Some Considerations on Goan Literature Written at Home and Abroad

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Abstract. The main aim of this article is to reflect upon the identity of Goan literature in terms of literary production at home and abroad, i.e., the narratives of authors who live, write and publish in Goa and of migrants abroad who have made Goa a main theme of their work. We define migrant writers as those who have migrated from Goa to other parts of the world or who were born away from Goa but have maintained close ties with the land of their forefathers. We define their literary production as ‘migration literature.’

Keywords: Goan literature, migration literature, literary system, literary works, readership

In Transit
Whenever a population is dislocated both beyond and within its national frontiers, all the cultural elements involved are transformed, literature among them. In his now classic text of postcolonial studies, The Location of Culture (1994), Homi Bhabha called for a new way of addressing cultures beyond the national model: “The very concepts of homogenous national cultures, the consensual or contiguous transmission of historical traditions, or ‘organic’ ethnic communities are in a profound process of redefinition” (5). After Bhabha, Rebecca Walkowitz (“The Location of Literature” 528) argues that in our present day, literature, too, is in a process of change and should be understood in terms of its heterogeneity and discontinuity rather than in terms of any homogeneous, monolingual, national literary tradition.

As we see it, this does not mean that organic literary identities mix to the point of losing their distinctive features. Neither does it mean that they can co-exist without any kind of pressure to homogenize motivated by diverse causes, mainly for political and economic reasons. Rather, we argue that they have gone through reconfigurations of different kinds, whose dynamic is quite evident, but
whose consequences are complex, making it difficult to point out the future scenario of literary traditions as we know them today.

In the so-called “Age of Globalization”, writers can write about home from the other side of the globe in both the language of the homeland and of the host country, just as one language can be associated with more than one culture, as is the case of the Portuguese language or the English language, or more than one language can be spoken in the same culture. Walkowitz (“The Location of Literature” 528) observes that due to the flow of migration across nations and continents, literary studies are reviewing the way in which books are written, classified, published, translated and anthologized, as well as the diverse ways in which they are received across geographies. Famous writers and their works no longer belong to a single literary system but to several at the same time. A case in point would be that of Goan author, Jessica Faleiro. When asked whether she would define herself as a Goan, Faleiro illustrated the multilayered identity of the writer on the move intent on defining herself not in terms of definite cultures but of her intercultural experience:

I’m afraid you’re not going to get a Yes/No answer from me! I identify myself first as an Adult Third Culture Kid writer, then as a Goan (by virtue only of my parents identifying as Goan) diaspora writer. I also speak about writing from certain ‘wounds’ or areas of ‘trauma’ when writing the self – which integrates itself into every narrative. These wounds are (in no particular order) being Indian, Goan (yes, two separate centres of trauma), Catholic and a Woman. There are a few more, but these four are the ones that are at the centre of my writing so far.

To complicate things, I’ll add that ‘people’ have categorised me as a Goan writer. When they ask, as you did, the reply above is what I provide. When they don’t ask, I don’t tell. Not everyone wants to understand the complexities of a person. I don’t feel affiliated to one country, which can provide discomfort in today’s world that seeks to define everyone by political boundaries. Maybe that will change one day, but for now there is no sense within me of Goanness per se, whatever that is, but of humanity. (Faleiro)

If we consider the historical role translation had in literature, this process of internationalization has always been present in every culture to some degree. What happens nowadays is that it has become much more intense—so much so that, as Walkowitz claims in her significantly titled work, *Born Translated* (2012), some works are actually born translated, in the sense that they aim at being translated from the moment of their conception. These are not works which are written in English and easily published, but mainly works in languages of more limited circulation that only when translated into European national languages with a wider reach, like English or Spanish, or also into languages that start to be internationalized, like Chinese or Arabic, can become available to a wider audience. This is why the publication of a translation sometimes precedes publication in the original language. It very much depends on whether these works, as Walkowitz goes on to add, belong to the mass market, the prestige culture or avant-garde communities.
This is no less true of Goa, whose culture and literature have always been marked by two factors that show its heterogeneity. Firstly, its plurilingualism, as is the case of the whole Indian subcontinent, since in Goa there have traditionally been literary narratives in four languages: Portuguese, Konkani, English and Marathi, among others of less visibility such as Urdu, Gujarati and, more recently, Hindi. Not only do some writers sometimes choose to write in their second language, say Portuguese or English, for example, rather than their first language, Konkani principally, in order that their works might have a wider circulation, but these works are also sometimes translated into the other languages of Goa. Secondly is the fact that Goan people are forever on the move. As Goan poet Manohar Sardessai (278) says in his poem, “We are the World Wanderers”, there is “an unseen, unbroken thread/That runs through our history” and has to do with Goa being a place of transit, an important port on the west coast of the Indian subcontinent even before the arrival of the Portuguese, and connected to the rest of Asia, Oceania, Africa, Europe and America. This mobility has to do with Goans receiving people from abroad, as was the case of the Portuguese colonization (1510–1961). Also, cultural, political and particularly economic factors, through time, have forced many of its inhabitants to migrate to other parts of the subcontinent, or to other continents (Sard; Gracia). For example, they went to the British and Portuguese colonies in Africa, and later on mainly to Arabian and Anglophone countries and, in this last case, in particular England, Canada and the United States, turning Goa from a micro into a macro community. These migrants formed communities in their new countries of residence that kept Goan customs and ties to Goa alive, though this did not prevent the migrant trying to integrate into the host country. Likewise, their going away had an impact in the country of origin at a social and economic level.

