

Goapuri & Velha Goa

A Tale of Two Cities -
Walking the Labyrinths of History

Mario Cabral e Sá



"The street of his (*Jayakesi I*, the Kadamba king of Goa) capital was completely filled with the palanquins of his pandits, constantly passing, the poles of which were covered with jewels, and inside which were quivering the golden earrings (of their owners)."

— Degamve grant of Sivachitta-deva cited by J. F. Fleet, in *Inscriptions relating to the Kadamba Kings of Goa*, published in *The Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*

"The whole of this land (Portuguese Goa) is thickly covered with villas and pleasure walks, and the banks of the rivers particularly are studded with houses and other buildings embosomed in delicious gardens and palm groves"

Viaggi di Pietro della Valle il Pellegrino vol II (1658-63)

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A special section at the end of the book: *Some Cultural Aspects*, highlights the features that distinguish Goa — architecture, interiors, garments, music, cuisine, jewellery. The cuisine section carries recipes by the well-known culinary wizard, Rosa Costa e Dias hailing from one of Goa's oldest Christian families. We have other sections: on coins, contributed by the internationally famous Goan numismatist, Felonel Rebelo; on the evolution of Goan garments, particularly the gorgeous and exotic *pano baju*, once worn by the Goan *crème de la crème*, a piece researched and written by one of India's famous *couturiers* — Wendell Rodricks; on "old modes of transport", a resumé of the original Portuguese work involving painstaking research and some excellent drawings (chairs, chariots, boats, horses, bulls) by the late Gozanga Miguel Agapito de Miranda. And we have a critical assessment of conservation of monuments by Percival Noronha, the founder member of Heritage Society of India, Goa Chapter. To all of them, a Big Thank You.

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ANOTHER BOOK ON GOA?

“...e não se pode saber o começo disto”

— Afonso Mexia, *Foral dos Usos e Costumes*, 1526

Afonso Mexia was the first *Vedor*, a kind of auditor general and chief accountant, of *Estado da Índia*, the centre-piece of a “far-flung thalassic empire”, as Professor Charles Boxer describes it. The *Vedor* was the most powerful official of the empire, next only to the Viceroy and had, if he so wished, direct access to the Crown. In other words, he could disagree with the Viceroy and make a grievance of it. Mexia, a very conscientious officer, left behind one of Goa’s history’s most important documents, the *Tombo Geral*, a detailed land survey. And while at it, he set himself the task of unveiling the origin of the land and its institutions if only to end throwing up his hands in despair; “...e não se pode saber o começo disto,” one just can’t fathom the beginning of it all...

Nor does one have an idea of the number of books written on Goa, from Vedic times to our contemporaneity. A Jesuit participant in the first Indo-Portuguese history congress held as a kind of celebration of the new chapter of Indo-Portuguese amity, opened by Dr Mário Soares, the then minister of external affairs of the by now democratic Republic of Portugal, told the media at one of the coffee-breaks, that he had in the library of his research center “three cupboardfuls of books on Goa by travel writers of various nationalities”. Some of them spies, some saints and almost all of them great raconteurs of what they saw and experienced in their quest of adventure. Not a few had a very inventive mind and their accounts of locations they had never been to were masterly crafted, based, to an extent, on the memoirs of other travellers they had relished and sought to embellish. Soares had signed a few months earlier a treaty, with retrospective effect, validating Goa’s merger with India in 1961. Till then, 1974, the acquisition of Goa had been, so far as Portugal was concerned, an act of naked and unjustified aggression. All this while, nearly eleven years, the Vatican treated Goa as a *de facto* Indian territory, but not *de jure*, an ambivalent position to say the least. As a result the Goa Archdiocese was governed by the Vatican through its Nuncio in New Delhi coadjuted by a functional apostolic administrator, the auxiliary bishop Francisco da Piedade Rebelo, of Goa. Officially, however, the last Portuguese archbishop, an Azorean called Dom José. Vieira Alvernaz, continued to preside, if nominally, over the Goa archdiocese till 1975.

Not much later, 1982, Professor Henry Scholberg, would publish his unique and very valuable work *Bibliography of Goa and the Portuguese in India*. He catalogued hundreds of titles, sought data in over 80 locations, ranging from private collections to public libraries and famous treasure troves of knowledge, ranging from the Portuguese *Torre de Tombo* to the British Library and Asiatic Society of Calcutta to the Saraswati Mandal Library of Panaji.

In an appendix he publishes, albeit in a revised form, the paper he presented at the Second International Seminar on Indo-Portuguese History, held in Lisbon, in reciprocity for the one held earlier in Goa, The title : *Literature of the Goan Freedom Struggle*. Like Afonso Mexia, in 1526, he threw up his arms in utter helplessness. “Two kinds of writings are available to the scholar: that which came during the movement and that which came after it. And there are two sources: those who wanted Goa to remain Portuguese and those who did not If one were to take all of the Pro-Indian writings on the Goa crisis and stack them one on top of the other, and if one were to take all of the pro-Portuguese writings,

stack them up, one would probably end up with two stacks of the same stature and weight. This is speaking both physically and metaphysically In the middle of all this was world opinion.”

Many more books have since come out. They range from history to fiction, some of the fiction having historical roots, and distressingly, some of the *history* being, in fact, pure fiction. Some serious historians, too, underwent mid-life changes. Some who earlier had harshly castigated the Portuguese later confessed that they probably had been carried away by their biases. Some saw the black legends of the Portuguese in the sixteenth and later centuries in a new, more lenient, light; For instance, corruption, the much written about causal factor of Portuguese decline. It was now argued that it was no worse than corruption in Indian kingdoms or in the colonies and settlements of other European colonists, be they British, French, Dutch or Danes. It had been a way of life. And still is in the by now liberated colonies.

Various other facets were analysed by international scholars. Was Goa’s culture a charming hybrid of East and West? No, was the answer of some socio-anthropologists. In their view it was essentially Indian. Certainly, was the way another set of observers saw Goa, similar in some aspects, unique in many others. And Goa was all the better for it. Because in the end, Goans had managed to amalgamate the best of both worlds and thus enriched their own ‘primal culture’. — a rather confusing term, considering that the territory that is now identified as Goa had a rich tribal culture before the advent of Hinduism. Other questions were focussed on the quality of life. Had it improved since 1961, after the Portuguese were ousted from Goa? Had quantity affected quality in areas like education, medicare?

Curious developments are taking place all the time and they are reflected in contemporary writing. While it is politically correct to emphasise on Goa’s Indianness and anything to the contrary would inspire controversy and vituperation, it is commercially profitable and yes, the done thing, to publicise Goa’s cultural linkages with Portugal. Tourism is a major area thriving on Goa’s “acculturation”, if that should be the correct term to use. It has generated a great deal of literature, from guides to promotional texts, to names and titles of hotels, restaurants and entertainment establishments.

We shall be concerned in this book with the rise and fall of two of the two main capitals Goa had: Govapuri, the settlement of the Aryans that flourished under the Kadambas of Goa; and Velha Goa, the capital of the Portuguese Oriental Empire, an empire constructed by those who dared “beyond what human might could aspire” and fell, as all empires eventually do. Except that the fall of both of Goa’s capital cities was slow, painful and sad.

We present in this book additional information that might interest some of the more curious readers in three appendixes, the first on the archaeological remains of the two empires; the second on culture aspects; and the third titled “The In-between Places” describing the many exquisite places and landmark between the two former capitals of Goa. The book also contains excerpts from the author’s earlier works covering aspects unique to Goa and relating to architecture, interiors, antiquities, music and jewellery.

Mário Cabral e Sá

Piedade, 26 January 2001.

SO MANY GOAS

"To the north of Gokarna is the *kshetra* (land) seven *yojanas* (1 *yojana* is roughly equal to 19.2 kms) in circumference: therein is situated Govapuri, which destroys all sins. By the sight of Govapuri the sin committed in a previous existence is destroyed, as at sunrise darkness disappears.... certainly there is no *kshetra* (land) equal to Govapuri."

Suta Samhita, ch. 16

Goa, I once wrote, is "where yesterdays are forgiven and tomorrow forgotten and life, like love, is an innocent dream, unpremeditated and unexpected. But beautiful." So, thank the Lord, she largely remains.

But Goa is more than that. It is a state of mind. The folk poet better than the historian, charts its vicissitudes, the highs of lows of its millennial existence. Once the rhumbodd (ficcuss of glomerata) epitomised happiness. Its flowers adorned the tresses of the loved woman, their delicate aroma an invitation to daliance. And then, suddenly, for no fathomable reason the rhumbodd ceased to flower. "Tell me, sister, what could I offer you", now asks in the folk plays the brother of his nubile sister. "Even if it be flowers of the *rhumbodd* I will dredge the seas for you."

A time came when Goans took to emigration to earn their livelihood in far-away, often inhospitable, lands. And the incredulous old woman who had nowhere to go and of necessity stayed back, asks herself, in a traditional folk song, in a whispered lament, "Villcechea ballponachi / sangattinn / Sat samundran bhair gele?" - have Viltu's (presumably her grandson) childhood companions gone beyond, sailing the Seven Seas?

Emigration took its inentable toll. And the anxious young wife left back, asks the brother-in-law. "If you have news of my husband/Tell me, brother". The husband eventually comes back, but finds comfort in the arms of a courtesan and the brother-in-law mocks "Yes, I saw him,/in the market/buying pearls for the dancing girl".

