

8

The Voiceless in Goan Historiography

A Case for the Source-Value of Church Records in Goa

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IT IS IMPORTANT to bring about a radical shift in the trend of Goan historiography to make it relevant in the context of its new liberated status and of the new prospects and challenges which the change has laid before us. Such a shift of trend is conceived here in terms of a reinterpretation of the Goan past by replacing the myth of 'Golden Goa' with the reality of the socio-economic pressures as well as opportunities to which the Goan population was introduced by Portuguese rule.¹ This proposal of a new purpose-oriented historiography may not appeal to those who are contented with the sight of some patches of exotic cultural vestiges left behind by colonial rule. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting for the benefit of their taste from the chapter on 'Golden Goa' in Maurice Collis's *The Land of the Great Image*: '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, *with humble folk within call to minister to your every wish*' (emphasis added). No wonder it was called Golden.² The author could not have been more sarcastic in his condemnation of a history of a colonized people from the standpoint of a colonial power.

There is a plethora of published historical works on Goa,³ 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 their few local beneficiaries. Much of this bibliography can be classified as 'tourist brochure history', seeking to focus the stage-lights upon some

surface attractions, leaving thereby in the dark some stark realities which need to be considered also as a part of the same colonial legacy. One could draw up a long list of such grim problems facing the Goan population in the wake of its liberation, but let me point out only our democratic but communalism-infected politics, and our strong and liturgically alert Christian minority in a state of economic and political lethargy.⁴

There is another attitude also that can be detected in many of the existing historical works on Goa. It tends to regard colonial rule as *gesta Dei per lusitanos*, that is, God working through the Portuguese. Diogo de Couto, for instance, even after a harsh commentary on the Portuguese administrative abuses and military failures, ends his *Dialogo do Soldado Prático* by repeating in the fashion of the previous chroniclers that the presence of the Portuguese in the East was by divine dispensation.⁵ We are not surprised also with the attitude of the well-known early and late missionary historians from Europe. They chose to write in terms of 'spiritual conquests', which justified the material conquests of Portuguese arms. But what can surprise a Goan historian following our new trend is the fact that he does not need to work hard to find illustrations of the maxim 'more popish than the pope'. To quote one man of the soil for producing a reactionary document in Portuguese, we have Sebastião do Rego, one of the first four native Goan clerics to be admitted in the Theatine Congregation. He preached a sermon in 1744 describing the Portuguese as sent by God to India to be 'the new Peters and Pauls chosen to exalt the holy name of Christ'.⁶ This may sound old history, but a more recent Goan author who studied the recruitment of native clergy in India has described the opening up of certain Religious Congregations to natives of Goa as a result of the fact that 'almost three centuries of Christianity and Christian influence had made them better men',⁷ meaning I suppose that they had learnt to sing the desired tune.

I wish to distinguish yet a third category in the existing bibliography on the history of Goa. It covers the published documentation. We have present among us here the venerable figures of Rev. Dr J. Wicki, S. J. and Rev. Dr A. da Silva Rego, who have given us their best in their monumental series of published documentation entitled *Documenta Indica* in 14 vols. and *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Português na Índia* in 12 vols. Their work may appear to be of usefulness only to the historians of Christianity

India, but there is much in it for writing the kind of history I am advocating here. I wish to recall in this connection the influence of J. H. da Cunha Rivara, who arrived as Chief Secretary of the Goa Government in 1855 and let himself stay here for nearly twenty years, had on the study of Goan cultural institutions.⁸ This scholar-administrator showed great concern for the preservation of Goan language and Goan village communities. There followed a spurt in historical research under his patronage and quite a few bright young Goans began delving into the Goan past. No one who wishes to study the socio-economic history of Goa will be grateful enough for the documentation contained in F. N. Xavier's *Collecção das Leis Peculiares das Comunidades*, *Bosquejo Histórico das Comunidades*, and *Collecção de Bandos*, not to mention his several other publications.⁹ Even though the author lived in an atmosphere of comparative constitutional freedom, the official protectionism did not permit him to do more than compile objective information. There is no attempt at interpreting these data and the author has a very simplistic explanation for this in a note appended to Part Two of the first edition of his *Bosquejo*: 'I have not taken upon myself the task of presenting my reflections upon the content of the documents published herein, not only because it would be alien to my intended goal, but also due to my lack of sufficient strength to do it'.¹⁰

