



Culture For All Conference on Cultural Mapping 2021

In early 2021, Sahapedia issued an open call inviting researchers, academicians, and practitioners to share their work on cultural mapping with the hope of creating a knowledge repository on the subject in India and regions with similar cultural history like Asia and Africa. Papers were submitted under the following themes - (a) Cultural mapping—theory & practice, (b) Technology for cultural mapping, and (c) Mapping Matters.

Over 60 papers were submitted of which 15 papers were featured in the #CultureForAll Conference. The conference was held digitally on 28 and 29 September 2021, in collaboration with the Centre for Social Studies (CES) at the University of Coimbra, Azim Premji University, the Centre for Internet and Society, and the Re-Centring AfroAsia project at the University of Cape Town.

The papers published on this site are predominantly from South Asia and their research interrogates, discusses, and reflects upon the complex questions of who, what, how, and for whom to map culture. The papers explore a diverse range of subjects and approaches that range from literature in Nagaland and food in Goa to music in South Africa and architecture in Delhi. The authors for the papers include researchers in history, literature, and music, as well as architects and educators.

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The Goan Pão: A Cultural Identity

Author Bio

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Abstract

Introduced by the priests during the Portuguese rule in Goa, bread had taken on a uniquely Goan feature with the use of toddy as the leavening agent and the wood-fired mud oven. It is this unique addition and the variety of bread that makes it a part of



culinary heritage, a mix of tangibles and intangible indigenous knowledge that affirms its place in the cultural map of bread in India. Over the years, due to a range of socioeconomic factors, traditional bakers have had to modify their way of bread-making. We are at a tipping point in history where the occupation is at a risk. The purpose of this study is to trace and document the *pão*, with its techniques and tools, as in its past and present, to provide a link for its future and to understand the associated social identity.

Keywords: Bread, Goa, Pão, Bakers

Introduction

From the French *baguette* and the Polish *challah* to the Ethiopian *injera* and the Indian *roti*, bread in its myriad forms has been a staple in communities across the world. Bread is essentially made of flour and water which is cooked with heat. According to the *Larousse Gastronomique*, bread can be fermented, made with various kinds of flour, such as wheat and rye, and cooked in various ways (*apud* Robuchon, 1997: 746). Certain breads contain a leavening agent like yeast that transforms the bread into a fluffy avatar. This marriage of dough and heat can be traced back several thousands of years to the Egyptians (*apud* Robuchon, 1997: 746).

Today, bread is a cultural object that is intricately woven into the fabric of societies. It is consumed like a daily ritual and is a necessary food item for occasions. It plays a quintessential role in the formation of social identity. History stands testimony to the fact that this humble baked dough was used as a means to exercise political influence. While colonial rulers have played an important role in the introduction and spread of the humble bread (*apud* Mosley, 2004), it still continues to be part of postcolonial societies. In many societies, these breads have adapted over time, just like the people who prepare and consume them.

Cultural mapping provides opportunities for local residents to participate and contribute towards the conservation of their local culture by sharing their knowledge and experiences. In this case, the two tangible components: the places and the artefact (the Goan *pão* and the equipment used) are used to merge with the intangible (the memories and experiences of local people) to map the unique culture of Goa. It is by this merging of the tangible and the intangible through the past, continuity for the future is established and a sense of identity, belonging, distinctive and indigenous is lent to the community.

Food is not only an essential requirement for the sustenance of people, but food is inextricably linked to our cultural identity (*apud* Reddy and Van Dam, 2020). Through the process of enculturation, people acquire food habits. Traditional foods, their well-guarded recipes, rules about eating, preparing and sharing food are passed down from generation to generation. The food items that are prepared in any given region or by a given community reflect the history of its people, culinary traditions and preferences.

