

GOA



THROUGH THE TRAVELLER'S LENS

NINA CALDEIRA
EDITOR

Goa, Through the Traveller's Lens

Nina Caldeira
Editor

Goa 1556
1220

2018

Goa, Through the Traveller's Lens

© 2018 Nina Caldeira, Ph.D.

Copyright of individual chapters is vested in the respective authors.

Copyright for the collection is vested in the editor.

The role of the Goa University in organising the event which generated the papers included in this book is gratefully acknowledged.

Front cover photo: Fontainhas by Bina Nayak, Road to Anjuna (front cover), mando group and temple (back cover) by Frederick Noronha.

Published in 2018 by

Goa 1556

Goa, 1556, Sonarbhat, Saligão 403511 Goa, India.

<http://goa1556.goa-india.org>, goa1556@gmail.com +91-832-2409490

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Typeset in Saligão, Goa with L^AT_EX, <http://www.lyx.org>.

Printed and bound in India by Rama Harmalkar 9326102225

Text: Bitstream Charter, 11.2/16.2 pt.

See Goa,1556's catalogue at: <http://goa1556.in>

ISBN 978-81-934236-5-3

Contents

Nina Caldeira	7
By way of an introduction	
Isabel de Santa Rita Vás	18
As kingfishers catch fire: scholarship as travel through inscape	
Sushila Sawant Mendes	46
Assolna, Velim, Cuncolim: an insider's view of Robert S. Newman's oeuvre	
Xavier M. Martins	67
Seventeenth-century maritime Goa as viewed by Pyrard de Laval	
Maria de Lourdes Bravo da Costa	77
French travellers on Goan food habits	
Prema Rocha	89
<i>Veni Vidi Amavi</i> : writing Goa from the outside-in	

Sunita Mesquita	101
Sifting sands: a search for stability and sustenance of Goan culture through travel narratives	
Glenis Maria Mendonça	114
Goa through the prism of contemporary travel blogs	
Brian Mendonça	125
Through the eyes of a traveller-poet: Goa, yesterday and today	
Irene Silveira	137
Goa through the lens of Europeans: a revisiting	
Akshata Bhatt, Nafisa Oliveira	169
Reconstructing Goa through travel narratives: a study of select writings from Manohar Shetty's <i>Goa Travels</i>	
Natasha Maria Gomes	184
Anne Bonneau's radio travelogues: A portrayal of the archetypal and stereotypical Goan	
Palia Gaonkar	211
Footprints of the colonial past: Goa in V.S. Naipaul's <i>A Million Mutinies Now</i>	

Ambika Kamat	221
An object of the Occidental gaze: analyzing Tomé Pires' description of Goa in <i>Suma Oriental</i>	
Frederick Noronha	233
In fact, this is only fiction: unusual 'visitors' who came Goa's way	
Index	249

Goa through the lens of Europeans – a revisiting

IRENE SILVEIRA¹

Situated at the crossroads of world spaces, Goa has long been a traveller's delight. Their well-documented accounts and pictures render a bird's eye view, often missing the essence of the place and its people. Goa is still at the crossroads of space and time, where Western itinerants flock for a glimpse into the past, a look into the future, or to try feel the pulse of present events. They now carry more sophisticated equipment, and hope to succeed where others before them stumbled. We focus on three such rewritings of Goa by contemporary Europeans – *Les Instantanés du Monde*, *Goa is not India*, *Contacto Goa* – and examine articles, podcasts and film documentaries in the light of past travel writing and current reality. We revisit Goa from the Western standpoint and hope to find answers to challenges thrown up by cross-cultural contact.

GOA, a tiny enclave on India's west coast, blessed with bountiful natural resources and pristine beauty has attracted visitors over a long period of time. Its coast and hinterland, believed to have been

¹ Assistant Professor at the Department of French and Francophone Studies, Goa University. irene29@rediffmail.com

commanded out of the seas by the gods themselves, are dotted with world-renowned beaches, gushing waterfalls, serene lakes, rustling streams, towering jungles inhabited by fauna and flora so diverse as to be the paradise of every lay nature lover and sagacious bio-scientist. The sheer variety of rare birds hovering in the Goan skies call out to both ornithologists and everyday tourists. Goa and tourism do indeed go together and her spaces are swamped by local and foreign visitors all year round.

With this tourist-brochure-styled introduction, I seek to highlight Goa's appeal to the foreign visitor from times immemorial right down to the present ones. If, in the past, Goa's strategic geopolitical position brought conquerors from near and far to its shores, today, her beaches and unique cultural ethos work their magic on Indian and foreign tourists alike. As in the days of yore, Goa has its fair share of coastal and hinterland visitors, each seeking his or her own answers in what could also be God's own country.

God could well have authored her destiny if we are to believe the many myths and legends surrounding her conception, coming of age and wooing by princes, sultans, and sailors down the centuries. The Portuguese conquest in 1510 (also said to be under the auspices of a saint) changed her face drastically. The *Cidade de Goa* as she now came to be known soon saw people of all colours walking the streets, and acquired a cosmopolitan hue, one which Goa

maintains till date.

From the sixteenth century onwards, numerous European travellers headed to the East docked at Goa. Stops at this spot may have been intentional or not; but once they landed, the strangeness of all they encountered did not leave them untouched. In their writings, they aspired to describe and explain what they witnessed in the East, for the benefit of their countrymen back home. These European travelogues have constituted a valuable source of information for historians and were until recently considered to be more or less objective reflections of Indian conditions of the time.

