Chapter 2

HISTORICAL SURVEY*

Auguste Toussaint, the eminent historian once described the Indian Ocean as "a neglected ocean". This may be true if we

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compare the publications and the literature on this body of water with those relating to the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. On the other hand, the Indian Ocean has a relatively longer history. By comparison, the historical references to the Atlantic and the Pacific are much more limited. This could be a manifestation of the "closed" character of the Indian Ocean in the continuity of its historical development, and the interrelations and interactions between events in its various corners, which provide a centrality that better permits a consistent narrative and pertinent analysis of its millennial story.

Any historical presentation or analysis in a work on contemporary international politics necessarily must be even more selective in what it treats than is the case with historical publications. The historian's task is to describe and analyse what
has happened and why it has happened. The student of contemporary politics utilises a historical perspective to cast light upon the patterns of present day developments.\(^2\)

It is an illuminating intellectual exercise in itself to divide and group the chronology of events into logical and consistent frames of reference. K M Panikkar, the well-known Indian historian, differentiated between three separate eras or historical frames with reference to the Indian Ocean. Firstly, the period before Vasco da Gama; secondly, the "Vasco da Gama epoch of Asian history," that is, the period between the arrival of Vasco de Gama at Calicut and the end of the hostilities associated with World War II; and, finally, the post World War II period.\(^3\)

The "da Gama epoch" presented very significant and important aspects. During this era, control and influence in the Indian Ocean and its riparian territories were exercised by non-regional maritime powers. However, the intensity of control along with aims and objectives varied and ultimately modified according to the different actors and the different historical periods of their policies and consequent action. Over time, the


\(^3\) See his book *Asia And Western Dominance,* p. 41.
original emphasis on ideological/religious motivations and on trade goals gave way to the build-up of colonial territories on a scale not witnessed in previous periods. Power and prestige factors were important elements which was uncommon in earlier periods. Non-regional control did not end in 1945. However, it did end to a substantial degree when the British withdrew from the Indian subcontinent in 1947. This was not total withdrawal. It should also be borne in mind that the "da Gama" distinction does not take into account of the by no means negligible presence and impact of the United States and the Soviet Union in the post-World War II period. Nonetheless, the nature of these influences differed from those which European powers exercised during the previous four and a half centuries.

In considering the modalities by which influence and control were achieved, the element of maritime power has to be taken into consideration. In the past, the Indian Ocean region was affected not only by the exercise of sea power but also by land power. Foreign invasions led to major developments in the Indian subcontinent as well as in East and South Africa before and during the time when great maritime powers reached out into the Indian ocean zone.

Another characteristic both present and past of the power relations between littoral nations of the area is their dependence on the balance of power existing outside the area. Thus, historical developments in the Indian Ocean area during most of
the time before the completion of the British conquest have been a function of events, or the power balance, in the Atlantic or European theater of power confrontations and competition.

In the pre-de Gama period, the historical events of the area could be largely divided between developments in the western and the eastern parts of the ocean. After the arrival of the Portuguese, the relationship between different parts of the Indian Ocean have become manifest. While major historical events took place in the northern section of the Indian Ocean basin, that is, in the Asian lands, the role of the African coast and, lately, of Australia cannot be ignored. The arrival of the Europeans was from around the southern tip of Africa. Prior to that the historical forces of the Indian Ocean region unfolded in the area north and east of the Arabic Gulf, across India, and further east into the Malay Peninsula and through what is today Indonesia. The geographical area around the Red Sea and the band of territory on the eastern coastland of Africa about halfway to the Cape of Good Hope constituted another focal point of historical developments.

The early historical records on navigation and travel in the Indian Ocean are both fascinating and intriguing. There were descriptions of Egyptian expeditions in the period around 1500BC which reached the Land of Punt, most likely Somaliland, and of Phoenician shippers who brought from
Ophir, "gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks".4 Traders and colonists from pre-Islamic Arabia, from India and Malaya, and also from China, sailed along the northern coast of the Indian Ocean exchanging goods and spreading their culture and civilizations into faraway lands. These maritime exchanges were helped by monsoon winds, a favorable climate, and the absence of dangerous currents. Probably even before the Mediterranean became an avenue for the seafarers of many nations, the sea routes from the Arabic Gulf and the Red Sea toward India and beyond as well as along the northern part of East Africa were frequented by the sailing boats of Arabs, Persians, Indians, Malays, and possibly also Chinese. The first European - according to historical evidence - who traveled in the Indian Ocean was a Greek by the name of Scylax. Darius I, the Persian king, sponsored the expedition that he led from the Arabic Gulf around Arabia to Egypt. 5

What is important to note is that these developments and historical events did not affect the configuration of the power relationships in the region. The ancient Persian Empire which reached to the Indus River never did have any aspirations for sea power in the Indian Ocean. There was no doubt that it was the land power that held overwhelming control in the northwest

4 Sir Reginald Coupland, op. cit. p. 10.
5 Toussaint, op. cit. pp. 24-27.
corner of the region. The arrival of Alexander the Great heralded the first organized European force that penetrated into the Indian Ocean area. After Alexander reached the Indus Valley, he was able to accomplish his retreat only by transporting part of his army by sea under the able seamanship of his admiral, Nearchos.

In the aftermath of the Alexandrian Empire, two successor states had influence over the northwestern part of the Indian Ocean - the Seleucids, who ruled from Syria to the confines of India, and the Ptolemies, whose empire was Egypt and the Red Sea coast. The Romans inherited only the western part of the Seleucid Empire; the eastern half fell to the Parthians, who barred commercial access toward India. Egypt, however, became a Roman province in 31BC and thereafter the Graeco-Roman period lasted for about 400 years. The early centuries of the Christian era was the period when there were fewer power influences but significant expansions of cultures made their impact felt over almost the entire basin of the Indian Ocean.

A. CULTURE AND POWER IN THE PRE-PORTUGUESE ERA

Roman influences never assumed an imperial dimension. They were commercial and, to some extent, cultural. It is even doubtful whether Rome can be considered in this context. Those
who traveled in the Red Sea and beyond were ethnic Greeks and Orientals, often the subjects of Rome. Typical among them was the anonymous author of the famous Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, a kind of mariners' directory, written by a Greek sea captain from Berenice on the Red Sea in the first century AD. This mariner described his voyages to India, to the Arabic Gulf, and down the African east coast, giving information and advice based on his travels.  

Up to the late fourth century Graeco-Roman ships and fleets sailed annually to India. Adulis, which is the present Massawa, served as the major entrepot for this interoceanic commercial intercourse. Along with trade there was a civilizational impact, the remnants of which are still to be found all around the western basin of the Indian Ocean.