To use Walkowitz’s nomenclature (“The Location of Literature”), it can be argued that this kind of experience gave rise to a Goan “migration literature”, a literary form that addresses migration thematically (the ties with the culture back home; settling down in the host country; the figure of the migrant in the home country) and includes works not only by first-generation migrant authors but also by second-generation authors, who, though they were born outside Goa, were affected by their parents’ cultural and geographic dislocation. Rather than an actual location, for them Goa is a construct of the imagination. In this sense migration literature also includes the works of those writers who have never left home but have made of migration one of the main themes of their literature since, on the one hand, Goans’ constant emigration affects life back home in Goa, while, on the other hand the new countries of residence, where Goans settle down, also become part of the Goan imaginary.

Goan Authors: Bridging the Geographical, Cultural and Linguistic Divide
As Goan literature is associated with more than one language and more than one geographic or cultural location, it looks beyond the national frontiers, and outside the national literary model—whatever these frontiers have been, the ones
set by the Portuguese, during their presence on the subcontinent, or nowadays, the ones established by India. Often the language of the country of origin and destination are the same, as is the case of Goan writers who wrote in Portuguese and moved to Portugal, or who write in English and moved to Canada, or in Konkani and moved to other Indian states. However, as already pointed out, authors might write in more than one language or might have been translated into several others. Whether writing at home or abroad, in one or more of the languages of Goa, they all count as Goan writers because a familial or historical relation with Goa is reflected in their literature. Nonetheless, they may write about Goa from different perspectives. A lot of them look back at a bucolic homeland to which they aspire to return one day, as in the case of the first-generation migrants, who migrated to Portugal or to Portuguese and British colonies in Africa. Others look at Goa as a place they have learnt about through their parents’ stories or their own vacations spent in Goa, as is the case of second-generation migrants, who were born abroad. There still are writers who see Goa as a place they leave behind, but do not aspire to return, as usually happens with more recent migrants to the West, who choose to settle in the new country for good.

Then, the diasporic movement has made even more conspicuous the change in the relation between the three pillars of any literary system: author, book and readers. On the one hand, even more frequently than in the past, authors might be said to belong to two literary systems, that of their country of origin and that of their host country, or even to multiple countries and places, depending on the way in which their social and literary identities are constituted. Often there is a disjunction between the place where the writers write their books, and the public to which these books are addressed (Walkowitz, “The Location of Literature” 531). Authors belong to their own country by birth and because they are read there, while they are also associated with their country of residence where they may be also read and published. A case in point would be that of the professor, author and editor, Peter Nazareth. Born to Goan parents in Africa, he considers himself a Ugandan or African writer, though his family kept their ties with Goa and instilled in him a great affection for and familiarity with their land of origin, so much so that in 1983 he put together one of the most important anthologies of Goan literature by Goan authors from around the world, Goan Literature: A Modern Reader (since reprinted as Pivoting on the Point of Return: Modern Goan Literature). Initially he omitted his own writing because he does not consider himself to be a Goan writer. He only included it at the behest of his editor, as he explains in the interview with R. Benedeto Ferrão in this volume.

Goan Writers in Portuguese
During the colonial period, many Goan authors wrote in Portuguese and forged links with Portuguese literature. As observed by Vimala Devi and Manuel de Seabra in A Literatura Indo-Portuguesa (205), most of the best-known works of Goan literature in Portuguese, written in the nineteenth century, were published
outside Goa. It was in the nineteenth century that Francisco Luís Gomes (1829–1869) wrote the first novel of the tradition, *Os Brahamanes* [*The Brahmins*] (1866), published in Lisbon, while he represented Goa in the Portuguese Parliament. Luís da Providência, pseudonym of Constantino José de Brito (1836–1914) (Devi and Seabra 206), was another author who published his novel, *A Neta do Cozinheiro* [*The Cook’s Granddaughter*] (1908), outside Goa. Cristóvão Aires (1853–1930) had his work completely published in Portugal. Other writers, such as the novelists, Taumaturgo Furtado (1861–1922) and José Frederico Ferreira Martins (1874–1960), also had their works published in Portugal. The tendency to publish in Portugal, which had started in the nineteenth century, continued in the twentieth, but on a minor scale.

According to Devi and Seabra (206), this phenomenon brought about a serious problem for the delimitation of Goan literature in Portuguese because it hindered the creation of a local tradition of Goan writers. Nevertheless, more recent studies on intellectual and literary production published in the Goan press (Festino, Garmes, Lobo, Melo e Castro, Pinto) show that first, the print press, then broadcast media allowed for the development of a continuous intellectual and literary tradition, as it brought together a number of writers who had their works published in eminent journals such as *Ilustração Goana* (1864–1866), *Álbum Literário* (1875–1880), *Luz do Oriente* (1907–1926), and *O Acadêmico* (1941–1943), as well as in publications associated with the Instituto Vasco da Gama and, later on, Instituto Menezes Bragança. In the twentieth century many authors, mainly poets and short story writers, who had published their works in journals, collected and published these texts in book form. In this way, while works published outside Goa had a place of relevance in Goa’s intellectual world, the Goan literary circle did not depend upon them exclusively for its existence.

