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sous la responsabilité de François Guichard et Michel Cahen

Politics of Goan Historiography

« Ideology [...] is not apology, although it may and often does entail it. Ideologies are world-views which, despite their partial and possible critical insights, prevent us from understanding the society in which we live and the possibilities of changing it. They are world-views which correspond to standpoints of classes and social groups whose interests in the existing social system and incapacity to change it make it impossible for them to see it as a whole [...] these ideologies are part of bourgeois ideology, not because they express immediate interests of the ruling class, but because they are limited in theory, by the limits of bourgeois society in reality; because their development, including even their criticism of bourgeois society, is governed by the development of bourgeois society and unable to go beyond it » (Shaw 1978).

To write about Goa is to write about difference. Goan history has always occupied a marginal position within the field of Indian history. Goa's economy and social practices though closely bound up with those on the South Asian subcontinent have evolved a specific character and flavor.

The year 1998 marks the quincentenary of Vasco da Gama's landing in the west coast of the South Asian subcontinent. This was perhaps the time first since Goa's liberation in 1961, that Goa's 451 year long colonial history became the focus of national attention. In the interim, Goa's colonial past was articulated and became a unique selling point for the marketing of India as a tourism destination.

While elsewhere in India the event created a sense of curiosity, within Goa¹ the issue crystallized into a dialogue between two visions of Goa's past, *Goa Dourada* (Boxer 1961 ; Collis 1946 : 32 ; Remy 1957) and *Goa Indica* (Ifeke 1985 ; Newman 1988). *Goa Dourada* refers to the Portuguese colonial construction of Goa which sees Goa as a European enclave attached to the Indian subcontinent and *Goa Indica* refers to the anti-colonial construction of Goa which emphasizes the Indian contribution to Goan society. The theoretical issues in the field such as the modes of production debate or the subaltern critique that has shaped Indian historiography has not had a significant influence on Goan historiography². This isolation of Goan historiography from the

1. Much of the research related to Goan studies has been restricted to the discipline of history and a few contributions from sociologists and anthropologists. Hence, the paper will depend heavily on the works of historians.
2. D.D. KOSAMBI, a native of Salcette, Goa, introduced a paradigmatic shift in the study of Indian history with his book *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, 1956. KOSAMBI (1962) made some insightful observations about social structures of villages in Old

crucial debates related to the field has contributed to the dominance of the two main interpretations of Goan society mentioned earlier and its history. The absence of critical assessment has rendered the history of the Goan majority mute.

The title phrase of a recently published book, *A Kind of Absence : Life in the Shadow of History*, by João da Veiga Coutinho (1998), strikes at the very root of the problem which I will explore in this paper. I have interpreted « A kind of absence » to mean the absence of a theoretically sophisticated critical account of Goan society and its history. This absence has contributed to the increasing dominance of teleologically constructed assessments of history, assessments which focus on the activities of individuals or groups and constitute more a documentation of facts to rationalize contemporary developments within the society rather than an interpretation of facts. Most of the accounts to be discussed later in this essay do not investigate the social relations that contribute to the constitution of the historical facts. Many among the existing accounts of Goan history, be it a reinforcement of *Goa Dourada* or *Goa Indica*, have obscured and cast a shadow over the actual processes and struggles that contributed to the making of the contemporary Goan society and its history. *Goa Dourada* and *Goa Indica* are class based ideologies. It is important that one recognizes them as such and expose what they represent. The paper focuses on the critical assessment of the dialogue between *Goa Dourada* and *Goa Indica* and attempts to destabilize these objects whose shadow obstructs our attempt to access, retrieve and understand Goan history.

With this in view, I proceed with a brief discussion on *Goa Dourada* – the colonial rendition of Goan history.

« Goa Dourada »

« For Latins the city was a paradise, a lotus-eating island of the blest, where you could sit on your veranda listening to music as the breeze blew in from the sea » (Collis 1946).