We cannot bypass the commendable work done by the former Director of the Goa Archives, the late Professor Pissurlencar. I wish to choose, however, to comment only on his *Agentes da Diplomacia Portuguesa na Índia*, which may be regarded from among all his other publications as most relevant for studying the native response to Portuguese rule.¹¹ Whatever may have been the intentions of the author in the post-Republican era, this work of his could prove very conclusively to his Portuguese masters that, contrary to the prevailing belief, the Hindu community of Goa had served the Portuguese colonial and political interests with unremitting constancy and zeal. This truth may give little comfort to those who are making political capital today out of their little knowledge of the past.

To conclude this sketchy evaluation of the past trends I may still have to refer to the works produced in the past few decades. We have among us another veteran of the Portuguese imperial history, and it would be highly presumptuous on my part to apply shorthand to his vast stock of writings. I feel overawed by the vast erudition and the catchy literary style that we see in C.R. Boxer's writings,

but perhaps I shall only make one remark, and that is, there was one group among the Goan natives that had caught eye of the Portuguese (shall I say 'more than the eye?') and that seems to have been the only group that has so far attracted the attention of Professor Boxer as well. The solution to the riddle will be found by those who are familiar with Professor Boxer's studies on 'Portuguese fidalgos'.¹² As to other historical works of this period, they try to do justice to the native people, but often there is too much political passion in them, reducing greatly the desirable historical objectivity based on sufficiently wide and accurate documentary evidence. There are surely some praiseworthy exceptions, and among these I would place B. G. D'Souza's *Goan Society in Transition*. However, it being a doctoral dissertation in Sociology, the author's approach takes him more into generalizations valid for medieval Indian society as a whole, rather than into concrete details of the life-conditions of Goan society.¹³

The Portuguese official chronicles and the State papers are of little help, and we find A.C. Teixeira de Aragão voicing this deficiency in Indo-Portuguese historiography: 'Past historians who wrote on Portuguese India cared to describe only the military feats of the Portuguese and the efforts spent in spreading Christianity. Mighty little has been done to describe the usages, customs, and nature of the natives, the civilizing influence of our rule, the institutions, privileges, and economic administration, and all that characterized the social relations between the rulers and the ruled'.¹⁴ The documents which he culled from various archival repositories, including the Goa Archives, and published in the third volume of his *Descrição Geral e Histórica das Moedas* are surely a great help to study the market economy that directly affected the economy of the capital city of Goa, and only indirectly the outlying jurisdiction. However, these records do not help us to form more than a vague idea of how the monetary policies of the Portuguese affected the daily life of the rural inhabitants. All that one can conjecture is some sort of impact upon the sale of the surplus products of the countryside in the city market, as well as upon the tax-revenue collected from the countryside by the central administration. We have luckily well preserved city municipality records as well as records of the village communities to provide more detailed information that can take us closer to the common man's reality in his rural setting.¹⁵ But we also have valuable Church records that can help

us in this task. It was the new religion that brought the colonial presence of the Portuguese in closest possible contact with the native population. Let me therefore expose the modalities of this interaction and then proceed to analyse the value of various Church records which have preserved for us accounts of that interaction or data that can be put together to achieve our purpose of resurrecting the history of the people of Goa.

Church Organization and Activity in Goa

It was only after Goa was made the headquarters of the Portuguese activities in the East that the Church organization also gained in complexity and importance. It was made suffragan diocese in 1533 and raised to the rank of a metropolitan archdiocese in 1557. Further titles followed in the course of centuries. Hence, from the beginning and at successive stages the Church of Goa was headed by Vicars General, Apostolic Commissaries, Bishops, Archbishops, and Patriarchs. This last title was granted in 1886. They were not necessarily appointed for life, but most of them died in office. A great majority of them belonged to the Religious Orders, generally Franciscans, Augustinians and Dominicans. This was so, because the Religious Orders dominated the missionary field till their suppression in 1834-5.

