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GOA

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WITH

MARIO CABRAL E SA

AND

WENDELL RODRICKS

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for a cherished common objective. This association in turn paved the way for the development of Konkani, which through the centuries had played a vital role in cementing the bonds between the two communities. That is why the Goan people, irrespective of religion, caste, or creed, eventually stood by the cause of Goa and the Konkani language.

After India became independent, new avenues were opened and the entire length and breadth of the globe became accessible to our people.

NEW TIES BEING FORGED

It should be pointed out that, while during the 19th and 20th centuries thousands of Goans emigrated to Bombay and other parts of India, thousands of others, mostly Christian, crossed the seven seas. Some went to the Portuguese colonies in Africa; others went to British East Africa, and to Malaysia, Macau, and Hong Kong. After World War II, England, the United States, and more recently Australia became available, first for study, and then for employment and settlement. Goan Hindus were no less enterprising, but for a long time their religious leaders prohibited sea voyages due to restrictions, and the prohibitions continued till the dawn of the 20th century.

Goans who worked overseas typically did so for a couple of years or more at a stretch, in order to save a sufficient amount that they brought back with them. It was this, and their steady monthly remittances, that brought wealth to a Goa that was devoid of any industrial activity worth its name.

After most of the European colonies were independent, the international situation changed considerably and Goans working in African countries either went to the countries of their colonial masters or returned to India. Very few opted to stay back and serve the land where they had worked.

By that time fresh opportunities emerged in the oil-rich Persian Gulf region, and Goans were among the first to avail themselves of them. It is estimated that about 150,000 people of Goan origin, who are citizens of India, work and earn in the Gulf countries. Though most of them are semi-literate, they are valued for their sincerity and skills. Goans are much sought after even in developed Western countries like England and America.

We do not know the exact number of Goans who have settled in the rest of the world. Both Hindus and Catholics have settled in large numbers in the USA, Canada, and England. A

substantial number of others have scattered all over the globe. How many of these will return to Goa after retiring is a matter of speculation. As it is, their identity is being diluted with every passing day, and the bond of attachment to the soil of their ancestors has also loosened considerably.

SEEKING A HOME IN PORTUGAL

— *Teotonio R. De Souza*

Some individuals from Calicut, Cochin, Cranganore, and Anjediv Island, but not from Goa, were the first Indians to arrive in Portugal with the return fleets of Vasco da Gama and his immediate successors; the Portuguese chroniclers Gaspar Correia and Joao de Barros refer to them. But we also know that Hindu goldsmiths from Goa were taken to Portugal a few years later to produce objects of art for the royal court. The best known, named Raulu Xett, worked there from 1518 to 1520. So prized and influential was his work that an art exposition entitled ‘The Heritage of Rauluchantim’ was held in Lisbon’s Museum of St. Rock in 1996.

Two and a half centuries after Raulu Xett, one Jose Custodio Faria from Colvale, later known as Abade Faria, accompanied his father Caetano Vitorino Faria to Portugal.

Jose’s parents had separated by canonical decree; the mother became a nun, and Caetano a priest. In Lisbon, Caetano became the Queen’s confessor; having access to the royal court, he sought to secure church promotions for Goan priests who felt they were being passed over; when that failed, father and son moved to Paris, and the so-called Conspiracy of the Pintos unfolded in Goa, with tragic consequences for countless people.

Brazil declared its independence in 1822, and in the new more liberal political climate Goans too asserted themselves. When elections to the Portuguese parliament were held in Goa, white Portuguese officials supported mestizos. Mobilizing local society, Goan candidates hotly challenged them, and Bernardo Peres da Silva and Constancio Roque da Costa became the very first Goans to occupy seats in parliament.

Both established themselves in Portuguese society despite the turmoil of the time. When later Peres da Silva was appointed Prefect of Goa in 1834, the mestizo-controlled militia got its revenge and promptly expelled him. Despite this setback, Peres da Silva continued to win elections to parliament until his death in Portugal.

DOCTORS WERE NEEDED FOR “THIRD EMPIRE”

Following the loss of Brazil, which had been the ‘second Portuguese empire’ after the decline of their first in the East, the Portuguese sought to create a new Brazil in the form of a ‘third empire’ in Africa. However, tropical and other endemic diseases, to which whites had little resistance, formed a major obstacle to the plan, and it is against this background that one must place the creation of the Goa Medical School in the 1840s, as a strategy for providing ‘doctors for the empire’.