More importantly, contacts were established between India and the Malay world. It is no exaggeration to call this cultural orbit "Greater India". Indians, especially Tamils from South India, settled in Malaya and Indonesia and merged with the local population (these Indian colonies should not be confounded with the Indian settlements in the nineteenth century). Hindu and Buddhist influences have not disappeared in those countries,

6 Roland Oliver and Gervase Matthew, op. cit., p. 94.

7 The names of Indonesia or Indochina attest to the validity of this thesis. The expression "Greater India" is used, among others by Toussaint, pp. 60-73.
though they have become submerged in the autochthonous substratum. There is historical evidence that Indian traders moved westward into the Red Sea and Arabic Gulf areas.

After the fourth century AD, Graeco-Roman shipping into the Red Sea and Indian Ocean declined with the political and economic collapse of the Roman Empire. In Iran, the Parthians were replaced by the native Sassanid dynasty. Under the Sassanids, Iran for the first time exercised naval power which controlled the sea routes from the Arabic Gulf to the Arabian Sea and even to the Red Sea. In the sixth century Ethiopia confronted Iran in Arabia and the Red Sea; the former occupied for half a century the Arabian coast of that sea. During that period, the expansion of political power took precedence over commercial interests.

In the seventh century, the emergence of Islam as a political and military power brought about transformation reversal of power relations. Arab conquest made Egypt and Iran integral parts of the Islamic world and the Red Sea an Islamic lake. These however were conquests by land and not by sea. The Islamic wave reached the confines of India (also by land) in the eighth century. However, there was no Arab-Muslim political-military expansion across the Indian Ocean; rather, the golden age for Arab merchant men flourished for 700 years. During that period important shifts occurred in the power relations between the countries bordering the eastern half of the Indian
Ocean basin. In the later years of that period the Chinese made their most spectacular naval appearances.

Since the first century of the Christian calendar, several Southeast Asian states have emerged. Some of them claimed over lordship over others. The Funan Empire, located in what is now Cambodia, extended its power over the Malay Peninsula. In the fourth century Funan was overtaken by the kingdom of Sri Vijaya, which was centered in Sumatra. But by the eighth century Sri Vijaya was made dependent on the Sailendra Kingdom, which had earlier originated in Java. It should be noted that all of these, in particular Sri Vijaya, were maritime powers.

In south India, several maritime kingdoms existed in the first century AD. Among them was the Chola Empire. The Chola Empire held a genuine thalassocracy in the Gulf of Bengal and eastward. In the eleventh century the Cholans attacked Sri Vijaya across the sea, and for two hundred years naval battles were fought for supremacy in the Malacca Straits.  

The influence of Islam had not yet reached the eastern Indian Ocean at that time. Arab merchants and settlers did move into the coastland of East Africa, where they set up townships

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8 See K.M. Panikkar, *India and The Ocean*, pp. 33-35. The Chola Empire At Times Extended to Ceylon And The Maldives Islands.
and mixed with the local inhabitants. But as mentioned before, the Arab-Islamic influence was commercial and religious-cultural. It was not expansionist in the politico-military sense. Aden, located at the entrance of the Red Sea, was held by the Sultan of Egypt from 1175 for half a century before it gave it up. By the thirteenth century, Muslim settlements, established for trade purposes, became widespread along the Malabar coast of India. After 1300 Islamic influence spread out into the eastern Indian Ocean, reaching the Malay areas, and the Malacca Straits, and moved very much beyond.

Muslim political domination and influence entered India by the tenth century from Afghanistan and established itself in Delhi by the thirteenth century, advancing further south in the next. This Islamic expansion did not, however, affect power relations, nor did it interfere with the shipping and trade pursued peacefully from one end of the ocean to the other. On the other hand, the appearance of the Chinese in the Indian Ocean in the thirteenth century and later in the first half of the fifteenth was mainly pushed by considerations of political power and prestige, though again, activities connected with these did not affect commercial navigation and trade.

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9 W. H. Moreland and Atul Chandra Chattarjee, "OCEAN," 143
Traditionally, China gave primacy to land power, for China's main strategic consideration lay with Inner and Central Asia. However, during the Southern Sung dynasty (1127 - 1279) sea power and overseas trade were given greater importance. Subsequently, the Mongol Yuan dynasty organized maritime invasions of Java (1292), and Chinese naval fleets exacted tributes from states in southern India, Sumatra, and Malaya. Between 1405 and 1433, during the Ming dynasty, seven expeditions under the command of Admiral Cheng Ho, a Muslim eunuch, were sent into the Indian Ocean - to Aden, Hormuz, and the Arabian Gulf and even to the coast of Africa. These Ming naval expeditions demanded and obtained tribute and acknowledgment of the Chinese emperor's overlordship and political supremacy. Suddenly, these maritime expeditions ended after 1430. The Mongol Empire had less interest in these oceanic incursions, and expansion across the seas was subsequently reduced and abandoned.¹⁰

By the end of the fifteenth century, when the Portuguese made their forceful entry into the Indian Ocean, there existed a political power vacuum. No major naval power exercised or sought to exercise maritime dominance in the Indian Ocean region.

¹⁰ See John K. Fairbank, op. cit., pp. 449-463
The wave of Islamic advance preceded the Portuguese arrival by less than a hundred years. In some parts, such as Indonesia, for example, it succeeded Vasco da Gama's advent. It would be futile to speculate whether the Islamic advance would have been prevented or stopped had the Portuguese influence reached the Indian Ocean earlier. One should be reminded that the Spanish annexation of the Philippine Islands forestalled the spread of Islam except for the southern islands of the archipelago, where Spain arrived a bit late for effective imposition of the Catholic faith.

B. THE PORTUGUESE TRADE MONOPOLY IN THE EAST INDIES

During the course of the fifteenth century, Christianity was critically engaged in a seemingly never ending struggle against Islam in southeastern Europe, in the Mediterranean, in Spain, and in North Africa. Ironically, the same time, Europe depended on the Muslim world for the supply of spices and certain luxury commodities. Venice and Genoa, the great trading centres of Italy, acted as middlemen in providing these much-coveted articles at enormous costs. And behind the world

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11 In Malacca the acceptance of Islam is estimated to have occurred in 1414, in Java around 1500, in the Moluccas around 1475, and in the Lesser Sunda Islands only by 1600.
of Islam stood legendary India, the source of wealth and - as it was believed - of Islamic might. There was also a widespread belief that behind the Islamic peoples, in Asia or Africa, Prester John, a Christian ruler, battled the common foe.

It was then well known, although not openly admitted, that the Ptolemy geography was erroneous, that the world was round, not flat, and that the Indian Ocean was not a land-locked sea. Therefore India could be reached by either moving westward (as Columbus attempted) or by circumnavigating Africa. Evangelistic motivation and a yearning for glory, power, and wealth inspired the Portuguese royal house to discover the route to the Indies. Under the leadership of Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), expedition after expedition was sent along the coast of Africa pushing deep into the Gulf of Guinea and the South Atlantic. It was a very systematic and secret undertaking.¹²

In 1487 King Joao II dispatched the expedition under Bartolomeu Dias which succeeded in rounding the southernmost tip of Africa and entering the Indian Ocean. The same year two secret agents, Pero da Covilha and Affonso da Payva, were sent to India and Ethiopia via Egypt and the Red Sea. Disguised as Muslim merchants, they reached Aden, where they parted.