As we have just said, different Religious Orders had established their missionary headquarters in the capital city of Goa, but of these we need to single out the Jesuits and the Franciscans for the intensity of their labours in the capital and rural areas of Goa. The Dominicans helped somewhat in the island-taluka surrounding the city, but the Jesuits had an exclusive hand in the establishment of the Church in Salcete, and so did the Franciscans in Bardez. The Church of Goa, which had begun with one parish in the capital city, had extended by mid-17th century to form as many parishes as the village communities in the three talukas that made the 'Old Conquests' of Goa.¹⁶

The expansion, organization and working of the Church in parishes was closely linked with the prevailing socio-economic factors. It may be interesting to note that it was the high rate of mortality caused by an epidemic in the city of Goa in 1543 that led to the breaking-up of the original single parish into four.¹⁷ The multiplication of the parishes village-wise also depended upon the

number of the faithful and the financial viability of the area to maintain the cult. It may be said in this connection right away that the Portuguese crown was bound by its duties of Crown Patronage to maintain the Church institutions and the cult in the East, but it got the natives not only to pay for these, but even to finance the wars for the survival of the Portuguese presence in the region.¹⁸ In the proceedings of the State Council that voted for the extraction of such *donativos* (euphemism for compulsory payments) we find mentioned time and again that endangering Portuguese rule was tantamount to placing the Christian faith in jeopardy.¹⁹ Returning to our theme of parish-organization there was the caste-division of the society which remained crystallized in the religious confraternities or *Confrarias* which played a prominent role in popularizing the new cult and in helping it to gain roots in the native soil.²⁰ It was through these bodies that petty cases of justice were settled in the villages, discouraging thereby the tendency of the natives to sue each other into misery for most trivial reasons. It was again through these bodies that acts of charity were practised towards the destitute of the village, and particularly worth praising were the steps taken in some villages to provide seed loans to peasants in need during the sowing season, saving them thereby from the clutches of the village moneylenders.²¹

It may be asked if opportunity was given to sons of the soil to join in the responsibility of attending to the pastoral needs of their countrymen. More than a required number of natives were trained as secular priests in the training-houses run by the religious, particularly by the Jesuits. However, as long as the religious remained in effective control of the Church in Goa, the native clerics had to remain contented with subordinate roles. We find cultural prejudices and political insinuations reflected in the reports submitted by the religious to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in Lisbon and Rome to evade instructions requiring a better deal for the native clerics. The attachment of the religious to their revenue-bringing parishes also played its part in their refusal to hand over the administration of these parishes to the native clerics.²² Hence, there was much more than just a slip between the legislation of the time and the actual practice. However, the dissatisfaction of the native clergy contributed substantially to building up resistance to Portuguese rule. We have records of grievances sent to Lisbon by the village communities of Goa, and we know that there were native clerics

who helped the drafting of these grievances.²³ It is also well known that on more than one occasion the native clerics led movements of public discontent against Portuguese rule.²⁴ It is sufficient to note here that as a result of the conflict between the sincere needs of the Church and colonial interests there arose an intellectual elite conscious of its rights but with little scope for their fulfilment.

To conclude this section I wish to discuss briefly three other institutions which might be considered secular in their origin, but were manned largely by ecclesiastics or performed very much of religious or spiritual functions. In their order of establishment these were:

1) Father of the Christians; 2) Inquisition; 3) Board of Conscience.

1) Father of the Christians or *Pai dos Christãos*, as he was called, was generally a Franciscan in Bardez and a Jesuit for the remaining jurisdiction of Goa. His task was to promote conversions to Christianity and to look after the spiritual and material welfare of the new converts. Rev. Dr Wicki has made available to us in published form the documentation that was available in the Goa Archives regarding the activity of the Father of the Christians in Goa.²⁵ The documentation relating to this institution covers many details of socio-economic nature such as payment of tithes, administration of justice, customs of inheritance, employment of poor and orphan converts, liberation of slaves, and so on.