Goa Dourada, or Golden Goa, is the image of Goa as conceived by the Portuguese colonizers in their construction of the Portuguese empire. According to the Portuguese writer, de Freitas, « Goans have created a lifestyle that is *sui generis*, different in many ways from ours in Europe, but totally distanced, by the insoluble problem of mentality, from that followed by the inhabitants of neighboring India » (Freitas n.d. in Newman 1988). De Freitas is obviously considering the Goans to be more civilized by virtue of their conversion to Christianity and discontinuation of Hindu religious practices among the converts³. The « insoluble problem of mentality » refers to the dominance of Hindu practices in the rest of the subcontinent. Golden Goa refers to an image of prosperity and leisure made possible by mercantile trade and the appropriation of surplus from the rural labor force under the protection of the Portuguese colonizers and their institutions.

The image of Golden Goa was reproduced in Goa especially within the Catholic communities in the Old Conquest areas⁴. As enumerated, Golden Goa has been articulated in a traditionalist and in a modernist way within Goa (Siqueira 1991).

Conquest areas of Goa (also see Kosambi's letter dated July 4th, 1964 to Pierre Vidal-Naquet cited in THAPAR, 1994 : 105-106). For reasons unknown, there is hardly any reference to Kosambi's theoretical insights in recent literature, the only exception being an essay published in French by CAMILLERI (1986).

3. In 1567, the Portuguese colonial administrators passed a decree which forbade marriages, cremations, investiture according to Hindu rites. Marriage had to be officiated by the church. This caused a migration of higher caste Hindus. However, for the sake of land, one brother would stay behind to be converted along with his family. From then on, there were Catholic Brahmins and Catholics of the lower caste. The caste mechanism was incorporated into a casteless religion as these classes were essential for maintaining the relations of production.
4. Old Conquest areas of Goa consist of three districts namely, Ilhas (now Tiswadi), Bardez and Salcette. These districts came under Portuguese control in the first half of the 16th century and have been subjected to the longest period of colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent, and the harshest treatment by the Portuguese, including forced conversion to Catholicism.

The Traditionalist View of « Goa Dourada »

The bulk of Goa's colonial history has been written from the perspective of colonial institutions such as the Portuguese crown, the religious institutions. History written from this perspective was aimed at validating the Portuguese claims of Goa as « a tiny piece of Catholic Portugal transplanted onto tropical soil » (Ifeka 1985). For most of these colonial historians, or chroniclers to be more accurate, including those who were critical of the Portuguese administrative abuses and military failures, Portuguese presence in the East was by divine dispensation (Couto 1954). The establishment of Portuguese colonial rule was rationalized as an initiating of the civilizing process. These colonial images of Goa were reproduced locally by the native landed Catholic elite who controlled people's access to land and took advantage of the access to education and employment in the colonial bureaucracy, which were open to members of the colonized population.

The traditionalist view of Golden Goa was constructed during the initial phase of Portuguese colonial rule. During the 16th century, the Portuguese were the undisputed lords of the sea controlling the majority of the shipments from Asia to Europe. Goa being the capital of the *Estado da Índia*, the Portuguese empire in Asia, played host to a variety of people. The traditionalist view of Golden Goa is based on the prosperity of the merchants in 16th century colonial Goa. From among the members of the colonized community, those who converted to Christianity were allowed access to certain colonial institutions.

The Portuguese administration offered incentives such as access to education, employment in the colonial bureaucracy. The people who availed of the opportunities, primarily the *Goancar*'s⁵, were encouraged to adopt European lifestyle and ethos which is encapsulated in the term *sossegado* (meaning relaxed and leisurely). On the one hand, the *sossegado* lifestyle of the *Goankars* was actually made possible by the labor provided by the members of the subordinate caste. The exploitation and appropriation of labor by the *Goankars* was based on the *bhatkar* (landlord)- *mundkar* (tenant) relationship which was ritually sanctioned and was ensured by the prevailing land-tenure system whose origin was origin pre-colonial (Kosambi 1964 in Thapar 1994 : 105-106). The *bhatkar* allowed the *mundkar* to stay on his land at his discretion and in return the *mundkar* provided labor demanded by the *bhatkar*. Failure on the part of the *mundkar* to comply entailed eviction. On the other hand, the *sossegado* lifestyle of the *Goankars* demanded the acceptance of and submission to the authority of the Portuguese colonizers. Today, this very idea of *sossegado* has been appropriated in the contemporary discourses of tourism (Siquiera 1991).

