

FOLLOWING THE GOLDEN THREAD: GOA BEFORE INDIA

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Annexed in 1961 by India, Goa was the first major Asian territory in the twentieth century to be decoupled from the pluricontinental Portuguese state, of which it was a territory since 1510 (East Timor would follow in 1975 and Macao in 1999). One result of Goa's subsequent integration into the Indian Union has been an obfuscation of specific nuances of the Portuguese presence in Goa, and by extension, that of Portuguese colonialism in Asia. There are various reasons for this obfuscation. To begin with, the distinct history of the Portuguese territory has come to be written in terms of British India. This historiographical tendency, as Rochelle Pinto notes in *Between Empires* (2007), was initiated at the end of the nineteenth century by Goan, especially Catholic, elites living in Goa. The final period of Portuguese sovereignty—overshadowed by an intense diplomatic war of position between forces external to Goa, i.e., the authoritarian Portuguese *Estado Novo* regime led by António Oliveira Salazar (until 1968) and the post-1947 Indian government—only intensified this trend. As Trichur Raghuraman argues in *Refiguring Goa* (2013), post-colonial scholarship, marked by a definite methodological nationalism—most certainly the Minotaur in the labyrinth we negotiate here, of which more below—ensured that perspectives unaligned with Indian nationalism were not well received. Indian nationalist narratives focus, by and large, on the 'black legend' of the Portuguese and Goa's release from Lusitanian captivity. Portuguese perspectives emerging after the end of the *Estado Novo* in 1974, on the other hand, are marked by a curious dualism. While some Portuguese accounts hark back to a supposed Golden Age, other narratives—consciously framing themselves as post-colonial—seek to write back against the Portuguese *Estado Novo*. Wittingly or otherwise, they use Goa instrumentally and eschew analyzing Indian nationalist constructions as if their only alternative were Salazarism and its late-colonial Lusotropicalism (which we will discuss hereunder). Between these various positions, often taken up far from the everyday reality of Goa, the lived texture, private lives, and public attitudes of pre-1961 Goa are mystified, misremembered, and distorted.

This representational matrix between competing ideologies is the labyrinth alluded to in the title to this introduction. Our reference is the clew of golden thread Ariadne gives the mythical Greek hero Theseus prior to his entering the labyrinth to battle the Minotaur. Theseus' task presented him with a conundrum: he may well enter the labyrinth and slay his enemy, but how was he to escape afterwards?

One route out of Goa's metaphorical labyrinth is to privilege close studies over grand narratives. An ideal source to begin this reflection on Goa immediately before integration into the India Union—its potentials as well as its problems—is pre-1961 Goan writing. This writing, and the attention to detail it demands, is what will prove a, if not *the*, golden thread out of the dark maze which is the discursive representation of the territory. The current moment is a particularly apt one for this project. Not only has ample time has passed since 1961, but also the promises

of Indian nationalism today appear to ring increasingly hollow. This configuration of temporal and ideological distance will perhaps allow for more balanced perspectives.

With these ideas in mind, we realized that the publication of *Monsoon* (2019)—Paul Melo e Castro’s translation into English of Vimala Devi’s *Monção*, the first work of twentieth-century Portuguese-language Goan fiction released by a mainstream Indian publisher—offered scholars of Goa a timely opportunity. We hoped that attention to the individual stories comprising this cycle might allow scholars to flesh out the various social, cultural, and political contexts of Goa prior to its annexation, allowing for future work to build on these thick descriptions.

To a large extent our hopes in initiating this project have been met. Despite the challenges posed both to us and the contributing scholars by the coronavirus pandemic, we were able to gather a robust selection of engagements with *Monsoon* and Goa prior to annexation. This collection features scholars of diverse origins, from the Portuguese [ex-]metropole to the former overseas territories, from the United Kingdom to Brazil (via Argentina). Indeed, it is a reassuring to see how the study of Goa increasingly draws attention from scholars in Brazil, bringing new perspectives to old issues. It is our hope, in publishing this section with *Kritika Kultura*, that we might extend this conversation to the Philippines, with its own history of Iberian colonization and contemporary Anglophony. This collection is also able to present in English scholarly work that accesses some of the languages of Goan experience, including Portuguese and Konkani. One of the articles presented here was even written first in Portuguese and then translated into English.