Conquest was resisted, but at some point surrender became iventable. The poet dips his pen in passion and visualises an idyll between the white conqueror and his local mistress

*The night is old, Sir, and
I'm going with you,
My king, my lord,
Let's hurry beloved friend
I'm with you, the night scares me.*

The lover, on his part, continues to woe

*Tell your shing of pearls,
tell, my dearly beloved,
to pay love's debt
to my restless desire.*

Now, bereft of her clothes and jewels, lying naked and pliant in her lover's alcove, she moans and sulks:

See, Sir? The moon peeps
 And sees me as I saw you,
 She has recognised my pale face...
 How can I cling to you?

In another farcical song the rich landlord seduces the poor maid "Daintily walks Terasa/ in her new velvet slippers". Comes summer-time and there is all round plenty of feasting and gaiety, till "They can dance no more, / the damsels are tired. They can sing no more,/ the lads are tired".

When the Aryans arrived at a imprecise time of Goa's history, they inscribed in their scriptures "At the sight of Govapuri, all sins committed in previous re-births disappear as at dawn darkness vanishes". The helpless, the dislodged aborigine tucks his flute in the folds of his loin cloth and leaves the balmy shores on which he once thrived to far-away unknown hills, to an uncertain future.

In fact, there are as many Goas as you may visualize from the position you assume. Its primal nomadic tribals were displaced by the pastoral *kunnebis* and *gaudda* who were of Dravidian stock. Their memory of the good times and the bad are encapsulated in an unending sing-song, more of a dirge than a celebration, more of a wail than a well told tale, "Once upon a time there was a mouse, and the mouse dug a tunnel, so deep that the earth above caved in". That, symbolically, was how they rose and fell. They had dammed the rivers, reclaimed land, let in fish through a network of ingeniously built canals through which the backwaters flowed into the sluice gates. At the high tide the gates opened all by themselves and the purseine nets set at the doors of the gates ensnared fish and shrimp. The gates shut themselves closed at the ebttide. At the approach of the SW monsoon they ate only vegetables, fruits and cereals. Their theology forbade them from consuming fish and meat - the fish because in the monsoon months they came in to spawn on the shallow algae - rich river beds, the meat because in those same months the grass grew and covered every inch of land from hill tops to valleys and their animals freely grazed, mated and multiplied. It would be an unpardonable sin if you contravened the code which the Gods above had wisely ordained.

Centuries later, a rich Goan landlord Caetanode Figueredo, a descendant of the Saraswat Brahmins, would cite the Portuguese chronicler João de Barros (*Decáda 2*) on the *Comunidades*, the Portuguese translation of the pre-Aryan communes, for *India Portuguesa* (vol II), a publication that was meant to celebrate the advent of the Portuguese republic in 1910 but was published only in 1923:

" The lands near the (western) Ghats were first inhabited by humble people who descended from the (hills of) Canara....and dyked the land in the fashion of the Flemish till their continued endeavours rendered them fertile and exuberant and finally, their people multiplied and the benefit of their farming (techniques) proven, came the sires from the interior of the kingdom of Canara and conquered these poor people".

Then came the Aryans, under the leadership of the Gowd Saraswat Brahmins. They toiled hard and so well that the Bahamani Muslims came to convert the land. They plundered the land and, the plunderers they were they took their body and went away.

Now quiet flow the Zuari and the Mandovi, the rivers along which coursed much of Goa's history and a great deal of international trade. At one time it was iron howes to Africa, at another it was horses from Arabia, tapestries from Persia, ivory, gold and slaves from Mozambique, cottons from Gujarat, pepper from Malabar, cinnamon from Ceylon, seed pearls

from Manar, rubies from Pegu. Faithful vassals came from as far as Europe to shop for their kings gifts to their queens, princesses and favoured concubines.

Kingdoms rose and fell with nagging frequency. New cities rose on the vanquished capitals. New religions were preached and the old obliterated. Convenience and seldom conviction were the guide and the norm. When Loku Sinai, a rich landlord (originally from Choraog?) was summoned by the governor to the city of Goa, he, helplessly, without asking any questions, "accepted the true faith", and let himself be taken to the baptismal font, his wife and children in tow. Now (1541) on he would be known as Lucas de Sa, It was meant to be magnimity from his new masters. The name remained almost the same. Moreover, he was free to retain his brahmin pedigree. His modified surname, from Shenoi to Sa, was to be seen as a royal concession. The governor himself, Garcia de Sa, had presided our his baptismal ceremony and proclaimed him his spiritual son.

Splendour and greed, pomp and misery, the tyranny of conquerors, the daring of adventurers, the abnegation of martyrs — Goa saw them all. Violence and humility characterized each change Goa tamely endured. And now, in the belief of the people who revere tradition, the souls of the primal owners of the land roam them, on new moon days, at the dead of night. The archdiocese and the department of historical archives have in their records lists of lands haunted by spirits, *terrenos pensionados*, on which weigh the oaths and curses of the cheated and the dispossed. The lists are to this day avidly availed of by real estate developers, lost they too, incur the wrath of the dead and, as a result, their businesses flounder. The lists specify the *pensões*, the encumbrances, on the satisfactory fulfilment of which the souls are exorcised and placated.

'Govapuri' was just one of the many names Goa was known by. But Its present geographical configuration was shaped by the Portuguese. They conquered the *Ilha de Goa*, the island of Goa — *Teeswadi* in its Sanskritic appellation — in 1510, and kept appending the name 'Goa' to their latter acquisitions of adjacent lands. To be fair, many of these acquisitions were made, contrary to popular belief, through diplomacy and not conquest, over nearly two-and-a-half centuries, right up to the late 1700s. It was a slow crawl to power — 3500 sqkm in nearly 300 years.

Goa was once the land of tribal Mundaris who have, by now, exiled themselves, amongst the other hilly and sheltered places, in the jungles of Madhya Pradesh. *Goi/Goe/Goy* was, it seems, their word for a patch of tall grass (Olivinho Gomes, *Village Goa*). And that, probably, was their toponimic for their habitat.

The antiquity of this land is established in the recent pre-historic finds by the Department of Archives and Archaeology of the Government of Goa in Sanguem, the south-eastern *taluk* and one of the least developed sub-divisions of Goa, and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) respectively at Usgalimal and Kajur, and at Mauxi in the north-eastern *taluk* of Sattari, like Sanguem, largely underdeveloped. However, the caves at all three places reflect the rich culture that prevailed in this tract of land and predates the Aryans. Carvings in the Usgalimal rock-cut caves depict symbols of the cult of fertility, religious cosmology, a triskelion, animals like the Zebu bull, antelopes, bison, animals mating, and in other postures are seen in the recent excavations at Usgalimal and Kajur. The carvings at Kajur are chiselled on granite and there is a remarkable, if small, anthropomorphic figure of a mother goddess. At Mauxi, archaeologists found an exquisite rock bruising of a bull. It has oversized lire-shaped horns, and an overemphasized hump. The body is somewhat large and linear; and the whole position is stylized, reminiscent, according to the experts, of rock bruising found

earlier in Maski, Raichur district, in Karnataka. The Maski bull, more perfect than the Mauxi bull, has been dated to Chalcolithic times (the first millennium B.C.). The Usgalimal and Kajur rock engravings could well be of the Late Upper Palaeolithic period (10,000 to 8,000 B.C.). But some scholars opine that it would be imprudent to put a date on the finds without more detailed study.

These carvings obviously predate Hinduism, and, in the opinion of some archaeologists, they, therefore, negate the abiding myth that Goa and the rest of the west coast of India were created by Lord Parashurama, the Rama of the Axe, the sixth *avatar* of God Vishnu, in a supreme feat of creativity.

The myth of the creation of Goa, and in fact, of the west coast of India, if it is some kind of "charter of validation", as all myths are, now assumes a different dimension. It merely heralds the arrival of the Aryans south of the Vindhya and the coastal plains, and by implication, of Hinduism, and the consequent triumph of the Iron Age Man over his Stone Age predecessor.

Goa was known by other names in less remote times. It is conjectured that 'Kowa' mentioned in the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* (about A.D. 150) was Goa. Between intelligent guesswork and fertile imagination, one has dozens of hypotheses as to how different people referred to Goa at different times: Govarashtra, the ancient name for south Konkan, and one of the seven divisions of 'Parashuramkshetra' (the mythic land "created" by Parashuram); Goparashtra, "the district of nomadic tribes" mentioned in the *Mahabharata*; Gopakapuri, Gopakapatana. All these appellations have 'go' as their root, and the inference flows: *go*, cow, that is what the land abounded in — an indication that it was a pastoral community. Then, there is the name Gomanta, which occurs in the *Mahabharata*, the *Harivansha*, the *Skanda* and other *Puranas*. These ancient references have been carefully garnered from various sources and catalogued by passionate historians of Goa and the Konkan, like José Nicolau da Fonseca (*An Historical and Archaeological Sketch of the City of Goa*) V. N. Kudva (*History of Dakshinatya Brahmins*), Rashtrakavi Govind Mangeshwar Pai (*Indiana Studies in Indian Culture, History and Civilization*).