The present research centres on European accounts of Indian, more specifically Goan, physical and social topography. I shall begin with a brief mention of the writings of prominent European visitors to Goa from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, along with highlights of their impressions. I shall seek to prove that these are indeed merely impressions and not thoroughly devoid of subtle manipulatory tactics. The second part of my research will focus on present-day travel narratives by Europeans in Goa in an attempt to redefine new tendencies in writing the Other. Has the revisiting of a new Goa by Europeans in the twenty-first century given rise to new, more informed styles of writing travelogues? What continues to plague or romanticise the European vision? Is a more truthful and objective rendering expected?

These are some of the questions that will be looked at in this essay. The concluding section will glimpse into diverse modern travelogues within the larger travel narratives taken up for analysis. Issues pertaining to identity and language will be touched upon and the travellers' take on Goa's uniqueness will be discussed.

I argue that despite the progress made in representing Goa, the European gaze continues to function through a European lens, one which continues to be tinted. Today there is definitely no dearth of knowledge available on Goa, yet a true knowing of the land and its people may require a more insightful look.

Writing the Goa of yore

On alighting at the *Cidade de Goa*, Western travellers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were confronted with hitherto unseen topography, climate, flora, fauna, peoples, customs, traditions, and socio-economic configurations. They were often plagued by strange dreaded diseases and faced extraordinary challenges. All of these found a way into their travel writings. The Portuguese *Estado da Índia* was given enormous attention in scholarly writing of the time. Portugal ruled the Eastern seas and controlled the spice trade in the sixteenth century; the glory of its golden capital was unrivalled even in Europe. Goa has been described by the French adventurer François Pyrard de Laval at the beginning of the seventeenth century as a city of magnificent streets, churches, squares and palaces.

The *Cidade de Goa* was, in the seventeenth century, a bustling cosmopolitan city with people of different origins and faiths within its walls. John Huyghen Van Linschoten wrote:

In the towne and island of Goa are resident many Heathens, Moores, Jewes and all strange nations... using severall customes and superstitions in religion (222).

Other well-known European travellers like Mandelslo, François Bernier, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier also attested to the presence of Jews in Goa (Fischel 39). Many of these Jews were gainfully employed in the Portuguese administrative setup as translators and agents in the initial period of the Portuguese rule over Goa.

These favourable conditions were soon to end with the Inquisition, yet Jews continued to maintain their presence and influence. In the uneasy political climate of the times, with the threat of the Mughals looming large, it was crucial that the Portuguese maintain close ties with the Deccani Sultans from whom they had wrested Goa. Diplomatic missions to the Sultanate were powered by Jewish resourcefulness with Judeo Coje Abrahão at the helm of affairs. His services were acknowledged by the Portuguese crown and he was granted a handsome pension (Fischel 43).

Particularly worthy of mention is the Jew who lends his name to the Panjim municipal garden and is known as the father of the European practice of Indian medicinal plants. In his well-known book, the fa-

amous Portuguese savant Garcia da Orta reveals in dialogue form the value of Indian herbs, aromatics and spices. *Colóquios dos simples e drogas da India* is a work structured as a series of conversations between the author himself and an imaginary character – Dr. Ruano – representing the European academic tradition with its lacunae. Garcia da Orta was not alone in his criticism of European medicine. According to Cristiana Bastos, although Goa boasts of the oldest colonial Western-style medical school in Asia from the 1840s, its director from 1854-71, Eduardo Freitas Almeida questioned the credibility of its doctors who earned the title but were incapable of practising what they learnt. In contrast, the native healers were effective, affordable and popular (770).

Cristiana Bastos highlights the role played by Goan physicians in Portuguese India and Africa and the hybrid nature of the medical practices. She states that:

imperial powers were not always successful in their attempts to erase local knowledge. In some situations, they did not even attempt it and, instead, they adopted elements of local knowledge as much as they brought in, or imposed, the European ways. On occasion, the traffic between European and local systems happened both ways, leading to the development of medical hybridisms (768).

It is a well-documented fact that the Portuguese colonial regime promoted hybridism, beginning with Albuquerque himself who purportedly encouraged marriages between Portuguese soldiers and local

women. However, this racialised narrative leaves room for doubt given the caste segregation prevalent in Indian society and which continued even after conversion to Christianity. Bastos asserts that the hybridism is rather cultural in nature, with the adoption of foreign customs by a Goan society firmly attached to native customs and practices (773-774). In the field of medicine, there was no dearth of medical knowledge in India with Ayurveda, Unani medicine and Goan folk healing practices. That these continued to be practised in a hybridised form right in the Royal Hospital and the medical school in Goa can be seen to be an outcome of the long hybridisation process that constituted the Indo-Portuguese.

John Huyghen Van Linschoten, the celebrated traveller from Holland whose monumental work *Itinerario* led to the rising of the Dutch sun in Indian skies, claims that the Portuguese Viceroy, Archbishop and aristocracy preferred Hindu *panditos* and *vaidyas* to the Portuguese physicians of the time (Figueiredo 52). The Italian traveller Gemelli Careri writes that the doctors from Portugal used to learn with the *vaidyas* the treatment of cholera and other tropical diseases, because European methods of diagnosis and therapeutics were unsuitable for these diseases.