Context

Bread, which is a part of Portuguese cuisine, was introduced to Goa, which is located on the west coast of India, during the colonial era. “Pão was introduced to us by the Portuguese. There are no records of pão or wheat bread before the Portuguese” (H1, CH1). Traditionally, rice has been the staple food of the region. “This is a rice-cultivating and rice-eating community. So, definitely pão doesn’t seem to be an indigenous item” (Ch1, H1). The word “baker” is *poder* in Konkani—the local language of the state of Goa. This is derived from the Portuguese word *padeiro*, meaning “baker”.

It is believed that the Jesuit Portuguese missionaries introduced the art of bread making in the erstwhile Portuguese colony, more specifically in the Salcete region (Fig. 1), which was part of the old conquest area of Goa (*apud* Filinto, 2020; Godinho, 2021; and Rodrigues, 2007:50). The bread-baking skills were specifically taught to the Catholic Goans and more specifically the “the Chardo caste of Majorda (in Salcete), a coastal area with good palm groves producing *sur*, a substitute for yeast. The Chardos of Varca, Nuvem, Colva and Utorda—all villages of Salcete—also picked up this profession” (Da Silva Gracias, 2012). As a result, the villages in Salcete, namely Majorda, Utorda, Cansaulim, Chinchinim and Nuvem were populated with predominant family-owned bakeries (*apud* Rodrigues, 2007:50). “Permission for bakeries were given by the Portuguese rulers to the Chardo caste of the catholic community” (B2, CH1). Later, bakers from these areas “moved to other places of Goa” and bakeries sprung up in other places (Da Silva Gracias, 2012). As articulately described by Filinto in her interview, the business of pão is “a centuries-old trade that was brought by ‘outsiders.’” Bread was an “outsider” and then became an “insider”. Now, bread is an integral part of Goa, of its cuisine, culture, and identity (*apud* Chakraborty, 2021). In her documentary, Filinto (*apud* 2018) explores how bread—a quintessential cultural object, has helped navigate the identity of an insider and outsider. The bread has stood the test of time and, today, twice a day, at dawn and dusk, the baker’s horn can be heard in the streets of Goa.



Fig. 1. Tracing the origin of bread-baking to the Salcete region of Goa, India (Source: Authors)

However, over the years, the traditional Goan bread is slowly disappearing from the countertops and baker’s baskets. The Goan *poder* and the family-run bakeries are also slowly vanishing. This study attempts to identify and map the uniqueness of bread in Goa and its relation to the social identity and place in the Goan culture. It documents the different kinds of bread that are commonly sold by the bakers in the state of Goa; traces the history of bread and the process used to bake bread; and analyses the current state of artisanal Goan bakers.



Approach

The narrative study used semi-structured interviews (annexure on request) to collect data regarding the history of bread, the traditional process and the other practices involved in bread-making and selling as well as the evolution of these practices. “The collection, survey and communication of the cultural data belonging to the order of orality – in our case the traditional gastronomic resources – can be a precious capital of knowledge, a resource of memory, of identity and of heritage for the present which, now as never before, feels the need to digitally connect with its analogical past.” (Grimaldi, Fassino and Porporato, 2019) The interviewees for the current study were traditional bakers, neo-bakers, historians, frequent users of pão and researchers of Goan culture and food. The officials of the Association of Bakers were also interviewed. Some interviews were in person, while some were conducted telephonically. The people interviewed were anonymised and the respondents were given a suitable alphanumeric code (B#No.– Baker#No.; CF#No.– Cultural Historian #No.; H#No.– Historian#No.; and R#No.– Respondent#No.) mentioned in the parenthesis in this paper. The data was coded as per the requirements of qualitative analysis for emergent themes. This study also utilises the secondary sources that have documented the history and practices of Goan pão.