The Modernist View of Goa Dourada

The modernist view of Golden Goa is essentially a reaction from the laboring sections of Christian population in colonial Goa, especially the *sudhirs*⁶. Throughout much of the first half of Portuguese rule in Goa, the agricultural laboring class did not have a choice but to be involved in their traditional activities. In the meantime, the increasing influence and power of Catholic *goankars* vis-a-vis the colonial administration, reproduced and deepened the exploitative relationship between *bhatkar* and *mundkar*.

By the middle of the 19th century, Goan economy had already touched its nadir with the Portuguese grip on the Indian Ocean trade being loosened first by the Dutch and later by the British. This contributed to the constant migration of Catholic Goans during the colonial period to British India, especially Bombay, in order to seek employment. While some educated Catholic Brahmins did seek clerical employment,

5. *Goankars* were members of the oligarchic families who were often referred to as the original settlers. The *goankars* were the only members within the village who were eligible to bid in the auction for land for cultivation. As members of the families of the original settlers, the *goankars* had special privileges within the village at the time of harvest, festivals, roofing of settlements, etc.

6. *Sudhir* is the same as the *varno* (or caste) category *Sudras*.

most of the migrants were *sudhirs*, who sought employment as cooks, butlers, musicians, etc. The religious affiliation of the Catholic *sudhirs* and their apparent familiarity with European etiquette attracted the attention of European trading communities in Bombay and other cities in British India. Soon job opportunities in other British colonies opened up, especially in East Africa. With every successive generation, the families of migrants enhanced their lifestyle in Goa. The *sudhir* families started competing with the Catholic *Goankars* for social prominence. The *sudhirs* appropriated the *goankar's* social practices and incorporated their culture into their everyday repertoire; they changed their patterns of consumption and traded their traditional lifestyle for one European.

The most important impact of this transformation was in the reduction in the labor resources the *goankars* could have access to. The female members of *sudhirs* families whose members worked abroad withdrew from the labor force. This, combined with the new income from outside Goa which was also beyond the control of the existing social order, introduced drastic changes in the social relations within the village communities. The *sossegado* lifestyle which had been a reality for the *goankars* was now appropriated by the migrants as a nostalgic memory of Goa itself. In the process of looking forward to such a lifestyle in Goa, the *sudhirs* also rejected the social hierarchy which had in the first place made such a lifestyle a possibility for the *goankars*. The increasing affluence of the migrants' families destabilized the hold of the *goankar* on the village community. The *sudhirs'* ability to compete with the *goankars* for prominence in village celebrations also contributed in changing the demographic composition of the village communities in the Old Conquest areas. The shortage in labor within the village communities was met by attracting labor from the New Conquest areas, predominantly Hindu *sudhirs* trying to better their conditions of existence. This inflow of population reintroduced the Hindu presence within the Old conquest communities. That presence disrupted the spatial configuration of the colonial conception of Golden Goa for both the Catholic *goankars* and migrant Goans.

In the post-liberation period, the Catholic elite, which included the *goankars* who were employed in the erstwhile colonial administration, found their political and social domination eroding. The social mobility of the subordinated caste made possible by new opportunities (such as access to education, employment in the government sector, etc.), and the government of Goa, Daman and Diu Tenancy Act of 1964 eroded the power and control exercised by the Catholic elite. While some Catholic *sudhirs*⁷ took advantage of political and commercial (legal and illegal) opportunities at their disposal in post-liberation Goa to cash in on the vacuum created by the crises that the Catholic landed elite found themselves in, others found employment within the Government bureaucracy and the private sector.