Another cheering feature of these essays is that so many engage unabashedly with the issue of caste. This is a new development in the study, and popular representation, of Goa and breaks with an older tradition which, especially following annexation, insisted on a Goa unmarked by social rifts. As with most features of Goa and the studies on this region, this tradition is marked by a dual lineage. On the one hand, it flows from the intellectual culture of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*, which declared Goa to be fundamentally Portuguese. As Rosa Maria Perez has observed, this trope of *Goa Dourada* [lit. Golden Goa] or *Goa Portuguesa* framed Goa as “a well-ordered society without tensions or noticeable ruptures between individuals and groups, converted, in theory, to the values of equality of Christianity and incompatible with the Hindu social stratification” (Perez 3). On the other hand, it derives from the ideological features of the nascent Indian republic which annexed Goa, a dispensation that refused to acknowledge the reality of caste-based discrimination (Dhadeshwar). To speak of caste, in the thinking of the dominant castes that ran this fledgling state, was to permit caste’s continuing existence. And so talk of caste itself was banished, hampering the ability of those

who experienced caste discrimination to press for the ameliorating attention of the state. This Indian reluctance to discuss caste has changed substantially since the 1990s. The acceptance in 1990 of the Mandal Commission Report by the then Prime Minister V. P. Singh ensured that marginalised castes, almost three-fourths of the population, would gain access to affirmative action. Their demands would thus become a basis for political mobilisation.

The first three of the essays in this collection are particularly marked by an engagement with caste. In his essay, drawing from various stories in *Monsoon*, Dale Luis Menezes sets the ball rolling with an analysis of the *bhatcar-mundcar* relationship (i.e., between landlords and various kinds of laborers). This understudied relationship was fundamental to Goan sociality on the eve of integration into the Indian Union. Indeed, it was not just Devi's work that focussed on the relationships between these two groups. Almost every single Goan writer in Portuguese (and Konkani) made it an object of comment. In his essay Menezes deepens our appreciation of this relationship, arguing convincingly that it was not simply a labor transaction, but a relationship in which caste was inextricably involved; it was/is well-nigh impossible to find a *bhatcar* originating from the labouring caste groups. Furthermore, Menezes extends our appreciation of this relationship outside the agrarian context in which it is often evaluated. While Menezes writes against the nationalist tendency of earlier scholars to look at Goa as an Indian region, and so downplay caste to talk up a common identity within the state and across the nation, he does not ignore productions on the master-slave relationships emerging from India and by international scholars from and of South Asia. This marks a new kind of Goan engagement with India. Some Goans clearly no longer operate with the burden of having to prove their Indian-ness by toeing the nationalist line or parroting one-sided shibboleths. These Goans accept being a part of the Indian state, and hence can work from within to address issue of injustice.

In her contribution, Favita Dias zooms into the village of Curtorim, famed as the granary of Salcete district in South Goa. She examines the role of caste in structuring agrarian relationships, particularly those between *bhatcars* and *mundcars*, and introduces us to the *gãocaria/comunidade*—the governing association of the dominant village clans—that helped give rise to the *bhatcarial* system. In so doing, Dias offers precisely the kind of close reading and ethnographic detail we had hoped for when inviting contributions to this collection, and which we believe will help negotiate the labyrinth of the representation of Goa. Those used to the image of a Goa unmarked by caste will be struck by the strident tone of Dias's critique. For example, Dias is scathing of the best efforts taken in the film to represent the laboring groups of Curtorim. This documentation does not satisfy Dias. On the contrary, for her, its failure to equally critique the relaxed, or *susegad*, lifestyle of the *bhatcars* perpetuates the casteism prevalent in Goan society. Her tone should

be taken as indicative of the magnitude of effort necessary to appreciate the world of the laboring castes, and eventually to help heal the political and affective wounds suffered by these groups.