The Greeks and the Arabs referred the area by other names. The Greek references, debatable as the actual locations may be, are: Nelkinda, Nekanidon, Melinda, Tyndis. The names generated in centuries past, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, much controversy amongst historians and geographers. M.D. Anville who was a pioneer in the matter of comparing ancient place names with modern, according to Fonseca, identified Goa with *Nelkinda* of the *Periplus*, *Melinda* of Ptolemy and *Nekanidon* of the *Peutigerian Tables*. But Major Rennel, the author of *Memoir of a map of Hindustan* (London 1786) places *Nelkinda* south of Goa, while he suggests that *Tyndi's* corresponds to Goa. Dr Vincent, the author of *Voyage of Narchuis and the Periplus of the Erythrean seas* (1805) identifies Goa with *Algidi*, but, more plausibly, the word corresponds to modern Anjediv. Diogo de Couto, the sixteenth century chronicler, suggests, on what evidence one does not know, that Goa is derived from *Goe-mot* which in the ancient local language meant fertile and refreshing land. Fr. Francisco de Sousa, the author of *Oriente Conquistado*, disagrees.

It was, according to him, derived from *Goubat*, a local principal deity. The Arabs referred to it variously as Kuva, Gova, Gove, Kawa, Kawe, Sindubur, Sandabur. Ibn Batuta, the fourteenth-century Tunisian traveller, describes Sindabur in some detail, in his *Travels in Asia and Africa*. He claims that he participated in an expedition by Nawab Djemaluddin of Honavar, then an important port south of Goa, to seize the city, and admits that, on that

occasion, the Muhammadan troops were reduced to “bitter strait”. Ibn Batuta himself seems to have opted for safety rather than valour and quietly returned to Calicut. Two Goan scholars, the already named Fonseca, and the better qualified Dr. George M. Moraes (*The Kadamba Kula*) are in disagreement about the location of Sindapur. Fonseca places it in Goa Velha, while Moraes argues it was Chandor, (then Chandrapura), in south Goa, and the capital city of the Kadambas before they moved to Gopakapuri. Moraes dubs Fonseca’s theory as untenable.

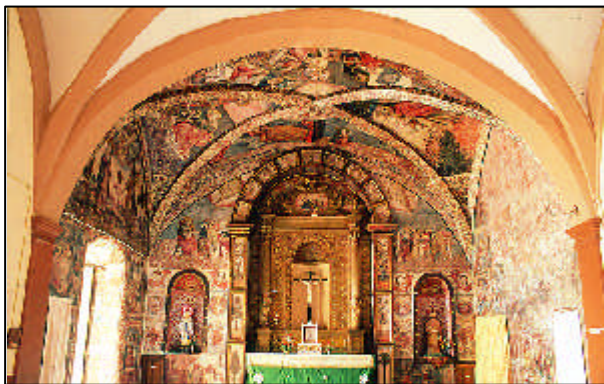
The Kadambas ruled Goa between 1008 and 1237. They had been preceded, at an imprecise time, by the Bhojas, Satavahanas, Kshatrapas, Abhiras, the Rashtrakutas and their feudatories, the Silaharas. The Silaharas, the better known of Goa’s many colonists, were daring seafarers and, possibly, using the port of Gopakapatana (Goa Velha) much before the Kadambas. Then, for reasons that remain obscure, the River *Zuari* (at that point in time *Aganishini*) began to silt, and a new port was established at Raibundar (the King’s Quay) — modern Ribandar — half-way between Panaji and Velha Goa (Old Goa). Though “royal,” it was an insignificant internal port. The main port was Ela, now Old Goa.

After the Kadamba debacle, there was a brief Muslim domination (1310-1367), followed by a Hindu revival (1367-1472) and then, again, another period of Muslim domination (the Bijapur Sultans, 1489-1510). The Portuguese conquest of Goa was abetted by the Hindus of Goa, who abhorred their Bijapur sovereigns because of their extortionate taxes, and by Thimaya, an ambitious and daring corsair from Honavar. The Hindus as well as Thimaya, believed that the Portuguese would trade for a while, find the climate inhospitable, tire and go. That, from hindsight, was a gross and, in many ways, tragic miscalculation. Thimaya had set his heart on farming the revenues of Goa’s city port after the Portuguese took it and in return had pledged the support of Honavar fleet and men. Like the Hindus of Goa, he, too, was bitterly disappointed.

It was during Bijapur rule that the River *Gomati* superseded in maritime importance *Aganishini*, and thus Ela became an important international port. The revenues of the custom house (*mandvi* in their language) were so substantial that *Gomati* was renamed *Mandvi*. When the Portuguese arrived, in 1510, they bypassed their glottal difficulty (they cannot comfortably pronounce clashing consonants) by changing it to *Mandovi*. So it remains. João de Barros, the Portuguese chronicler (*Décadas II*) speaks of the rich revenues the custom house on the Mandovi generated. The Muslim had the river policed by crocodiles, so enormous that they could devour whole bulls and upset big ships. Lest they lose their sanguinary instincts, the Portuguese who succeeded the Muslims, fed them the prisoners captured during their incursions. They renamed Ela, the old Muslim capital, Goa, which, at one time, is believed to have had a population of over 220,000 and rivalled London and Antwerp. When the city fell in ruin (in the 1700s) and a new capital city was founded in Panaji, the old capital came to be known *Velha* (meaning old in Portuguese) *Goa* and the new, *Nova* (new) *Goa*.

To the Portuguese, the acquisition of Goa was a dream-come-true. They had achieved, “by valorous deeds,” as their bard Luis de Camões sings in his epic (*The Lusads*), “more than human might could aspire”. And they lavished on the land all manner of grandiose descriptions. They saw themselves as the creators of the Rome of the East - so intense, and, from their point of view, fruitful had their endeavour been to convert “the pagans, the gentiles and the idolators,” their epithets for the Hindus of Goa. Golden Goa, the Queen of the East, the Pearl of the East, were some of the other names they conjured for the land.

Then came the years of decline, pestilence and profligacy. It is distressing that the inhabitants of the city of Goa literally tore it apart before they abandoned it and sold the materials of the buildings that once stood tall and proud for a pittance in order to sustain themselves. But their failures served a purpose. From them, the British, and, to a lesser extent, the Dutch and the French, learnt a great deal, and set up empires that prospered for as long as they lasted. ■



...AND SO MANY CAPITALS

From the third century B.C., when the first batch of Aryans is believed to have arrived here, Goa has had many capitals. (The Aryans came here by a circuitous route. According to one version via the Indo-Gangetic plains, then the eastern coast and thence the west coast; it is also believed that they arrived in Goa by sea, in ships that they arranged for at Gujarat. According to another, by land via modern Gujarat.)

The historically documented capitals are:

- *Chandrapura* (now Chandor): The first capital of the Kadambas when they defeated the Silaharas in 1008. Today it is about 20 minutes by car from Margao, the capital city of south Goa district, and Goa's most important trading center.

- *Govapuri*: The first settlement of the Gowd Saraswat Brahmins, whose arrival in Goa is said to have taken place in "ancient times" (estimates ranging from 300 B.C. to A.D. 700). It was the capital of the Silaharas and, upon their defeat, of the Kadambas, who shifted from Chandrapura.

- *Ela*, the capital city under the Sultanate of Bijapur (1489-1510).

- The well known archivist, the late Dr. Panduranga Sacarama Sinai Pissurlencar mentions another capital in his work *As primitivas capitais de Goa* (Nova Goa, 1932): Valipatana, the capital of the Silharas "according to Varde Valaulikar" in Bali, Canacona taluk, Goa's southernmost subdivision. He also mentions Goapakapura and Guhalla-de-va.

- *Goa, Panelim, Panjim, Nova Goa, Cidade de Goa*: After the Portuguese conquered Goa, on November 25, 1510, they named the new capital of the territory they conquered Goa, and in due course, in 1530 to be precise, it became the capital of the Portuguese Empire of the East, which till then Cochin, in Kerala, their first major settlement in the East, had been.

So it remained till December 24, 1737 when bouts of epidemics and the fear psychosis they generated caused the authorities to shift the capital to Panelim, about 3 kms away, on the road to Panaji. When the fear subsided somewhat and moved by notions of pride and prestige, the Portuguese shifted their capital back to Goa, the Old Goa of our times, on September 3, 1710 - but not for long.

Amid fears of fresh outbreaks of epidemics and attacks by the Dutch and the Marathas, it was moved back to Panelim on March 3, 1741. From then on — a reflection of the onsetting rot — the capital was shifted back and forth from Panelim to Goa 13 times in 33 years. On two occasions, perhaps as a face-saving device, the temporariness of the shifting was reflected in the name *Por-Panjim*, meaning 'towards Panjim', till it was finally shifted to Panjim in May 1843, renamed *Nova Goa*. In May 1947, it was again renamed — *Cidade de Goa*, — and its jurisdiction extended to the neighbouring villages of Mercês, Santa Cruz, Caranzalem, Dona Paula, Cabo and Ribandar. The once "far flung thalassic empire" was now in the throes of death, financially decrepit and, to its bad luck, now threatened by the nationalistic winds blowing across British India.

There was a plan to shift the capital from Cidade de Goa to the port city of Mormugao, around 1670. One Viceroy, Caetano de Mello e Castro, resided in the fort in Mormugao for sometime, hardly two months, to expedite the construction of the new capital - but the idea was then abandoned because the Portuguese were, by then, impecunious.