Françoise de Valence credits seventeenth-century French travellers to Goa with describing maladies and remedies of the time. Pyrard de Laval lists hot

fevers, dysentery, and venereal infections as the common diseases prevalent in Goa. Garcia da Orta describes the symptoms of cholera which plagued the city of Goa. These epidemics were equally documented by French travellers Pyrard de Laval and Charles Dellon, and the malady was later known as *mordechi* or *modechien* in French, a corruption of the Konkani word *modachi* which alludes to the swift and sudden death brought in its wake (Valence 115). Narcotics were among the drugs recommended: datura, notably, has been described by Garcia da Orta as well as by Jean Mocquet, while opium finds a mention in Dellon's travel writing. The French traveller also remarks that the Goan *conje* (rice gruel) was used by the pandits to treat dysentery (Valence 117-118).

In addition to writing about the Indian physical and social topography, the Europeans worked to modify it. Understandably, European travellers have given vivid accounts of the practice of Sati, which led to its eventual eradication. However the tone of the writing had nuances that differed from the native historiographies and justified the colonial enterprise. Similar was the case with some Portuguese narratives pertaining to the Goan village economy – the *gaunkari* system. Afonso Mexia's *Foral de Usos e Costumes dos Guancares* describes the Comunidade system, under which profits from the land were divided among the shareholders who collectively owned the land. Paul Axelrod and Michelle A. Fuerch highlight

the variations between Mexia's *Comunidade* and the Saraswat village of the *Sahyadri Khanda*. This Hindu text, through its emphasis on the village deity and temple, differs remarkably from the Western document in its reproduction of the village economy (442, 455). The *Comunidades* again gave rise to numerous debates in the nineteenth century with Portuguese Orientalists like the Viscount de Torres-Novas Goa and Constancio Roque da Costa arguing that the system was unsuited to modern economies and should hence be abolished. Parallels can be drawn with British representations of clan-based villages as stateless ancient forms to justify the Raj. The opposing position was upheld by Xavier and Cunha Rivara, Secretaries to the Portuguese Governor-General who regarded the *Comunidades* as an idyllic village republic sadly eroded by the Portuguese government. The *Comunidades* live on to this day thanks to such defensive arguments which nevertheless, did not differ much from Mexia's original analysis (Axelrod, Fuerch 457-459).

The winds of change swept swiftly in Portuguese times, and the Goan landscape saw many additions in fruits and crops. The Portuguese Jesuits dedicatedly visited orchards and improved the grafts. The fruit of their labour can be tasted till this day. P.K. Gode opines that the delicious mangoes, some of which still fetch a high price in the Goan market, were the fruit of grafting which was introduced in Goan

horticulture from the 1550's onwards (281). Italians visiting India have heaped praise on the Goan mango and enumerated many of the fruit's varieties.

Plants, fruits, and spices were richly documented by the foreign travellers. The exotic botany narrative of the time was in response to the mystery and allure that the spice trade conjured up in the European mind. According to Saldanha, Chapters 49 to 83 of Linschoten's *Itinerario* "introduce exotic fruits like mango, pineapple, and coconut; aromatics (sandalwood, frankincense); narcotics (datura, betel, opium, cannabis); and all the fine spices" (162). The following extract praises the benefits of cloves to a European audience. The discourse at spice farms aimed at Western travellers to India today, is not much different and it corresponds to the larger than life image of Indian spices in the Occidental eyes.

The water of greene Cloves distilled is very pleasant of smel, and strengthneth the hart, likewise they procure sweating in men that have the Pox, with Cloves, Nut megges, Mace, long and black Pepper; some lay the poul der [powder] of Cloves upon a mans head, that hath a paine in it, that proceedeth of colde. They strengthen the Liver, the Maw [stomach], and the hart, they procure di gestion, they procure evacuation of the Urine, and stop lascativenes [diarrhea], and being put into the eyes, pre served! the sight, and foure Drammes being drunke with Milke, doe procure lust. (Saldanha 162)

In the light of the fact that today's European tourists often visit spice farms and local markets, not so much to make purchases as to take in the exotic sights, smells and sounds, it is but evident that the market-

place would have also figured in the accounts of European travellers to the *Cidade de Goa*. The market in the Goa of old was called the *Leilão* (auction market) and was situated at the *Rua Direita* (main street). Pyrard de Laval describes it thus:

Proceeding from this palace [of the Viceroy] to the town, you enter the most handsome street of Goa, called la Duo drecho, or "straight." It is more than 1,500 paces in length, and on both sides has many rich lapidaries, goldsmiths, and bankers, and also the richest and best merchants and artisans in Goa, all Portuguese, Italians, or Germans, as well as other Europeans. This street ends with a church [de la Sancta Misericordia], the most beautiful, rich, and highly decorated in Goa.... While this market is afoot, there is so great a crowd in the street that one can hardly pass (Saldanha 163).

This iconic market street has been immortalised in Linschoten's drawing on Goa. What stand out in the scene are the inequalities in class and ethnicity. In the midst of the frantic commercial activity, the viewer's gaze moves from the black slave girl to the horse in the centre before resting on the opulent palanquin and richly adorned Portuguese gentry on the right. Linschoten covers all segments of the population in his account – women, slaves, prisoners, *Mesticos*, *Castisos*, Arabs, Jews and animals. Linschoten claims to reveal in his *Itinerario*:

[...] places thus far discovered and known by the Portuguese; to which are added, not only the description of the habits, polities, and nature of both the Portuguese living there and the native Indians, and their temples, idols, houses, with the most important trees, fruits, herbs, spices, and suchlike materials, as well as

the manners of these people, whether religious, political, or economic, but also a short narrative of the commerce [...] Everything described and gathered by the same; very useful, seemly, and also entertaining for all the curious and lovers of strange things. (Saldanha 155).