The third essay in this collection picks up the theme of shame and shaming that we encounter subtly in Menezes' contribution and more robustly in that of Dias. Jason Keith Fernandes discusses the theatrical tradition of *tiatr* and how it evolved to respond to casteist shaming, and the consequent challenge *tiatr* made to this regime of shaming through claims of humiliation. Zooming out from the close focus Dias brings to the study of Goa, Fernandes look at the way the *tiatr* tradition has been influenced by British India and how these influences continue to negatively impact on *tiatr*'s reception among those beholden to Indian nationalism and the values of British Indian nationalist culture. In his discussion of the theatrical antecedents of *tiatr* and the reasons why it continues to be deprecated, caste remains within the crosshairs. His essay also points towards how the Catholic working castes' relative non-engagement with the national has led to the disparagement of *tiatr*. However, as Menezes contends, 'Liberation'—the Indian nationalist term for the forced integration of Goa into the Indian Union—was not 'national' for those of *mundcarial* origins in the way was for the elite classes in South Asia. As ownership of agricultural land continued in the hands of native upper castes after the assertion of Portuguese sovereignty in 1510, the Portuguese administration was seldom directly repressive of the Goan subaltern. Rather the liberation this oppressed group desired was from the indignity of the *bhatcar-mundcar* relationship. That *tiatr* consistently took up this relationship is clearly visible from the fact both Menezes and Dias reference the works of Agostinho Fernandes, whom, in his contribution, Fernandes presents as the father of *tiatr*. The key theme of shame in this essay, also present in Dias's contribution, directs scholars towards a closer examination of the affective worlds of Goans. The *mundcarial* system born of the *gãocarias/comunidades* continues to cast a long shadow over contemporary Goa and has become intertwined with Indian nationalism to the detriment of the working castes and classes, especially those who are Catholic.

Present across the first three contributions are references to the compact between dominant-caste Hindus and Catholics in the period just prior to the end of Portuguese sovereignty. This theme is also picked up in Sandra Lobo's contribution to this collection. Hers is a particularly salutary intervention, especially given the present moment in Goa where political mileage is gained by crafting an image of the Hindu wronged by Portuguese colonialism. Certain stories in *Monsoon* challenge this portrayal, offering vignettes of dominant-caste Hindus both in the metropole and in Goa pursuing their careers and ambitions. These stories would no doubt have drawn from the lives of dominant-caste men, often of the Hindu brahmin Saraswat caste, who travelled to the metropole, frequently on scholarships, and

even married metropolitan women (see, for example, Ferrão and Kandolkar ; and the memoirs of Edila Gaitonde). At home in Goa, influenced by the caste system and caste-inflected British Indian nationalism, such subjects could also maintain the same cool distance between themselves and metropolitan Portuguese—as Devi illustrates in the story ‘Padmini’—they did from working-caste native Goans, regardless of religion (see Kosambi 11 and his description of ritual purification practiced by upper-caste Hindus into the twentieth century after contact with “polluted” Christians, native or otherwise).

It is also to the world of dominant-caste Hindus that our gaze turns in Amita Kanekar’s contribution, which explores the architectural forms of the Brahmanical temple in Goa. Making an argument for these temples that draws on Portuguese architectural historian Paulo Varela Gomes’s work on Catholic churches in Goa (*Whitewash*), Kanekar outlines how these places of worship, especially those controlled by the powerful Saraswat caste, constituted an idiosyncratic type unlike temples in British India. Consisting of an eclectic assemblage of elements adopted from various statal forms in and around Goa, including those of the Bijapuri Sultanate, the Mughal empire, and the Renaissance-Baroque vocabulary of Catholic churches in Goa, these temples demonstrated the confidence of this caste which—pillars of the *Estado da Índia* almost since its very inception—decisively consolidated their power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As the political climate has changed since integration into India, where a British Indian Hindu-ness bears socio-political cachet, so too, she argues, has this temple form come under threat, as these buildings are now modified to reflect a Hindu identity consonant with British Indian understandings.

What is particularly compelling about her argument, however, is her identification in these temple forms of a Goan nationalism moulded within Portuguese Indian parameters. The Goan temples took inspiration from the Catholic churches in Goa, which in their time had themselves in earlier centuries taken inspiration from the architecture of the Deccan Sultanates, because “the dominant Brahmanical castes saw themselves as the modern inheritors of a Goan heritage”, Goan-ness in this case takes its aesthetic cue from Portuguese Indian Catholicism. A significantly different political and cultural logic from British India is at play here.