The Goa that had dazzled conquerors, "the folderol and pomp," as a modern historian

put it (George D. Winius, *The Black Legend of Portuguese India*), had ended. So had "the delicious stories" of thievery, lust and licentiousness, and the spectacle of "viceroys going abroad from their palace, in ornate sedan chairs, heralded by flutes and trumpets and drums accompanied by a full retinue of noblemen in attires of velvet and silk." (Jan Huyghen Van Linchosten, *Itinerario*)



The Island of Teeswadi on which the Two Cities once existed

THE LEGACY OF GONDWANA LAND — TEESWADI

It is a beautiful story, perhaps mere fantasy, but in any case worth retailing. In ancient times but no one really knows when, there was a huge continent, it included Africa, India, Australia and South America. All that suddenly changed. How and why no one knows. There was a thunderous clash, rock on rock and the course of the rivers changed, mountains yielded place to seas and lakes, and the seas and lakes to mountains. In the course of it all several islands rose in River Gomati. Many generations later, came the Aryans. Their river Saraswati, in modern Haryana, had suddenly dried and they were left with no means of sustenance. So they moved southward through different routes, each clan guided by its hunch and wisdom. The wisest, the Gowd Saraswats, headed off to Goa, where Lord Parshuram had created a land for them. They were, the Lord had assured, his – “chosen ones”. They were 96 in all and when they reached the promised land, they split in two groups, one of 66 settled in Sashasti, Sanskrit for 66, the other of 30 in Teeswadi. And so, as any new settlers must, they vowed to toil hard and pray intensely. But they were weak and on the verge of death. Death, however, didn't daunt them. The fate of the Vedas did. In those days the Vedas were propagated through *Sruti*, recitation, but to recite they had to have the strength to do it. Fish was the only abundant food that offered itself and so they took to eating fish, reluctantly, at first, but soon enough with great relish. And they curried and boiled, baked and fried it in a hundred different ways.

There are small communities of Saraswats outside Goa, in Rajputana, Sind, Gujarat and Kathiawar. There are references to *Saraswata Tirtha*, near Prabhaspattam in Kathiawar, and *Saraswata-desa* in Saurashtra. *Shenvi* is used as a term of respect even today in Kutch. There is a place Kushasthali, near Dwarka, in Kathiawar. It was also called Kushasthali and it is likely that Kushasthali near Dwaraka was after Kanyakubja by settlers from that place.

It is, therefore, possible that the Saraswats, in their search for a new settlement, came first to Rajputana, then proceeded to Sind, Kathiawar, Kutch and Gujarat, from where they migrated to Goa by land or by sea; and that some Kanyakubja families came later, via Kushasthali in Kathiawar. It is speculated that one of their surnames, Lad, is derived from Laha (South Gujarat).

The original immigrants to Goa probably included some traders. Within a short time, the whole of Goa was sprinkled with their colonies round their temples. Presumably, the colonists started life as agriculturists, traders and scribes and by dint of industry, good habits and character soon came to be proprietors of large tracts of agricultural land. They were polite but shrewd. They built up excellent relations with the local inhabitants whose life-styles they changed slowly and diplomatically. Neither were they averse to adopt their institutions and norms if they had merit. Pantheistic by nature, they absorbed in their pantheon local deities and treated them with great respect.

The first batch comprising of sixty-six families belonged to ten *gotrs* (kinship clans), the Kanyakubja Sharmas belonged to three of these *gotrs*; later came a batch of thirty families belonging to eight other *gotrs*. The batch of 66 (*sashast* in Sanskrit) named their settlement Sashasti. The second batch, of 30, named their settlement Teeswadi, *tees* being 33 in Sanskrit and wadi, a settlement. The settlers were, respectively, identified as *Sashikars* and *Teeswadkars*. They freely mixed and were governed by the same religious principles and practices, social norms and etiquettes.

As often happens in similar circumstances, the new colonists married local women. They

were in fact entitled by the laws of Manu, the codifier of Hindu ethics, to do it. For, Manu had postulated that a man of a higher caste was free to marry a woman of a lower caste and by so doing his wife would be integrated into the caste. But women were not entitled to such a privilege. A brahmin woman who married outside her caste was promptly expelled from the community. A large number of local women were fair. Goa had prosperous commerce with Gujarat, Persia, Arabia and Egypt and there were settlements of Ethiopians, Israelites, Arabs, and like in any coastal region misgenation was a social reality. However, it is only the Saraswats of Goa and the West Coast who are known as *Gauda Saraswats*.

Of the origins of the Teeswadi island, the geologists have another explanation. In ages past, a volcano erupted violently, and the lava that it spewed solidified to form deltoids of varying sizes, the largest being that of Teeswadi proper, followed by, in descending order of size, Chodan (Chorão in Portuguese texts), Divar, Khumbarjuvem, Juvem (*Santo Estevão* in Portuguese texts) Akaddo, Vanxim and Khorjuvem. Each island has its history. Chorão, the second largest, was famous for its palatial mansions, lush gardens and ample mango groves, the best *Afonas*, the queen of all mangoes, in Goa or anywhere. It was the site of a Catholic seminary, which was constructed in 1559 on the top of a hill, presumably on the ruins of a Hindu temple, and commanded a breathtaking view. The Portuguese nobility, alarmed at the consequences of the poor sanitation of the capital city of Goa, had sought refuge in the island and built lovely villas for themselves. They lived in great luxury. But, sadly, not for long. Pomp and prejudice yielded place, not too soon, to misery and disease. And, eventually, it was a choice between desperate exodus or slow death.

Divar, situated between Chorão and Old Goa, till the conversion of its inhabitants in 1560, was *Devwadi*, the island of divinity. Or according to some texts, it was *Dipaliwadi*, an island of enlightened people, where Divali, the festival of lights, was celebrated with much pomp, as nowhere else in Goa. It had once been, the myth goes, the abode of seven *rishis*, sages who had performed arduous penance for seven crore years (each crore being equal to ten million.) On it the Kadambas built the Saptakoteswara temple, and dedicated it to their favourite deity, Lord Shiva. The *linga* installed here was a miracle of metallurgy. It was made of an alloy of seven unalloyable metals, a *saptaling*. Many of the stones of that temple are now found in the magnificent baroque churches of Old Goa. That was, in the view of the Portuguese who built the churches, the best use they could put to the granite marvellously chiselled and crafted by "the idolators", their epithet for the Hindus!

The famous *Raj-vidi*, the Royal Path of the Kadambas, of which we will know more in the following pages, began at Gopakatana, ran across what now is the Kadamba Plateau, and through what later came to be the famous *Rua Direita* of the Portuguese, ran to the Royal Quay, where well-rigged and elaborately adorned boats ferried the King, his Queen, their progeny and the royal retinue, to Divar. Here, the royal cortege paid homage to Lord Shiva at the Saptakoteswara temple, on their way to or from their other territories, which spread over the Naroa Creek, to Sattari, and then on, Halsi, Belgaum and eventually Badami, at that point in time, the alternate capital of the Kadambas.

At the Naroa point, the *Gomati* (*Mandovi*) and *Aganashini* (*Zuari*) joined, and the confluence was — and still is — the holiest of Goan *teerths*, as holy to the Goans as of those of Narmada or Kashi are to the other faithful. The canal that connects the two rivers, the Khumbarjua (Combarjua) canal is, perhaps, Goa's richest in bio-diversity.

Juvem, it seems, was relatively less populous. Legend has it that when the Portuguese arrived in Goa, one of the marvels they had never before set their eyes on was the finely

textured red laterite stone. They had known and worked on all manner of basaltic stones and baked in their kilns some excellent bricks. But laterite, like a delicate woman, needed special handling. Only the masons of Pernem, at that point in time owned by the Raja of Sawantwadi, knew how to work the laterite. The Portuguese decided on an impulse to bring in masons from Pernem, convert them to Christianity, and intern them in Juvem, from where they were taken, under escort, to the city of Goa, to build all the grandiose churches that once adorned it and of which only a handful remain and we shall soon visit.

Across Juvem, by now renamed Santo Estevão (St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr who was stoned to death at Jerusalem, circa A.D. 35) was Marcel, a village famed for its temples and dancers. It had once been Machalapura, so named by Madhav Mantri, the famous Goan general, and once, at an indeterminate time during the reign of the Vijayanagar Empire, the governor of Goa. Machambika was his mother's name. And Machalapura was his tribute to her.

Teeswadi, the main island, is where all of Goa's capitals, except for Chandrapura, were situated. It lies between 15° 31' and 37° 5' N latitude and 74° 1' and 75° 25' E longitude. It is also spelt Tisvadi and Tissuari. It is about 14.5 (kms) long and 4.8 kms broad, in all about 70 sq. kms in area, a triangle with its apex pointing to the sea and its base to the mainland.

Our focus will be on *Govapuri*, the city of Goa's Hindu past, Goa-a-Velha, later simplified to Goa Velha, after the Portuguese conquered the island in 1510, and *Velha Goa*, the city that was once the splendorous City of Goa and now the tomb of Portuguese history in Goa and, in a way, Asia. We shall begin with the story of Goa Velha. In due course we shall suggest to the reader a visit to a few other in-between areas of considerable historical importance and, undoubtedly, immense aesthetic interest, also situated in Teeswadi, and which the reader will, probably, cross on his way to or back from any of the ancient and inter-connected cities: Goa Velha and Velha Goa. (*Appendix III*) ■



GOVAPURI: GOA-VELHA

"... I presume Old Goa (i.e. Goa Velha) need not complain for the loss of trade, which she never had; nor lament the deprivation of costly and spacious buildings, which she never wanted; but hath them rather as a country town (of whom she is the dame) than city though she might claim the title of mistress; her soil is luxurious and campaign, and abounds with rich inhabitants, whose rural palaces are immured with groves and horts refreshed and cooled with tanks and rivulets, but always reserve a graceful front for the streets, which are broad and cleanly..."