Travelogues thus seemed to be written for the pleasure of the curious European and for the satisfaction of his urge to acquaint himself with strange things. Pursuit of the different Other was primordial and the description that ensued stressed on the unusual. The encounter with this difference gradually gave rise to what Pramod K. Nayar calls a “rhetorical transformation of India” (213). Although meant to be predominantly informative for the benefit of the European readership back home, as reiterated by Linschoten, travellers’ texts were infused with a generous dose of the marvelous. The initial contact led to an accumulative account bordering on exaggeration which soon saw a subtle shift from benevolent abundance to deplorable excess. In the initial years, a mystifying exoticism coexisted with a demystifying scientific as travellers in awe and amazement sought to paint the land of the plenty. The pleasant profusion in paradise was followed by exaggerated tales of horror. In later stages, the Europeans painted the Indian sphere as deficient. Excess was substituted by a lack, which evidently needed to be filled. This “iconoclastic moral marvelous” trend in writing flattened differences among Indian landscapes, emptied native icons of value and highlighted native moral deficiency; thus paving the

way for a repopulation of the Indian scene with English icons (Nayar 218). Thus writing by visiting travellers served colonial interests in a much larger sense. Although Nayar's typology is in reference to English travel writing in the early colonial period and to India in the larger context, clear resonances between these early trends and modern Western perceptions of Goan conditions can be detected.

Recording the Goa of today

A traveller documenting his impressions of Goa in the present technologically advanced times would resort to more than just the pen. I have thus selected travelogues which present Goa through audio and video recordings and are aimed at a wide public reach through the mass media. The corpus includes travel documentaries in audio or video format by Portuguese, French, German and Russian visitors to Goa.

Nalini de Sousa hails from Portugal but currently lives in Goa from where she heads *Lotus Film and TV Production*. She is well known in the Lusophone world for her documentary series *Contacto Goa* – aired on the Portuguese channel RTP and showcasing the close links between India and Portugal. Sousa's work is prolific; the series cross the seventy-number mark and touch on a variety of topics of relevance in Goa. Through its recording of real, everyday life in Goa and interviews with a great number of locals and visitors, *Contacto Goa* has succeeded in bringing Goa closer to television viewers in far-off Lusophone

places.

Les Instantanés du Monde is a book accompanied by a CD and complemented by around ten podcasts. These are essentially snippets taken from the travel experiences of French globetrotter and blogger Anne Bonneau. True to their name, the *Instantanés du Monde* are instants frozen in time, served with just the right dash of magical sounds to make the listener believe that they are still around for the savouring. Anne Bonneau has sojourned in Goa for around two weeks in 2010, and written on the land and its people in heart-warming prose and poetry. The audio recordings with her surreal commentary and authentic conversations with Goans from across the street are sure to seduce any would-be traveller to Goa. Her audio portraits transport the listener into an enchanting Goa that one may not necessarily encounter on the ground.

In a change of tone, the Austrian Rudolf Gottsberger presents us with a realistic documentary film on the Goa of today, with its beauty, madness and filth. The unusual array of visitors is tied to Goa's northern beach landscape (Arambol in particular), and presents a rare view of this land. Travellers vouch for the fact that "you are never alone" in Goa and also confess "you can find company, you can find loneliness". The illusion of Golden Goa – the land of dreams (and *shanti* times) – is carefully shattered as Gottsberger exposes the paradoxes that go into the making

of present-day Goa.

In the initial part of my analysis, I shall identify the major tropes in these travelogues. Undoubtedly the Goa of today is far different from that of the yesteryears. Yet, it is important to look for parallels with the writings of classical Western travellers. I do expect differences in style to be connected to writers' experiences and background. In my opinion, it is the original standpoint that will eventually determine the image captured.

The beautiful topography of the land, its green foliage and rich fruit described in the past has justifiably been given due attention through photographs and video footage. Anne Bonneau transports us to this *paradise* via her dreamlike descriptions in sensual prose. The rain of Goa, its wet earth, enchant time and again. The repetition signals a sense of wonder and awe and can be likened to the accumulative trend in early English travel writing. *Contacto Goa* too, documents the luscious fruit of Goa. In this case, more than the mango, it is the cashew that appeals. The episode on the cashew along with interviews with the proprietor of Zantye's, a prominent cashew nut processing and exporting firm, brings this popular fruit and nut to the centre-stage. Modern-day botanist Miguel Braganza reveals that in Goa the nut was first eaten only in 1928 and that the cashew itself was a relatively later entrant into the Goan soil (post 1720) and hence missed making it to Garcia da Orta's

monumental *Coloquios dos simples e drogas da India* (“Contacto Goa” 23). Such inter-textuality between travelogues and centuries is fairly common and of particular interest.

Amongst *Contacto Goa*'s many interviews, is one which connects with the travelogue of Linschoten – that of a descendant of the *Vaidyas* of old.² This episode stresses on the continued popularity of indigenous medicine, revealing the relation between the owners of present-day iconic Hindu Pharmacy in Panjim and the well-known Ayurvedic medic *Dada Vaidya*. (“Contacto Goa” 61). Indian healing systems proved their value in the Portuguese era and continue to hold their sway over Europeans in Goa. Their present popularity among Westerners in Goa is well documented by Rudolf Gottsberger. The third story in the series testifies to the effectiveness of Indian healing. Maya hails from Russia and talks candidly about how she was cured from a serious illness thanks to the meditative dance form that she now practises and promotes with her friend Tanit. The therapeutic dance focuses on physical and mental well-being, and has influences of Sufi and Indian temple dance practices. The documentary also speaks of the appeal of Ayurveda and other ancient Eastern forms of healing among the Westerners in Goa. (“*Goa is not India*”).