¹² A good description may be found in Alan Villiers, Op. cit., pp. 117-152.
Payva left for Ethiopia and was never heard of again. Covilham sailed to India, visited several places on the Malabar coast, went to Hormuz, and traveled along the East Africa coast. Upon his return to Cairo, he forwarded a detailed report to his king. He was then ordered to go to Ethiopia, where, being prevented from returning to Portugal, he spent the rest of his life.

In 1497 King Manoel I, the successor to King Joao, commissioned Vasco da Gama to sail around the Cape and to India. The Portuguese knew exactly their exploration objectives. Unlike Columbus, they were familiar with the problems of navigation in those waters, the monsoon pattern, and the Indian ports to which they were heading. Da Gama's ships reached Calicut in April 1498, the first to have made a direct trip between Europe and the Indies. The following year, he journeyed back to Lisbon.

In this manner Portugal, with consistency and financial sacrifice and with its limited resources, opened up the trade route to the wealth of the Indian Ocean. However, more was achieved. The Portuguese turned the flanks of the Islamic world, diverted the traditional flow of spices and other articles which had reached the Middle East from the Indian Ocean region and the Spice Islands, and deprived the Arab world of the revenue they had realized by forwarding these commodities to Europe. The Ottoman Empire that by the early sixteenth century gradually extended into Egypt, Arabia, and
Mesopotamia now faced a Christian power on a new front - the Red Sea and the Arab Indian Ocean.

At the point of the arrival of the Portuguese maritime traffic was almost entirely in the hands of Arab-Muslim sailors and merchants, but no naval or political control was exercised by any nation in the Indian Ocean area. In order to secure the maximum exploitation of the wealth of these areas, Portugal wished to create a monopoly to its sole advantage. Lisbon then attempted to place the Indian Ocean under its naval-military control.\(^\text{13}\)

During the next ten years, following the first voyage of Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese government came to the conclusion that in order to exclude all competition in the spice trade and also "to spread the faith", it had to make full use of its naval superiority, sweep the off the Arab vessels, and capture the trade and divert goods directly to Lisbon. However, there were divergent views on how to achieve this grandiose strategy.

The first Portuguese viceroy of India, Francisco de Almeida, who arrived in 1505, defeated combined Arab and India fleets. He believed that Portuguese supremacy could be

\(^{13}\) When Vasco Da Gama allegedly told his Arab pilot that the Portuguese had come to India "To share in trade and to spread their faith, but not to conquer, whether you wish or not", Villiers, op. cit. p. 142.
maintained without territorial acquisitions, only requiring the assistance of local allies. However, his concept was not endorsed by his successor, Alfonso d' Albuquerque, who became the architect of the Portuguese empire in the East. He aimed to capture the strategic approaches to the Indian Ocean, to seal off these entrances to foreign shipping, and to set up territorial bases around the shore of the ocean. The Cape route was made secure by occupying key points along the East African coast; Socotra and Aden were captured to control the entrance to the Red Sea. Hormuz was taken to dominate the Arabic Gulf. Albuquerque set out to conquer the eastern bottleneck leading to the Spice Islands, namely Malacca. Military stations were established on the island of Ceylon. And to set up a central command post to rule this vast maritime empire, the Portuguese settled in Goa, which became the supreme headquarters of their naval domination and the seat of their imperial possessions.

The Almeida-Albuquerque controversy, which was decided in favor of the latter, under entirely different conditions and in a different technological age, may still have some contemporary implications and comparisons. The question remains basically the same: Can naval (and air) supremacy be secured without naval (and air) bases? We shall have to come back to this issue more than once in different contexts in the course of this study.

The degree to which Portugal succeeded in excluding all foreign competition remains moot. Although Arab and Indian
captains needed licenses issued by the Portuguese against payment to carry goods, their monopoly was not total. This is only natural, for blockades and embargoes never are. Nor was it unusual that Arabs and Indians considered Portuguese activities as piratical; the French considered the British blockade around their coast during the Napoleonic Wars to be piracy; so did the Germans when they were placed under a blockade in World Wars I and II; unrestricted U-boat warfare was also given the same epithet. Nevertheless, for a hundred years Portugal was able to obtain valuable cargoes - pepper, ginger, cinnamon, mace, cloves, nutmeg - all highly priced products in Europe. Portuguese ships also brought precious stones, silk, porcelain, textiles, and perfumes to Lisbon. The Indian trade was a royal monopoly and ended at the mouth of the Tagus. Portugal had no ships available to take the goods further. This was done by Flemish and Dutch shippers, mostly from Antwerp, who distributed these articles to England, France, Germany, and other countries.

Portuguese control and trade monopoly were made possible by the naval-military superiority of their galleons and navies over the Arab-Turkish and other vessels in the Indian Ocean. Although European waters were shared by ships of every flag, a papal bull issued by Pope Alexander VI in 1494 gave the seas of the Western Hemisphere to Spain and the waters around Africa and India to Portugal. A year later, Spain and Portugal signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, which shifted the dividing line

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somewhat to the west so that Brazil was recognized as belonging to the latter. The Portuguese thus claimed sovereignty over the Indian Ocean with the justification of "confiscating the goods of all those who navigate these seas without our permission".¹⁴

Portuguese rule served three purposes. Firstly, it satisfied aspirations for the glory and greatness of the country. Secondly, it offered an opportunity to convert "heathen" to the Catholic faith; and it brought unprecedented wealth to a poor country. In view of the limited resources of Portugal, all this was a remarkable achievement. It was also a fortunate coincidence that no major local power existed which could have challenged the Portuguese ascendancy. The Ottoman empire's naval strength was deployed in the Mediterranean and engaged in a desultory struggle with the Christian powers. There were only relatively small forces which were available to fight the Portuguese in the Red and Arab Seas. Nonetheless, they caused considerable trouble to the "Rulers of the Indian Ocean". Ethiopia, the putative realm of Prester John, was invaded in the middle of the sixteenth century by Turkish-led Islamic forces. The Christian empire had to be rescued by Portuguese contingents but at the price of Ethiopia's conversion to Roman Catholicism. When the danger was over, allegiance to the Pope was denounced, and the Portuguese influence ejected from Ethiopia.

¹⁴K.M. Panikkar, India and The Indian Ocean, p. 40.
The Mogul Empire gradually extending its domination over India since 1526, was almost exclusively a land-based power, with little interest in maritime traffic or trade. This clear division of land power and sea power prevented any major clash between Portugal, with its monopoly of navigation and trade, and the rulers of Delhi, who controlled much of the interior of India.