From this group of Goan writers, who led their literary life in Portugal, we can infer that very few of them wanted to portray the social and emotional condition of the migrant subject living away from home, whether self-imposed or circumstantial, even though this is a recurrent subject with some diaspora Goan writers of the twentieth century or with other writers who always resided in Goa. The plot of *Os Brahamanes*, for example, despite not focusing on this subject—since Gomes was a Parliamentarian and not an exile—takes place in the north of India, during the period of British colonialism on the subcontinent, as well as in England and, as a consequence, its characters find themselves between two worlds. The novel by Constantino Brito da Costa, on the other hand, takes place in Goa, and does not consider Goans away from home. Cristóvão Aires, a disciple of the Portuguese poet, Tomás Ribeiro, deals with Indian matters in an Orientalist fashion like his master. The novels by Taumaturgo Furtado are situated in Portugal and do not even mention India. As regards José Frederico Ferreira Martins, his novels, *Amores de Bocage na Índia* [*Bocage’s Many Loves in India*] (1935) and *A Grande Amorosa* [*The Beloved*] (1938) are set in Goa and the characters move between the metropole and the colony, though, again, this is not the central theme of the narrative. Another author in
the Portuguese language, who published outside Goa but was largely recognized by the Goan intelligentsia, was Agostinho Fernandes (1932–2015), whose novel, *Bodki* (1962) deals with the life of a young doctor in a small Goan village and his conflicts with Hindu customs in the local community. Again, this would be an example of a novel published outside Goa but which probably resounded in Goa, as it deals with themes of relevance to the Catholic gentry. Such themes would include the conflict between tradition and modernity, a recurrent motif in Goan migration literature.

Once Goa became part of India in 1961, some Portuguese-language Goan writers moved to the former metropole, from where they regarded Goa from their self-imposed exile. One of the most prominent is Vimala Devi. Born in 1932 as Teresa da Piedade de Baptista Almeida, she was a daughter of a land-owning family. Like the people of her class, she was educated at the Lyceum in Portuguese. She moved to Portugal, in 1958, a few years before Goa was integrated into India, to join the part of her family that had already settled down there. She started her writing career while still in Goa and continued it in Portugal. It was in her new place of residence that she adopted her Hindu pseudonym, Vimala Devi, to make it explicit that she was writing for Goa as a whole, both the Hindu and the Catholic community. Her choice of name revealed, at another level, the cultural and literary complexity of Goa and the fact that she always bestrode cultures, Catholic and Hindu, Indian and Portuguese. She then married the Portuguese writer, Manuel de Seabra (1932–2017) and lived in England and Barcelona, making Western culture one of the main themes of her literature, and publishing her poetry not only in Portuguese but also in Spanish, Catalan and Esperanto, evidently addressing her new audience in Europe. Her short stories and poems about both Indo-Portuguese and European culture, her proficiency in various languages, as well as her choice of pseudonym, show her feeling of belonging to different cultures and literary traditions.

Another talented writer in the Portuguese language, who moved to Portugal in 1967, after the Portuguese regime came to an end, is Leopoldo da Rocha, born in 1932. A historian, he is the author of *As Confrarias de Goa* [The Confraternities of Goa] (1973), *Casa Grande e Outras Recordações de um Velho Goês* [The Big House and Other Memories of an Old Goan] (2008)—a highly critical retrospective narrative of Goa during the colonial regime and its aftermath—and more recently, *Cruz de Guerra e Outros Textos* [Cruz de Guerra and Other Texts] (2017), in which, among other subjects, he addresses the life of Goans on the move, in particular between Africa and Portugal.

Other writers who had a strong connection with Goan culture and had always written in Portuguese during the colonial period stayed in Goa and began to write in English or Konkani, and sometimes still in Portuguese. This would be the case, for example, of Ave Cleto Afonso, author of *O Vaticínio de Swârga* [Swârga’s Prediction] (2013), a mock epic poem which rewrites *Os Lusíadas* (1572) by Luís de Camões and reflects in depth on how Goan identity originated from Portuguese colonization and, therefore, sees it as being constituted in between
two worlds. Writers like Epitácio Pais (1924–2009) and Maria Elsa da Rocha (1924–2007), though they never left Goa, also made the migrant life one of the motifs of their literature, in particular, the experience of Goans who left their village looking for a better life in big cities like Mumbai. If Rocha depicts the predicament of those who go away, she also considers the life of incomers from other Indian states, in search of a better life in Goa, who have a troubled relationship with their relatives back home; many times, they believe that life in “Golden Goa” is easier and more plentiful than it actually is. Likewise, author Augusto do Rosario Rodrigues (1910–1999) also spent his life in Goa, but often wrote about those departing. An example is the highly ironic short story, “Serafina”, in which a mother despairs when she learns that her son, a doctor, might be having an affair with a mulatto girl in Cabo Verde, where he is. Another example of a writer in Portuguese who never left Goa, but wrote about Goans in Africa, is Beatriz da Conceição Ataíde Lobo e Faria (1913–1994). In her stories, mainly from the perspective of a woman character, Africa is portrayed as a place where lower-class Goans, who suffer from discrimination at home, can, through effort and dedication, earn enough money to live a decent life and help their families back home with their remittances. Africa is also presented as a place that both unites and separates Goan families. Young wives go there to meet their husbands, after an arranged marriage; young husbands find work in Africa so that later on they can bring their wives over and start a family; or parents die there, leaving their children orphans without a home either in Goa or in Africa. In all cases, both at an economic and social level, even though they are far away from home and only sporadically visit Goa, the lives of these characters are lived according to Goa’s moral standards and they see Goa as a safe haven always awaiting their return.