Kanekar’s article continues two threads initiated by contributions placed earlier in the collection. The first is in her identification of the temple *qua* juridical personality as a *bhatcar*, whose *mazans*, or managing owners, interacted with a variety of service castes and groups. The second, as in Fernandes’s contribution, is her analysis of how nationalism in British India influenced socio-political articulations in Goa. Indeed, Kanekar’s observation is the sharper, in that she clearly locates Indian nationalism as a *de facto* Hindu nationalism. In making both

these points Kanekar joins Menezes, and ourselves, in critiquing the tendencies of earlier scholarship on Goa, arguing in her essay that too often “popular ideas, or rather prejudices, have been commonly passed off as historical fact”.

Drawing from Devi’s short story “The Subsidy,” the legal historian Luís Pedroso de Lima Cabral de Oliveira turns our gaze towards another element of dominant-caste society in pre-Indian Goa, the *descendentes*—persons born in the subcontinental territories of the *Estado da Índia* but largely of metropolitan Portuguese ancestry. It should be noted, however, that the language of caste is not part of Oliveira’s methodological toolkit, though one might argue that if the local caste groups were converted to Catholicism, the *descendentes* themselves were converted into a caste (at least, such was the view of Portuguese geographer Orlando Ribeiro in 1956 [1999: 80]). Of the various groups that composed the *Estado da Índia*, and particularly of Goa, the *descendentes* have perhaps been the most sinned against, portrayed negatively by both metropolitans and their caste rivals in Goa. As a counterbalance, Oliveira draws our attention to the little-known 1908 novel *A Neta do Cozinheiro* (The Cook’s Granddaughter), written by the *descendente* Luís da Providência (the pseudonym of Constantino José de Brito [1836–1914]). In what Oliveira frames as this ongoing project of defamation, Devi was no shrinking violet but an active participant in the discursive marginalisation of the *descendentes*. We believe that this essay to be one of the first in English to engage with this group generously and is an important contribution to the Anglophone scholarship on Goa for this reason (see also Bastos). In his rich introduction to the *descendentes* within Goan society, Oliveira alludes to the complex politics of eighteenth-century Goa, and the nativism of its elites, which laid the foundation for the Goan nationalism to which Kanekar also alludes. Indeed, the idea of an independent Goan nation, a possibility first articulated during the American revolutions did not die until after 1975 when, with the fall of the *Estado Novo*, Portugal finally conceded sovereignty over Goa and other parts of the former *Estado da Índia* to the Indian Union.

Oliveira’s discussion of the representations of *descendentes* also makes one thing strikingly clear. The portrayal of Goa as *Dourada* and *Portuguesa* was not a persistent metropolitan exercise. Indeed, in the nineteenth century as now, some metropolitan Portuguese have been particularly invested in orientalizing Goa and Goans. It is to this matter of the representation of Goa, particularly in the period prior to annexation, that Sandra Lobo’s intellectual history of Devi makes a most interesting contribution. Lobo engages in particular with the context behind Devi and Seabra’s two-volume *A Literatura Indo-Portuguesa* [Indo-Portuguese Literature] of 1971, so often the first port of call for interested scholars first reading Goan literary production in Portuguese. Lobo takes up the relationship with Lusotropicalism of Devi and her husband, and intellectual partner, Manuel Seabra. Briefly stated Lusotropicalism is the idea that Portuguese colonialism was different

and created a unique *modus vivendi* in the Portuguese world that minimized the difference between colonizers and colonized. First articulated by the Brazilian scholar Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987), Lusotropicalism was taken up by the *Estado Novo* and lies at the heart of representations of *Goa Portuguesa*. Perhaps for this association with a fallen authoritarian regime Lusotropicalism is vehemently cashiered rather than analysed dispassionately. A particularly pertinent question is why someone like Devi, as a native Goan Catholic, might be attracted to the myths of Lusotropicalism. One possible answer is that in Freyre's work—filled though it is with shaky premises and untenable conclusions—offers a positive image of the Catholic Goan, as opposed to the depersonalised cultural gallimaufry, cringing under the gaze of the 'pure' *savarna* (or dominant caste) Hindu and mortified this ego ideal might doubt "the purity of [the Goans'] race", that we find in Tristão de Bragança Cunha's classic polemic *The Denationalization of Goans* (4) and beyond. Lobo herself is no proponent of Freyre's ideas, but her discussion of Devi's engagement with it offers a valuable opportunity for us to re-evaluate Lusotropicalism, and the way it was, and can be, used by persons from the overseas provinces to assert themselves within the metropolitan frame.