Findings and Discussion

• *The Indigenous Process*

For the Portuguese who landed on the shore of Goa some 500 years ago, bread was part of their diet, and partaking of the bread was linked to their faith. Being away in a foreign land, having bread served as a link to a familiar way of life for the wheat-eaters of Europe. Like in Goa, oven-baked bread was also introduced in other Portuguese colonies across the globe. However, in Goa, it is believed that since yeast available at that time didn't give the desired results, they experimented with a local ingredient as a leavening agent. “The wheat that was available at that time probably did not make satisfactory bread with the yeast. In a bid to innovate and get the ‘right’ bread, they might have come across the fermenting properties of toddy available” (H1, CH1). Instead of yeast, “toddy was used to leaven the bread,” (Rodrigues, 2007: 50) and ferment the dough (*apud* Collingham, 2007: 60). This proved not only successful but also that made this bread unique and “probably lends the characteristic flavour to the bread and distinguishes bread in the other parts of India” (H1, B1). The coconut toddy, called sur in Konkani, was obtained from palm trees that are indigenous only to the western coastal belt of India. “Nowhere else in India was toddy used in baking breads as far as we know, except for Bombay (now Mumbai), by the bakers who migrated from Goa to Bombay. Maybe because toddy was easily available locally” (H1, CH1).

In the later years, the use of toddy slowly dwindled and “yeast was introduced as it was found to be more economical and profitable” (Rodrigues, 2007: 49). (Fig. 2) Bakers today use wet yeast instead of toddy as the leavening agent as this reduces the time it takes for the dough to rise. Today it is rare to find bread with toddy. There has been an attempt to keep the tradition alive during festivals like the Poderanchen Fest (Baker's festival) and revive this bread made with toddy, particularly by Marius Fernandes who

longed for the bread of this childhood (*apud* Filinto, 2020) and Alison Lobo who conducts baking classes. Nonetheless, the difficulties of sourcing fresh palm toddy could also be a factor that prevents bakers from using this natural leavening agent as part of their daily orders. The locals continue to use toddy to prepare the other traditional Goan delicacies like the rice cakes, which are cooked with steam.



Fig. 2. Wet yeast used by bakers for baking bread today (Source: Authors)

- ***The Types of Bread and its Consumption***

There are several types of artisanal Goan bread, namely *pão* (written also as *pao*), *poie* (written also as *poi*), *katre pão*, *poxe* (a.k.a. *unddo*) and *kankonn*. Goans claim that it is not merely the shape but each bread is different in its taste due to the tempering—the temperature and the duration at which it is baked, style of baking, and some changes in the ratio and composition of the ingredients (B1, B2, B4, R1, R2).



Fig. 3. Some varieties of bread. A: *Poie*, *katre pão*, *pão*; B: *Kankonn*; C: Loaves of bread (Source: Authors)



The poie, which “should be grainy” (R1, R2, B1, B2), is round, mildly sour and has an air pocket like the pita bread. It was traditionally made of whole wheat and dusted with wheat bran. Joao Godinho is one of very few bakers in Goa to still prepare whole-wheat Poie (*apud* Godinho, 2021). “Today, the dough for Poie is made with a portion of *maida* [all-purpose flour] and wheat flour. People who have diabetes prefer the poie to other kinds of bread” (B1). Those who are health conscious or need to monitor their diets are advised to replace rice with whole wheat, and this artisan variety bread presents itself as a healthier option.

Katre pão or *katricho pao* is derived from the Konkani word *katarap*, which means “to cut”. The dough is cut and shaped by scissors. Bakers would generally sit on the floor and shape the dough with the scissors using the thigh (*apud* Navhind Times, 2019). However, some bakers today have categorically stated that they shape the dough at their workstations, using their hands instead of their thighs (B1, B2). Once baked, this butterfly-shaped bread has a lighter crumb texture. The pão is spongy and square in shape. Slightly elongated versions of the pão are also available. Other varieties of bread are unddo, which is round bread and is scored by the centre with the hand. When baked, it has a crisp crust and a soft inside.