**Goan Writers in Konkani**

Konkani is Goa’s official language and Goans have traditionally had a great literary repertoire in this language, first in oral and then in written form. As many Goans migrated to other regions of India where Konkani is also spoken, such as Karnataka and Kerala, Konkani literary production is very much alive outside the boundaries of Goa. At times these writers also write in English or are translated into English or Portuguese, thus gaining visibility in other literary circles without losing their cultural identification.

Manohar Sardessai (1925–2006), known as “Lok Kavi”, “The People’s Poet” in Konkani, and later on baptized “The Prince of Poets in Konkani”, was one of the great exponents of Goan poetry in this language. He wrote poems not only in his mother tongue in both scripts, Devanagari and Roman, but also in English and French, and translated his own Konkani poems into English, French and Portuguese, showing his dexterity in crossing cultural, literary and linguistic borders. He did his doctorate in French literature in Paris and, while there, wrote a series of poems in Konkani, “We Are the World Wanderers”, “Wherever I go” and “The End of Exile,” which describe how Goans are permanently in transit
and yearn for home. The writing of these poems coincides with the last years of
the Portuguese regime in Goa when many Goans went abroad in search of better
economic conditions or due to political reasons. Soon after the Portuguese left,
Sardessai went back to Goa, where he worked for the cause of the Konkani
language. His decision to write in Konkani is highly meaningful politically
because it was a way to affirm the importance of a local language that was
reduced to second-class status during Portuguese colonialism and then had to
fight against Marathi to become Goa’s official language.

Jayanti Naik is a contemporary Goan writer. She is from the village of Amona
in Quepem, Goa. She has not only written in several genres—short story, drama
and poetry, as well as children’s literature—but is also a translator who recognizes
the importance that literary narratives should go beyond their language of origin.
Naik has made folklore one of her fields of expertise. In her book on Konkani
folklore, entitled Konkani Lokved, she has collected the oral tales of Konkani
speakers who settled in the states south of Goa. Also, as the title of her anthology
in Konkani—The Salt of the Earth: Tales from Rustic Goa (2017), translated into
English by Augusto Pinto—implies with its Biblical reference (Matthew 5:13), she
feels the worthiest people in her community are the simplest ones, the Bahujan
Samaj, a conglomeration of lower castes (Parobo 3). Hence, her literature not only
depicts the rural people of Goa at home, but also those who are abroad, showing,
on the one hand, that their moving away from Goa is in most cases the result of
living in restricted economic circumstances and, on the other hand, that their
experience abroad has a deep impact on the life of the community at home.

Damodar Mauzo is one of the most prominent Goan writers. He writes in
Konkani and is also proficient in Portuguese, English and Marathi. Early in life
he moved to Mumbai to study and, while there, started a writing career. In his
literature, he deals with life in the Goan village and with Goans abroad, as for
example in the English-language translations of his anthologies, These Are My
Children (2007) and Teresa’s Man (2014), and his novel in the Konkani language,
Karmelin (1983), for which he won a Sahitya Akademi Award. Though Mauzo
was away from Goa in Mumbai during his college years, most of his life has been
spent in the village where he was born. His writing confirms that the literature
of migration is not only written by migrants but also by those writers who make
people on the move one of the topics of their literature because they realize how
the life of the migrant reflects directly on the life of those who stay home
(Walkowitz, “The Location of Literature 553).

Goan Writers in English
There are many Goan writers in the English language who reside in Goa, but
were born abroad or have spent part of their lives abroad. Their works, like their
lives, juxtapose the life of Goans at home with those of subjects in transit around
the world. Such is the case of Margaret Mascarenhas who has been defined as a
transnational novelist. She is an American citizen of Goan origin who spent part
of her life in Venezuela and today lives in Goa. Her novel, Skin (2001), depicts
Goans in transit between the United States and Goa. She is one of the few Goan authors to discuss a very thorny issue, that is, the legacy of African enslavement in Goa. Skin has already been translated into Portuguese and French.