2) The Inquisition played a formidable role in Goa and has been branded as the worst of all that functioned anywhere in the world.²⁶ Apart from certain published reports of eye-witnesses and victims, particularly of the French doctor Dellon, all that is left of the documentation of that institution are a few stray files in the National Archives of Lisbon and an inventory book in the same repository giving a complete list of the condemned and acquitted from the time of its inception till 1774.²⁷ The total number had reached 16,172. It included persons of different nationalities, but nearly three-fourths were Indians almost equally represented by Christians and non-Christians. Many of these Goan natives were hauled up for crossing the border and cultivating lands in the mainland.²⁸ The prevailing system of property relations in the village communities of Goa and the ever-increasing burden of Portuguese taxation left no other alternative to many Goan peasants but to leave their homes and go to cultivate lands in neighbouring Muslim lands. The Inquisition watched over the purity of faith but did not suggest anything constructive to remedy the economic distress of the social

groups which had no say in the administrative structure of the villages.

3) The Board of Conscience or *Meza da Consciencia* was not exactly a distinct institution because it was an activity of the Inquisition itself. It started functioning from the early days of the Inquisition in Goa, but it had ceased to exist when Francisco de Souza wrote his *Oriente Conquistado*. The author tells us sarcastically that being a board of conscience it was bound to be short-lived in India where consciences are upset more easily than stomachs.²⁹ As we know from the documentation relating to the Inquisition published by A. Baião, there were conflicts between the officials of the Inquisition and the civil authorities, including viceroys, who resented the interference of the Inquisition.³⁰ However, the Inquisition being an institution of somewhat hybrid nature, neither fully secular nor fully ecclesiastical, it had apparently won the confidence of the natives. Besides, Lisbon consistently took serious note of the reports that went from the Inquisition.³¹ We read in a memorandum sent by the general assembly of the village communities of Salcete to the crown in 1643: 'It is impossible for the people of this land to find justice, because their enemies are too powerful. . . . We request that the officials of the Holy Inquisition be entrusted with the task of conducting a secret inquiry into all that has been exposed in this memorandum, because no one here can dig into such dirt without fearing reprisals'.³² In the appendix to the same memorandum they repeat: 'We request your majesty that if any inquiry is instituted it should be entrusted to the Board of Conscience formed by the officials of the Holy Inquisition, because that is the only body that can be trusted with a mission of doing fair justice'. Hence, it is not surprising that the continuance of such a body was irksome to colonial interests.

Source-Value of Church Records in Goa

After reviewing briefly the organization and activity of the Church in Goa we are now in a position to appreciate the source-value of various records that have survived of this activity. It is not possible for me to present here any exhaustive survey of these records; and all that I shall try to do is to delve into a somewhat detailed analysis of some select records that are available in the Goa Archives, in the Patriarchal Archives and in the parishes.

There are many scattered references to Church activity in the State papers, but however useful they may be for our purpose, I shall limit my attention to those records only which once belonged to the Religious monasteries and were transferred to Government archives following the suppression of the Religious Orders in 1834. The records of the Jesuits had been taken over by the Government even earlier, namely at the time of their suppression in 1759. All these records bound into nearly 400 volumes are still awaiting a scholar who may decide to use them to study the impact of the activity of Religious Orders upon Goan economy. I was able to use these records to draw a graph indicating *price-rates of essential commodities* in 17th century Goa for the purpose of my doctorate dissertation. I could do it with the help of the day-to-day accounts showing item-wise income and expenditure of the religious houses. Unfortunately there are no such account books for the period prior to the 17th century, and even these are more or less complete only for the Augustinian monastery of Our Lady of Grace. These same ledger books can also provide information regarding employment and wages of artisan and menial labour in service of the religious. One gets even such interesting details as the cost for extracting a **tooth**,³³ or the reward paid to a slave-retriever to get a slave back.³⁴ The same account books and the books containing the title deeds of landed properties can help us to study the impact of the concentrated *capital* of the Religious Orders. Their capital came partly from endowments and legacies, but it was also to a large extent reproduced through investment in trade and through industrious methods of farming. Trading in real sense was banned for the religious, but they always explained their activity as exchanging the surplus of their various mission posts. However, there is documentary evidence to show that whatever exchanging was going on did not always differ much from trading.³⁵ But the very fact that the religious could not very openly and intensely indulge themselves in trading, their accumulated capital began disturbing the rural economy of Goa long before the decline of the Portuguese. Goa-based seaborne trade forced the lay Portuguese settlers to seek safer investment in village lands. However, the latter were no match against the spiritual control and the concentrated capital of the religious, and this frustration of the lay settlers can be seen reflected in the constant complaints to the crown. The municipal councillors were writing to Lisbon in 1603: 'If this State of India is

lost, it will be solely because of the Society of Jesus. . . . They are absolute masters of a great part of this island, most of which they have purchased, and at this rate there will be no house or palm-grove left which will not be theirs within ten years from hence. The Portuguese settlers find themselves impoverished, because they have no lands to invest in, and whatever capital they had they have lost it in the sea. The income which the Fathers derive from their properties in Salcete alone should be sufficient to support all the religious houses that we have here'.³⁶