The Portuguese imperium in the Indian Ocean extended over almost one century. This was the real Vasco da Gama epoch - an attempt by one European power to maintain a national monopoly of power and trade. By comparison even at the height of British imperial dominance in the Indian Ocean region in time of peace, the sea lanes were left open to the shipping of all flags.

C. THE EUROPEAN COMPETITION FOR POWER AND INFLUENCE

Portuguese power was reduced in the Indian Ocean area by the arrival of other European powers and not by the opposition from the littoral powers. In any case, Portugal would have been unable to maintain its monocratic control if it was in competition with other and often more powerful European nations. But the decline of Portuguese power in the early
seventeenth century was mainly due to historical developments in the Europe.

In 1580 King Philip II of Spain inherited the throne of Portugal. Inevitably, Portugal thus became involved in the wars that Spain fought against England and its own rebellious provinces in the Netherlands. The Dutch so far had acted as middlemen and traders in the distribution of Portuguese goods brought from the Indies. Now they were banned from the mouth of the Tagus. They, and subsequently the English, therefore, decided to have direct trade contacts with the Indies.

The Dutch also had a Covilha to brief them concerning sailing and trade in the Indian Ocean. Jan Huyghen van Linschoten, who for years had been secretary of the Portuguese Archbishop of Goa, provided the necessary information. He even published a book entitled Itinerario, which was a detailed guide on the navigation and geography of the region.

The first Netherlands fleet of four ships sailed in 1595 under the command of Cornelius de Houtman, who had previously served under the Portuguese. Following Linschoten's advice, after reaching the Cape, he sailed directly to Java, thereby avoiding the Indian waters and the Straits of Malacca so closely monitored by the Portuguese. The Dutch even later preferred one of two more routes to reach the Indonesian islands - the middle route, which brought them along the island
of Mauritius (named after Maurice of Nassau), or the eastern route along the western coast of Australia - for both were less frequented by the Portuguese. The center of their activity became Java, where they founded Batavia, subsequently the capital of their East Indian empire.

Although fully supported by the States-General of the Netherlands, the Dutch sailed and traded under the aegis of their East India Company. This enterprise was essentially commercial. They were not interested in converting the natives or, in the beginning, in creating a colonial empire. They fought the Portuguese as rivals in business and ousted them gradually from their strongholds, east of Malacca, then in Ceylon, India, and the East African coast. In 1641 they captured Malacca. In 1620, with the assistance of the English, a strong Persian army took Hormuz. However, the Dutch were unable to completely eliminate the Portuguese because they were faced by two more formidable rivals, the English and the French.

The English East India Company, was established in 1601. It was intended to outshine in every respect the similar companies of the Dutch and the French. In same year six ships under Captain James Lancaster sailed to Sumatra, returning with a rich cargo two years later. But the first English activities in the East Indies were rather modest compared to those of the Dutch, with whom they occasionally cooperated but whom they more often had to fight just as vehemently as the Portuguese.
One of the most important ventures of the English was the peaceful take-over of Bombay Island from the Portuguese, a more convenient trading post than Surat further north. Soon Bombay developed into a major commercial center and outlet for Indian goods.

The East Indian Company of France was created in 1604 but at first was deployed almost inconspicuously. Only after 1664 did it set up trading posts in India. In 1710 the French seized uninhabited Mauritius (the Dutch had abandoned the island) and named it Isle de France.

In 1641 Portugal separated from Spain and tried to pursue an independent foreign policy. But it was too late to rescue its Indian Empire. In 1648 the Portuguese lost Muscat to the Omani Arabs and some of their East African outposts. The Portuguese came to rely increasingly on the English against the Dutch and thus managed to retain Goa and other stations on the Indian subcontinent.

Admiral G A Ballard described the period between 1600 and 1750 an "interregnum" because no single European nation was able to wield overwhelming influence and authority in the Indian Ocean area. 15 During that period some powers, indigenous to the region, established limited control in certain

15 G.A. Ballard, op. cit., p. 56.
maritime areas. Aurangzeb, the last of the outstanding Moguls, equipped a navy which successfully operated in the Bay of Bengal against the kingdom of Arakan. It was during his reign (1658-1707) that the Mogul Empire spread over the major part of India; after his death, the decline and fragmentation of this Muslim empire began. In 1698 Seif-bin-Sultan, ruler of Oman-Muscat, captured Mombasa, Kilwa, and Pemba from the Portuguese. Subsequently, the Omanis placed Zanzibar under their control. In the nineteenth century Zanzibar became an independent sultanate under an Omani ruler. The Portuguese fought back and eventually were able to keep only the area south of Cape Delgado (Mozambique). The Moguls had no navy on the Malabar coast of India; the Maratha Confederacy, which was in a state of revolt against the Great Mogul, maintained a fleet which fought the forces of Delhi. Subsequently these forces engaged in a long struggle against the English East India Company and captured vessels of any flag until, in 1756, their power was destroyed by the British.

A series of wars between the English and the Dutch in the latter half of the seventeenth century provided the reason that persuaded London to support the remaining Portuguese possessions. The main Dutch strength remained concentrated in what is now Indonesia, but the coast of Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope also continued to be controlled by the Netherlands.
By the early eighteenth century France was displaying keener interest in the Indian Ocean region. In 1735 the French, under Commander Bertrand Francois Mahe de la Bourdonnais, the governor of Isle de France (Mauritius), converted Port Louis into a major naval base. Port Louis is about halfway between the Cape and India. The British at that time had no such base between the Atlantic and their stations on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts of India.

The wars waged between the French and the British during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries determined the outcome of the struggle of these two imperial for the control of India and the ocean surrounding it. While it is correct to say that these wars were really decided in the European theatre and by the naval battles fought in the Atlantic, changes in the military or naval balance in and around India in some cases resolved the distribution of power in this area.

During the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748), Joseph Francois Duplex, governor of Pondicherry, the French base on the Coromandel coast, struggled to establish French supremacy in India. With the help of his Indian allies, he tried to oust the British from Madras, their headquarters on the east coast of India. He was opposed by his British counterpart, Robert Clive. Dupleix failed, and the ensuring peace left the Franco-British balance essentially unchanged.
In 1756 the Seven Years' War began. Actually, in the interval between these two conflicts, wars by proxy were fought between the Indian allies of France and Britain. But now the struggle concentrated in the northeast where the Nawab of Bengal, an ally of the French, seized Calcutta, the British trade center. Clive defeated the Nawab at Plassey (1757), and Bengal became the first large territorial unit of the English East India Company. As in the previous war, the French were handicapped by a relative lack of naval power. With Admiral Howe's victory at Quiberon Britain gained naval control in the Atlantic, and the French forces in India were virtually cut off from their homeland. By the Treaty of Paris (1763) Britain annexed Canada and French influence in India was also largely eliminated.