— Dr. John Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia*

Dr. Fryer was a surgeon in the East India Company and visited Goa in 1675, by which time the city of Goa, the capital of the Portuguese Empire of the East, had already entered into a precipitous decline. Many of the inhabitants had left for Panjim. Many others had, perhaps even earlier, shifted to the island of Choraó, where they lived in grand style, in large palaces and surrounded by lush gardens of ornamental plants and fruit trees. They moved about in exquisite horse-drawn carriages and palanquins borne by sturdy slaves.

Long before the capital city of Govapuri had been abandoned by the Kadambas (1260 ?) who returned to their primal capital of Chandrapura (Chandor). The 1260 date is suggested by the late George Moraes, perhaps the leading authority on the Kadambas of Goa, in his book *The Kadamba Kula* (Bombay 1931). Dr Moraes suggests the year by a process of logical deduction. He presumes from epigraphic evidence — in fact lack of it — that Shashtha-deva probably died in 1260 because he could find no inscription related to him after 1260, the last he could find being dated 1257. By the same logic, he presumes that his successor Kama-deva ascended the throne in 1260. He further relies on Ferishta, the Muslim chronicler (*Briges translation*) to arrive at the conclusion that Gopakapatanna "was destroyed or at least occupied by the Muhammedan troops".

The sequence of events he suggests is as follows: Kama-deva ascended the throne in 1260 and not 1243 as stated by Miguel Vicente d'Abreu (Goa 1858) in his compilation, notes and corrections of *Bosquejo Histórico de Goa* (Madras, 1831) by the French Padre Denis L. Cotineau de Klougen; in Kama-deva's reign the Yadavas "would seem to have relinquished their hold over the Konkan"; Kama-deva shifted his capital to Chandor; Malik Kafur, the general of the Delhi Sultan All-ud-din, reduced the Yadavas, marched southwards, overran Goa, penetrated as far as Rameshwar, modern Cabo de Rama, in South Goa, "caused a mosque to be constructed", and, as a result of this expedition, the Kadamba city of Gopakattana (Govapuri) "was destroyed or at least occupied." It happened in 1310 or soon thereafter. Or, say, well over 300 years before Dr. Fryer visited Goa..

When Dr. Fryer visited the then Portuguese capital city of Goa, it was, "a place more quadrated for still retirement, than noisy commerce". On the banks of the *Mandovi*, canoes belonging to fishermen had replaced the caravelles, and if any bigger ships there were they were "balloons (ships whose sails when fully blown by the wind looked like balloons, and were known by the Portuguese as *balões*) of pleasure only".

Fryer arrived in Goa Velha, at that point in time Goa-a-Velha, i.e. the former (Hindu) capital Govapuri or Gopakatana, at "a time of festivity". It was being celebrated "with triumphant arches and most pompous pageants" palanquins (*machilas* in the usage at the time) — "passed commonly". It obviously was a Christian festivity. The Hindus were no

longer allowed by law to publicly celebrate their rituals. Dr Fryer describes the people as “urbane and less pestered (than in the Portuguese capital) with drunken comrades, as soldiers, seamen and ruffians”. The market was well stored. And it was easy to judge that, though the port had silted and the shipping and commercial activity shifted from the Zuari to the Mandovi, Goa Velha had never been deserted.

Ahead of it, on a hanging hill, was “a sumptuous structure called Santo Pillar; the ascent to it was by a winding staircase cut out of rock, and railed with stone banisters”. The Capuchins, *Capuchos* as they were then known, Fryer writes, were “disconcealed” (barefoot) and “consanguineous to the Franciscans, differing only in superiority and austerity”. In fact they lived a very rigorous regime, meditating everyday for three hours, doing severe penance for as long as two hours, sometimes flagellating themselves with whips bearing thorns and nails. Their monastery, still exists, so do the grim cells which deserve a visit.

What Fryer’s account conveys to us, as do other descriptions by earlier and even later travellers, is that the Catholic evangelists, in this case the Franciscans, went about with a zeal that now shocks and amazes but in their own time, was perhaps seen as exemplary. They dismantled the old Hindu temples that they had found on their arrival; they converted the Hindus that remained on the land, and built churches and chapels, often on the ruins of the Hindu and the Buddhist shrines that predated them and were the symbols of the culture that till then had prevailed.

No doubt they built some magnificent edifices, religious and otherwise, and to a large extent showered generous favours on the neophytes. But history has its surprises. About two centuries later, the Franciscans, and other religious orders were harassed by the Portuguese authorities. They were expelled and their order eventually banned. Their churches and real-estate, very extensive and yielding rich revenues, were confiscated. The churches were transferred, along with some of the properties, to lay parish priests. Some of the properties were leased out, some were gifted to civilians favoured by the government for loyalty and services rendered.

Between Goa-a-Velha and the city of Goa, at its peak, there were — still are — many villages, that are described in old books as “important” and the inhabitants as “prosperous”, claims, perhaps, embellished by time.

The villages: Carambolim, Azossim, Mandur, Dongrim, Neura of which there were two — *Grande* (Big) and *Pequeno* (Small) are connected by crossroads, some of which, we learned, once were broad and well-cobbled, Batim, Gancim, Mercurim, Curca, Santana and several other smaller villages and hamlets. One was also told that Dongrim was once an island (J.S. Diogenes Noronha, *Neura O Grande*, 1921) and the property of the Augustinian monks. Azossim, on the other hand, was a creek, a narrow inlet of an estuary that no longer exists. The inhabitants seemed to like their comforts. A cobbler, Braz Fernandes (Theotonio R. de Sousa, *Goa to Me, Goa Village: Economy and Life*) had a two-year contract with the village to supply footwear, partly paid in kind, partly in cash, in quarterly instalments. But not much later, there are indications that the villages and their inhabitants fell on bad days. Diogenes Noronha relates in his lean but very informative book that when Neura, his ancestral village, was included in the Panjim municipality, the Senate, as it was then known, the villagers passed a resolution that the community provide the footwear for such of their representatives who had to attend the meetings of the Senate. Obviously, they could not afford the luxury, but neither could they bear the humiliation of walking barefoot some 12 kms to the capital and back. They had traditions to keep. Their ancestors had travelled in

their own chairs and chariots to the receptions hosted by their former Hindu Kings, the Kadambas. (see *Cultural aspects*)

Carambolim is the first village on one's way from Velha Goa, the Portuguese city that was once predominantly Catholic, to Goa Velha, the old Hindu capital. It was once one of Goa's most prosperous *comunidades*, village republics, dating from Goa's Dravidian past. But, in view of the raging epidemics in the 1600s, some of the inhabitants (for instance, the families of Colaços, Barros, Falcão) sought refuge in Velim, in south Goa. The *comunidade* of the village, due to default in payment of liabilities to the government, had been taken over and the refugees from Carambolim, who were monied, acquired it by emphyteusis i.e. paying the liabilities of the local defaulting tenants and acquiring the fields. The Carambolim *comunidade* owned extensive lands and built Goa's largest man-made lake, unfortunately now silting very fast. A few kilometres away is the Pilar Lake, also in a very bad condition, built by the Kadambas.

Originally, Carambolim was known as Karmali, derived from Kadambhalli, (*Kadamba*, after the King, *halli*, meaning hamlet - *People of India, Goa*, vol XXI, *Etymology of Village and Place names*, Anthropological Survey of India). It shot to limelight in 1928 in a most unexpected way, when 690 inhabitants of the pastoral *gaudda* community, reverted to Hinduism, along with 71815 Christians of other villages in Goa, in the massive *Shuddhi* movement that had been launched by the Arya Samaj in 1896, and was propagated in Goa by Vinayakbuva Masurkar. The 'historic day' of mass reversals was February 26, 1928 (Arhana Kakodkar, *Shuddhi: Reconversion to Hinduism Movement in Goa in Goa: Cultural Trends*, ed Dr. P. P. Shirodkar). It was a massive movement that resulted in severe repression from the Portuguese and even found echo in the British Parliament, through the intervention of Shapurji Saklatwala, a Parsi MP of Indian origin.

Being the closest to the city of Goa, the churches of Teeswadi, the island county in which it was situated, are among the oldest in Goa, and most of them are indeed beautiful. The most outstanding is the Church of Santana (dedicated to Saint Anne, Virgin Mary's mother) in Talaulim village. It was erected in 1577 and its architect, Fr. Frias, a local priest (he also built the beautiful Church of Nossa Senhora de Piedade, in Divar island) was perhaps among the earliest Goans to be given a title of nobility (F. N. Xavier, *Nobiliarquia Goana*). World Monuments Movement is considering, at the time of writing, to fund its restoration through the Archeological Survey of India (ASI).