The success of the religious in farming excited much jealousy of the lay Portuguese settlers. The Jesuits in particular had more than doubled the output of their lands through their more rational approach to cultivation. We know, for instance, that the three villages of Assolna, Velim and Ambelim were valued in 1578 at 2010 *xerafins*. They were then given as a grant to the Jesuits. By 1635 their yield was assessed worth 5500 *xerafins*.³⁷ The consolidated plots and large palm-groves of the religious also gave rise to a type of bonded labour known as *mundkars*, who were bound to the land as a result of small loans which they could hardly repay.³⁸ There are indications that the religious were benevolent to their *mundkars*,³⁹ but the lot of these must have taken an unhappy turn when the suppression of the Religious Orders pushed them into the hands of new secular landlords.

In addition to what I have said about the impact of the accumulated moneys of the religious, the papers of the suppressed convents also yield information regarding *loans, rates of interest, and the nature of goods pawned*. An inventory made of all the moneys and properties of the various houses of the Society of Jesus in the Portuguese East in 1759 shows that five houses in Goa alone had given out loans worth over 350,000 *xerafins*. Their major customers were the general assemblies of the village communities and also some individual village communities, which mortgaged their lands against these loans to satisfy the exactions of the State. The general assembly of Bardez had borrowed 100,000 *xerafins* from the professed house of Bom Jesus at an interest of 5%, while the general assembly of the Salcete villages had taken a loan of 62,200 *xerafins* from the same house for 6% interest. It is interesting to note that the Jesuits, who have been maligned for being religious fanatics and champions of the anti-Hindu drive in Goa, had given 23,800 *xerafins* as loans to several Hindus residing in Cumbarjua.⁴⁰

To conclude my presentation of the Church records in Goa archives I wish to introduce yet another manuscript entitled *Cartas de Alforria aos Escravos*.⁴¹ Slavery had been a common feature in Goa much before it became a profitable trade for the Portuguese in the Americas. Pyrard has left for us a vivid and lewd description of the slave-market of Goa in the beginning of the 17th century.⁴² He also tells us that Goan natives were not enslaved because of a privilege they had secured from the crown.⁴³ However, even without such a privilege it would not be easy to enslave Goan natives in their own territory where they could easily escape, and we do not know whether any were included in the West-bound cargoes. But the Public Revenue Department had a resolution passed in 1646 to send as many *corumbins* from Goa as possible to cultivate lands in Ceylon.⁴⁴ We do not know in what capacity they were to be sent or whether they were sent at all, but it can be inferred from the manuscript I wish to introduce here that a good number of slaves recorded therein belong to the *corumby* and *chardo* caste groups of Goa.

The manuscript containing 112 folios is a register describing the deeds of obligation drawn by various Fathers of the Christians during the years 1682-1759 and signed by the slave-owners binding themselves to set their slaves free within a maximum time-limit of ten years. This register contains nearly 350 such deeds. A great majority of the slaves are from across Goa's borders as can be inferred from their designations *gatal* and *balagaty*. Nearly two-thirds of these are females of an average age of twenty. Several of these deeds also refer to orphan children handed over by the Fathers of the Christians to the care of certain families under condition of teaching them good manners and the Christian doctrine, treating them well in their infirmities, training the boys in some suitable skills, and giving the girls in marriage at the appropriate age.