This vein in Lobo's essay allows us to continue to interrogate the methodological nationalism informing many post-colonial epistemologies. Are many post-colonial formulations not arguments to secure the interests of national elites and enable the fixing of formerly colonized peoples within national boundaries, often within punishing local hierarchies? Do they not keep people in their place, restricting their ability to move across formerly imperial territories—which were, in theory at least, open to free movement—and merely entrench the power of local elites rather than addressing questions of rights and justice (Hindess, "Citizenship")? Such a position would find support in the argument put forward recently by Gary Wilder (*Freedom Time*), who draws attention to the fact that anti-colonial leaders like Léopold Senghor and Aimé Césaire did not necessarily call for a system of discreet, independent nation-states as a condition for freedom, but called for justice *within* the empire; an appeal that was never satisfied.

Here is an opportune moment to explain our use of the term 'Indian Union' throughout this introduction. In its discursive struggle for Goa, the *Estado Novo* scrupulously referred to the country commonly named India as the 'União Indiana' (which seems to be the preferred Portuguese translation of the "Union of India", more properly the designation of the independent Dominion of India between 1957 and 1950 and then the government of the succeeding Republic of India). The reason is obvious. Goa is and always has been India in the geographic sense (however much a figure such as the Indian novelist Nirad C. Chaudhari should have wished in 1965 that "a miniature continental drift" might take detach Goa from the subcontinent, creating a new Madeira or Azores in the Indian Ocean and ridding India of its pesky

denationals (qtd. in Porobo 62). Salazarist reference to the “Indian Union” was a means to resist the political teleology implicit in the shorthand “India” (see Bravo, “The Case of Goa”). Our usage is different. By referencing the country through this mouthful of a name we seek to draw attention to a variety of features. First, to highlight that the Indian state is not a single nation, but consists of a variety of nations within a state. To erase this diversity would be to blithely lend our support to the ever-growing threat of Hindu nationalism, that sees the country uniquely as a Hindu nation-state. This term also seeks to reference the internal tensions present in this country’s political arrangement ever since British India’s independence and the consolidation of the post-colonial state. Always veering between centralisation and federalism, the federal nature of the country was recently highlighted by the Chief Minister of the State of Tamil Nadu who, drawing on Article 1(1) of the Constitution of India, referred to the government in Delhi as the “union,” rather than “central,” government (Janardhan). That our post-colonial preference should echo the *Estado Novo*’s formulation is perhaps just one more reason to rethink the summary dismissal of the *Estado Novo*’s arguments in the face of the aggression of 1961 as we thread our way out of Goa’s representational labyrinth.

There has been ever greater attention to critiquing the formulae for the discursive representation of Goa since Rochelle Pinto outlined the way these were developed in the context of British India’s influence in the region. Such attention can, however—especially for largely Anglophone scholars unfamiliar with the nuances of Portuguese history, whether global or metropolitan—make for a certain bias; to read Portuguese Indian history through the lens of its relations with British India and ignore the influences and interactions with metropolitan Portugal and the larger Portuguese world. In this volume this bias is corrected by Oliveira and Lobo, and the critical value of their interventions cannot be overemphasized.