² *Vaidyas* and *Pânditos* are terms used to designate indigenous doctors in Portuguese times.

Gottsberger trains his camera on the Jews that inhabit the Goa of today; he offers rare video footage of a Jewish wedding on the coastal belt – a poor attempt at recreating a big fat Indian wedding. The bride arrives on the beach, dressed in a white wedding gown and riding a decorated horse; she is unceremoniously assisted by men, rather than by her own maids of honour (who incidentally are White women wearing red saris); her husband is dressed in Indian festive attire, the marriage is solemnised on the beach by a Jewish rabbi, and the ceremonial prayer shawl is revealed to have been bought at Mapusa market from a certain Mohammed. The bride imagines herself a princess and is accompanied down the streets and onto the sands by a modest retinue of scantily clad tourists and informally dressed locals. Understandably, the scene does not have much in common with the illustrious Jews of Goa's past.

The Gaunkari or Gaonkari system also finds a mention, especially in Bonneau's work,³ as do Goan people from different strata of society. In contrast to the derogatory portrayal of natives by sixteenth-century travel writers as "palanquin bearers, galley slaves, petty traders, deceitful feudatory chiefs, and heathen savages..." (Axelrod, Fuerch 443), Bonneau as well as Sousa focus on folk tribes and their customs, bakers and vendors, fisher-women, taxi-

³ Victor Hugo Gomes in his conversation with Bonneau asserts that Goa's true heritage lies in its unique Gaunkari system ("Instantanés 2" 00:03:18-38)

drivers, men of religion, musicians, artists, writers, architects, intellectuals... This representation of a cross-section of the Goan populace is certainly in more positive terms, yet leaves much unsaid or over-interpreted. The listener is left with a false impression that bakers in Goa have French bakeries⁴ (Bonneau 83-84), sausage vendors are fluent in five languages-including Portuguese⁵ (Bonneau 85), every Goan has music and jazz “in his blood”⁶ (“Panjim” 00:15:42-48), upper-class intellectuals have made a “pact with the coloniser” and their houses have “nothing Indian about them”,⁷ (“Chandor” 00:04:18-24). Scenes are conjured up – of football games (with no mention of popular cricket matches), of an august mansion where coconut oil is purportedly extracted and which turns out to be a modest house (Bonneau 84). Claims

⁴ The bakery run by Gil Gomes displays the signage “French Bakery”. Its products however are more Goan than French. Bonneau seems delighted in her find of a “French bakery” but makes no mention of any Goan bakeries serving baguettes, croissants and such French fare. She concludes that Goans eat *pão* (as do the French – *le pain*) and both are very similar.

⁵ The sausage vendor, Florence Lobo, is portrayed to be fluent in multiple languages including Portuguese. It is highly improbable that she is capable of communicating in Portuguese with the exception of a few mispronounced phrases.

⁶ Alex Fernandes claims that Goans have music and Jazz in their blood. Bonneau is merely documenting a stereotype. Not all Goans are necessarily Jazz music fans.

⁷ Bonneau makes this assertion following her visit to the Menezes Braganza house in Chandor, and her encounter with Aida de Menezes Braganza, a descendant from the family of Luís de Menezes Bragança, the famous Goan journalist known for his anti-colonial writing. Bonneau has mistaken the true identity of the Goan Catholic elite and assumed that they had nothing Indian about them. The fact remains that many Goan elites were proud of their Indian roots and spoke out against the colonizer.

like “it is Portuguese to be drunk in the afternoon”,⁸ (“Panjim” 00:13:00-32) are evidently either half-truths or exaggerations, rooted in an inadequate knowing of the Other. Bonneau confesses her ignorance when she states that Europeans cannot tell the difference between Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. She then applies the same yardstick to Goans claiming that Portugal and France is the same seen from Goa (84). This is entirely incorrect and most Goans are aware of Portugal and France as being distinctly different.

Gulfs in knowledge are apparently bridged by turning towards one’s own culture. Faced by an experience of overwhelming strangeness, the visitor often attempts to correlate with his own culture and reinterprets the contact with the Other in his own cultural mould. The Other thus begins to resemble the Self in the mind’s eye. Bonneau sees Goan sausages arranged as a *chapelet* (rosary), connects the Goan *choriz* (sausages) with the European *chourisso*, draws connections between the Goan *pão* and the “*pain*” (French bread), terms the Goan tea break the “*pause café-tartine*”; she has also reinterpreted the Goan *bhatcar* in the Konkani stage *tiatr* as the “*Arlequin*”⁹ of French theatre.

Bonneau is delighted to stumble upon a French

⁸ Bonneau is again providing a stereotypical representation, which is far from the truth.

⁹ Arlequin (or the Harlequin) is a typical character in French theatre. Bonneau identifies the *bhatcar* character common in Goan *tiatr* with Arlequin.

bakery (which ironically only bears the name and serves no French bread, of the likes of croissants and baguettes, both of which are however available in Goa), to discover that a Goan is interested in environmental and social issues, like so many French people. She has found a Victor Hugo in Goa (surnamed Gomes) – and his name is music to her ears! “C’est son nom, Victor Hugo”, she proclaims triumphantly¹⁰ (Bonneau 88). In matters relating to religion too, she draws on her native cultural representations: she compares the offering baskets at church in the two countries, and is impressed by the *São João feast* in Goa. She unwittingly terms the local Catholic tradition of jumping in the well as “pagan”.¹¹ (“Saligão” 00:13:27-14:10). Although these are minor aspects that do not appear to make a great difference in the portrayal of Goa, they serve as indicators of the viewpoint through which the French traveller sees Goa.