In the midst of cruelties to which the slaves in Goa were often subjected by their owners, the concern shown by the Church brought them some solace in their sufferings and some hope. It was only in mid-19th century under British pressure and the wave of liberalism in Portugal that slavery was finally abolished, but by then their number had dwindled very considerably, and in 1853 all the three talukas of the Old Conquests of Goa did not have more than 100 slaves.⁴⁵

Church Records in Patriarchal Archives

It is unfortunate that the bulk of early records from the Patriarchal Archives is lost to scholars. In response to an order of the home government, the Archbishop of Goa Francisco da Assunção e Brito handed them over to be shipped to Portugal in 1775. It is not known where they finally landed.⁴⁶ But this does not seem to have been the only occasion when records left the central repository of the Church records in Goa: Archbishop José Maria da Silva Torres, who governed the archdiocese during 1844-49, had taken away the records covering the period of his administration for the purpose of writing his autobiography, and we do not know if they ever came back.⁴⁷ The bulk of the earliest records that are now available in the Patriarchal Archives belong to the late 18th century. The consultation becomes tedious due to lack of proper classification and of a systematic inventory of the holdings.

Very useful from among the other records of this repository is a series of codices entitled *Rois das Igrejas* (Church rolls) dating from 1773. They carry yearly certificates issued by the priests in charge of various parishes indicating the total numbers of the faithful and providing various interesting details regarding their age, health, sex, reception of sacraments, employment outside the village, and so on, which are invaluable for a demographic historian.

There are also about a dozen files classified as *Varia Documenta* which contain miscellaneous documents, including some of interest to the theme of the present study. These are applications submitted by individuals in need, asking economic assistance by way of alms or dowries for their daughters.⁴⁸ Although these and some other such records will have to be tapped for writing the kind of history of Goa I am advocating here, I shall introduce in more detail just one series of manuscripts entitled *Visita Pastoral*.

These manuscripts are registers of statements signed by sworn witnesses and taken down by the notary assisting the Archbishop or his delegate during the visitation of the parishes. It is customary in the Catholic Church for the Bishop to go round every few years, or as need may require, visiting every parish of his diocese to inspect the state of faith and morality of the faithful and to encourage them to do better. In Goa the non-Christians, who lived in predominantly Christian areas, were also subjected to these checks in so far as their activities could influence the Christians.

The Bishop ordinarily appealed to the secular authorities to execute his sentences over non-Christians, but as to Christians he checked the record of their objectionable behaviour and determined the penalties to be executed through the parish priest, or through his own assistants if the parish priest himself was in need of correction. The abuses revealed by the sworn witnesses refer to non-observance of religious practices or to lack of decorum in the practice of religion, and to such socio-economic-moral problems as drunkenness, usury, labour exploitation and prostitution.

Our records covering the years 1747-1927 are bound in 19 volumes of an average number of 300 folios. It may be noted that each of these volumes is made up of two originally separate books which still retain their original independent numbering of folios. I have culled out bits of information from the first six codices to give an idea of the source-value of these records for reconstructing the Goan past centred around village life.

(a) *Abuses in the practice of religion*

The parish priest of Chandor (Salcete) in 1755 is denounced by his parishioners for refusing to attend to the burial of the daughter of a widow who did not have four *xerafins* to pay the burial fee. The funeral was delayed until 6 p.m. when a charitable man of the village offered to pay the amount on behalf of the said widow.⁴⁹ The same priest is also accused of having refused to do the christening of the child of a poor *kunby* until he pawned his hoe to borrow half a *xerafin* to pay the priest.⁵⁰

The parishioners of Siolim expressed their unhappiness over the behaviour of their assistant parish-priest in 1760. He was accused of forcibly collecting gifts from the parents of the girls who were to be approved for marriage. One of the complainants had to part with broilers worth one *xerafin*, and another had to give away a pigling costing four *xerafins*. The same priest is accused of drawing up a list of chickens and piglings the parishioners had, on the occasion of visiting their houses for the annual Easter blessing.⁵¹

(b) *Drunkenness*

A certain Atanasio Menezes, a married man residing in the Ganapoga ward of Rachol (Salcete) was denounced for drinking

day and night. He was also accused of using his job of assistant to the police inspector of the area to pay for his drinks by extorting small cash from the poor peasants.⁵²

This is one vice of which the clerics are accused with more frequency in the proceedings of the pastoral visits. Apparently, when other pleasures of the flesh were denied to them, the clerics seem to have taken the recommendation of wine by St. Paul a little too seriously. The parish-priest of Velsao (Salcete), for instance, is accused in 1748 of drinking so excessively as to be incapable of doing his duty of celebrating Mass for his parishioners even on Sundays and days of obligation.⁵³

(c) *Usury*

There are plentiful references to usury in these records and this frequency perhaps rates next to prostitution.