In The Cry of the Kingfisher (2011), Belinda Viegas, a Goan resident who spent her childhood in Kenya, covers different geographic locations—England, Goa, Nairobi and Kuwait—as she deals with the lives of three women, each from a different walk of life but all Goan or of Goan descent who, when their paths cross, find relief from the forces of poverty, tradition and lovelessness through the act of storytelling. Similarly, Jessica Faleiro, born in Kuwait of Goan parents and now a resident in Goa, portrays the Goan abroad through the narrator of her novel, Afterlife: Ghost Stories from Goa (2012). Joanna is a young Goan who is doing a course on creative writing in England. Though studying abroad, her family memories in the form of ghost stories are the subject matter of her book. Through these stories, that altogether read like a novel, she synthesizes the arrival of the Portuguese in Goa, via a story on the Inquisition, and the experience of the new wave of Goan migrants who go abroad to study in Anglophone countries, as is the case of Joanna herself and her sister, Carol, who resides in the United States.

Likewise, there are some writers in English who have always resided in Goa but also bring the figure of the migrant or the returnee into their literature, as is the case with Brenda Coutinho’s, A Matter of Time: Vignettes of a Golden Childhood in Goa (2013). The presence of these people on the move in Goan literature is as much part of Goan life as the most ancient rituals of the culture, since, as we argued at the beginning of this article, Goa has always been a place of transit, receiving people from abroad and sending Goans out to all continents.

Other Goan writers write in English from a location abroad. In the first decades of the twentieth century, Joseph Furtado (1872–1947), made the themes of exile and life abroad one of the main concerns of his literature, in particular in his book, Songs of Exile, published in Bombay in 1938. He left Goa in his youth to work in British India; his works, Lays of Old Goa and Lays of Goa and Lyrics of a Goan (1922), among others, express a great saudosismo, nostalgia, for his native land.

Victor Rangel-Ribeiro, today a resident of New York, was born in Goa in 1925. In 1939, he moved to study in Mumbai. After devoting himself to teaching and to journalism, he emigrated to the United States in 1956, where he worked part time as a music critic for The New York Times. He has written both a short story collection, Loving Ayesha and Other Tales from Near and Far (2002), and a novel, Tivolem (2008), which deals with life in a small Goan village in the 1930s. It was to this remote village, but on the brink of deep change, that a young lady returns from Mozambique, after the death of her parents, in order to reconnect with her past and start a new life in the land of her ancestors.

More recently, in the second half of the twentieth century, fiction writer, Ben Antao, defines himself, in terms of his cultures of origin and residence, as a Canadian-Goan writer (Antao). He is a Goan by birth who has made Canada his permanent place of residence. Though he writes in English, he has also translated some of his own works into Konkani. In 2012, he published a bilingual book of
short stories, *A Madhouse in Goa* (2012), both in English and in Roman Konkani, titled *Xirap ani her nov kotha*. He has also written a bilingual travelogue, *Lands of Sicily/Le Terre di Sicili* (2008). While many of his essays, short stories and novels have Goa as their main theme, others are set in Toronto and even the United States, such as his book, *Images of the USA* (2009). Living away from home seems to have been a liberating experience for Antao. It has led him to reflect not only on his culture of origin but also on life in his country of residence as well as places he has had the chance to visit. His works have been published both in Goa and in Canada.

Selma Carvalho was born in Goa and shortly after traveled with her mother to Dubai in the Persian Gulf. Later, she spent several years in the USA before moving in 2008 to London, where she currently resides with her family. Though she has spent most of her life away from Goa, Goans, at home and abroad, are the main theme of her fiction and non-fiction work. She has written several short stories which have been published in various literary journals. In them, her characters, perhaps very much like herself, are always on the cultural divide, be it within Goa, as is the case of “Mand Goes to Church” (2016), in which a Catholic village is seen from the perspective of a tribal protagonist, or the conflicted life of Goan migrants from different social backgrounds who are trying to become part of mainstream culture in the United States, as in the short story, “Six Months of Winter”. She also describes the decadence of an Indo-Portuguese elite family, as seen from the perspective of the last daughter of the house who is now living abroad in “Home” (second-runner up place in the New Asian Writing Contest, 2017).

**Main Motifs in Goan Migration Literature**

Taken together, the above-mentioned and briefly commented authors construct a vast repertoire of images about the movement of Goans around the world as well as the self-image that Goans have created of themselves. Either looking at Goa from abroad and in retrospect or imagining Goans’ experiences in the diaspora while living in the Goan village, the lives of these authors, like the lives of their own characters, confirm that Goa is not only a multicultural society, like the rest of India, but also a markedly transcultural society that extends beyond its geographical boundaries.

One of the recurring themes, in keeping with much of Goa’s literature in general, is the division of Goa’s identity into two distinct cultural matrices. In migration literature, this theme appears in particular from two privileged perspectives: either the *saudosista* or the critical. Though the same themes might recur across the two approaches, some predominate in each. In the case of the narratives that reveal great *saudosismo*, or longing for the land of origin, the theme of the bucolic village, the *casa grande* and family relations keeps cropping up. As for the narratives of the second group, they deal with poverty, exploitation of the
lower orders, the condition of women, and caste, among many other themes, both at home and abroad, and generally adopt a highly critical approach that neither exoticizes Goa for foreign audiences nor romanticizes it for the nostalgic.