D. THE BRITISH CONQUEST OF INDIA

During the fifteen years of peace following the Treaty of Paris, the English East India Company further expanded and consolidated its control over large territories in India. In 1778 the peace was interrupted by hostilities between Britain and France, and in the following year Spain and the Netherlands joined France. Once more British and French fleets entered the Indian Ocean to challenge each other for control and dominance. Pierre Andre de Suffren, the French rear admiral, fought Sir Edward Huges, the British vice admiral, in the Bay of Bengal and around Ceylon. Trincomalee, the naval base on
Ceylon (which still belonged to the Dutch) was taken by the British but retaken by Suffren. Pondichery, a French base in India was captured by the British.

The peace treaty of 1783, concluded again in Paris, restored the status quo, leaving however an edge in favour of London. In the Atlantic theater Britain fared less well, for the independence of the thirteen American colonies in North America had to be recognized.

From 1783 until World War II no major naval encounter between ships of major powers took place in the Indian Ocean, and no concentration of large naval units occurred except during the Russo-Japanese War. In 1905 the Russian Baltic fleet passed the ocean on its ill-fated journey to the Far East.\(^{16}\)

During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the British further extended their possessions on the Indian subcontinent and over other territories of the region. Cape Province was captured and annexed in 1806, and Dutch settlements in Ceylon were seized in 1796. The Indonesian archipelago was restored to the Dutch after the Treaty of Amiens (1802) but retaken again after the renewed outbreak of the war.

\(^{16}\) See Richard Alexander Hough, op. cit., p. 20
The French naval strongholds in the middle of the Indian Ocean, the Mascarene Islands, were the bases from which the French directed a commercial war against the enemy shipping. The French corsairs did damage even during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1810-11 the Mascarenes, the principal island being Isle de France (Mauritius), were captured by the British. The Seychelles were taken earlier (1794).

In India, Tippoo Sahib, ruler of Mysore, followed in the footsteps of his father, who was an ally of the French, by invading Travancore, a British-protected state. He was defeated in 1799 and South India was incorporated into the possession of the British East India Company or turned into vassal states of the British. In north central India the company's power was advanced to the border of the Punjab, and Delhi was taken in 1804. The British Crown, represented by the company's Governor General, claimed paramountcy on behalf of the Mogul, who was by a puppet of British policy.

France did not give up attempts to erode Britain's control of India. Bonaparte's Egyptian campaign was ultimately aimed at India; in 1800 the First Consul enlisted the help of Isar Paul for a land invasion of British Asia; and in 1807 Emperor Napoleon negotiated with Persia for transit of a French army. But another even more urgent preoccupation, the Peninsula War, prevented any attempt to carry out this chimcrical project.
The French also flirted with Seyyid Said, the ruler of Muscat-Oman, and concluded a treaty with him in 1807. However, as soon as the tide turned against Napoleon, the Sultan switched his support to the British.

Under the treaties of Paris which ended the Napoleonic Wars (1814 and 1815), Britain kept the Cape Province, Mauritius, and Ceylon. The Indonesian Archipelago was returned to the Netherlands and the island of Bourbon (subsequently, Reunion) to France. Trade posts in India (Pondichery, Chandernagor, and others) were also restored to the French but prohibited from being fortified or maintaining a garrison. Thus the British took into their possession all the strategic key points of the Indian Ocean, removed their French rivals from India, and were well on the way to dominate India and its surrounding environs.

E. THE INDIAN OCEAN AND PAX BRITANNICA

Although it seems highly frivolous to pretend that the British Empire was built by absentmindedness, it is still correct to maintain that the extension of British power over a huge, and populous India, as well as most of the countries around the Indian Ocean, was not the result of a preconceived strategy. This, of course, was not true of the establishment of Portuguese mastery in that area. The English East India Company was the
arm of British power which was instrumental in extending British power and influence. It operated, fought, and ruled to secure markets, to trade, and to make money. Neither its founders nor subsequent leaders thought of establishing a gigantic territorial empire under the direction of the company with all the worries and risks involved in such an enterprise. The Portuguese, the Dutch, and the French were fought because they were rivals in the commerce to be conducted in the areas in question, a commerce which relied on the exploitation and the control of the local population and its rulers. As the Portuguese discovered, to trade under such circumstances one had to control and in order to control one must have territorial supremacy. But, as shown above, it was essentially the series of conflicts with the rival French, employing allies in India, which induced the British to use similar methods. And when the allies of the French were defeated or proved unreliable, the company, with the approval of its home government, resorted to the annexation of land which it had to govern. As is often true in world affairs, this procedure proved contagious as originally conquests were made for reasons of expedience or security or simply because a weak adversary was faced.

There is certainly much validity in the proposition put forward recently that the external domination of Indian Ocean countries was essentially the result of great power rivalries,
conflicts between regional powers, and European interference in the affairs of the latter.\textsuperscript{17}

The conquest of the still independent countries of India continued after 1815. The Maratha states gave up resistance in 1819, the Punjab was annexed between 1804 and 1850, followed by the North-West Frontier Province. Baluchistan was brought under British control in 1875.

In 1815 Britain occupied the kingdom of Kandy in the heart of Ceylon, which neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch ever controlled. In 1819 Singapore was founded by Sir Stamford Raffles at the eastern entrance of the Straits of Malacca, on an island ceded to the British by the Sultan of Johore. Malacca itself was exchanged by the Dutch for certain British settlements on Sumatra. Singapore soon outdistanced Malacca as the major entrepot and harbour of the straits as well as of the areas to the east and west. By the end of the nineteenth century the Sultans of the Malay Peninsula accepted British protection. In 1909 Siam ceded to Britain four other Malay states until then under its vassalage. The British conducted three wars against Burma between 1824 and 1885, which resulted in the annexation of the country. Subsequently, Burma was placed under the administration of the Government of India.

\textsuperscript{17} Report Dated May 3, 1974, Of The Experts To The Ad Hoc Committee On The Indian Ocean Pursuant To The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3080 (XXVIII) of December, 6, 1973. ("Zone Of Peace").
In 1857 a mutiny broke out against British rule in India which was swiftly suppressed. It led to the final elimination of the last of the Moguls. The outdated rule of the East India Company was ended in the same year, and direct control by Britain established. In 1877, Queen Victoria assumed the title of Empress of India.

London also extended its rule in the western half of the Indian Ocean. In 1839 it secured the town of Aden and the adjoining island of Socotra at the entrance of the Bab et Mandeb Strait. Aden and the Red Sea grew immensely in strategic importance when the Suez Canal was opened in 1869. In 1882 Britain occupied Egypt and its Suez Canal zone, thus placing itself in control of the route to India. Nor was the Cape route neglected: In 1843 Natal was annexed to prevent the Boer republics, which lay north of the Cape Province, from obtaining an outlet to the ocean. And the South African War (1899-1902) led to the annexation of the Orange Free State and Transvaal, and ultimately the unification of South Africa under British rule. Along the northern east Coast of Africa, Zanzibar was made a British protectorate in 1890, and the British East Africa Company-administered territory (Kenya) was taken over by the London government in 1895.