It soon became evident that while the Medical School was the only institution of higher studies in Portugal’s Asian empire, in the eyes of the Portuguese its graduates were only a subaltern elite in the imperial scheme. They were simultaneously powerful and powerless; powerful because they served as mediators between the colonial centre and the colonial populations they could serve, yet powerless because they were barred from practising in Portugal without additional studies at metropolitan universities.

Many Goa Medical School graduates hence went to Portugal; for a while, they were the largest group of Goans there, either as first-comers or as descendants of those who stayed on. Quite a few also won elections to represent Goa in parliament. When political success generated interest in law, most Goans who came opted either to study medicine at Coimbra, Oporto, and Lisbon, or law at Coimbra and Lisbon.

Space permits us to refer only to a few Goan diasporans who distinguished themselves in their adopted land. The best-known state-run maternity home in Lisbon is named after Alfredo da Costa, son of Bernardo Francisco da Costa who represented Goa in parliament in 1853. Few Portuguese, however, know of his Goan origin. Julio Caetano Raimundo da Gama Pinto, his contemporary from Saligao, has an excellent public hospital named after him, commemorating his pioneering contributions to ophthalmology and eye surgery in Portugal.

In 1923 Adeodato Barreto arrived as a young boy of 17 to study law in Coimbra, but got himself much involved in defending Indian culture in Portugal, and also in defending the rights of poor Portuguese coal miners. He set up an Institute of Indian Studies at Coimbra University and started a journal named *India Nova* (New India); he also corresponded with Rabindranath Tagore. Adeodato shared the ideals of *Seara Nova* (literally, New Harvest), a group of radical thinkers of the time. His book, *Civilizacao Hindu* (Hindu Civilisation), was

published posthumously in Goa.

Adeodato merged himself in Portuguese society without losing one bit of his Indianness. Unlike most Goans in Portugal, he saw his Goan identity as intimately linked with a wider India. Kalidas, one of Adeodato’s five children, took up his father’s passionate defence of workers’ rights, and is a prominent union leader in present-day Portugal.

Sebastiao Rodolfo Dalgado, who died in Portugal almost on the eve of Adeodato’s arrival, was also a champion of his Goan heritage. Dalgado had been a Padroado missionary on the Indian subcontinent and was able to enrich Goan identity through his widely appreciated research into linguistics and etymology, and his many publications.

TINY MINORITY ALSO DID WELL

Several Hindus, though in a tiny minority, also did well for themselves as doctors, lawyers, and even politicians. Pathologist Morto Dessai left his mark on the Public Health Services. Vasanta Porobo Tamba retired as ‘Conselheiro’ emeritus of the Supreme Court of Justice; his level of integration in Portuguese society may be judged from his marriage to a sister of Eduardo Lourenco, a prominent figure in the cultural world.

Xencora Camotim, who arrived in 1945 at age 23 to study law at Lisbon and Coimbra, went back to Goa and returned in 1957; he went from Civil Registrar to being President of the Provident Fund of the Order of Advocates during 1971-74, even contesting the post of President of the Order of Lawyers of Portugal. He served as consultant to several African nationalist leaders detained in Portugal, and also to Goan freedom-fighter Mohan Ranade, jailed in Portugal for several years.

Narana Coissoro arrived in 1950 to study Law at Coimbra and obtained his doctorate in London. While a professor he was expelled from the university for his political views and only readmitted after the fall of Salazar. He remains prominent as the longest-winning parliamentarian since 1976 till a year ago, and became Deputy President of Parliament.

In his 70s, Coissoro is a respected columnist and continues lecturing in Political Science and Law. Married as he is to a Portuguese lady, with a daughter Smita who is a professional lawyer and also a dedicated promoter of *Opus Dei*, the family maintains a good dialogue between the adoptive culture and traditional Goan Hindu family values. Coissoro has served as president of the Casa de Goa, a cultural association.