The kankonn is ring-shaped toasted bread. In Konkani, it literally means “bangle”. The bread is named so because these rings of crusty bread tinkle like glass bangles when they are fresh out of the oven and might be considered the reflection of the cultural influence of the indigenous Indians who wore bangles as ornaments.

Each of the breads is baked at various temperatures. The poie is “baked first as it needs the most heat and gets baked quickly” (B1, B2). In around 2 minutes, the poie fluffs up and turns a delicious shade of brown. They are then quickly dropped into the cane basket that is placed just below the mouth of the oven. After the poie, the cutlet pao, which is similar to the poie, is baked. The katre pão is put into the oven and requires around 5 minutes (B1, B2). It is followed by the pão which requires about 8 minutes to be baked. The unddo and the kankonn are baked last (B2, B4). The unddo has a crusty exterior and a soft interior. The kankonn would require about 15 minutes or longer to ensure that it is firmer (B3).

In addition, there is also the *poderanche bol*, which is made of regular dough, sugar and coconut, cardamom among other ingredients. There is also the *kazaranche bol*, a.k.a *Goddacho godd bol* or *Mapsheche bol*, which is a sweet variety of bread mostly prepared in the north of Goa and traditionally offered during weddings to friends and family. It is brownish black in colour and is made of coconut, palm jaggery, coarse wheat and toddy.

• *Mapping Pão—A Tangible Cultural Artefact*

The local contexts make mapping of tangible culture unique. While mapping the pão, it is interesting to note how the varieties of some bread change names as per extremely narrowed down local contexts. Poie is also called *bhakri* or *kundeachi bhakri* (R1, R2). This

change of names also mirrors the influence of local culture, which is a fusion of two distinct religions, culture and practices over a period of time. It also occupies a place in the religious overtones of the culture, with *pão* being standard staple in the Christian homes before gradually breaking the religious barriers. Thus, *pão* forms a tangible artefact for a social identity specific to the culture. The specific use of different breads gives an insight into the life and culture of the Goans. For example, *pão* and *unddo* is usually had at breakfast, while *poie* at other meals. There is also *cutlet* bread. The *kankonn*, apart from being eaten by adults is “also boiled in water and given to children as they are initiated to solid foods” (R1, CH1). This, when further studied, can give an understanding of the lifestyle of Goans and its evolution.

The different varieties of bread are consumed with various pairings. A typical breakfast in Goa is generally said to be bread and *kalche koddi*, which means the “curry that was cooked the previous day” in Konkani, or *baji*, which is usually a spicy vegetable coconut curry. *Ros omelette* is a popular snack. Bread is also eaten with an omelette served with *ros*, which means gravy in Konkani, and is generally spicy chicken or chickpea *xacuti*. Bread can be stuffed with Goan sausages, also called *chouris pao*, or with cutlets. *Kankonn* can be dipped and served with *chau*, which means tea in Konkani. Across Goa, there are tiny kiosks that sell bread and various accompaniments (R3).

The unique traditional *pão* seems to have travelled to Bombay (now Mumbai) with the Goan bakers that migrated there. It can be recalled that Bombay was handed over by the Portuguese to the British as dowry on the occasion of Catherine of Braganza’s marriage to Charles II of England. This could have been one of the reasons for this migration of the Goan bakers and their craft. Goans who migrated to Bombay earned the sobriquet “*pavallas*” (Rodrigues, 2007: 51) and as “*macapao*” (literally meaning “give me bread” in Konkani).

The *pão* remains an integral part of the meals in Mumbai today. The *pão* also referred to as *pav* in many areas and has also undergone further evolution in taste and texture to create unique snacks around this humble bread, like the iconic *vada pav*, which is essentially *pão* served with spiced mashed potato patty that is coated in chickpea batter and deep-fried, and the *pav bhaji*, which is *pão* served with thick spicy gravy of mashed vegetables. Apart from Mumbai, in other regions in Maharashtra, the *misal pav* is a popular dish made of sprouted beans and served with *pav*. Further north, the *dabeli* or the Kutchi *dabeli* is a popular Gujarati snack consisting of *pav* stuffed with a spicy-sweet filling.