In the southeast of the Indian Ocean region, Australia, including its west coast, became an undisputed British territory
in the early nineteenth century. Formal occupation of what is now Western Australia took place in the 1820s to forestall the French from establishing a foothold.

Accordingly, British sovereignty extended over most of the countries surrounding the Indian Ocean. France, with British consent, turned the big island of Madagascar into a protectorate in 1885 and ten years later converted it into a colony. The Comoro islands also came under French control. In 1888 France occupied the town of Djibouti, a key point on the southern entrance to the Red Sea. In the scramble for African colonies, Germany managed to obtain a large chunk on the east coast, later known as Tanganyika. The Portuguese continued to hold Mozambique between the German colony and South Africa.

On the Arabian coast of the Red Sea, the Hedjaz was under Ottoman control until 1916, and Yemen remained a vassal state of the Ottoman sultan. South of Egypt, what was to be known as the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan was brought under British control in 1898. In 1889, a year after France had taken Djibouti and after the British had settled opposite Aden in their Somaliland Protectorate, Italy, the latest country in the race for African colonies, occupied Eritrea. On the other side of the Horn of Africa, the Italians established themselves in what was called Italian Somaliland. Thus the ancient empire of Ethiopia was placed in a pincer between the two Italian colonies to the north
and south. But Italian endeavors to conquer this ancient land failed after the fatal Battle of Aduwa in 1895.

On the eastern shores of the Indian Ocean, Siam (Thailand) was the only country in the area which managed to retain its independence. Until World War II, the Netherlands remained the undisputed sovereign of their East Indian empire, from Sumatra to the Moluccas.

Britain had no further need for major naval forces in the Indian Ocean. It controlled most of the coastal lands and was in possession of practically all the strategically important strong points. Only the French could have been potential opponents in the western sections of the ocean, holding such key positions as Djibouti and Diego Suarez, the naval base at the northern tip of Madagascar.

But France was no longer a rival on the sea. After 1871, smarting from its defeat by Germany, it sought compensation in territorial acquisitions in Africa and Indonesia. Although there were crises in the Anglo-French relationship, the French posed no challenge to British control in the Indian Ocean region. And after the conclusion of the entente cordiale in 1904, France became more a cooperative friend than a rival. The Netherlands, and even more so the Portuguese, relied on British protection for their colonies. But from the end of the Napoleonic Wars there was no potential foe that could have
jeopardized the naval supremacy of Britain. The growing high-seas fleet of the Kaiser was still unable to reach out in strength into the Indian Ocean. Ships and warships were now fuelled by coal; coaling stations were a necessity for any far-flung naval presence or operation. Only the British were in possession of bunkering facilities in every corner of the ocean. And bunkering on the high seas in time of war was a most hazardous undertaking.

For some time, around the middle of the nineteenth century, only light units of the British navy were needed to carry out humanitarian actions. Britain assumed the task of abolishing the slave trade. Not only Arab ships were engaged in this traffic, but also French, Portuguese, and vessels of other nationalities. Piracy was a menace to shipping for a long time in the Malay waters and the Arabic Gulf. The Pirate Coast in the Arabic Gulf, later known as the Trucial States or Trucial Oman, was pacified by the British in the 1820s. The sheiks or emirs pledged to keep the truce, that is, to place themselves under the protection of London.

The British imperial sway over India and the Indian Ocean region was unique. No European power, in fact no country ever in history, dominated such a huge overseas empire, one which was not territorially contiguous with the homeland. The vast tracts of Central Asia and Siberia under Russian sovereignty were territorial extensions of European Russia itself. But
British India and its dependencies had become a self-sufficient imperial domain to the mother country. In the eyes of British statesmen and strategists, the security and protection of this realm were only slightly secondary to the safety of the homeland.

Although Great Britain carefully watched any danger which would have threatened the naval approaches leading to India, its main concern during most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the potential threat from land which would weaken or destroy its Indian Empire. The dreaded opponent was Imperial Russia. The mountain wall of the Hindu Kush, the Pamirs, Karakoram and the Himalayas seems to have been considered insufficient to protect India, the "most precious jewel" of the English Crown. For many decades the defenders of India endeavored to push the first line of defense of this country further north and west. Several attempts were made to convert Afghanistan into a British protectorate; British protective measures were extended into Persia; an incursion was even made into Tibet to secure that country's dependence on Britain. In 1907, when a detente was reached with Russia, the southern section of Persia was declared a zone of British influence with the consent of St. Petersburg.

After 1907, the greatest danger to the Indian Empire was considered to come from Germany. The Berlin-to-Baghdad
railway was sensed to be a menace to the British position in the Arabic Gulf.

Japan was acknowledged as a Far East great power after its defeat of Russia in 1904-05. Even before then, however, since the end of the nineteenth century, Japan had cooperated with the British, and in 1902 Japan signed a naval agreement with London which assured Britain that in the event of a war with Germany no danger would threaten its Indian Empire from the east. The fact that an Asian power was called upon to strengthen the balance in that part of the world was a significant foreboding of the events to come.

F. THE IMPACT OF WORLD WARS' I AND II ON THE GEOPOLITICS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

When World War I broke out, the British, in addition to thinking of the defense of India, had another reason for securing their control over the Arabian Gulf. Since 1904 the British Navy had gradually turned toward oil as the fuel for its ships. The British Admiralty was the principal shareholder of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. To safeguard the flow of oil from its main source, the Persian oil fields, units of the British-Indian Army occupied the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab, including the town of Basra. During that long war, Mesopotamia and parts of Persia, along with German East Africa, were rather
peripheral scenes of fighting. In the East African campaign against the Germans, contingents from South Africa participated on the side of forces from Kenya and the Belgian Congo. In 1910 the Union of South Africa was established as a self-governing dominion where Afrikaners (Boers) shared power with the English.

On sea, no major action took place in the Indian Ocean. Commercial ships were raided by the three German cruisers which belonged to Berlin's Far Eastern fleet. The British had few warships in the Indian Ocean (the German cruiser Emden was able to shell Madras with impunity), and it took the British some time to destroy the privateering German vessels. It should be noted that Australian troopships sailing to Suez were escorted by Japanese destroyers. Because of the distance involved, no German submarine entered the Indian Ocean in World War I.