The Saudosista Approach

Whatever the experience of the migrants in the new destination, one common theme in their literature is the desire to become reunited with their own culture even when circumstances might have forced them to abandon Goa. These narratives are permeated by saudosismo. Life far away from home, whether amidst a migrant community or alone, is associated with fragmentation, dislocation and alienation, and produces what Paul White (5) defines as “an erosion of certainty”, since living away from home as well as being confronted with a new culture brings about fissures in the individual’s cultural identity as he becomes alienated both “from old norms and new contexts” (White 5). This is why much of the migrants’ literature tends to be autobiographical, as it provides a means to cope with the new situation. Migrants often become writers as a way to both keep in touch and come to terms with the country of origin. This very much depends on the motives that led them to seek a new life abroad, as well as the difficulties encountered when trying to adjust to the new context.

Sandra Ataíde Lobo (66) argues that Portuguese culture in Goa is a space that Goans, in particular of the Catholic gentry, would reclaim for themselves. This elite, for example, was in favor of the defense of Portuguese culture and education in British India, as a way to protect the migrant Goan community’s identity in cities such as Mumbai. In turn, it is this Portuguese element that still marks the Goan identity, both at home and abroad, and that Goans, in different parts of the world, try to revive through their many narratives, even when their mother tongue is English, since they are second-generation migrants who barely speak a word of Portuguese. Their narratives abound with images of the Golden Goa of the Portuguese that the migrants took away with them and passed on to their children, as well as a series of values, also associated with Portuguese colonization, that are manifested in their literature, such as the allusions to the Catholic religion, their Portuguese names, a past of land-owning parents or grandparents, the joint family’s life in the Casa Grande, even the family’s caste.

Ataíde Lobo (66) adds that even if Portuguese diplomacy did not take into account the interests of its expatriate citizens, ‘the migrants sought to maintain the second-generation cultural and political links to Goa and Portugal as well as occupy the space of representatives of Portuguese culture’. This would be the case, for example, of the short story in English, “The House at Assagao”, by Assagaonkar, in which a father instills in his daughter, born in England after his marriage to an English woman, the desire to visit his family’s ancestral house in the village of Assagao where he had spent his childhood vacations. Through her father’s stories, Goa grows in the girl’s mind to the point of reaching “mystic stature” (393).
When African countries started their struggle for independence, many Goans were forced to leave behind a prosperous and peaceful life and start anew in Goa or in a new destination such as Canada (Fernandes 353). As noted above, when these many dislocations subvert a person’s confidence in the stability of culture, the migrant or diasporic subject seems intent on trying to recover those cultural elements, such as life in the Catholic village back in Goa, which defined their people’s identity and gave them a degree of confidence which they might have lost in the process of migration. This is why their narratives are often nostalgic. *Goa Masala: An Anthology of Stories by Canadian Goans* (2010), for example, anthologizes many life narratives in which Goa appears as a safe haven. Along the same lines, in *Images of Goa*, also written in English, a memoir that covers the years 1942 to 1964, Ben Antao creates the character of Joe, an alter ego through which he reminisces about the land of his birth and evokes typical places, such as the pipal tree in the center of the village; rituals like weddings, feasts and funerals, celebrated by both Catholics and Hindus; and characters like the toddy tapper. Also, Peter Nazareth, in the already mentioned anthology, which is significantly titled, *Pivoting on the Point of Return: Modern Goan Literature* (2010), brings together excerpts from novels, short stories, poems and essays around themes that evoke great saudosismo, such as “Home, Exile and the Self”, “The Return”, “The Local” and “The Outside”. It is important to remark that, during the time of the Portuguese Empire, the work of the already referred to author, Joseph Furtado, is also symbolic of this kind of relationship with Goa.

From a different historical perspective, Manohar Sardessai’s poem, “We Are the World Wanderers”, written while in Paris and during the last years of the Portuguese regime, also looks to Goa with sadness and yearning, but for the opposite reasons. His desire is to return to the motherland free of the presence of the Portuguese colonizer, as expressed in the poem, “The End of Exile” (“Preface” by Maria Aurora Couto to Sardessai’s, *My Song, Ma Chanson, O Meu Canto* [unpaginated]):

This is the end of the exile, of the gloom  
And the mind flies  
Quicker than the train  
To greet the land  
That gave me life, love and pain.

While Sardessai writes his poetry in Konkani about the happiness of going back home, after the end of the colonial period, Lambert Mascarenhas, from his exile in Mumbai, published his novel in English, *Sorrowing Lies My Land* (1955), in which he also yearns for his beloved Goa at the same time as he condemns the Portuguese regime.

As Siqueira (49) observes, “the dynamics of globalization” paradoxically contributes to the “reinvention of the old: the processes of how community, place and identity are generated and constituted through ritual performance at the micro level of the village”. We think this is what this saudosista literature does:
it recreates this Goan history of life back home in the village, which migrants are intent on preserving, because it gives them the illusion of being still rooted in their country of birth once they have been geographically and culturally detached from it. Nonetheless, through this process of idealization, Goan culture is often reduced to idyllic moments that can distort or simplify it. This is why these narratives are often contested by others that nourish no illusion about the life left behind.