With the development of tourism in Goa and its growing prominence within Goan economy, the idea of Goa was given a new lease of life by the tourism industry and more significantly the Indian State through its public relations efforts to promote tourism in Goa. Though initially such activities were restricted to the coastal areas in the Old Conquest areas, today they have expanded into the New Conquest areas as well. For the coastal communities, the incoming tourists meant new opportunities for generating income, which in turn led to enhancing their status within their community. The members of coastal communities now rent their houses as tourist accommodations, operate restaurants and as far as possible have withdrawn from the labor market⁸.

While, on the one hand, the idea of *Goa Dourada* received a fresh lease of life through the development of tourism, it also set in motion criticism from the traditionalists and the migrant returnees who were upset over the construction and

7. Catholic *sudhirs* were the most conscious of their position within the hierarchy of Goan society (MONTEMAYOR 1970).

8. However variations were observed. Catholic families are involved in both renting rooms and operating restaurants, Hindu families have more reservations about renting rooms to tourists and are more willing to operate restaurants. See SIQUEIRA (1991) in his observations about Candolim in 1988. I observed similar patterns during my fieldwork in 1995-1996.

commodification of the authentic experience of Golden Goa for tourists (Siqueira 1991). An example of the articulation of this displeasure is the Report of the Sub-Committee of the Diocesan Pastoral Council entitled, « Tourism in Goa : Its Implications », (Diocesan Pastoral Council, 1988). This report, in the process of criticizing the commodification of the image of Golden Goa, in turn glorifies it in various ways. The report laments the loss of traditional occupations, ridicules the new job descriptions such as waiters and bus-boys, and reproduces erstwhile colonial elitist sentiments.

« Goa Índica »

« There is an abundance of published work on Goa, but a critical look at them leaves us with hardly anything that has any depth of analysis and is not tainted directly or, indirectly with the myth of "Golden Goa" and its implied theory of welfare that served to quieten the guilt of the erstwhile rulers and few local beneficiaries » (Souza 1994 : 69).

Goa Índica is viewed as a nationalist response to the colonial construction of *Goa Dourada*, which emphasizes the Indian contribution to the construction of Goan identity. The objective is to highlight the Indianness of Goan society because as in some cases, Portuguese rule was a mere « accident in history » (Priolkar 1967 : 46). Responding to a need for a history which erases the Portuguese colonial bias, research slides away from being an investigation into history to being an historicism – an imposition.

The discourse of history and the patterns of communal politics in post-colonial Goa have encouraged and reproduced each other, and is evident during the first couple of decades after liberation. Most of the anthropologists and sociologists who conducted research in Goa in the recent time also seem to have uncritically accepted these nationalist renditions of history. They have concentrated on viewing Goan history with the intention of encouraging the process of assimilation, post-colonial nation-building and State formation without subjecting these very processes to critical inquiry. The argument I'm making here is not to undermine the efforts but to point out the unintended ramifications of good intentions.

Caroline Ifeka's work (1985) fits squarely within this search for the formula for integration of Goan society into the Indian nation-State. Ifeka, argues that the colonial construction of Golden Goa has to be displaced and replaced by an image of Goan society which « emphasizes the Indian contribution to Goan Identity – *Goa Índica* ». Similarly, taking into consideration the immediate need for Goa's integration into the Indian nation-State and the violence inflicted upon Goan society by the contradictory images of Golden Goa, Robert Newman (1988) hints to an overarching need to « develop an identity which can include all "sons of the soil" and give them the confidence to meet other Indians on an equal footing ». But the question remains as to who develops the identity that Newman refers to. Considering the need for Goa's integration within India, the responsibility of creating an identity for the Goan people rests on the shoulders of the Indian state and the dominant class within Goan society. The exploited majority of that society and their history have little influence over this process of identity formation, which is not that different from the colonial construction of Goa.

Newman is able to recognize the antagonisms that hold Goan society together. As he states here :

« Circumstances have always been against the emergence of *Goa Índica* as opposed to *Goa Dourada*. First, the society is divided by caste and class [...] there is a long history of colonial oppression [...] upper class (Brahmins or Kshtriya) landlords and government officials during colonial times and landlords, industrialists and businessmen in recent times have exploited the lower or working class [...] so that alternative images or views of Goa have been very slow to emerge. The class interests of the opposing groups have been far apart and some of the so-called freedom struggles of the past were really attempts by powerful landed clans to exploit their erstwhile "subjects" without Portuguese interference » (Newman 1988 : 17).