Outside the present Old Goa complex the first church to be built was in Carambolim. It is dedicated to St. John the Baptist and was erected in 1541. The Church of Goa Velha, dedicated to St. Andrew, is famous for its unique festival, the Procession of Saints, when, huge, life-size statues, are taken out in solemn procession on the fifth Thursday of Lent. It is attended by thousands of Catholics. And it is not rare to also see Hindus making vows to the saints or offering gifts of thanksgiving for favours received and votive pledges and offerings for favours begged.

It was originally a penitential procession of the Franciscans friars. When their order was disbanded, the statues were transferred to the Goa Velha Church, of which only a cross remains near the Kadamba Raj Vidi, the royal path. The icons carried in the procession were then 60. Then, because of decay, their number dwindled to 27. But not all of them were images of saints, some were just symbolic figures. Now their number has been raised to thirty, with the addition of St. Francis Xavier, St. Peter, the first Pope, and St. Andrew, the patron saint of the village. There are plans to add yet another image, that of Fr. José Vaz,

the only Goan to be beautified, a mid-step to canonization. For those who know how acrimonious the rivalry between the Jesuits and the Franciscans was, the new move will evoke mixed feelings. Francis Xavier was a Jesuit and the methodology followed by the Jesuits in their evangelistic efforts was strongly frowned upon by the more austere and severe Franciscans.

It is a procession such as is seen, it is said, only in Rome. But it has the unmistakable influence of oriental rituals. Fr. Cosme da Costa, professor of History at the Mission Seminary, Pilar Goa, who shared with us some of his research on Govapuri, is of the firm opinion that the Procession of Saints was patterned on Buddhist traditions. The Buddhists had a strong presence in the area. But we could not find any published corroboration of da Costa's theory.

Nearby Batim has its own story. The church here, which is dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe (after a mountain range in Beja, northern Portugal), was erected in 1541. The local press reported of two recent "apparitions" of Virgin Mary, similar to her earlier apparitions in Lourdes (France) and Fátima (Portugal). The attitude of the Goa Archdiocese is that it will not deny the event, nor will it confirm or recognize it. Many claims of supernatural actions and miracles were made and hotly debated. Thousands of people flocked to the site of the "apparitions". Some, convinced that they were seeing Virgin Mary hovering in the sky, stared at the sun without protective glasses, resulting, in 1997, in an estimated 900 persons totally losing their eyesight.

The Church of Our Lady of Rosary at Curca, erected in 1650, is a beautiful church. The village is also famous for its mineral water spring which is supposed to have enormous therapeutic properties, ranging from skin rashes to other more complicated ailments, like weak eye sight and infertility.

Tradition has it that three families from Batim, all of them converted to Christianity with the surname Menezes, but belonging to three different *gotrs* (i.e. kindred lineage) in their Hindu past, held positions of influence in the Kadamba court in the twelfth century. Similarly, it seems, the families of Neura, a large number of them bearing the surname Noronha, and, apparently, inter-related, also wielded considerable influence in the Kadamba court. Quite a few of their descendants own and live in ample and majestic houses, all of them facing the main road from Old Goa to Pilar.

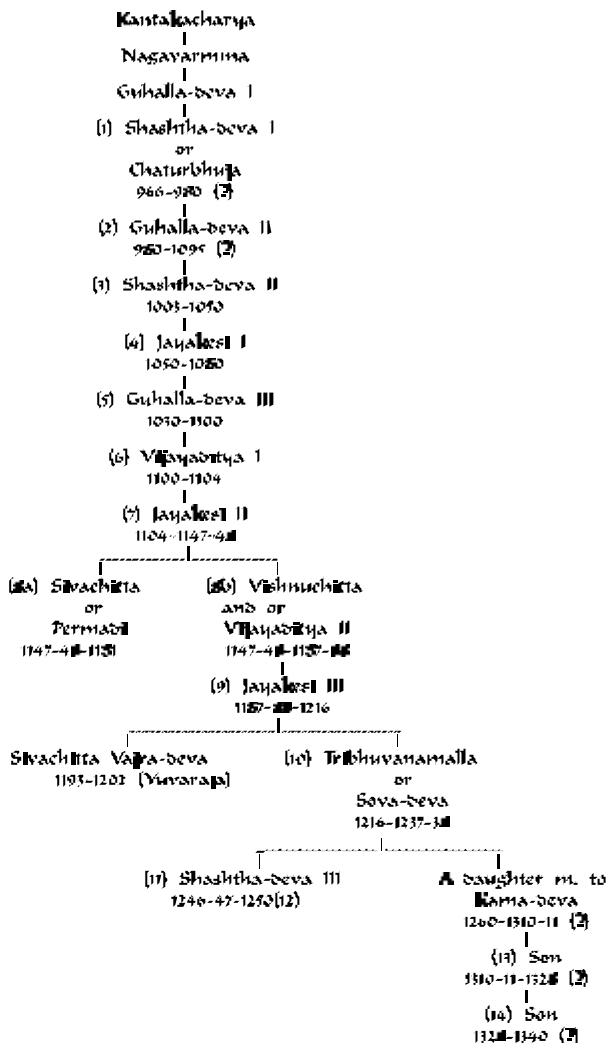
According to Fr. Cosme da Costa, the Noronhas of Neura who, like most Goan converts, retained even after their conversion to Christianity, their brahmanic caste, served as officers of the Royal Kadamba navy. Neura itself, he vouches, was the site of the Kadamba arsenal, but later it silted and is now a large paddy-field. Another of da Costa's theories is that the Menezes of Batim who later shifted to Goa Velha, retained their primal Kshatriya caste and were important members of the Kadamba army. While we could obtain confirmation that the Noronhas of Neura, like Goan converts to Catholicism else where, still retain their original Brahmin pedigree and the Menezes, with equal pride, their Kshatriya pedigree, we could not obtain any confirmation of their ancestors having served, respectively, in the Kadamba navy or in the army. Nor could we find the reason, if there actually is any, why the Kadambas recruited Brahmins for the navy.

However, both the Menezes and Noronhas, treasure family memories that speak of grand ceremonials at the Kadamba court. José Avito Menezes, a rich landlord from Mercurim, has in his parlour a huge family tree that traces the origins of his branch of the "Menezes from Batim", to the 1700s. Each of the houses is a repository of pieces of great antiquity. Lucky are those who are allowed to see them and admire their artistry and reckon, in sheer awe,

their vintage. Dr Suzete Menezes, a well known pathologist, knows the traditions of her in-law's family but no longer has any documents. The same fate befell the ancestral documents of the late Dr Máximo Menezes family. But they know that each of the three named Menezes's was given the same surname by the Portugal, belonged to the same caste in their Hindu past but were of different stocks. All the three families knew that their ancestors held important positions both in the Hindu and Christian past. ■



THE KADAMBAS OF GOA



GOPAKAPATANA

What we know of the Kadambas of Goa, of their glory and grief, is as largely as most of Hindu history is, from orally transmitted accounts from one generation to another, rarely, if ever, objective. And we have interpretations by researchers and historians of material they chanced on, like copper plates excavated at sites they justifiably believe were within the Kadambas' domain (e.g), the head of the lion, which is now the centre-piece of the small but interesting museum of the Pilar Seminary. (*the exhibits of which we will soon detail*) A similar head is exhibited at the Old Goa Museum of ASI. According to the famous Indologist Gritli Mitterwallner, the exhibit in the ASI Museum was found a few years ago (in the early 1960s?) in the former temple tank situated at the foot of the hill on which the temple of the protecting deity of Goa, Govanatha or Govésvara was located. Later, she writes, the Portuguese built the convent of Pilar in its place.

"The history of the Kadamba dynasty is the history of one of the most neglected, through in its own days on of the most influential, of the dynasties that ever held sway over the Dekkan." Moraes rues that he "met with unexpected difficulties" in writing the history of the dynasty Judging by the enormous influence the Kadambas wielded for over a thousand years he expected to find a large number of copper plates and lithic records. But that was not to be. After consulting all the available works on epigraphy and archaeology, and consulting all the journals he "had to be content with just a handful of inscriptias".

Moraes himself was a very neglected scholar. He spent the last years of his life very unhappily. He even thought, a few years before his death, of selling the books, several hundred of them, he had diligently collected over the years. He had come to the contingency of being unable to meet his living expenses and he announced it with pain in the press. The fact that he was an austere man all his life adds to the poignancy of his sad predicament. Before *The Kadamba Kula* was published in book form he had presented its contents as his thesis for his Masters and was awarded the Chancellor's Medal. That happy event took place in March 1929.

The origin of the Kadamba *Kula* (family) "is enveloped in the mist of legendary tales". According to one legend, the first Kadamba was born under a Kadamba tree, where his mother, a very poor woman, had pitched her hut. One day some hunters asked her to cook for them a peacock they had just killed, which she did with pleasure hoping that the hunters wouldn't mind if she fed her son the leftovers. But while she was still stirring the pot her son rushed in. He was desperately hungry. And the woman, in a moment of weakness, thought she would feed him what to her mind was the most insignificant piece of the bird - the head. After a while the hunters came back, They were furious when they discovered that the head was missing. Nothing would placate them because that peacock was no ordinary bird. It was a mythic bird. The one who ate the head would become the king, the others would occupy the lesser positions. And thus the hungry child became the king.

There are several other legends, invented, probably, to account for the political rise of an obscure family by projecting the progenitor of the family, "race" as Moraes puts it, as a demi-god. According to one fable, the original Kadamba sprang into being from a drop of sweat that fell to the ground from the broad forehead of God Siva. He was a three-eyed and four-armed creature.