Earlier in this introduction, in the context of Dias’s article, we suggested the need for greater focus on the affective worlds of Goans. Cielo Festino’s essay opens avenues for this kind of research by exploring the issue of trauma in Goa. There is no dearth of trauma studies on South Asia, and most certainly regarding the Indian state. Trauma studies have explored the situations in the Punjab, at the time of Partition; in Kashmir, in the context of India’s brutal military occupation of the territory; and more recently following brutality against Muslims in the state of Gujarat in 2002. And yet, despite the violent nature of the integration of Goa into the Indian Union, the sudden rupture of a quincentennial legal tradition, the destruction of the Portuguese language, and the effective disappearance of long-standing cultural traditions and/or their transformation into cultural clichés for tourist consumption, these studies seem to have sidestepped Goa almost entirely, a notable exception being the passing references to trauma in the work of Susana Sardo (46, 57-8, 136-7). Where there has been talk of trauma, it has been, as Festino

points out, in a language first initiated by the Catholic native elite in the nineteenth century as they struggled to craft a Goan nationalism, and then appropriated by Hindu dominant castes, as they accommodated themselves to the Hindu sensibilities of the Indian nation-state.

No doubt this scholarly silence is a product of the energy spent justifying the Indian nationalist project of subsuming Goa into itself. But it is also a result of Goa being viewed as an Indian pleasure periphery (Routledge; Ferrão). Until recently even scholars seemed to have found it difficult to appreciate there may be problems in Goa, perhaps because their measure of misery was always the abyssal poverty and violence found in parts of the former British India. Indeed, one can understand the difficulty Portuguese scholars may have experienced in approaching the subject, for to do so in the intensely revisionary environment of the Portuguese Third Republic (which replaced the *Estado Novo* dictatorship) might expose them to charges of fascist sympathies. Perhaps the fact that Festino is an Argentinian scholar working in Brazil allows for the distance necessary to broach this topic otherwise sensitive to both Goans and/or Indians, on the one hand, and metropolitan Portuguese on the other.

Festino's discussion on trauma could usefully be placed in conversation with the strident position that Dias takes. In the latter's discussion there is a suggestion of the *mundcars* of Curtorim having a "false sense of pride" in the romantic image of Curtorim's agrarian traditions. Is it necessary, one wonders to judge the *mundcars* so harshly? Could it be that, in their way, they too deal with the trauma involved with integration into the Indian Union, and the pride in their village, whose reputation built by their labour, is a way in which they not only cope with this trauma, but make it a basis from which they can mount a defence of their own dignity? After all, as Fernandes suggests, the securing of dignity is very much an ambition of the subaltern Goan.

In the concluding article, Paul Melo e Castro's considers *Monsoon* as a cycle of short stories rather than simply a collection. His analysis reflects the way in which we sought to articulate a path out of the labyrinth of representation. Castro argues that "Short story cycles swap the forward-driving, telic, causal chain of the novel for a digressive sense of time and place and a recursive design that prompts an *ex post facto* ordering of inter-story relations. Devi's stories thus offer a tentative model to approach Goa. Much scholarly work, and popular opinion, spurred on by an unarticulated, and perhaps unconscious, Hindu nationalism have assumed the inevitability of Goa being integrated into its neighbour. However, this need not necessarily have been the case. Susana Sardo is one of the few scholars to observe the anomaly of Goa becoming a part of the Indian Union (*Guerras*). Sardo argues that the singularity of Goa's postcolonial condition: of not becoming an independent

country—the ‘normal’ trajectory of colonial territories gaining independence from a metropole—and instead being integrated into another equally postcolonial territory, has not, in fact, been sufficiently theorized. Questioning this forward-driving, telic logic opens, therefore, the possibility of appreciating Goa through a series of digressions, or, as we suggested earlier, a focus on microhistories that does not seek to create a national—whether Goan or Indian—history for this territory and the peoples that live within it. Indeed, this is exactly what Castro proposes in his contribution, analysing “the main ‘centrifugal’ and ‘centripetal’ forces at work in *Monsoon*”, “the way characters, storylines, and situations are pushed apart, and experiences, plights, and places align.” Such a methodology, rather than a nationalist one, would be more appropriate to analyse this forlorn territory so that, as Castro suggests, we might, like the monsoon rains, be able to “refract the complexity of the multi-faceted” nature of the Goan polity.