In spite of the fact that Newman points to the existence of classes in Goan society, the brewing interclass, he has considered these issues as secondary and less consequential to the immediate need of identity formation. Newman's concern was

to overcome the threat posed by the idea of Golden Goa. The problem in these works is the failure to firstly recognize the dangers of conflating the politics of identity with the politics of history, and secondly their inability to address the political economic content of the call for identity politics. Thus, instead of analyzing how the class of caste and class interests contributed to the construction of a Goan identity in the first place, the issues are raised merely in order to emphasize the need for the construction of an Indian identity for Goans. While the sustained emphasis on the politics of identity leads to a misunderstanding of history and co-option by the dominant class, undertaking a political economic analysis of identity politics might actually contribute to exposing the class based exploitation and appropriation of populist symbols within Goan society. Rather than viewing the recognition of Konkani as the official State language⁹ merely as a triumph of Goan society to establish harmony between the Catholic and Hindu population within Goa, it is important to assess the class alliances that were forged for voicing the demand. Under the circumstances, Newman's recognition of class/caste antagonisms (see above passage) but at the same time his inability to undertake a class analysis of Goan society, point towards some fundamental methodological and conceptual problems.

Similar problems arise in historical research as well. The lack of theoretical clarity to the meaning of local initiative in the making of Goan history has turned the search for initiatives into a search for form. This form often presents itself as a rebellion or revolt against the colonial administrators, the most popular among them being the history of the freedom struggle constructed around the Rane Revolt. Challenges to such a violation of historical data and of the misinterpretation of events, of customizing them in order to fit them into a teleological construction and the justification of the current order of things, though available were not made public¹⁰.

While some Goan researchers were caught up in the problems mentioned above, other researchers working on Goan history but located outside Goa started responding primarily to the theoretical developments in history and the social sciences, reevaluating Goan history. Anthony Disney (1986 : 85) initiated his discussion of 17th century Goa with the following questions :

« Should Goa be studied mainly within the context of Indian Ocean trade ? Or should greater recognition be given to the fact that most Goans lived by subsistence agriculture, and more stress therefore be placed on the life of the villages and the routines of the countryside ? On another plane, is it more appropriate to regard Goa as falling firmly within the Portuguese political, economic and cultural orbits [...] or should she, on the contrary, be presented as indissoluble part of the mainland, overwhelmingly Indian in character and essence, throughout this period ? And if Portuguese rule was never more than superficial and Goa derived little of her distinctiveness from Portuguese associations, what, if anything, gives her a particular identity as compared with neighbouring parts of India ? ».

These questions when considered within the context of Goan historiography are refreshing, but Disney's response is problematic. For him, the answer to the questions vary « according to the concerns and interests of those through whose eyes Goa is viewed in any particular period », for there are « several perceptions of Goa, each held by an identifiable interest group » (*ibid.*). While Disney's answer suggests that the various identifiable interest groups are existing in isolation from each other

9. In the backdrop of the traditional image popularized by the tourism industry, the agitation for the recognition of Konkani as the official language spread – culminating in the riots of December 19-23, 1986. Large-scale destruction of property, armed conflict, loss of life marked the event. The demand for declaring Konkani as the Official Language of Goa was conceded with the passing of the Official Language Bill on February 14, 1987. Also see NEWMAN (1988).