• *The Tools of the Trade*

The baker has distinct tools for baking and selling bread that have evolved over time.

- Mixers, metal trays and racks for preparing the dough: Earlier, mixing of the dough was done by hand, but today electric mixers are in use. These mixers initially mix the ingredients and then for the kneading process, the dough is transferred to the marble or *kadapa* platforms. (Fig. 4) The dough is portioned out manually and shaped into various forms either onto metal trays or slabs and left to rise on wooden racks. While

the dough is being prepared, simultaneously, the oven is also being prepared for baking. (Fig. 5)



Fig. 4. A: Electric mixer; B: A small weighing scale to portion out the dough for individual loaves (Source: Authors)



Fig. 5. Shaping the dough and proofing—A: Rolling and shaping out dough; B, C: Proofing racks and trays (Source: Authors)

- Wood-fired mud oven for baking: To make traditional bread, the wood-fired oven is quintessential. “The wood-fired mud oven also called *for* in Konkani” (B2, CH1). This hole-in-the-wall oven is a dome-shaped oven with a laterite stone floor. A certain kind of wood is used for coal. “Wood from mango and jackfruit trees cannot be used for baking, though it is widely available here. These varieties of wood burn very quickly, but for baking, we require wood that burns slowly. Earlier tamarind wood and zambol wood were used, then wood was also brought in from Karnataka and Maharashtra. The wood used for coal infuses the bread with different flavours and aroma” (B1, B2, CH1). The bakers set fire to the wood several hours prior to putting the first dough in the oven. According to the bakers, the bread baked in this oven gives a unique flavour that no electric oven can replicate. Hence, traditional bakers do not wish to shift to electric ovens for the fear of losing out on quality of the flavour and texture of the bread which would in turn further have an impact on the sale of the bread. The essential process of preparing the oven depends on the

shifts in which the bakeries function. “The oven is prepared by heating it from within with burning logs of wood. After several hours, the smouldering bits are removed and the oven is cleaned” (B1, B3). “The dough in its various forms are laid out on huge planks or in baking trays, waiting for their tryst with the furnace” (B3, B4). A peel with a long wooden handle and a carrying surface made of metal is used to transfer the dough into the oven and later remove the breads when they are ready. The breads are dropped into the cane basket that is placed at the mouth of the oven. The ash is dusted off the bread and transported in cane baskets. (Fig. 6)



Fig. 6. Baker at work—A: Baker using a long peel to put the dough into the traditional oven; B: View from the mouth of the oven; C: The baked bread is then dropped into the cane basket placed at the mouth of the oven (Source: Authors)

- Cane basket, cycles and scooters: The bakers earlier used to carry “a basketful of bread on their heads and a bamboo staff in hand,” (Rodrigues, 2007: 49) and go from house to house to sell the bread. They traditionally wore “a long white *cobai* (a loose skirt, kabaya look alike). Made of flour bags, which were made of strong grey cloth,” (Rodrigues, 2007: 48) and carried a staff which was “fitted with loose metal discs, which would make a zang-zang sound when struck on the ground. The staff had a dual purpose, one to announce the coming of the *poder* and the other to act as a support for the basket” (Rodrigues, 2007: 49). Today the baker’s horn with its distinct sound has replaced the staff. Incidentally, the local fishermen also use the same horn. Usually seen on a bicycle with a cane basket fixed to the back seat, some bakers today even have custom-made motorbikes fitted with baskets. The baker’s baskets woven with strips of cane are still in use today. The baskets are covered with “a plastic sheet and this protects the bread from dust, rain and keeps the bread warm” (R1, R2, B1).