He was very cultured, with pure thoughts and high learning and, in course of time, he begot Mayuravarmma, "the Subduer of the earth by the power of the sword, of his own

arm and his invincible armour". According to yet another legend, Mayurvarmma was born to Rudra and the Earth under a Kadamba tree. "As he was born with an eye on his forehead he could not wear the crown on his forehead last it shut his eye. So it was bound near his knee where it would show well.

It was in Jayakesi I's reign that Gopakapattana, the former capital of the Southern Silaharas, was made the main seat of his government. Jayakesi I was the fourth ruler of the Kadambas of Goa dynasty, which, probably, came to power around the year 966. Jayakesi I ruled between 1050 and 1080. The dynasty lasted till, perhaps, 1340. But the decline had begun in 1237 when the Kadambas over estimated their strength and challenged the Chalukya suzerainty with disastrous consequences. In 1310, when the Khilji General Malik Kafur defeated the Yadovas, Kama Deva, the Kadamba scion, had a glimmer of hope of regaining power, but his death in the same year snuffed it out.

Jayakesi I was a very influential ruler. He strengthened his influence with a matrimonial alliance with the Chalukyas of Anhilwad. To quote Moraes: "We learn from the Dvyāsharaya by Hemachandra and Abbhayatilaka that Karna I, of the dynasty of the Chalukyas of Anhilwad, married Mayanalladevi, the daughter of a Kadamba prince, Jayakesi, who was ruling at Chandrapura. There is hardly any doubt that this was Jayakesi I of the Goa Kadamba family, for King Karna having ruled from A. D. 1063-64 to 1093-94, was his contemporary."

Hemachandra gives an interesting account of this marriage. Once an artist happened to visit the court of King Karna and exhibited to him a roll with portraits on it. Among others, the King saw a portrait of a maiden of unparalleled beauty; and on inquiry he was told that she was the daughter of King Jayakēsi of Chandrapura. Many princes wished to wed her, but she refused them "one and all", the artist informed. After some time she was shown the portraits of princes painted by the Buddha *jatis* and seeing the one of Karna, she agreed to marry him. The artist added that it was for conveying this message that he had been specially deputed by her, and he delivered to the King the present King Jayakēsi had sent him. Raja Jayakēsi, knowing that he (Karna) was a great Mahārāja, had sent him an elephant as a present which enormously pleased Karna. He examined the elephant minutely and then he went into the garden where he beheld a beautiful woman, who very much resembled the lady whose portrait he had seen in the roll. On asking the maiden who was in attendance, he was assured that she was the same princess of whom the painter had spoken to him. Karna consented to marry the princess and made her his *Pat Rani* (crowded queen).

There are Kadamba inscriptions which give an idea of the splendour of Govapuri. "The street of the capital was completely filled with the palanquins of his pandits, constantly passing, the poles of which were covered with jewels, and inside which were quivering the golden earrings (of their owners)". One of Jayakesi's own charters describes it as a "beautiful and pleasing city, the abundant happiness of which surpasses the paradise of Indra". The commercial prosperity of the place is attested by the fact that the city had trade relations with no less than fourteen countries. The fame of Goa as a commercial centre on the west coast had travelled far and wide over the continent. The countries that are enumerated in the charter are Shihalla, Callah, Zungavar, Pandu, Queralla, Chandda, Gandda, Bangalla, Gheata, Gurjara, Laita, Pusta, Srytam and Chandrapur.

The city owed a substantial part of its prosperity to the wise administration of Sadano, a grandson of the merchant Muhammad who had rendered valuable service to Guhalla-deva.

Jayakēsi appointed him governor of the Konkan. Prudent, just and liberal, he was well versed in mathematics and “the fourteen arts, the four recourses, and the seven solicitudes”. By his wise rule and exemplary conduct, he put an end to all rivalry and heart-burning in the kingdom. He held in check all the mischief-makers in the country. “The power of this *pradhano*,” (chieftain) says the inscription, “was firmly established and he was sincerely esteemed by all”.

The charter would also have us believe that in ancient days there was not much trade at Goa, writes Moraes. The prosperity of the city dated from the time when this *pradhano* took up the reins of government. The inscription continues, “Under the administration of this minister the city enjoyed great happiness and new increase of trade; and all its citizen became aware of the administrative abilities of Sadano. They all allowed him a free hand in their respective departments and Jayakāsi vested him with extraordinary powers”.

Armed with these powers, Sadano determined to establish in the capital a charitable institution, which in the Portuguese translation of this document is called “*casa misericordiosa*”, house of mercy. Accordingly, he issued orders for its construction on Friday, the 3rd of Vaixaka, in the year Jaya, of the S.S. 975 or A. D. 1053. This institution supplied food to the poor and the poor and the helpless and provided lodgings for the pilgrims. For the upkeep of this house of mercy the ingenious governor devised a new tax, which was to be imposed on the owners of trading vessels and merchants coming from foreign countries. “When this new customs duty was proclaimed,” says the charter, “all the foreign merchants trading in Goa accepted it willingly and took a voluntary vow among themselves to pay the tax as a charitable contribution”. However, the fact that those who refused to pay this tax were penalised indicates that the tax was not a voluntary contribution, but was imposed by royal authority. It was further enacted that if any rich person, native or alien, were to die without progeny, his property, after deducting the expenses necessary for his funeral, which was to be performed with great pomp, was to be transferred to the house of mercy. The income was devoted to performing the obsequies of the poor dead. The expenses in such cases had to be paid by the treasurer in the presence of the King and of his minister.

According to the *Prabhandhacintamant*, a contemporary text, Jayakēsi met his death by ascending a funeral pyre in order to fulfil the promise he had made to a pet parrot. One day while taking his meal, we are told, he called the parrot to come out of the cage. The parrot uttered the word “puss”, as if to say that it was afraid of the cat. The king looked around and not seeing the cat, solemnly assured the parrot that he would kill himself, if it sustained any injury from the cat. Thereupon the parrot approached the king and perched on a golden vessel. He was immediately slain by the cat, which was lying hidden under the vessel. When the king saw his pet killed, he rose up and not heeding the courtiers he burnt himself to death. But the book is crowded with incredible stories, perhaps invented to enhance for posterity the image of the king.

The Kadamba dynasty reached its apogee under Jayakēsi II, who ascended the throne some time in A. D. 1104. He is described as a feudatory of the Western Chalukya King Vikramāditya VI, but he was biding his time to free himself of their control.

The opportunity came when the Hoysala King Vishnuvardhana invaded the Chalukya empire. Then on, the Goa Kadamba King Jayakāsi II styled himself the *Konkana Chakravarti* or the Emperor of Konkan, But Vikramāditya recovered his ground. A loyal feudatory, Achugi II, the Sinda chieftain, was immensely useful. Thus the attempts of Jayakēsi to establish

his independence ended in dismal failure. But Vikramaditya was lenient with him. The differences were soon and permanently sorted out. The reason was that Vikramāditya bore genuine admiration for Jayakēsi on account of his noble and warlike qualities. It could also be, Moraes suggests, a stroke of diplomacy on the part of the Chalukya Emperor. More than at any other time the Chalukya emperor needed loyal feudatories in the South to assist him against the rising power of the Hoysalas. He strengthened them by marrying his daughter to Jayakēsi. There is an inscription of the latter which gives a detailed account of how he married this “ruby of the Chalukyas.”

But the Kadamba fortunes dipped. Albeit temporarily Goa fell to the Delhi Muhammadans, but their object was plunder and not the permanent occupation of the country. On the return of the Muslims to Delhi, the defeated monarchs regained their respective kingdoms.

The conquest of Goa by the Muhammadans, subsequent to the Yādava victory over the Kadamba King was; the reason for the final transfer of the capital from Gōpakapattana to Chandrapura. Obviously, Chandrapura had a more protected geographical situation. The first mention of Goa in later documents is by Ferishta when he discovers its conquest by the Bahamanis who fixed their capital on the banks of the Mandovi.

With the advent of the Muslim rule Govapuri and the busy port of Gopakapattana lost all their importance. The river Zuari itself began to silt. As so often in Goa’s history, glory yielded place to gloom.

Though Chandrapura was less vulnerable than Govapuri, “the Lords of the Western Ocean” lost their kingdom in the most pitiful circumstances. Suddenly one night the city was invaded by the enemy and the king was killed. So were many inhabitants. The princesses and the ladies of the court destroyed their jewels and drowned themselves in the river. The queen who had been away returned one day and realizing it was all over, removed her jewels, threw them out and cursed the women of Chandor. That they may have a fate as sad as her own. She then came out of the fort and stamped her feet four times. She would not take back from the city anything, not even the dust on her feet.

That, let us clarify, is the popular tradition, unconfirmed by records. One does not know even the name of the king who came to such a sorry end. Was he Kama-deva? But the river, at the ebb tide, still leaves on the shore gold powder, the powder of the jewels cast into the river by the princesses who drowned themselves rather than live the rest of their lives in disgrace and ignominy. When we move from the Hindu capital to the Christian, a tale in many ways similar will unfold itself before us.