10. See SOUZA (1994c : 154-159). Earlier published under the title « Feudal Lords Unmasked, » in *Goa Today*, March, 1987. De Souza starts, about the Ranes of Sanquilim (the ancestors of the then and current Chief Minister of Goa), as follows : « This essay was to be originally included in a Goa University publication on Goa's freedom struggle. This paper was deemed improper and [...] rejected by the editorial committee of the official historians subservient to ruling political interests who were only interested in paying floral tributes to Goa's freedom struggle, or whatever they choose to understand by that. Unfortunately, even the institution that is meant to set the tone for our intellectual life, including historical research, joined the chorus with "Goa wins Freedom". This is the state of intellectual subservience and poverty twenty-five years after our liberation ! ».

and can have their own perception of Goa and Goan history without interfering with the others, the situation can also be considered an ongoing crisis. Disney's failure lies in his inability to realize that these views are class based and that the various interest groups are not existing in isolation from one another. The interest groups or, in other words, classes in a society do not exist in isolation from one another. Their existence is dependent on the existence of the other interest groups within the society, for example, the *bhatkar* cannot exist without the coexistence of the *mundkar*. The aspirations of the various groups thus are always in conflict with each other. The conflicts among interest groups are not natural ; rather they emerge when each group tries to be itself in the course of their everyday interaction within society. In a class stratified-society, it is the conflict between various groups in their attempt to uphold their respective view of society that should be a researcher's primary concern. Primary because these conflicts lay bare the inner workings and expose the contradictions inherent to that society.

A few historians (Pearson 1973 ; Scammell 1980, 1988 ; Souza 1975, 1994) have made the effort to change the course of Goan historiography. Pearson (1983) has exposed documents suggesting the importance of local groups, especially merchants in 16th and 17th century colonial Goa. Souza (1994c) has destabilized the role popularly attributed to the Ranes in Goa's freedom struggle¹¹.

While these studies have contributed to reorienting the gaze of Goan historiography, the methodological limitations inherent in these approaches have closed the possibility for any radical break from the dominant trends. Pearson's reasoning for the economic and political power wielded by the *vaniás* in the early phase of colonial Goa is a perfect example of the limitations of these approaches. Pearson (1983) argues that the *vaniás* were influential in colonial Goa only because « the Portuguese simply lacked the numbers to achieve dominance in their colonies ».

Teotonio R. de Souza is right in pointing out that there is a need « for a new and rectified historiography that will take care of past deficiencies of *approach and evidence* » (Souza, 1994b, emphasis original). Souza further states :

« History of the Portuguese Goa-based empire needs to be truly Indo-Portuguese. The new approach that I have been advocating will alone make such historiography relevant to the people of the areas concerned, in the context of their new aspirations, new prospects and new challenges. Search for, and utilization of, indigenous evidence alone can help to reduce the over dependence on colonial European documentation and to write an Indo-Portuguese history from the inside ».

According to Souza the solution to the problem that is plaguing Goan historiography is a straight forward one. One has to replace a Luso-centric history of Goa, constructed on the basis of European documentation with a Goa-centric history based on indigenous evidences and local perspectives. The only problem with this approach is that it is prone to the same problem which Souza has pointed out in Luso-centric history of Goa : that of being one- dimensional. The new approach that Souza has been advocating requires the replacement of « colonial European documentation » with « indigenous evidence. » Thus, the crisis in Goan historiography has been reduced to a dispute over interpretation of data and facts from colonial or indigenous sources (Souza 1975). The failure to locate the native or, in this particular case, the Goan perspective is blamed on the sources referred and not on the exploitative relations of power in place within the society¹². Facts are assumed to be natural and are hence given an ontological status independent of the epistemology of their interpretation (Brown 1973). This approach overlooks the observation that every interpretation, in this particular case data and facts from colonial or indigenous sources, is engendered with its own theoretical and political presuppositions (Callinicos 1976 : 9-19).

The solution to this impasse involves a detour. This detour is in the form of a schematic projection through which to perceive the facts. Facts are information that helps us constitute a society, an articulated whole. Hence, one has to necessarily go

11. The Ranes of Sattari are a politically influential family in post-liberation Goa. Recent accounts of history (KAMAT 1985) has viewed the Rane Revolt of 1895 as one of the early fights against Portuguese colonial rule.