India proved to be an important source of manpower and also a logistic base for the British. For a hundred years Britain had tried to make India self-sufficient or nearly self-sufficient, both militarily and financially. Previously, the Indian Ocean possessions of the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the French, while producers of valuable commodities, were often a drain on the metallic monetary resources of the mother countries. There was little these countries could usefully export to their colonies. In the mid-nineteenth century, the British exported opium to China
in exchange for Chinese tea and porcelain - opium which was grown in India. But with the industrial revolution in England, it was possible to transform India, with its teeming millions, into an area which imported industrial articles in return for the raw materials it produced. During World War I, India advanced on the road of industrialization, which reduced its dependence on British goods. Japanese competition was also sorely felt throughout the Indian Ocean region by Japanese competition to the more expensive British and other European articles.

But British territorial expansion still continued after the end of this war. Not only had German East Africa (now Tanganyika) become a British mandated territory, but the elimination of Ottoman control from all Arab lands led to the creation of the British mandated territories of Iraq (Mesopotamia), Transjordan, and Palestine. After the hostilities ended, no other territorial changes took place except that, in compensation for having been given no German lands in Africa, Britain ceded Jubaland (between Italian Somaliland and Kenya) to Italy, and the king of Nejd annexed and Hedjaz, the country assuming the name Saudi Arabia.

After the war, important internal developments occurred, particularly in India. The Wilsonian principle of national self-determination had a tremendous political impact of Asians. The claim for Indian independence was openly raised, and the status of the Indian Empire, as a colony of Britain, became less
secure. Although India was nominally given "dominion status", it was not a self-governing dominion and unlike Australia and South Africa in the interwar period, it did not grow into a genuine independent state.

Outwardly, British dominance remained unchanged. It reached its zenith while internally weak and even hollow and evidently was as overextended as Aurangzeb's Indian Empire was at the end of his reign. Sooner or later the British hegemony in the Indian Ocean region would have declined. World War II, however, hastened this inevitable development.

A prelude to the war was played by Italy in East Africa. Mussolini attempted to accomplish what Italy had failed to achieve at the end of the nineteenth century: to conquer Ethiopia. In 1935 his armies invaded that country, and in the following year Ethiopia fell to the Italians. The League of Nations sanctions proved ineffective; Britain, at the risk of war, could have prevented Ethiopia's conquest by closing the Suez Canal to Italian shipping. But weak in the air and intent on keeping the peace even at the sacrifice of Ethiopia, London shied away from any drastic steps. Thus an Italian empire, a very ephemeral empire indeed was formed by the merger of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland.

World War II reached the Indian Ocean region in the summer of 1940; France had fallen and Mussolini's Italy cast its
lot with Germany. Hostilities began along the Eritrean-Sudanese border with the invasion of British Somaliland by the Italians. However, South African forces and British-Indian units soon invaded the Italian empire from the north as well as from the south. The Italian troops, cut off from homeland, were swiftly defeated, and by the end of 1941 warfare ended in East Africa.

However, other actions soon threatened the security of the Indian Ocean region: the German-Italian advance in North Africa posed a real threat to the Suez Canal, and less troublesome but potentially weakening pro-German movements surfaced in Iraq and Iran. The North African danger was eliminated only in 1943; but Iraq and Iran were made secure earlier. British forces seized key positions in Iraq, and later, after the invasion of the Soviet Union by Germany, British and Soviet forces moved into Iran from the north and from the south, deposed the pro-German Reza Shah, and established a line of supply across Iran to the Soviet Union. The most critical situation for all countries around the Indian Ocean was created when Japan entered the war against the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands.

On December 8, 1941, one day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese troops landed at a number of points on the Gulf of Siam and handed an ultimatum to the Thai government demanding passage to Malaya and Burma. By the end of December, the Philippines were considered lost. The
Netherlands, Australia, and the United States were now faced with the problem of defending the "Malay barrier", the string of islands from the Malay Peninsula to New Guinea. Only by preventing the capture of this "barrier" could the Japanese be forestalled from entering the Indian Ocean.

The two British capital ships, the Prince of Wales and the Repulse, were sunk on December 10, 1941 Singapore, lacking defences on the landside, was captured by the Japanese on February 15. Vice Admiral Nagumo, of Pearl Harbor fame, now moved his carrier force into the Indian Ocean, mainly to prevent reinforcements from reaching the Dutch East Indies. The Japanese victory in the Battle of the Java Sea (February 27) sealed the fate of Java and the rest of the Netherlands possessions.

Nagumo's fleet now began raiding Indian Ocean shipping. The British Far Eastern naval forces had lacked protective air cover since the sinking of their carrier Hermes. Commanded by Admiral Sir James Somerville, the British forces withdrew first to the Maldives and then to Mombasa on the East African coast. The Indian Ocean was open and practically defenseless; air strikes hit Colombo and Trincomalee.¹⁸

¹⁸ Samuel Eliot Morison, *PM* PP 86–101
Japan's failure to carry on its naval advance and to land troops on Ceylon, thereby cutting off communications with India, has puzzled historians. The real reason for this reluctance was Japanese fear of over extension. Japan's war plan, agreed to by its Supreme War Council on September 6, 1941, did not envisage the conquest of India, but only those of the Philippines, Malaya with Singapore, Burma, and the Dutch East Indies. A defense perimeter was to be set up from the Burmese-Indian border along the Malay barrier and thence across the western Pacific to the Kurile Islands. This already huge area (which earlier was declared to be the "East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere") was then to be defended against attempts at recovery. In any case, advances in the South Pacific to cut off Australia were given priority by the Japanese strategy; and their defeat in the Battle of the Coral sea forestalled any further ambitious naval offensives in the Indian Ocean, a war thereafter now deemed secondary by Tokyo. The Japanese did, however, occupy the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which covered the entrance to the Malacca Straits.

Madagascar was under the control of the Vichy government to prevent the use of Diego Suaraz by German or Japanese submarines; South African and East African British forces captured this naval base in the summer of 1942.

19 see Auguste Toussaint, op. cit., pp. 238-238, and Alan Villiers, op. cit., p. 229.

20 See Samuel Eliot Morison, op. cit., p. 34.
As soon as the Japanese advance stopped, the Indian Ocean area became of second or third rate concern to the Western Allies as well. A stoppage in the badly needed food imports to India resulted in the death by starvation of about 1.5 million of its inhabitants.\textsuperscript{21} After May 1943, German submarines moved into the Indian Ocean around the Cape, into waters where shipping was not yet assembled in convoys, and wrought havoc among Allied ships. The Germans even used the Japanese occupied Penang Harbor as a submarine base. Japanese submarines also carried out raids, collaborating here with the Germans.\textsuperscript{22}

In the spring of 1945, Allied forces in India and Ceylon prepared for the reconquest of Burma, Malaya, and the Dutch colonies. These military operations were partially successful before the Japanese surrender in August 1945.