The Critical Approach
Leaving home and moving to unknown places, often in difficult circumstances involving poverty and discrimination, also brings about a reconsideration of one’s cultural identity. People start moving between alternating feelings about home, host country and cultural identities. Because migration is often associated with marginality in the new context, with what White calls the struggle “for the legitimization of otherness” (6), it is an experience that calls for reflection not only on the individual’s personal condition but also on his relationship with his own culture. This is why migration literature deals both with the actual voyage across continents and with the character’s inward journey, as the migrant crosses geographical and personal boundaries (White 6). In fact, the migratory experience starts long before the trip itself, when an individual decides to leave or is forced to do so, because he feels alienated at home due to political, economic or cultural reasons. This feeling can go on for several generations, as the migrant and his descendants struggle to become integrated into the culture of the host country and reconcile themselves with life back home. This is why second-generation writers also make the migrant’s experience one of the themes of their literature.

Some common motifs of migrant literature are the traumatic process of migration and the harsh living conditions in the new destination. Others include comparisons between life back home and in the new homeland, and the breach within families, in particular, between the ones who stay put and the ones who migrate, or even within the diasporic community.

Siqueira observes that one of the pull factors for Goan out-migration was “the establishment of major cities in other parts of India by British colonialism”, which allowed “Catholics from Goa [to find] ready opportunities for employment in these cities that many times they lacked in Goa” (56). Later on, as Siqueira (57) also remarks, the petro-boom in the Persian Gulf also led to the migration of members of the lower classes, because they could not find jobs at home, as we see in the work of two writers in Konkani, Damodar Mauzo and Jayanti Naik. In Karmelin (1983), Mauzo deals with Goans abroad from the perspective of an ayab who emigrates from Goa to work in the Persian Gulf and suffers both economic and sexual exploitation. In Bhogdand (1997), Naik narrates the story of an idle, young Bahujan Samaj man who lives with his widowed mother in dire poverty in a small Goan village until a friend of his father’s, who comes from Kuwait to visit Goa, offers to help him find a job in the Gulf.
At the other end of the social scale, before 1961 members of both the Catholic and Hindu gentry would go to study in Portugal, as depicted in the short story, “Dhruva”, from Monção by Vimala Devi, in which a young Hindu man from a rich family goes to study medicine in Lisbon. If while he is away from home he feels *saudades* for the young wife he has left back home, once he returns to Goa he feels he no longer belongs there and has become a stranger in his own land. Mostly, “home” remains an unchanging place in the migrants’ mind that will always await their return. When and if they finally do come back, they realize that the place is no longer the same; it has moved on, while the people who stayed behind are not necessarily interested in the return of this Goan who, after so long, has become an outsider and might find it difficult to relate to his country’s reality. As White observes, “return has a spatial and temporal dimension. Returning to one’s own ‘past’ and place is rarely fully satisfying. Circumstances, borders and identities change” (13).

Migration also has consequences for the population that stays behind, economically and socially. As Siqueira (56) comments, when Goans migrated to other parts of the world, this meant the withdrawal of labor from agriculture. Eventually, when these same migrants started sending remittances to their families, it led to the latter abandoning rural tasks, and also to the improvement of their own condition in Goa society. In Into the Diaspora Wilderness (117–118), Selma Carvalho tells how the remittances sent by migrants to their relatives in the village of Nuvem—where she was born—led to a change in the landscape, as the old, dilapidated houses of the *mundkars*, the land-tillers, were replaced by beautiful new houses. In this way, the dream of their ancestors came true, as they changed their condition from land tenants to land owners.

Also, the migration of this elite meant that educational opportunities, as well as positions in the local bureaucracy, which were previously restricted to the higher classes, opened to the lower classes. This topic is masterfully portrayed by Vimala Devi in her short story, “Esperança” [“Hope”] in Monção, in which a young *mundkar*, the first member of his family to attend the Lyceum, aspires to getting a job in the Portuguese bureaucracy rather than toiling on the land, as people from his class and caste had done for generations. However, he meets with great disappointment when the impoverished family of the *bhatkar*, land-owners, feeling threatened by these “upstarts”, will not provide him with the necessary contacts in the colonial administration.

There are several literary works, written once their authors were living in exile, or were about to leave Goa, that are highly critical of this Goan gentry. In Casa Grande, Recordações de um Velho Goês (2010), Leopoldo da Rocha turns a critical eye on the Goan Catholic elite for their shortcomings. Looking back from his new life in Portugal, in Casa Grande Rocha analyzes places, customs and rituals through which the Catholic gentry tried to maintain its distinction. In The Sting of Peppercorns (2010), Antonio Gomes also criticizes the Goan gentry through the figure of one of the sons of a rich family, a *bon vivant*, who moves to Coimbra to
study law only to squander the family fortune and get involved with unscrupulous usurers, visit bordellos and have affairs with both the owner of the lodgings where he lives as well as her young daughter. Nonetheless, though pointedly critical, both authors show a profound affection for their land at a period of upheaval around the end of the Portuguese regime. Along the same lines, Orlando da Costa wrote the play, *Sem Flores Nem Coroas* [No Flowers, No Wreaths] (1971), once he was living in Portugal, while Leslie de Noronha, from his exile in Mumbai, wrote the English-language novel, *The Mango and the Tamarind Tree* (1979). Like Rocha’s novel, these two works portray the traumatic experience of the end of the colonial regime for the Catholic gentry who saw their cultural identity disintegrating. If Rocha’s novel finishes with his main character, Bal, already living in Portugal and writing his memoirs for his daughter, born in the diaspora, da Costa’s play and Noronha’s novel end with the death of their main characters, Salu and Raoul, signifying the end of an era and the beginning of an uncertain but promising future.

