.

After they were fully equipped and the conditions were rights, on 2 May 1511, Alfonso de Albuquerque sailed to Melaka. What had happened to Lopez de Sequeira was taken as an excuse to capture Melaka.

Alfonso de Albuquerque was escorted by 18 fully equipped warships together with about 1200 crewmen. He brought a large fleet because he



Alfonso de Albuquerque

knew that the Melaka defence was very strong.

On its voyage to Melaka, the fleet captured a Gujerati ship. They forced the Gujerati crewmen to show them the way to Pedir on the coast of Sumatera. In Pedir, Alfonso de Albuquerque met with eight of the Portuguese captives who had escaped from their captivity in Melaka.

On 1 July 1511, Alfonso de Albuquerque arrived at Melaka. His main aim was to discuss the release of the Portuguese captives. He demanded compensation for the Portuguese ships that were destroyed in 1509. He also demanded permission for the Portuguese to build a fort.

Sultan Mahmud Syah was influenced by the Gujerati and the local traders to reject the demands. Tengku Ahmad, the prince of Sultan Mahmud Syah, was also against the Portuguese.

Alfonso de Albuquerque felt nervous looking at the situation. Therefore, the Portuguese had to



Portuguese soldiers attacked Melaka

use force in attacking ships and setting fire to houses along the coast. This forced Sultan Mahmud Syah to release the captives.

The Portuguese attacks did not stop there. Alfonso de Albuquerque had decided to attack and capture Melaka by 25 July 1511. Unfortunately, the attack failed as he was defeated by Melaka. They only managed to capture the Sungai Melaka bridge.

On 10 August 1511, the Portuguese attacked Melaka again. They attacked the Melaka fortress during night time. On the next day, fierce attacks continued. The Portuguese attacked the merchant ships and destroyed the mosque in Melaka.

Alfonso de Albuquerque waited a few days to give instructions to his crewmen for further attacks. They were always prepared for any counter attacks from the Melaka army. At the end, the final attack was launched a few days later.

On 24 August 1511, Melaka was occupied by the Portuguese army. Sultan Mahmud Syah and his son Tengku Ahmad, together with their followers had to retreat to Muar, Johor. Later, they moved to Pahang and then to Pulau Bintan. From then on, the Portuguese colonization of the Malay Peninsular started.

In actual fact, the victory of the Portuguese in capturing Melaka had a few causes. The Portuguese fleet had warships that were fully equipped. Their weapons were more advance than the ones used by the Melaka army. The Melaka army had used traditional weapons.

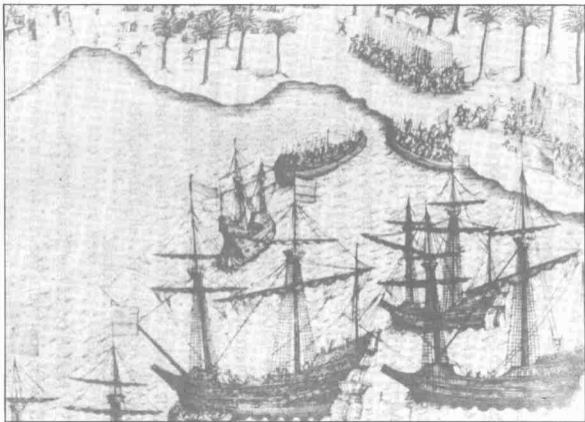
A large number of the Melaka soldiers were mercenaries. They did not have the spirit of loyalty to the Melaka Sultan. When they saw that the Melaka army was about to collapse, they switched sides. Besides that, the Portuguese were helped by foreign traders who were not loyal to Melaka. The Chinese traders had lent their barges to the Portuguese for their attacks on Melaka.

After capturing Melaka, Alfonso de Albuquerque set up a Portuguese administration. Matters pertaining to the local customs and practices were handed over to the local people.

Some important posts were created. The Fortress Captain was the Portuguese chief officer in Melaka. His appointment was from one to four years. The post was a token for the royalties who had served the king well. His function was to assist the Viceroy or Governor in Goa.

The Captain General was responsible for the administration of army matters and heading both the navy and army. The Chief Justice was responsible for the administration of public matters. The Mayor administered financial matters and the Bishop administered religious matters. Every post had its own deputies.

Native posts like Bendahara, Temenggung and Syahbandar were maintained but were changed to administer native matters only. Major races were



The Portuguese Navy came to Melaka



The A Famosa

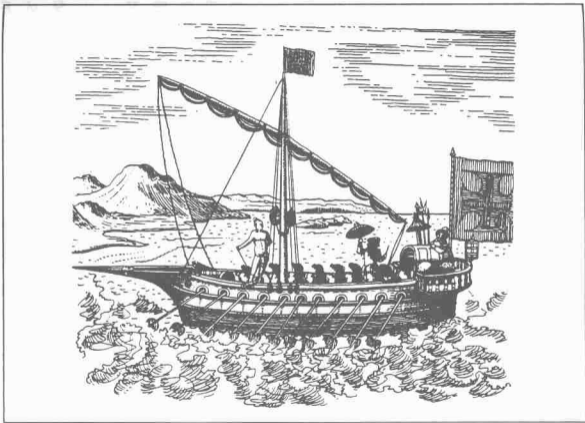
represented by their local leaders or captain.