Despite some attempts in stretching one’s imagination, Bonneau’s documentary may be held in stark contrast with its German counterpart. Magical Goa turns dark and morbid in *Goa is not India*. Repulsive images of cripples crawling, woman coolies running behind taxis, haggling vendors and a narrative of Goans being out to cheat every foreigner pervade

¹⁰ “It’s his name, Victor Hugo”. Bonneau alludes to Victor Hugo, the monumental French writer known for his interest in social causes.

¹¹ The jumping in the well tradition linked with the São João or San João Feast can hardly be termed pagan or non-Christian merely because it is not celebrated in the same manner here as in the West.

that account. This supposedly rampant behaviour is rationalised by the European as a sort of return colonisation. Having been exploited in the past, the natives thus purportedly see Europeans as a “walking wallet” to extort money from. (“Goa is not India”, Rudolf Gottsberger.) The focus is on Westerners living and doing business in Goa. The local police are maligned for taking bribes but also for doing their duty and enforcing security measures which become a hindrance to European business activities. The rhetoric opposes the “They” to “Us” and presents the natives and the Europeans as watertight compartments and warring entities. Indians are portrayed as inefficient and incapable of building a bridge in less than 15 years (“Goa is not India”, Elena Slovush). Ironically the travel writer also confesses that he would like to know Indians better.

Knowing the Other entails spending time with the Other, inattentive, unbiased observation and fruitful conversation. Speaking the Other’s language and using interpretative services where required are expected to lessen the Tower-of-Babel effect. Although the classic European travelogues of past centuries were for long preferred in academic circles in view of their objectiveness and freedom from pressures exerted by the Indian power classes and a familiarity with the sights of India, Eugenia Vanina questions the veracity of these accounts by pointing to the linguistic inadequacies of the Western travellers, very few of

whom were proficient in the native languages (270-271). Hence, the importance of language in contacts with natives and subsequent observations cannot be overlooked. The Western texts are today examined in the context of their writers' socio-economic background and home country conditions. They are no longer viewed as objective sources of information but as interesting renditions of the Indian scenery, duly coloured by the writers' stereotypes and constructs of the Indian Other.

Subsequent to this research, I argue that knowledge of local languages, and close links with the local population in its diversity can yield a more truthful version. *Goa is not India* is primarily in English with some parts in German, *Les Instantanés du Monde* is in French interspersed with English and at times Konkani. It is noteworthy that the French is mainly a translated voice-over of the original English and that the documentary maker found it pertinent to enlist the services of a Goan proficient in French to interpret and facilitate her interactions with the Goan landscape. On the other side of the spectrum is *Contacto Goa*, which although predominantly Portuguese, registers English, Konkani, Hindi, Marathi, and French through its conversations with different sections of the population. A voice seems to be given to all communities in Goa, and Hindu culture and way of life is sufficiently represented. *Les Instantanés du Monde* – the fruit of a two-week long maiden voy-

age – over-represents the Catholic community and highlights the Portuguese face of Goa while eclipsing its Indian side. In the case of *Goa is not India*, the entire local population is silenced in favour of the European voice.

Travelogues within travelogues

Travel narratives are often interlaced with other travel stories which may be in to Goa, or out of Goa. Sousa interviews folk artists and *dhalo* dance performers who evoke their trips to Rajasthan and to “Reshia” (Russia) (“Contacto Goa” 1). Similar is the account of José Custodio Faria’s days in Portugal and France, and the famous incident where his father is reported to have encouraged him with these words uttered in Konkani – *kator re bhaji*.¹² The power of words is scientifically acknowledged today as the *power of suggestion*. Isabel da Santa Rita Vaz¹³ in her conversation with Sousa labels Abade Faria as a son of this soil and claims that the Goan hero never did stop being a Goan. This particular episode of *Contacto Goa* pits Goans against Portuguese by bringing to the fore understated elements regarding discrimination against Goans which was to culminate in the Pintos’ Revolt

¹² A phrase used in local parlance to encourage and boost morale. José Custodio Faria’s father is reported to have uttered these words in Konkani and spurred him on, in a key incident when he was to speak in public in Europe. The words did have their desired effect and more. They probably inspired Faria to research on the power of the human mind and present hypnotism to the world.

¹³ Retired English professor and theatre personality in Goa.

masterminded by Catholic priests (“Contacto Goa” 26).

Another illustrious son of Goa whose travel tales are recorded by Sousa is Francisco Luis Gomes, the *Prince of Intellectuals*, who fought for the democratic rights of Goans in the Portuguese Parliament. An anecdote is told in vivid tones: In Portugal, Gomes speaks about the beauty and riches of his land. He says the natives are so rich, that they do not wash their dishes after meals; they merely throw them out (“Contacto Goa” 36). The plates he referred to were probably made of leaves and not of fine porcelain as would have been imagined by his European audience. Multiple ways of seeing the same reality characterise inter-cultural meeting points. Alex Fernandes, Goan portraitist and photographer, who lived and worked in Kuwait, confesses to Bonneau that despite learning Arabic during his time there, he still had to deal with cultural differences in social behaviour *vis-à-vis* women in the Arab world (“Panjim” 00:03:10-35).