The Japanese aggression in the Indian Ocean area temporarily ended Western domination in the eastern part of the region and threatened this domination in all other parts. With their sea and air superiority, the Japanese might have been able to take Ceylon, but it is still questionable whether they would


\textsuperscript{22} Samuel Eliot Morison, \textit{op.cit}, p. 314
have been able to conquer India. Sea and air power alone cannot secure control of land areas. The loss of these two elements of power might, but would not necessarily, jeopardize domination of the land. Ultimately, however, control of the land can only be permanently assured by land forces.

The fact that Western dominance had been eliminated in some areas and jeopardized in others largely contributed to the campaigns for independence which took place all around the periphery of the Indian Ocean. To enter into a discussion of these movements would be beyond the task of this work. We shall restrict ourselves to the mention of major events.

In 1947, the countries of the Indian subcontinent - India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and Burma - were given independence by Britain. The irony is that India, which had for the first time in history been united by the British, had to be partitioned because of the irreconcilable antagonism between Muslims and Hindus.

Indonesia managed to obtain recognition of its independence by the Netherlands in 1949, though not without struggle and violence. Malaya, as the Federation of Malaya, was granted independence in 1957. The British possessions of North Borneo, Sarawak, and Sabah joined the Federation, which thus became Malaysia in 1963. Singapore, however, withdrew from the Federation in 1965 and established itself as an independent state.
On the east coast of Africa, Tanganyika in 1961 (and landlocked Uganda in 1962) obtained independence, as did Kenya in 1963. Also distant from the oceanic shore, Zambia (the former Northern Rhodesia) became independent in the same year. In 1964 Zanzibar joined Tanganyika to from the United Republic of Tanzania. Malawi (the former Nyasaland) became independent in the same year.

In 1949 the United Nations placed Italian Somaliland under the trusteeship of Italy. This trusteeship ended in 1960. Later that year, the British agreed to the union of their Somaliland Protectorate with what used to be Italian Somaliland and the new state assumed the title of the Somali Democratic Republic.

In the Red Sea area, Sudan achieved independence in 1956. Both countries at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba achieved independence; Jordan (originally called Transjordan) in 1946 and Israel in 1948. Saudi Arabia, which occupies most of the Arabian Peninsula, has been recognized as a fully independent state since 1925. Aden and its hinterland, the Aden Protectorate, were abandoned by the British in 1967 and formed the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen).

Along the Arabic Gulf, British-protected Kuwait became fully independent in 1961; Muscat and Oman (since 1970 the Sultanate of Oman) have been recognized by Britain as fully
independent in the post-World War II period. Since the announcement of withdrawal "from east of Suez" in 1967 by London, the formerly British-protected Gulf states have declared their independence; Bahrain and Qatar became fully independent in 1971; the seven Trucial States formed the United Arab Emirates that same year. Iraq has been formally independent since 1932.

Most of the major lands or groups of islands in the Indian Ocean have also become independent states. Madagascar (now the Malagasy Republic) was given full independence by France in 1960. The Maldives archipelago was confirmed as fully independent in 1965, and Mauritius in 1968. Three of the four Comoro Islands (French) became independent in late 1975 and the Seychelles (British) in 1976.

All these new countries are members of the United Nations. The former British territories, with slight exceptions, are members of the Commonwealth.

Relatively few territories of the region remain under European colonial rule. Mozambique, the Portuguese possession, achieved independence in 1975. In continental Africa only the French Territory of the Afars and Issas remains under European rule; in Asia no territory continues under European rule. Those islands which are unlikely ever to obtain
independence are miniscule specks of territory, such as those of the British India Ocean Territory.

The region, then, is presently fragmented to an extent which somewhat recalls the period when Europeans first entered the Indian Ocean. Relations between the regional nations permutate and move in a bewildering combination of enemies and rapprochements. These littoral powers maintain contacts with the superpowers and other great powers and area reflection of almost every shade of political alliance and alignment.

While sovereignties and sovereign units have changed, while new ones rose or have risen, and while some old ones have disappeared or became completely transformed, the geographic infrastructure has not. This is still the Indian Ocean basin of ancient times. But technological devices or transportation and communication have brought once distant countries and peoples of this basin closer together. If we are entitled to consider the region as a geopolitical or geostrategic entity, we are certainly more justified in doing so now than hundreds of years ago, although the political picture certainly has become more fragmented, mosaiced, and even kaleidoscopic in contrast.

This historical survey of the Indian Ocean in terms of imperial and naval domination brings out a number of ideas and
conclusions that are extremely relevant to the entire thrust of the study.

Firstly, as observed in the study, prior to the intrusion of Portuguese dominance, all the historical empires whether stemming from Roman or pre-Roman times did not have any strategy that relied on total naval and maritime control of the Indian Ocean. Essentially, all these empires and kingdoms used approaches on the African and Indian coast to bolster their land-based empires and kingdoms.

Secondly, it was only with the arrival of the Portuguese that a 'grand strategy' was devised that sought to integrate naval strategy and maritime control with the imperial designs of the Portuguese empire. These ideas were effectively implemented by Alfonso de Albuquerque, the conqueror of Malacca. The Portuguese pattern was followed or attempted to be followed by a number or other imperial powers, such as Holland, France and Britain. What is both interesting and intriguing to note with regard to Portuguese dominance of the Indian Ocean was that it was motivated as such by imperial and evangelistic notions as well as by considerations of profit and commercial exploitation. Although, it has not been considered in the study, the role and influence of the Papacy cannot be discounted in the imperial aspirations of Portugal and her Catholic rival, Spain.
Thirdly, the one power that truly dominated the Indian Ocean and the approaches to it combined with a vast land based empire and colonial possessions was Britain. In fact, the brief survey of the history of the Indian Ocean reveals without doubt that it was only Britain that exercised effective and almost total control. In many ways, the British Empire, with the exception of the North America colonial possessions was the protrusion of the British dominance of the Indian Ocean. More than any imperial power before it, Britain had an empire and an effective naval strategy. The supreme naval theorist of this strategy was none other than Admiral Mahan.

Fourthly, any examination of the historical developments relating to the Indian Ocean will show the close interrelationship between maritime control and trade. Trade and naval control were inextricably linked. In the case of Portugal, the lure of the spices of the East and the attempt to break the Arab monopoly were pre-dominant considerations, although the search for Prester John was also a dominant considerations. After Portugal, all the European powers that competed for power and influence in the region were strongly motivated as much by commercial considerations, if not more than by imperial designs. In many cases, it was difficult to distinguish between trade and the flag. The exploits of the English East Indian Company, the French East India Company and the Dutch East India Company were strong demonstrations of this.
Finally, from the period beginning with the so-called discovery of the 'Cape of Good Hope' and the eve of World War II the Indian Ocean was really an arena for the competition for naval power and political influence of the European powers. With the advent of Portugal in the affairs of Asia, whoever controlled or sought to control the Indian Ocean was a European power. European dominance was the hallmark of the contest for control in the Indian Ocean region. The entry of Portugal signalled the emergence of European dominance in Asia and world affairs.