12. According to FOUCAULT (1980), the production of knowledge is not independent from the exercise of power. It is the position occupied by the people exercising power which privileges one version of history over the other.

beyond the facts to understand social reality (Garaudy 1970 : 42-43). The detour I am referring to is the analysis of the social relations that determine the existence of facts within society. Any effort short of this endeavor reduces the analysis to a partial description of society and confuses it with society itself (Anderson 1969 : 221-222). The method espoused is not completely alien to Goan historiography, as is evident in the works of D.D. Kosambi. Kosambi's (1962) analysis of village communities in Old conquest areas is highly insightful. He was able to see through the opacity imposed on the prevalent understanding of the villages on Old Conquest areas of Goa. He critically examined the assumptions, real events and human interactions that constituted the facts that were presented in colonial and indigenous sources¹³. He was never concerned the existence of data or facts and his skepticism enabled him by to expose the contradictions that held the colonial Goan society together. However surprising it may be, Kosambi's core contribution, a method for the study of history, has been completely ignored by Goan historians to say the least.

In the absence of any serious theoretical and methodological intervention within Goan historiography, truth has become synonymous with the organic adaptation of new evidences. Its definition is reduced to its practical usefulness which is subject to the observer's manipulations. Thus, while historians have exposed the « facts » with regard to local dominance (Pearson 1973 ; Souza 1974) within to colonial Goan economy, the significance of this dominance for understanding Goan history awaits analysis.

The point to be made is that the production of knowledge is a social process to be understood in the context of society, which is historically determined (Zinn 1971). Under the dominance of a given mode of production, knowledge is intended to legitimize a particular historical course (Habermas 1970). In the context of Goan studies, colonial historiography (*Goa Dourada*) denied Goan society history in order to legitimize the process of lusitanization. Likewise, post-liberation Goan studies sought to resurrect the Goan past from the perspective of *Goa Indica* which did not elucidate, but instead obfuscated, the real impact of colonialism as well as the deepening crises within post-liberation Goan society. Contemporary Goan historiography does not go beyond exposing the chauvinistic content of colonial historiography (Marx & Engels 1971).

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If by Goan history we mean « Goan peoples' history », the trend that has emerged over the past thirty odd years leaves much to be desired. Very often the colonizer-colonized problematic is turned on its head by Goan historians but rarely the right way up. Thus, while history constructed around the idea of *Goa Dourada* is from the colonizer's perspective, the nativist history has shifted the focus of the spotlight on the colonized. In that, the researchers are contented in treating the colonized as a homogeneous group of people instead of exposing the mediation of colonial rule by various groups within the local population. Without exploring the social environment of people's interactions within society, the history of Goan society has been reduced to a resurrection and vindication of the Goan past. The criteria for the construction of the peoples history are still to be ironed out.

The failure to produce a history of the people has been attributed to a crisis in the availability of information. Besides, the manner in which the problem is posed also to a large extent determines the answers. Consequently, postcolonial research in Goa has sought to transform the colonized people of Goa, who constitute the object of their research, from objects to subjects of history. In doing so the objective structural features of Goa's colonial social formation articulating within the Portuguese hegemony have been reduced « to the intentions, motives and interpersonal relations of individual agents » (Abercombe *et al.* 1979).

In the face of the Goan societies response to the economic restructuring of the Indian economy, the world economy, and the accompanying crises, post-liberation Goan studies has become an accumulation of harmless platitudes with disconnected and disjointed empirical additions. Post-liberation Goan studies as exist today

13. In a letter elaborating his view on the Asiatic mode of production, KOSAMBI (1964) wrote : « The real difficulty here is the misleading documentation. Ancient Indian records derive from the brahman caste and those who read them pay not attention to the function of caste in ancient (as well as modern and feudal) Indian society. »

surreptitiously justify the existing order, either directly, by pointing out the essential harmonies of the system, or indirectly by pointing to both the preposterousness and the barbarity of any suggestion of change. They obfuscate the real impact of the colonial legacy as well as the on going process of contemporary globalization within which Goan society articulates. Post-liberation Goan historiography's language suggests a process by which the past is made to weigh « like a nightmare on the brain of the living » (Marx 1994) meant to intentionally or unintentionally glorify the prevailing political order. Indulging in such a dialogue without understanding its material underpinnings is to be enamored of fetishism (Marx 1974), and to be a part of the shadow that obscures a people's history.

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