Fig. 7. A: Labourer with the baker's horn in his right hand and his cycle is fitted with a cane basket covered with a plastic sheet; B: Cane basket lined with plastic sheet and cloth to keep the bread warm; C: Baker's horn (Source: Authors)

• *A Dying Craft*

A combination of economic factors like rising costs, meagre profit margins, intensive labour, regulation on the minimum price of bread and sociocultural factors have led to the younger generation shunning the Goan family business of bread-making. This void has been filled by the migrant labourers who have taken ownership of the bakeries.

- Rising costs of raw materials: The price of bread is regulated by the state government. An increase in the cost of ingredients has also raised the production cost of bread, but the bakers' lament that the price of bread hasn't risen at a similar rate. "The current rate is 4 rupees per bread. The commission per bread that is given to workers is 80 paise to 1 rupee per bread. Out of the remaining 3 rupees, not even 20 paise, we get as profit" (B1, B2, B3). In order to cut costs, "There are some bakers who add more yeast to the dough to quicken the process of bread making, but this comes at the cost of the flavour and shelf life. Bread that is made in this manner in the morning turns bad by the end of the day" (B1, B2, B3). "This compromises on the quality of the breads" (B1, B3). The bakers have requested assistance from the government in terms of supply and subsidies for materials.
- Labour intensive: As bread-making is labour intensive, earlier bakers worked "in shifts in periods of 3–4 months" (B1, B3) but today, bakers run their bakeries with the help of "labourers mainly from the neighbouring states" (B2, CH1). However, in the last decade, with the rising costs of raw materials and staffing woes, many bakers prefer to give their bakeries on rent to various labourers as their profit margin is higher than if they ran the business themselves.
- Threat to traditional process: The supportive occupations like toddy are on a decline, thus making fermentation a different process with the use of yeast as a replacement. This has added to the decline of the traditional baking of the bread that makes it uniquely Goan. More worrisome is that it is "very difficult to find artisans who can repair or even build the essential wood-fired mud ovens" (CH1). In addition, the traditional ovens also have come under fire as they are linked to air pollution in residential areas. Some bakers have "invested in air-filters to address this issue" (B1, B2). According to the president of All Goa Association of Bakers, "several initiatives have been taken to introduce traditional bakers to alternative convection ovens that are powered by electricity, diesel and gas. But traditional bakers don't want to change and hence they are slow to adapt to these alternative methods" (B1, B2, CH1). The bakers are in a precarious situation. If they don't use the traditional ovens, they would compromise on the taste of the bread. This, in turn, may affect the sales of the goods. Expenditure on new ovens is an investment that they have to consider in relation to the profitability of the business.

• *Saving the Bread = Saving Cultural Heritage*

When the artisanal bakers don't find the profession profitable, the profession dies a



natural death. It is difficult to find local artisans who know how to build or even repair the traditional wood ovens. Other than these tangible reasons, one underlying cause for the decline of the craft, like in all other crafts, is the lack of societal respect. Unlike some other countries, where crafts are considered as art and given due appreciation and position in the society, the condition is contrary here. “Get educated and do a respectable profession,” (B1, B3) is the advice that bakers convey to their children. “I am a baker. What is my place in society? I know it is a difficult life and I would not want them to suffer the same as me. I will not want my child to become a baker like me” (B3, B4). The traditional bakers dissuade the younger generation to take up this as a profession. Thus, the traditional craft is dying out due to the missing link of the future. And with this is dying a sense of identity.

Food is an essential and “living” component of the culture of any place since it evolves with time. The singularity of its nature makes it a cultural heritage, and like all heritage, the culinary heritage also needs to be conserved. This conservation not only helps to preserve indigenous knowledge but also preserves the local and traditional crafts, even those allied, in this case—the bakers, the toddy tapper, the sellers as well as the pot makers (who make pots to collect toddy), the oven makers (who build specific ovens) and others. Saving the pão, thus, would save a rich culinary tradition from becoming extinct.