The gemmological metaphor with which Castro finishes provides another point on which our section coincides with the Greek myth, for some versions hold that rather than golden string it was in fact a jewelled thread Ariadne gave Theseus. Indeed, the more we investigated translations of this myth, the more obscure Ariadne’s gift became. In some versions the thread was golden, in others the clew was red, and in other translations still it was jewelled. Here is a perfect metaphor for the difficulty in engaging with such a multilingual space as Goa. Just as we, having no Greek, cannot check the “original” myth for ourselves, scholars who lack one of Goa’s major languages—Konkani, Portuguese, English or Marathi—rely on hearsay, stereotype and filtered opinion regarding Goans who expressed themselves in other languages, with other frames of reference, symbolic vocabularies, and ideological investments. In this context, it is these multi-faceted individual instances, polished like jewels, or indeed appreciated as jewels, which might furnish a thread to exit the representational labyrinth to which Goa has been banished over the decades. Our appeal here is to a richer internal discussion in Goa. Yet doing justice to the local does not mean ignoring wider debates and the understandings they make possible, just as Devi’s stories connect Goa to Bombay, Lisbon, Rio de Janeiro and beyond. Though we recognise the vast differences between the two situations, might the experience of the Philippines across two different colonialisms and between several languages offer points of comparison with which to think through Goa’s pre- and post-1961 trajectory? This is a project that we would look forward to collaborating on with interested scholars more conversant with Filipino history.

This section is not without its shortcomings. For example, it might appear the focus of this collection is inordinately on the Catholic. We would argue, however, that this is not in itself a problem. As Fernandes (*Citizenship*) has argued elsewhere, Catholics in Goa are a woefully understudied group. Where they have been studied it is largely the Catholic elite who are the focus. This collection instead tries to

achieve a balance between Catholic elites and subalterns, all the while privileging a perspective that attends to subaltern agendas. This multifocal attention to Catholicism is therefore not inappropriate, since—so often buoyed by nationalist methodologies—scholars have often attempted to domesticate Catholicism in Goa by stressing its syncretic nature, especially as practiced by subaltern Catholic groups. The result is an image of Catholics in Goa as something of hybrid monsters: neither authentically Catholic because of their syncretism nor authentically Indian because of their Catholicism. In his introduction to *Monsoon*, and elsewhere, Fernandes has made an argument for the Catholicity of Goa. In this volume too, Menezes points out that “Devi suggests that the indifference of the *bhatcar* class can give away to fellowship and community by the recognition of common humanity.” Could this fellowship be possible precisely because of the influence of Christianity that, as the *Estado Novo* argued, distinguished *India Portuguesa* from the rest of the subcontinent? Caste may have continued to mark relations in Goa, even among Catholics. However, as Fernandes has argued (*Evangelii Gaudium*), it did allow for a rhetorical space to critique the actions of the elite, a space not otherwise open within the casteist notions of justice that dominate the subcontinent elsewhere.

In the manner of the cycle, we will conclude where we began, yet changed by our itinerary like the Chandracanta character in Devi’s stories. *Monsoon* is one of the most nuanced works in Goan Portuguese literature, moving from high to low across the social groups of Goa’s *Velhas Conquistas*—the central territories forming the core of Goa from the late 1500 until 1961. In her stories, Devi is most occupied in criticising what she saw as Goa’s internal problems, the attitudes it behoved Goans alone to change. Her work, we might say, represents a regionalism shorn of the defensive, reactionary chauvinism that often characterizes such an outlook. Riffing off Dirk Wiemann’s idea that, contrary to the “national” novel, the short-story genre permits “a thinking beyond the nation state”, Castro argues that, in Devi’s case at least, it admits of representation at the much more immediate, local level of villages, neighbourhoods, families, peer groups, and often isolated individuals, the intimate methodology for approaching Goa we championed above. The brings us round to the title of our section: Goa before India. The preposition should be understood in at least two possible construals: the temporal (as work here is focused on Goa before integration into the Indian Union) and the locational (in that in these essays Goa is brought to the foreground, its specificity understood on its own terms and not made to fit any procrustean category deriving from British Indian experience, or contingent on the politics of the Third Portuguese Republic for legitimacy). It is thus, avoiding nationalist mystifications, whether they be Portuguese or Indian, that we might, like Theseus, find our golden clew and thread our way out of the labyrinth towards the light.

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