In 1747 certain Portuguese military officials are accused of lending money to poor peasants of Jua island during the sowing season for exorbitant rates of interest. Money was lent in June to be paid back in November along with two measures of paddy per *pardao*. There were two Hindu ladies, namely Chimnea Parbu from Santa Luzia and Tuka Bamana from Cumbarjua, who were also lending money to those peasants and demanding one *kudav* of paddy per *pardao* of loan. Considering just the lesser demand of two measures, the moneylenders were collecting 148 *xerafins*, 1 *tanga* and 40 *reis* more than their due of 41-3-20 per every 1000 *xerafins* of loan at the legitimate interest of 10% and at the market paddy price of four and half *xerafins* per fardel of 5.95 *kudav*.⁵⁴

Cases of usury were also recorded against several men from Mormuganv (Salcete) in 1755. They were accused of lending say six *kudav* of rice in May to collect seven at the harvest time, which involved a profit of nearly 48%. Some were also lending cash in the months of January-February to be repaid in rice during the months of April-May at the rate of four to four and half *pardaos* a fardel.⁵⁵

(d) *Exploitation of labour*

The parish-priest of Betalbatim (Salcete) was accused in 1748 of having beaten up a *ganvkar* named Andre Afonso, who had

refused to bring his plough to work on the parish-priest's fields, because the Fathers paid less than others for the same work.⁵⁶

The parish-priest of Colva was accused that same year of mercilessly beating a poor man whom he had sent to Goa with a basket of mangoes and had returned without the basket and could not account for six mangoes which some soldiers had taken away.⁵⁷

(e) *Prostitution*

In this matter Goa was no exception to what normally happens in places where military camps or garrisons are located. It may be noted that most of the women involved in prostitution were of low castes. Many of those found in Salcete had come from Bardez to work as cooks or house-servants. Though there were individual women offering their services freely, there were also ladies running organized brothels employing Christian and non-Christian maids.⁵⁸ One comes also across the allied problem of abortion.⁵⁹

(d) *Church Records in the Parishes*

I could not visit more than six parishes of Salcete to consult parish archives, but from this limited experience it was sufficiently clear that the keepers of those parish records were more serious in guarding the keys that kept the records safe from human visitors than in protecting them against insects and rats. With the exception of the records of the town-parish of Margao, the records in the five other village-parishes were in a sad state of preservation. All that they kept in good conditions were the registers of births, marriages and deaths, which in most of the parishes date back to 1880s. The value of this sort of records cannot be minimized,⁶⁰ but there are older records going back to mid-18th century in some parishes, like Benaulim, Navelim and Margão, and which deal with the economic administration of the churches and the cult. These records of the *Fábrica* and *Confrarias* need to be salvaged with some urgency. The parish archives also have the manuscripts of the proceedings of the administrative boards of the parishes (Junta Administrativa) containing very useful information on the socio-economic history of the parishes. There are also the *Rois*

da Cristandade giving details of age, sex and family status of the parishioners.

NOTES

1. C. R. Boxer's authoritative and popular works, with an eurocentric approach to the history of the Portuguese empire, may be considered responsible for the propagation of this myth in the English-speaking world. Cf. n. 12 *infra*. However, it also goes to the credit of Boxer to have destroyed some other myths, for which he earned the wrath of the Portuguese nationalist historians at one time. I am referring to the reactions to his *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415-1825* (Oxford, 1963). Cf. Portuguese reaction in *Studia*, n. 12 (July 1963) 549-54. Boxer was a *persona non grata* in Portugal until the political change of 1974.
2. Collis, M., *The Land of the Great Image*, (London, 1946) p. 32.
3. Gonçalves, J. J., *Síntese Bibliográfica de Goa*, 2 vols. (Lisboa, 1966-7).
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16. Coutinho, F., *Le Regime Paroissial des Dioceses de Rite Latin de l'Inde*, (Louvain, 1958) p. 40.
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19. *Assentos do Conselho do Estado*, ed. P. S. S. Pissurlencar (Bastorá, 1955) III, p. 342; (Bastorá, 1956) IV, pp. 78 93ff., 412.