Alfonso de Albuquerque also built a fortress called the A Famosa. It was a very strong fortress. No enemy could destroy the fortress. The Portuguese were able to maintain their position in Melaka for 130 years. The ruins of the fortress can still be seen until today.

A Famosa was also used as an administration headquarters. All administration offices, churches and business centres were placed within the fortress.

In 1513, Sultan Mahmud Syah established his government in Pulau Bintan. He tried several times to recapture Melaka but failed. This was because the Portuguese had built A Famosa. In 1526, The Portuguese army attacked Pulau Bintan. Sultan Mahmud Syah was forced to retreat to Kampar in Sumatera. He died there in 1528.

The son of Sultan Mahmud Syah, Sultan



The Portuguese's ship

Alauddin Riayat Syah, founded the Johor Sultanate at the river bank of Sungai Johor in Kota Tinggi. He continued with the effort of regaining Melaka.

Melaka had truly an ambition of the Portuguese all the while because of its strategic location. From its geographical point of view, Melaka was located midway in the trading route between the East and the West. Merchant vessels stopped over at Melaka during the Southwest Monsoon and the Northeast Monsoon.

Melaka's location was also safe from strong winds and storms as it was sheltered by Sumatera Island. Its location at the far end of the Straits of Melaka, enabled Melaka to keep watch over all voyages of merchant vessels from the East and the West.

Besides that, Melaka was located near the centre for the straits produce especially the spices. Spices were much needed by the Chinese, Indian

and European traders. Do you know what spices are?

Spices are things like black pepper, white pepper, cloves and others. Spices are used to make food taste better.

The hills in Melaka made the place safe from enemy attacks. The hills were the natural fortress for Melaka.

At the port of Melaka, there were various kinds of goods which were easily available. Trading in Melaka was based on entrepot trade. Merchants from the East and the West together with those from nearby countries gathered at Melaka to carry out barter trade.

Cloves and nutmegs were brought from Baras and Maluku Islands. Black pepper and gold were brought from Sumatera. Onions, rice and meat were brought from Jawa Island. Merchants from India brought cloth, perfume, medicine and silk.



The map, showing the Archipelago of spices

Glass products, perfume and opium were brought by merchants from Arab. Siamese, Burmese and Cambodian traders brought commodities like camphor, salt, sandalwood, tin and gold. Merchants from China brought things like porcelain, silk and musk.

Every trader exchanged goods with traders from other countries to take back to his own country. According to Tom Pires, there were 84 languages spoken in Melaka and there were about 4000 foreign traders here. That showed how busy the Port of Melaka was.

Opportunities like these were grabbed by the Portuguese to practise the monopoly trading policy in Melaka. They introduced the "approval letter" system which required all ships that were involved in trading in Asia to call at Melaka.

The Portuguese government also imposed high tax, that was 10% on goods from China and 8% on goods from Bengala, India. In 1524, the

Viceroy, da Gama imposed the death penalty and confiscated all goods belonging to ship owners who did not have the "approval letter" from Melaka.

The Portuguese also dreamt of controlling the spice trade in Southeast Asia. From Melaka, the Portuguese gradually monopolized the spice trade of the Archipelago of Spices, black pepper in Kedah and tin in Perak.

The spice trade that was carried out by the Portuguese became stronger. The trade brought great profit to the Portuguese. For instance, black pepper that was bought for US\$45 was resold for the price of US\$1800. From here they reaped a profit of manifold.

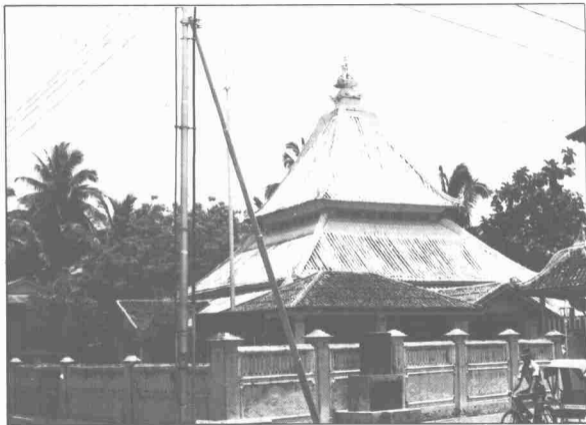
Besides that, the arrival of the Portuguese in Melaka had aimed to crush the Islamic influence there. They aimed to crush the role of Melaka as the Islamic propagation centre. Next, they hoped to spread the influence of the Christian Catholic faith.