Recommendations

It is a known fact that the number of people taking up an occupation often depends upon the perception of societal respect. Often stigma and social shame are attached to traditional occupations, and as a consequence, people don't want to be associated with certain trades. Being called a poder in local parlance is not flattering. If traditional bakers, the craft and the occupation have to be conserved, these local artisans need to first feel that their trade is valued.

Conservation of a culinary heritage goes hand in hand with its popularisation not only within the state but outside the state as well. This is reflected in the various specialty cuisine restaurants all over the country. Unfortunately, this cannot be said as much about the Goan cuisine, and especially the pão. Goan pão has to be promoted in its own form—as a culinary heritage at places of tourist interest and hospitality industry. Though it can be said that pão has become ubiquitous, it actually is not. The popular and widely available sliced bread is not a part of heritage cuisine. While some may argue that pão is found all over the country, a bite into these breads would reveal that they lack the distinctness that is inherent to the Goan pão.

The artisanal breads need to be promoted in various ways by multiple stakeholders at the national level by inclusion of traditional breads at various conferences, festivals, like IFFI and others, since Goa is the hub of many cultural activities in the country. There are dedicated festivals to promote culinary arts, such as Serendipity Arts Festival, and in recent years, there has been a series of hands-on tasting sessions related to traditional foods. In addition, when a food is unique to a place, it becomes a part of the identity of



the place and the people. A Geographic Indication (GI) status helps in the consolidation of the identity and conservation of the traditional indigenous knowledge of a place. It is surprising that this typically Goan culinary specialty—the pão—has remained unheralded for the GI status. Several stakeholders are currently working to make this a reality (*apud* Kapur-Gomes, 2019).

Some of the suggestions for increasing visibility of traditional Goan breads at the local level are as follows: incorporating traditional breads into the menus of high-end restaurants, conducting heritage tours on traditional bread making and tasting, conducting classes and competitions on traditional bread baking, incorporating visits to artisanal bakers and skill-based course on traditional bread baking at various levels in the sphere of education. This would also aim at consolidation of the social identity and local culture. As per National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recommendations, an internship or a skill-based course could be considered useful in this direction (*apud* Government of India, 2020:16). Additionally, the bagless days mentioned in the NEP (*apud* Government of India, 2020:16) could be utilised to create awareness about the culinary heritage and play a role in keeping it alive.

Heritage is conserved only with the contribution of the local artisans who know the tradition and form an essential part of their own identity. Thus, it is recommended that support and empowerment to the local artisans be offered to conserve the culinary heritage of the Goan pão. This could range in various activities from starting a scholarship for them to take up the vocation and train new bakers in the traditional art, thus keeping it alive, to offering financial assistance in starting and maintaining a school for traditional culinary craft. In order to keep up the tradition, several other associated and allied occupations like toddy tappers, cane basket weavers, etc., also need to be given support to enable them to sustain. Government subsidies and other financial support are much needed for the preservation of these occupations. Lack of subsidies and inflation have, unfortunately, met with demands of an allowance of increase in the prices of bread, which has not received a government nod in a bid to keep the bread affordable to the poorest. In addition, the tools of the trade, especially the traditional wood-fuelled ovens, need to change based on innovative sources of fuel in order to conform to environmental requirements. Exploration into newer sources of fuels has to be taken up in order to keep up with the changing times without compromising on processes and other aspects of culinary heritage.

It will take a concerted effort by various stakeholders to give the traditional baking craft and the traditional bread its due value. The Goan pão and its myriad varieties are cultural assets as they are a testament to the collective history of a community and a way of life.

Limitation of the Study

The study largely depends on secondary sources and oral history, which comes with its own set of legends. Also, many of the traditional bakeries have shut shop or taken up quicker processes, thus making the tools, equipment and recipes inaccessible. There is a



paucity of documentation on the early use of toddy in bread making and how the bread established itself into districts other than Salcete as well as how many traditional bakeries function currently in Goa.

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