Oscar Mascarenhas is one of several Goans who hold key positions in journalism and mass media. His father, Antonio Peregrino Mascarenhas, former Municipal President in Daman, came to Portugal in 1957 and worked as a doctor for the Social Security Department; Oscar was then only 7. He is presently executive editor of the old and prestigious *Jornal do Fundao*. Asked what he thought of Goan associations in Portugal, he pithily said they were marked by divisions and obstructionism; those who do not get involved do not allow others to function either.

Others who have distinguished themselves include Nobre da Costa, briefly Prime Minister of Portugal; Caetano Goncalves, Supreme Court judge and Governor General of Angola in 1910; Luis da Cunha Goncalves, also a Supreme Court judge and twice MP for Goa; the psychiatrist Alfredo Almada Araujo, who headed the Instituto de Orientacao Profissional; Mario Cordeiro, a leading paediatrician; Aires de Sousa, a top radiologist, and Agostinho Vicente Lourenco, famous organic chemistry scholar, who has a bust in his honour at the Academy of Sciences, Lisbon. Andre Goncalves Pereira and Alfredo Bruto da Costa had ministerial responsibilities in post-1974 Portuguese governments, and Parliament recently named Bruto da Costa to chair the Economic and Social Council that advises the government on policy planning. He has contributed significantly to the study of problems of social exclusion in Portugal.

Orlando da Costa, poet, playwright, and award-winning novelist who passed away in 2006, became an esteemed figure in Portuguese literary circles. He was born in Mozambique but spent his youth in Margao before arriving in Portugal in 1947 at the age of 18. Two novels as also a play convey to Portuguese readers his deep emotional involvement in Goan culture. His older son Antonio, a lawyer involved in Socialist Party politics, has served as minister for parliamentary affairs and minister for justice, but now ranks second in the new Portuguese Government following elections in 2005; younger son Ricardo is with SIC TV.

Bernardo Colaco (from the old palatial *Solar Colaco* abutting the Mandovi River at Panelim, before one reaches Old Goa) arrived in Lisbon in 1959, at the age of 21, to study law. Starting as State Attorney in Angola, he subsequently became Joint Director of Judicial Police; he was the only Portuguese judge who stayed on during the difficult political transition, helping

set up independent Angola's own judiciary. He is presently Joint Attorney at Portugal's Supreme Court.

POST-1961, MANY GOT FREE TRIP TO LISBON

Following 1961, hundreds of Goans opted to leave for Portugal, going via Karachi, where they were accommodated at Portuguese Government expense and then provided with a free trip to Lisbon. Those who had no family or means were temporarily lodged at government expense at Rua de Junqueira, in the old warehouses of the *Cordoaria* (rope factory). Among this batch I have come across models of success as well as cases of self-destruction.

Valentino Viegas, who had completed six years of Lyceum, embarked with a suitcase lent to him by Bento Miguel Fernandes, owner of the *Confeitaria Italiana* in Panaji. He remembers that the Cordoaria was far from comfortable, especially with broken window panes during winter. Valentino served two years in Angola, where he was awarded the *Cruz de Guerra* (Military Cross). In Mozambique he studied history. Married to a Beira-born Goan, he returned to Portugal in 1974 and worked for several years at the National Archives; today he is in the Public Health Department, and was also at my invitation a part-time lecturer in Medieval Portuguese history at the Universidade Lusofona in Lisbon. Valentino's son, a chemical engineer, married a Portuguese woman; his daughter studied medicine and is married to a German.

Assis Milton Rodrigues is another inspiring case. Born in Panjim in Fontainhas, Assis was only 7 when his father died; he and his mother moved to Bombay with four younger siblings, where she made ends meet by sewing and working as a private nurse. The family returned to Goa when Assis began losing his sight, and after Liberation they accepted the Portuguese offer of migrating. Assis was admitted to a centre for the blind in Lisbon. He graduated in Modern Languages and proceeded to Mozambique in 1969, where he founded an Institute for the Blind. In 1976 he joined the wave of *retornados* (returnees) to Portugal, then in England finished a course for teachers of the blind. For the past 24 years he has been running APEDV, a Lisbon institution he founded to provide training and employment to the blind. Assis has married twice and has a child from each marriage; both share in their father's interest.

