

Goans on the Move

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Goa has long been a place of transit. Since time immemorial people from across the Indian subcontinent have passed in and out of the territory. Europeans, including the Portuguese who gave Goa the epithet, ‘Rome of the East’, have come, gone and returned again, as have visitors from further afield, along the old Bahia-Lisbon-Goa route of the caravels or down the Hippie trail of the 1970s. Goans themselves have migrated over the ages, whether in flight, forced by economic circumstances, or for personal advancement. Whatever the particular push-and-pull factors in each case might be, these migrations often had common destinations, leading in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the formation of diaspora communities in the main cities of India, principally Mumbai, as well as in the former English and Portuguese colonies of East Africa. After the independence of these colonies in the 1960s and 1970s, many Goan Africans would find themselves again on the move, to Lisbon or Brazil, or to Anglophone countries in the Americas, Europe, Oceania and beyond. The various movements of these Goan subjects, the preservation or deliquescence of ties to home, identity and language, in short, the ever-changing fate of those in diaspora, have given rise to a large body of poems, novels, short stories and personal narratives that represent these experiences as a process of what Leela Gandhi terms “mutual transformation” (129), one affecting destination and origin, host community and migrant, family and society.

In order to reflect on this “house of many mansions”, as we have characterized Goan literature elsewhere (Melo e Castro and Festino, 2017), this

volume presents an assortment of writing on, and by, “Goans on the Move”: scholarly articles, interviews, personal narratives, book reviews, and a selection of poems, novel excerpts, short stories, including English and Portuguese originals and translations of Portuguese, English and Konkani works. Between them, the works of fiction and scholarly articles in Portuguese included in the volume come from different parts of the world: Goa, Mozambique, Brazil, Portugal. For this reason, they present different renderings of the language that has been respected as marks of each cultural identity.

As a body, these narratives can be divided into two rough halves: those that portray Goans as a “transnational diaspora” (as discussed by Brenda Coutinho in the current volume) that crossed continents and those that describe Goa’s “intra-territorial diaspora” that spread out across the Indian subcontinent, be it northwards to Maharashtra or south to coastal Karnataka (cf. the article by Mabel Cynthia Mascarenhas). These movements outwards of Goan migrants were shaped by the realities engendered by Portuguese colonialism and its various effects on Goan society, economy and culture. The complex ambiguities of the Portuguese, of foreign influence and native assimilation, can be seen in the work, *Kristapurānā* [Discourse of the Coming of Jesus Christ], written by the English Jesuit, Fr. Thomas Stevens, a foundational text in Goan culture. Such issues are the subject matter of Suresh Amonkar’s *Goenche Sansarikaran* [The Globalisation of Goa] (2017), written in Nagri Konkani and reviewed for this volume by Kaustubh Naik.

The different levels at which Coutinho and Mascarenhas deploy the term ‘diaspora’ indicate both its evocativeness and its knottily protean meaning. Appearing in scholarly discussions throughout the social sciences, and increasingly prevalent in cultural and literary analysis, this suggestive term has inspired work from scholars worldwide, not least in the broad field of Lusophone Studies, as attests Darlene J. Sadlier’s *The Portuguese Speaking Diaspora: Seven Centuries of Literature and the Arts* (2016), reviewed for this volume by Paul Melo e Castro. The range of work in the present issue of the *InterDISCIPLINARY Journal of Portuguese Diaspora Studies* clearly demonstrates the truth of Shackleton’s observation that “diaspora” is a highly productive term with epistemological implications (ix). Diaspora can encompass theoretical reflections on how movement affects culture, as in Rosa Maria Perez’s study of Goan women participating in satyagrahi and the Pan-Indian freedom movement. Diaspora can provide a framework for discussing the reformulation of literature at home and abroad, as in Regina Célia Pereira da Silva’s article on the journey of the Goan legend, “Mogarém”, between various cultures and literatures. Diaspora also implies a linguistic process of adaptation and exchange, as Carla María Ataíde Maciel discusses in her article on Goan and other Asian communities in contact with Portuguese and the Bantu *Sprachbund* in Mozambique. Concomitantly, as Jason Keith Fernandes argues in his significantly titled article, “Citizenship on the Move”, the notion of movement not only includes the cross-border dynamics of culture and cultural identity, but also allows us to

examine localized citizenship acts and practices, which can affect changes in relationships between members of a given community.

Migrants often become writers to come to terms with their own situations. Experimental biographical narratives soon give rise to literary ones, as shown by writer Jessica Falcão's own personal account of the psychological impact of an upbringing between cultures and how it has influenced her writing. Robert Newman's reflections on the life of a family of Goan migrants lead him to wonder how migration affects people and ends with a rhetorical question that raises a crucial issue in the experience and representation of diasporic communities: "Are they not condemned to sing the blues forever, since they belong neither here nor there?"