In 1545, Francis Xavier arrived in Melaka to spread the Christian faith. Francis Xavier was a famous preacher. Unfortunately, the local people had no interest in the Christian faith. The Portuguese themselves were more interested in monopolizing the spice trade than in spreading the Christian faith.

The Melaka community at that time had difficulty accepting other religions. This was because they had been brought up in the Islamic faith. Islam had existed in Melaka before the arrival of the Portuguese, that was, since 1415. That meant, the arrival of the Portuguese was a century after the arrival of Islam.

The first ruler of Melaka, Parameswara, had embraced Islam after marrying the Princess of Pasai. At that time, Pasai was an important Islamic propagation centre in the region.

The loyalty of the people of Melaka to their ruler was one of the factors which prevented them



Kampung Hulu's Mosque

from accepting the Christian faith. For the people of Melaka, whatever that was done by the ruler became their example to follow. It was the same with religion. If the ruler was a Muslim, then the people also became Muslims.

Besides that, the Muslim merchants from the Middle East like the Turkish and the Arabs had been in Melaka far longer than the Portuguese. Besides trading, the traders also spread the Islamic teaching to traders from China and the Malay Archipelago, besides the local people.

These traders were clever in playing the part as Islamic preachers. Every teaching was delivered in a simple and friendly way. They did not force the people to embrace Islam. Later, the local people were influenced and accepted the Islamic faith willingly.

The foreign traders took back the Islamic teaching with them when they returned to their home countries. They spread the religion to their

relatives and the local community.

The Muslim traders also spread the Islamic teaching through marriage. These traders married the local girls. In this way, the Islamic teaching was not only spread to the girls but also their respective families. These mixed marriages also produced a new community.

With the reasons stated above, it was not surprising that Christianity had difficulty reaching the local people. The anti-Portuguese sentiment amongst the Islamic traders had made them more determined to spread the Islamic teaching.

It was the same with the Malays who were spreading Islam. Therefore, there was a strong tussle between the expansion of Islam with Christianity.

Various efforts were made by the Portuguese to attract more Christian followers. The local people

were promised protection and other things. Unfortunately, their strong efforts also failed. The Christian faith was only practised by the Portuguese.

If they were not the followers of Islam, they were the followers of other religions like Hinduism and Buddhism. However, they were only of a small number.

The Portuguese colonization of the Malay Peninsula, especially Melaka, for 130 years had left many effects even until today. Do you know what these effects are?

The Eurasians are part of the Malaysian society. The Portuguese colonization had produced the Eurasian community of whom all were Christians. The Eurasian community was born of marriages between the Portuguese and the local girls.

At one glance, we would say that they are Malays. This is because the Eurasian community

and the Malay community had no difference, from their complexion till their speeches.

The Eurasians speak fluent Malay language just like the Malays, rather there are those who can no longer speak fluent Portuguese. This is caused by the surrounding influence and the daily mixing with the local community.

From the point of customs and practices, the Eurasian community still practises some of the culture which contained Portuguese elements, even until today. The Eurasian community use Portuguese names.

The development of the Malay language and writing was also influenced by the Portuguese. The Malay lexicon was enriched. There are some Malay words that were derived from Portuguese.

These words are frequently used by us in our daily lives. These words are like *garpu* (fork), *almari* (cupboard), *meja* (table), *tuala* (towel), *jendela*

(window) and *biola* (violin). The use of these words has enriched the Malay language.

As for writing, the romanized writing was introduced to the local community. Before that, the local community had been using the jawi writing brought by the Arabs. The romanized writing has been preserved even until today.

One of the elements of the Portuguese culture that is still here today is the Joget dance. This is an interesting dance and is danced in a group with pairs of partners. Violin is the main musical instrument used in this dance.

The costumes of the dancers are very pretty. These costumes are the traditional Portuguese costumes. Usually, this dance is danced during festivals, marriages celebrations and others.

The Portuguese colonization also ended the Malay Sultanate of Melaka. Melaka is one of the states in Malaysia which does not have a sultan.

As a result of his defeat in the battle, Sultan Mahmud Syah retreated and established a government in Pulau Bintan. He died in Kampar in 1528 after the Portuguese attacked Pulau Bintan.

After the colonization of the Portuguese, Melaka was colonized by the Dutch in 1641. Later, Melaka was colonized by the British.

There are still some Portuguese ruins that can be found here until today. These structures have become historical landmarks. A Famosa is the most famous structure among the people of Malaysia. Whoever visits Melaka would visit the fort for sure. The fort was built near the sea.

The fort that is situated on top of a hill was built using tombstones that were found in the area. This shows how cruel the Portuguese were at that time.

At St. Paul's Hill, we can also see Portuguese ruins. During the Portuguese colonization, the hill

was known as "Our Lady's Hill". Here there is a church which was built by Duarte Coelho in 1521 as a sign of thanks after he had managed to run away from the attacks of the Chinese in 1519. On the hill there is a statue of Francis Xavier.