Finally, there are other literary works which, rather than looking back to their country of birth, discuss the life of the migrant in the country of destination. Several short stories in the Portuguese language concern the experience of Goans in Mumbai during colonial times. In “A Christmas Tale”, Epitácio Pais depicts the life of a young Goan woman who, making use of the good manners learnt as a servant in her bhatkar’s great house in Goa, moves to Mumbai in order to leave behind a life of poverty. She seeks new horizons, only to find out that, even in the big city, she cannot escape her caste and class. As Maria Elsa da Rocha also portrays in her short story, “Não só de pão…” [“Not by Bread Alone…”] from *Vivências Partilhadas* [Shared Lives] (2008), life in the *kudds* of Mumbai, where Goan workers lived in straitened circumstances, could also be cruel and disappointing.

In some cases, criticism comes in a veiled manner, as for example in narratives in English written in Canada. In “Why I Miss Zanzibar” George Pereira says that “Zanzibar was a multicultural society” and presents a detailed analysis of the different communities that resided in Zanzibar as well as the way in which they lived together (Goa Masala 172). Was he implying, perhaps, that in spite of Canada also being a multicultural and liberal society, not all migrants have access to mainstream Canadian culture? In “Married to a Goan”, also in *Goa Masala*, Jenny de Mello, an Englishwoman married to a Goan man, alludes to the discrimination suffered by her child in a Canadian school: “Our eldest boy had the hardest time. When he started kindergarten in 1976, he was the only non-White child in the school”. Only later on, she observes, when her younger kids started school, did children from other parts of the world start appearing in their classroom to compose the multicultural society Canada is today. Nonetheless, she points out that “overall Canada has been good to [their] family” (46). Writing from Australia, Roanna Gonsalves in her collection of short stories, *The Permanent Resident* (2010), also deals with the life of Goans abroad from a highly critical perspective, as her stories portray how difficult integration into the new culture can be for the unskilled and illiterate.
Goan identity has never been premised on a single linguistic identity, as the different novels and stories discussed above show: some of them, written in Portuguese, portray the Goan elite moving to Portugal, both during Portuguese administration and after; others, also in Portuguese, are about the lower classes living in Mumbai kudds, while certain narratives in Konkani also depict Goans from the lower rungs of society looking for new horizons in Kuwait or in the Gulf; finally, there are many stories in English which depict the life of contemporary Goans in Anglophone countries. What brings all these narratives together, despite the linguistic and, at times, social and cultural divides between them, is the experience of a life lived on the borders of culture, a fertile field for reflection and critique because, as James Clifford (307) has observed, “diasporas are caught up and defined against the norms of nation-states ...”. It is this distancing that allows the migrant individual to see his culture from different perspectives, which are many times antagonistic, and later on transmute them into a body of literature made up of works which offer opposite renderings of Goan culture. Out of a great number of possible readings, in this article we have chosen two perspectives, the saudosista memoir that looks back with nostalgia to the land of birth, and the critical one which deals with the social injustices that both pushed the migrant out of the homeland and often still prevents him from even becoming part of the mainstream of the host country.

Final Words
As we have argued in this article, moving out has always been a natural path of life for Goans, affecting their society, both those who departed and those who remained, thus shaping their literature, both written at home and abroad. The relationship between the narratives of all these Goan authors, in the different languages of Goa, has not always been harmonic and democratic, since it is mediated by relations of power directly connected to Goa’s changing cultural and political scenario as well as its language policy.

In turn, this body of literature has never been associated with only one geographic location. In the same way that Portuguese works in Indo-Portuguese Goa were related first to Portugal (because literature written in the colonies was related to the metropolis as well as to the place where it was being written) and then to literature in the Portuguese language around the world, many works written by Goan exiles in Portugal have Goa as the main theme of their literature. These narratives are complemented nowadays by many others written in Goa in Konkani, Marathi or English; or in other parts of India, in Konkani, English or other Indian languages; or by migrant Goans around the world in different languages. They are all boughs of the same tree revealing the plurilingual and multicultural nature of Indian literature.

As Wolkowitz (“The Location of Literature” 532–534) points out, what matters is not a question of whether authors or narratives belong to one or more traditions, whether narratives are considered as individual works or as belonging to a full body of literature, but of explaining the transcultural context which this
kind of writing entails. What must be problematized are any claims of cultural absolutism or rooted cultural identity since, on the one hand, the worlds between which the migrant moves are not necessarily distinct and coherent, while on the other hand, their literary systems might not be totally singular and local. Likewise, what also matters is that mobility and cultural adaptation have always been powerful factors that have had a strong influence on literary studies and, therefore, have contributed to reshaping the relationship between author, works and reader and offer new perspectives on how to understand literary systems in a globalized world.

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