Yet the diaspora experience is often represented as a convivial one, as attests the call for contributions to the second volume of *Goa Masala: An Anthology of Stories by Canadian Goans*, which shall pay homage to the sesquicentennial of Canada's independence. Nevertheless, as per Edith Melo Furtado's review of the first volume of *Goa Masala* (2010), which touches on the profits and losses of intercontinental migration, diaspora can also be both agonistic and antagonistic, to use the well-known terms of Homi Bhabha (1998), depending on the reasons for departure and the conditions of reception in the host country. Augusto Pinto discusses the discomfort of diaspora subjects in his insightful review of Roanna Gonsalves's short-story collection, *The Permanent Resident* (2016). The difficulties confronting Goan migrants to the metropolis of Maharashtra, and the relative image of their own tiny home, are portrayed in the Bombay stories of Augusto do Rosário Rodrigues, Maria Elsa da Rocha and Epitácio Pais, translated from the Portuguese by Paul Melo e Castro, and in the story, "The Housewarming", by Manohar Hirba Sardesai, introduced and translated from Marathi into English by Heta Pandit. Likewise, in their article, Alice Santiago Faria and Sidh Losa Mendiratta map the impact Goan migration had on the city of Bombay, in particular on the pre-existent Catholic community, which came to be known as East Indians. Along the same lines, the hardships of Goans across the Arabian Sea is one of the themes of Hema Naik's novel, *Bhogdand*, which depicts the life of migrants in Kuwait (exemplified by the chapter translated from the Konkani by Augusto Pinto for this volume), while in "A Morte do Lulu", translated into English for this volume by Paul Melo e Castro as "Goodbye Lulu", Leopoldo da Rocha represents the life of those in the diaspora who feel forever dislocated. For its part, "The Curator of Cans" by R. Benedito Ferrão (translated for this volume into Portuguese by Duarte Drumond Braga) relates the experience of a young Goan student in America trying not to lose himself in an indifferent, materialist world. In the short story, "The Bed" (translated for this volume into Portuguese by Viviane Souza Madeira as "A Cama"), Himanshu Burte narrates the selling of a bed which symbolizes the pain involved in the breaking up of a household and the anguish provoked by an uncertain future that will be lived away from Goa.

Just as Goans have fanned out across the world from their tiny home territory, so Goan literature displays concentric rings of diaspora experience. The way in which the life of those left behind is affected by family members moving into the diaspora is masterfully portrayed by Damodar Mauzo's short story, "These Are My Children", originally in Konkani, and translated from English into Portuguese here by Joana Passos.

Another central issue in diaspora experience, often finding representation in literature on this theme, is the reformulation of the relationship between migrant and home and the creation of a new cultural identity, which is discussed by Ben Antao in his interview with Garmes, Melo e Castro and Festino; Peter Nazareth in his e-mail exchange with R. Benedito Ferrão; Antonio Gomes in conversation with Rochelle Almeida; and Carla María Ataíde Maciel and Sílvia Bragança in the testimonies given to Paul Melo e Castro. No less important is the relationship between fellow Goans in the diasporic community, as depicted by Ben Antao with no little sarcasm in his short story, "Goan Identity", or as portrayed by Selma Carvalho in her highly perceptive and no less critical story, "Six Months of Winter", written for this volume and translated into Portuguese by Viviane Souza Madeira.

Migrants might leave their home country alone or in groups. Many Goans who belonged to the local intelligentsia left individually for pastures new. According to Edward Said (13) dislocation from what is 'customary' to the migrant intellectual enables him to regard everyday life at home from a 'provisional and foreign' point of view, which allows independence of thought and expression. The analysis of such migrant viewpoints is found in this volume in Sandra Ataíde Lobo's study of Tristão de Bragança Cunha (1891–1958), often referred to as the father of Goan nationalism; Fátima da Silva Gracias's overview of the painters, António Xavier de Trindade (1870–1935) and Angela Trindade (1909–1980); Daniela Spina's work on expatriate intellectuals such as Guilherme Joaquim de Moniz Barreto (1863–1896); and Luís Pedroso de Lima Cabral de Oliveira's review of Fernando Jorge Colaço's *December 18–19, 1961: Before, During and After*, a memoir of the author's life as a jurist in Goa, Portugal and Mozambique. Our volume also features Cibebe Aldrovandi's review of Mohan Ranade's autobiography, *A Senda do Dever* (2014), translated into Portuguese by Ave Cleto Afonso. In it freedom fighter Mohan Ranade narrates his life as a prisoner both in Goa and in Portugal during the process of Goa's integration into India.