Goa has seen a wide range of travellers down the centuries. Some are paradoxically situated between two worlds, having sojourned in Goa and in the West. Others are of Goan origins... such as Wendell Rodricks¹⁴ who came down from France upon being exhorted by a lady at the *Yves Saint Laurent* fashion house, to look to his homeland for inspiration

¹⁴ Well-known fashion designer from Goa. Lived in France.

("Colvale" 00:01:55-4:25); and Remo Fernandes¹⁵ who in a reversal of travel trends, was inspired to be an Indian hippie in Europe. ("Siolim" 00:01:00-29). Both speak to Bonneau in French. Then there is Nalini Sousa herself who traces her origins to Goa. In an interview with Sousa, Anuj Timblo, on vacation from the United States, gives credit to his Goan family for permitting him to pursue his dreams in music, and to Indo-Portuguese Goa for being his muse ("Contacto Goa" 2). Margaret Mascarenhas has also returned to Goa from America and collects art by Goa-based artists when she is not penning novels on Goa.¹⁶ She expands the definition of the *Goan artist* to include all artists creating out of Goa. Mafalda Mascarenhas is one such Western artist among the many who see Goa as an ideal place to unleash their creativity ("Contacto Goa" 3).

That Goa is populated by Europeans who live and work out of the place is given much credence by *Goa is not India*. However, the Europeans are shown to interact mainly among themselves and to do business in this land which alternately attracts and repulses them. On the other hand is Sousa's narrative where Europeans live and work and create together with locals in an attempt to add to Goa's financial and cultural value. Episodes dedicated to architecture explain that the architectural style typical of this

¹⁵ Famous Indian pop star. Of Goan origin. Travelled through Europe.

¹⁶ Her acclaimed work includes the novel *Skin* amongst others.

state is veritably Indo-Portuguese in character. It is no longer Portuguese or European, rather the original creation of the Catholic and Hindu elite in Goa ("Contacto Goa" 4,5). Contacto Goa's stress on the *Indian-ness* of Goa is unmistakable. The makers of the documentary series give enormous footage to Hindu and Indian customs, evoking prehistoric Neolithic settlement sites, Hindu gods, temples and festivals, folk dances, ancient deities, Maratha vestiges and the like, all narrated in English and in local languages, aptly translated into Portuguese for the global Lusophone audience.

And Goa is....?

Just as in centuries gone by, recent narratives have attempted to capture the essence of Goa and reconstruct it for the Western viewer. Anne Bonneau has done it beautifully, conjuring up magical imagery of a Golden Goa through poetic reading, realistic sounds, authentic noises¹⁷ that surprisingly prove to be music to the ears. Everyday marketplace haggling and the noise of blaring horns are transformed into sweet sounds. The rain is magical and the muddy slush is pleasing to the touch (Bonneau 88). Goa is wonderful beyond compare! Rudolf Gottsberger works at the other end of the spectrum, beating the drums about Goa's supposed innumerable failures. The multitude of negatives is appalling. Goa seems to bear all that

¹⁷ Bonneau intersperses her narration with local music and sounds – singing, bargaining, traffic, rain etc.

is unwanted in great measure – corruption, apathy, filth. In addition, the moral values of the natives are questioned, thus creating a space for the traveller. Natives are portrayed as corrupt, unprofessional, lazy, and undependable, inferring that the Westerners are far more capable of running successful businesses in Goa. In the past too, travellers juxtaposed the *Enlightened Self* with the *Other*, drawn up as a savage in their eyes. Parallels with Nayar's typology stand out, as the two narratives (Bonneau and Gottsberger) show a dramatic shift from excessive beauty to exaggerated horror before arriving at a moral marvellous and casting doubts on the value of the native way of life.

Of the three narratives examined, that of *Contacto Goa* alone seems fairly authenticated and objective. Bonneau's story-telling is highly emotive and exotic, and she deals with the unusual by linking it in some way to her own culture. Gottsberger is extremely critical and contrasts Goa's deficiencies with the supposed plenty of Western culture. Overall, it is Sousa's informative and interpretative presentation that through the use of multiple sources – Indian, Indo-Portuguese and Portuguese – succeeds in constructing Goa as a multicultural entity. The vantage point, in this case, is no longer the West. She moves from her comfort zone into the everyday Goa and does not hesitate to look back at Portugal with a critical eye.

Goa's mysterious allure lies in her contradictions. In the past, Western travellers attempted to define her as the *Rome of the Orient*. "Goa is not India," firmly states Leon Rebelsky. Gottsberger lends his approval by entitling his documentary accordingly. Bonneau too assumes that "there is nothing Indian in this house"¹⁸ during her visit to the Menezes Braganca House in Chandor, overlooking the stellar presence of Luis Menezes de Braganca and his anti-colonial writings. She later arrives at the very same conclusion – "Goa is not India"¹⁹ ("Panjim" 00:08:40-49). Despite a semblance of valid evidence, these attempts at defining Goa remain factually incorrect and largely incomplete. The French and the German narratives define Goa by an absence and a negation, leaving much unsaid.

So what is Goa? The version delivered by *Contacto Goa* presents this space as essentially Indo-Portuguese. Nalini Sousa answers the enigma by showcasing facets of Goan culture that are Indian and Portuguese while stressing on the confluence of the two. Synthesizing forces such as the sounds of *bhajans* sung in a Christian church are given due representation in many episodes.

An encounter with the Other produces varied responses. Thierry Wilhelm – world traveller – enjoys

¹⁸ "...rien d'indien dans cette demeure" - Bonneau's original translated as "there is nothing Indian in this house".