Half-a-dozen Goan priests undergoing training at Pius X Pastoral Institute in Old Goa were allegedly brainwashed by

their Portuguese Dominican superior; they left for Portugal and opted out of the priesthood as well. Their education permitted them to pursue liberal professions with some success. Anacleto Viegas did well as a lawyer and, with his talent for music, contributes to Goan cultural activities. Rui Crasto, who died a couple of years ago, helped create a Goan cultural association called ARCIP, and its journal, *Voz do Oriente* (Voice of the Orient), in collaboration with Mario Viegas.

Alongside such successes, I have known Goans of that diasporan phase who were too old or had no motivation to acquire new professional training. Victims of their own illusions or political miscalculations, they eked out their living amidst great difficulties and muffled their sorrows in the taverns of Alcantara.

LONE MUSLIM SERVED IN ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE

I was able to find a Muslim among our diasporans. Issub Khan from Valpoi had joined the military in Goa when he was 17, and was among the POWs detained for six months following Liberation. He was then 27. Issub opted to be repatriated to Portugal and continued serving in the artillery. He married a Portuguese woman from Vila Real; that same year he was transferred to the difficult battlefields of Angola and then to Mozambique, where he served longest, first in the military and then as a civil administrator in the hinterland.

Following Mozambique's independence, Issub Khan came to Portugal but sent his daughters to Goa to be educated. According to one of them, Azirah Khan, whose book *Ver e Reviver Goa* (Seeing and Reliving Goa) I released recently at the *Casa de Goa*, her father instilled in them a love for Goa. She has yet another book for release this year: *Shigmo: brincando com fogo* (*Shigmo: Playing with Fire*). I have just sent her a Preface at her request.

Independence for Angola and Mozambique caused a massive influx into Portugal. While some 10,000 Goan families had been serving mostly as a subaltern colonial elite, nearly 20,000 other families consisted of Hindus and Muslims from Daman and Diu, who controlled small-scale trade. Some Goans also owned their own businesses, particularly as restaurant owners. There were just two Goan restaurants in Lisbon prior to this phase; now they number at least eight, helping diasporan Goans in Lisbon feel less homesick than they once did. Till his premature death, my late father-in-law, Luis Pascoal Correia, was one

such contributor to the Goan palate in Portugal with his little restaurant in Belem. His daughter Elvira Correia de Souza has however, risen to another level, serving permanently as Assistant Finance Manager of Hotel LeMeridien in Lisbon. The Christian background of most Goan immigrants has helped them mix freely with ethnic Portuguese society.

Since Portuguese law still allows those born in Goa before 1961 or their immediate descendants to 'recover' their Portuguese nationality, many Goans have in recent times sought to take advantage of this privilege (recently thousands of non-Goans, armed with false papers, have sought to do so as well). Leao Fernandes from Saligao, age 25, came via Holland in 1989. He started serving tables in a restaurant, but with diplomas in electronics engineering and computer technology he eventually got a well-paid job with Galp Energy, a company that meets 50 percent of Portugal's oil needs.

Asked about his early impressions in Portugal, he told me that most Goans had paid little attention to him; he was better appreciated by the Portuguese and others. He attributes this to lack of self-esteem and feels that even the most talented Goans in Portugal tend to play second fiddle and to be subservient.

BLAZING NEW PATHS IN NORTH AMERICA

— *Peter and John Nazareth*

Goans in North America have entered various professions and had success in varied fields. Among them are Dr. Arnold Menezes, Professor N. K. Wagle, Victor Menezes, Vasudev Kenkre, Susie Coelho, Datta V. Naik, George D'Souza, Damodar R. Sardesai, Francis D'Mello, and B. B. Borkar.

What? B. B. Borkar, the famous Goan poet who died in the 1980s? No, his son, who is a doctor in the U. S. and whose son Rahul is becoming a professional rock musician and singer, thus partly following in his grandfather's footsteps.

The fields in which Goans have achieved success include medicine and its specializations, such as neurosurgery, electrocardiology, and oncology; heading corporations; teaching, and being academics; family counseling; agri-business; journalism; music; movie animation; software programming; producing radio programmes, and hosting TV programmes; aeronautical engineering; nuclear physics; investment banking; insurance; travel agencies, and sports. . . .

But it is doubtful that we could list all successful Goans in