In the age of high colonialism, waves of ordinary Goans departed home, headed in particular for various spaces in the erstwhile British Empire, quickly forming new diaspora groups outside India. The Goan community of East Africa is the topic of Selma Carvalho's *Into the Diaspora Wilderness* (2010) and *A Railway Runs Through: Goans of British East-Africa 1865–1980* (2014). In her review of Carvalho's books, Viviane Souza Madeira quotes James Clifford's idea that any diaspora is both "rooted and routed" (1994) in the sense that, while drawing on their native inheritance, diasporic subjects develop new forms of community consciousness and solidarity in their journey far from their original homes.

Similarly, Duarte Drumond Braga observes that the women's voices in Carvalho's *Into the Diaspora Wilderness* (2010), which mixes personal narratives with more essayistic and sociological discourses, do not represent a single narrative voice but rather the voice of an emergent community. The afterlife of this East African community is shown in *Goa Masala: An Anthology of Stories by Canada Goans* (2010), edited by Ben Antao, and reviewed here by Edith Melo Furtado. It features personal narratives and short stories written by Goans who, unable for a variety of reasons to continue in the ex-British and Portuguese colonies in Africa after independence, decided to make new lives in Canada.

It is widely recognized that Goan literature is multilingual in nature (consisting equally of works written in Konkani, English, Marathi and Portuguese, among others), as observed by Vishram Gupte in his insightful article, "Identity, Exile and Literature in Goa". It is also multipolar in origin. As Joana Passos and Hélder Garmes and Cielo G. Festino argue in their respective articles, Goan literature consists both of diasporic writing and work written at home. While the former might be written thousands of miles away, Goa remains a key theme, either explicitly in the case of historical and memorialistic fiction set in the Goa of the past, or, as in the case of literature written at a geographic or chronological distance, implicitly as the comparator or base point for character formation and development. Antonio Gomes's novel, *The Sting of Peppercorns* (2010), a family saga based on the author's youth that spans the tail end of Portuguese colonialism and the first decades of Indian government, exemplifies the explicit trend. Roanna Gonsalves's stories about Indians in Australia are more implicit, Goa often being in the migration history of the characters' families, but not necessarily of the characters themselves.

In the case of literature written in Goa itself, though the writer might never have left home, migration continues to be a major frame of reference. We see migrant figures from different historical periods in the fiction of Beatriz Lobo e Faria and Damodar Mauzo. The stories of Lobo e Faria first appeared in the Portuguese-language press in the 30s, 40s and 50s. The selection reprinted here features characters in Africa, going to Africa, returning from Africa, or supported by family members resident there. In this way they show the importance of this current of migration to the Goan imaginary of the mid-twentieth century. Later fiction shows the growing importance of the Persian Gulf as a destination for Goans. Damodar Mauzo's novel, *Karmelin*, published in Konkani in 1981 and in English translation in 2004, deals with sufferings of an ayah in Dubai. Dale Luis Menezes analyses the novel for this volume, setting its representation in the context of long-standing ideas about the migration of lower-caste, female Catholics in Goan society. The protagonist of José Lourenço's tale, "Serafim", is also a 'gulfie'. The story narrates the eponymous hero's dream homecoming to Margão, though it ends on a note of tragic mystery that suggests no true return will ever materialize. Included in the original, it has also been translated into Portuguese for this volume by Cibele Aldrovandi. The questions of departure and return around which all these narratives revolve is revisited by Brenda

Coutinho in her article, “Return of the Goan Diaspora: Deconstructing a Myth”. The author argues that the ultimate homecoming of migrants is largely a myth, in the sense that the children of Goans born in the diaspora feel a decreasing connection with the land of their parents and rarely return to settle.

Our overall argument here is that these varied narratives can be read as a discursive network. On this view, they complete one another and offer, in an overt or tacit manner, alternative ways of understanding diaspora and the diasporic or migrant subject as feeling freed from or imprisoned by the past, out of place in the new context or in step with his new international environment. Considering this production as a body raises key questions: who has access to representation? The bourgeoisie alone? Are themes such as marginality, racism and discrimination broached? Who broaches them and how? Do the unprivileged ever speak or do others speak for them and, if so, as in Gayatri Spivak’s classic formulation, can they be said to speak at all? What about new hyphenated identities? Are they celebratory, problematic or both? Do they deconstruct fixed notions of home and identity? Our premise here is that, in their discussions of uprooting, displacement and reterritorialization, Goan diasporic narratives ultimately view alterity as a constitutive element of Goanness, both because, since 1510 (if not before), Goa has been decisively shaped by outside forces and because, for the centuries after up until the present day, Goans have flowed out across the world, changing and being changed by all the far-flung places they have come to call home.

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