¹⁹ "Goa n'est pas l'Inde" – Bonneau's original translated as "Goa is not India".

the interpersonal encounter and the cross-cultural exchange in the course of his travels. However, he states, as did the Western travellers of the past centuries, that he wishes to satisfy his curiosity (“Goa is not India”). Are accounts of the East meant primarily to satisfy the curiosity of the Western traveller and audience? In my conclusion, I choose to reflect on Mafalda Mascarenhas’ reaction vis-a-vis Indian tourists. In a candid conversation with *Contacto Goa*, this Portuguese artist in Goa states that she finds the sari to be a sensual garment. She explains that to the Western gaze a bikini on the beach is regular fare while a sari is erotic. However, she is acutely aware that the reverse is the case of the Indian gaze. (“Contacto Goa” 3). The absence of a derogatory tone in her reflection on Western and Indian perceptions is commendable. This, in my opinion, is an intercultural stand where an individual sees the Self and the Other, is conscious of the differences in position, and yet accepts them without judgement.

Travels are journeys undertaken – from the homeland to alien country, from the Self toward the Other. European travellers came to Goa and re-interpreted their experience of the land and its people in their writings. Their travel tales are true, but only to a point. As people travel in unprecedented ways in today’s world, the Self encounters the Other in newer, more varied forms. Skilful navigation of meeting points between cultures is a real challenge thrown open to all modern day travellers.

Works Cited

- Axelrod, Paul, and Michelle Fuerch. "Portuguese Orientalism and the Making of the Village Communities of Goa". *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 45, No. 3, 1998, pp. 439-476.
- Bastos, Cristiana. "Medical Hybridisms and Social Boundaries: Aspects of Portuguese Colonialism in Africa and India in the Nineteenth Century". *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 4, 2007, pp. 767-782.
- Bonneau, Anne. *Les Instantanés du monde*. Feuillage, 2014.
- Bonneau, Anne, creator. "Benaulim." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- . "Colvale." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- . "Dans les forêts de Netorlim." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- . "Goa, en Technicolor." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- . "Margao." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- . "Moira." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- . "Panjim." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- . "Saligão." *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.

- . “Sangolda.” *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1^{ère} France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
 - . “Siolim.” *Instantanés du Monde à Goa*, Outre-mer 1^{ère}, 2011, *la 1ere France info*, <http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/emissions-radio/instantanes-du-monde>, Accessed 10 June 2011.
- Contacto Goa*. Created by Nalini de Sousa, Lotus Film and TV Production.
- Dellon, Charles. *Dellon's Account of the Inquisition at Goa: Translated from the French: with an Appendix Containing an Account of the Escape of Archibald Bower, (one of the Inquisitors) from the Inquisition, at Maçerata, in Italy*. I. Wilson, 1812.
- Figueiredo, Joao. M.P. de. “The Practice of Indian Medicine in Goa during the Portuguese Rule, 1510-1699”. *Luso-Brazilian Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1967, pp. 51-60.
- Fischel, Walter J. “Leading Jews in the Service of Portuguese India”. *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 47, No. 1, 1956, pp. 37-57.
- Goa is not India*. Created by Rudolf Gottsberger. Studio Rot, 2012.
- Gode, P.K. “References to Grafted Mangoes in India between A.D. 1600 and 1800”. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol.79, No.4, 1959, pp. 281-282.
- Gracias, Fatima da Silva. *Health and Hygiene in Colonial Goa, 1510-1961*. Concept Publishing Company, 1994.
- Jazeel, Tariq. “Postcolonialism: Orientalism and the geographical imagination”. *Geography*, Vol. 97, No. 1, 2012, pp. 4-11.
- Kundra, Sakul. “Widow Immolation in Mughal India: Perceptions of French Travellers and Adventurers in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries”. *Social Scientist*, Vol. 42, No. 9/10, 2014, pp. 63-84.
- Linon-Chipon. “Autour de François Pyrard de Laval: un voyage, un naufrage, deux voyages, deux textes, plusieurs textes (de 1601 à 1679)”. *Centre de Recherche sur la Littérature des Voyages*. 19 Feb. 2002.
- Mocquet, Jean. *Voyage a Mozambique & Goa: La relation de Jean Mocquet (1607-1610)*. Chandeigne, 1996.
- Nayar, Pramod. K. “Marvelous Excesses: English Travel Writing in India, 1608-1727”. *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2005, pp. 213-238.
- Orta, Garcia da. *Coloquios dos simples e drogas da India [...] [Volume I]*. Imprensa Nacional, 1891.

- Phillip W, translator. *The Voyage of John Huyghen Van Linschoten to the East Indies. The First Book, Containing His Description of the East, Volume 1. From the Old English Translation of 1598.* Hakluyt Society, 1874.
- Saldanha, Arun. "The Itineraries of Geography: Jan Huygen van Linschoten's "Itinerario" and Dutch Expeditions to the Indian Ocean, 1594-1602". *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 101, No. 1, 2011, pp. 149-177.
- Valence, Françoise De. "Health in Goa in the Seventeenth Century: The Reports of some French Travellers". *Bulletin of the Indian Institute of History of Medicine*, Vol XXIX, 1999, pp.113-122.
- Vanina, Eugenia. "Roads of (Mis)Understanding: European Travellers in India (Fifteenth to Seventeenth Century)". *Indian Historical Review*, 40 (2), 2013, pp. 267-284.
- Winius, George D. "The Renaissance as Reflected in Goa". *Mediterranean Studies*, Vol. 7, 1998, pp. 125-134.