20. Rocha, L. da, *As Confrarias de Goa*, (Lisbon, 1973) p. 2.
21. *Documenta Indica*, ed. J. Wicki (Rome, 1964): VIII, pp. 83-4; (Rome, 1972) XIII, p. 614.
22. De Melo, C. M., *op. cit.*, pp. 244-51.
23. *AHU*: India, *Caixa* 15, doc. 110. The two priests chosen as procurators by the general assembly were Antonio de Pinho and Estevão da Gama.
24. Bishop Matheus de Castro in the 17th century, and several priests involved in the *Conjuração dos Pintos* in the 18th century.
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27. *Ibid.*, pp. 263-94.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 279-83; *AHU*, India, *Caixa* 41, doc. 32.
29. Sousa, F. de, *Oriente Conquistado a Jesu Christo*, II Bombaim, 1886) p. 33. It was first published in Lisbon in 1710.
30. Baião, A., *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 72, 86-7, 102, 107, 123-8.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 76-7.
32. Cf. *supra* n. 23.
33. *HAG*, Ms 4477, fl. 16.
34. *HAG*, Ms 4395, fl. 34v.
35. *HAG*, *Ordens Regias*, II. fls. 48v-49; *ARSJ*, *Fondo Gesuitico* 74-B/9, 1443; *AHU*, India, *Maço* 6, doc. 5 (March 11, 1755).
36. Cunha Rivara, *Archivo Portuguez-Oriental*, I, P. 2, p. 128.
37. *HAG*, *Monções* 19 C, fl. 734v.
38. *HAG*, Ms 3038, *passim*, various contracts of *munda*.
39. *Broteria* (Lisbon), Photocopied documents from the Royal Archives of Belgium, Box 77, Bundle n. 1, fl. 23: contains orders of the Provincial of the Jesuits, Antonio de Almeida, in 1656 to the Brother in charge of the palm-grove, in Cortalim. He is to give alms to the poor needy *mundkars*.
40. *HAG*, Ms 7602.
41. *HAG*, Ms 860.
42. *Viagem de Francisco Pyrard de Laval*, II, ed. A. de Magalhães Basto Porto, 1944, p. 51.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
44. *HAG*, Ms 1164, *Assentos do Cons. da Fazenda*, 1643-7, fls. 164-5.
45. *HAG*, Mss 2976, 2977, 3018.
46. Teixeira de Aragão, *op. cit.*, p. 80; Nazareth, C. de, *Mitras Lusitanas no Oriente*, II, 2nd. ed. (Nova Goa, 1924), p. iv.
47. *PA*: *Offícios das Autoridades Ecclesiasticas e Civis*, 1858-62, n. 1 (1862). The folios are not numbered. It is a letter of the administrator of the archdiocese to the Archbishop-elect Amorim Pessoa requesting him to contact the brother of the former Archbishop Silva Torres and to bring back the records. Arch. Silva Torres had died in 1854 and the writer of the letter believes that his brother may be able to return the records.
48. The amount granted as alms is 5 *xerafins*. The dowry-grants vary between 25 and 30 *xerafins*.
49. *PA*: *Visita Pastoral*, V-VI, fl. 150v.
50. *Ibid.*
51. *PA*: *Visita Pastoral*, VII-VIII, fl. 86v.

52. *PA*: *Visita Pastoral*, III, fl. 15v.
53. *Ibid.*, fl. 55.
54. *Ibid.*, 4v-8v.
55. *PA*: *Visita Pastoral*, V-VI, fls. 11, 15v.
56. *PA*: *Visita Pastoral*, I-II, fl. 117v.
57. *Ibid.*, fls. 110v-111.
58. *PA*: *Visita Pastoral*, V-VI, fl. 96; IX-X, fl. 95.
59. *PA*: *Visita Pastoral*, V-VI, fls. 63v-64.
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*Abbreviations:**AHU*=Arquivo Historico Ultramarino (Lisbon)*HAG*=Historical Archives of Goa (Panaji)*PA*=Patriarchal Archives (Panaji)