



Reginald Fernandes  
of Goa”

Dale Luis Menezes will present a paper titled, “Reginald Fernandes and Concanim ‘Romans’ in the Literary History of Goa” at the III Congresso Internacional do LIA – Laboratório de Interlocuções com a Ásia, on 19 October, 2017 at Casa de Portugal, São Paulo, Brazil. This presentation will be part of the Pensando Goa project, which aims to produce a literary history of Goa.

Reginald Fernandes’ writing career spans almost 40 years. This period that stretched around c 1955-1992, Fernandes wrote more than 120 novels or what in Concanim came to be known as ‘romans’ or ‘romaxeo’ (pl.). The Concanim ‘romans’ is not adequately studied, neither in the history of Konknni literature nor in the history of Goan literature. Fernandes’ writings give the impression of pulp on first glance: they were printed on cheap paper, the books were pocket-sized, the plots were formulaic and revolved around love stories, crimes, and magic realism, and the language used had a touch of the dramatic in it. Perhaps this is the reason why dominant canons of Konkani and Goan literature never seriously considered the writings of Fernandes – or indeed other writers in the genre of ‘romans’ – as legitimately constituting literature.

Fernandes’ writings not only talk about Goa, but also other places like Africa – often set in a magic realism-esque manner. The language used in Fernandes’ novels is infused with Portuguese or Portuguese-inflected words, and as such it points to larger connections across linguistic and geographical boundaries. Fernandes was inspired by pulp fiction in English – both in English pulp writings and films—which also suggests that Goan literature through the

Concanim 'romans' had wider connections with other literary cultures. This study proposes to discuss the life and career of Fernandes and locate him in the historical context in which he produced his oeuvre.

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