A probe of the relics of the Kadambas of Goa is not for the faint-hearted. At one site - once belonging to the Kadambas and then gifted by the Portuguese to the Raja of Sonda, who had ceded to them much of south Goa - the watchman guarding the now private property asked us: “What are you looking for? It is all bushes, thorny ones at that. Yes, there is a well somewhere. We never saw it ourselves, but we can hear the sound of water falling into it. And there is a beehive somewhere. We were once attacked by the bees.....”

At another site, we were cautioned about snakes and jackals prowling the area. A python had feasted on a month-old calf the week before, a pack of jackals had a lair “somewhere near”. They howled every night and emboldened by hunger raided the settlement. They often made off with chickens. Whether mere rumours or God’s own truth, they were not the most encouraging incentives to carry out our probe into Goa’s labyrinthine past. But an educative recce it was. All by ourselves, we were guided by mere instinct and the vague but abiding notion that, somewhere amid the ruins of the Fort Wall of the Portuguese city of Goa, there

was a pathway to Govapuri. We had thought that the fair weather of the whole of the previous week would hold. But that was not to be. Drenched to the bone and bruised by thorny shrubs, we abandoned our efforts to find the segment of the *Raj Vidi*, the Kadamba's royal path, that once started at Gopakapatana and ended at Badami, in Karnataka, and at that point in time, the second Kadamba city. Subash, my friend and driver, and I admitted defeat and returned to our native Island of Divar - once the site of the Saptakoteswara temple complex. It was not just one temple, it was a *panchayat* of the Gods, five of them, each one with a temple of his own, the largest being Shiva's, Saptakoteswara, the favourite Kadamba deity.

Our idea had been to go from Velha Goa - the Christian city - Rome of the East, as the travellers of the 1600s and later centuries, described it - to Goa Velha, the Hindu city of our pre-Portuguese past. Near the ruins of the city of Goa's fort wall, near a modern building that bears the signboard of an ice factory but is actually a motor-repair workshop, we stumbled into an object embedded in the ground. Could it be a sun-dial? It was, but a fairly modern granite piece!... The ASI has since recovered it and it is the latest addition to its exhibits in the Archaeological Museum at Old Goa.

Several other persons like Dr P.P. Shirodkar, a well known historian and then director of Goa's department of Archives and Archaeology, had undertaken the probe much before us. So had Dr. George Moraes for his book *The Kadamba Kula*, Dhume, the former land surveyor and author of *The Cultural History of Goa, from 10,000 BC to 1352*, Fr. Cosme da Costa, of the Pilar seminary, to mention a few. Dr. Shirodkar's probe was far more rational than ours. Also, needless to add, absolutely rewarding. He reported it in *Marine Archaeology*, the monthly magazine of the Marine Archaeology Department (MAD) of the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), India's reputed scientific organization. It is based at Dona Paula, on the outskirts of Panaji. Like most historians, Dr Shirodkar was motivated by the sure knowledge that Indians had a rich maritime past. As he puts it, "*Samyana* i.e. sending ships overseas was encouraged by Emperor Asoka. According to Cyril Hromnik. Indian gold mining in and around the south Zambezi plateau might have started as early as the end of the second and beginning of the first millennium B.C. He avers that the high quality of iron objects found in Southern Africa was perhaps developed in South India. The inter-action of Indians with Africa and several other nations of the time was very much evident."

Dr Shirodkar states further, "Goa which was known as Ariake by the Greek geographers was the traditional supplier of iron hoes or *mamuty* (the African word for hoe) to African farmers since, at least, the early part of the first Millennium A.D. During his time Ballipattana, most probably present Velim in south Goa, Chandrapur or Chandramandal (presently Chandor), Revatidwipa (presently Reddi in Maharashtra) flourished, it was the Chalukya period of Goa's history. They, probably, were important ports from where ships sailed to the African as well as to the Arabian coasts. Items of trade like rice, fine cotton goods, cane sugar, precious stones, betel, spices and perfumes were exported through Goa or then Broach to Socotora (*Sukhadhara* island) an important link-port-city which had been colonised by the Hindus as early as the 3rd century B.C. The way was opened for the Romans to have a direct trade link with the Western Indian ports. The water fountains in Anjediv Islands (off the Goan coast, now ceded by the government of Goa to the Indian Navy for the Sea Bird base, which when complete will be one of Asia's largest) were used by the traditional seafarers long before the European powers used them for replenishing their water supply."

The city of Govapuri was connected to the sea by a five km long laterite port which was

easily accessible to ships coming from outside for trade and commerce. The outer walls of the port, made of huge laterite stone buttresses and staircases, is even today visible at low tide. But it is fast silting. It was a meter high when Dr Shirodkar visited the site in 1989. It was less than 15 cms high when we eventually visited it in August 1999, in our second attempt, by a different route along with Dr. J.P. Rao, the deputy superintendent of ASI, the officer-in-charge of the Goa Mini-Circle and Manoj Saxena, an archaeologist of the same circle who had earlier found a way to the port from Old Goa, via Neura.

On an earlier survey of the area, all that Dr. Shirodkar and his team could discover was a few remains of the ancient port at Mascarenhas *Wado* (ward) in Goa Velha. To quote Dr Shirodkar: "It was a long wait for eight years when suddenly I was provoked by a letter from Dr. S. R. Rao of NIO, (the marine archaeologist who excavated Dwarka and is an internationally recognised expert on Harappan culture), requesting me to present a paper on the port of Goa".

Dr. Shirodkar reports: "On 29th July afternoon (1989), I set forth once again in search of the ancient port. To my surprise, I found the port wall stretching over a distance of 5 km. The wall is straight, going along the present Zuari bridge, taking a turn at Agasaim (*Agase*), i.e. *Mahadarvaza* or a gateway leading out of the town. It begins from the place called Kharrosai (*Khar + rasai*) and continues through Mascarenhas *Wado*, crossing the area of Dando or Dadda (*sand mound*). The wall is submerged at several places. A senior resident of the village, António Gonsalves told me that during his childhood, the wall was almost two meters high. But now, on account of the silting as well swelling waves, the entire structure has been demolished or buried under the sand. Yet, one finds some of the portions almost intact and that the port in its heyday had a perfect setting for large fleets. The wall meets half-way between Vithi or Rajbidi. The royal road indicates that the port had direct access to the main road of the city. The material used for cementing the stones of the port wall is lime. Inside the wall precincts, there appear to be at least three navigational channels and protective docking systems where the ships could take shelter. According to António Gonsalves, the channel had enough water 80 years ago for small boats to ply, but no more. There is now a narrow creek for small boats to get inside the dock area. The docking wall runs along the ancient shore-line for a length of four or five kms. It gives one the impression that the port could shelter easily over one hundred ships at a time." With the discovery of this ancient port which was the hub of activity 1000 years ago, we may hope," comments Dr. Shirodkar, "to get new historical material which may throw an entirely new light on the Silaharas (who probably built the port) and the Kadambas (who came to possess it after they defeated the Silaharas)".

Dr. Rao, Manoj Saxena and I drove into Gopakapatana from Old Goa, past Neura, through Pilar, about which we will soon write in greater detail. At Pilar, we found on the highway to the Dabolim Airport a site marked with a signboard erected by ASI. Within the nearby compound we found the remnants of a Kadamba oil mill (the property, we were told, now belongs to the Sinari family and the Church), a granite grinder in the Sinari part, another in the Church part of the property. Once, we were told, there were six grinders. We also came across a small Ganesha (circa 13th century) in the house of Daya Naik, a mechanic working for Kadamba Transport Corporation. He had found it in the nearby swampy grounds and enshrined it in his private oratory.

We were told that the Kadambas had large stables. There were wells to bathe the horses and to provide them drinking water. There were seven tanks once. Two have since silted. We saw three of them, partly silted, and were told that there were two more inside a very

dense and thorny thicket. A few steps away are the ruins of a Portuguese cemetery. And, across the road, leading to Raj Vidi, there is a majestic cross, apparently all that remains of the once prosperous parish Church of Goa Velha. We found scattered at various places shards of apparently Chinese pottery. The royal path, we were told (but have no corroborative historical evidence), was once about 32 metres broad. It started at the royal palace and one segment ran to the seaport, mentioned above. A photo published by Dr. George Moraes in his *The Kadamba Kula* presents a far happier sight than we found, but even now it offers an excellent view. It is bang opposite Goa Shipyard, in the Vaddem area of the port town of Vasco da Gama. At that point in time, Vaddem was an "isthmus", as described in Portuguese texts, and it connected the port city of Vasco da Gama and the mainland. What remains of the Raj Vidi is a small segment, hardly 300 metres long. It has been partly asphalted and, quite visibly, encroached upon. Some houses and other civil construction now occupy almost half the breadth of this once royal path. It leads from the old port of Gopakapatana, past St. Anthony's Chapel and, around the Pilar hillock, to the hills of Batim, Gaunxim and Goulem-Moula and thence, across the Kadamba, plateau so named in the 1980s, to Ela (Old Goa). This segment of Raj Vidi more or less coincided with the Rua Direita of Cidade de Goa, the hub of the Portuguese capital which left indelible memories on the travellers who visited it and they, in turn, on the readers of their works.

Apparently, Raj Vidi bifurcated at Pilar, passed through the Batim-Gaunxim valley, via Maina, to reach Telaulim also known as Santana. Curiously, as we discovered, the segment, now run over by thorny bushes, measures about 3.5 kms, while the asphalted road to Old Goa is much longer, about 17 kms. long. Small byways link the nearby village of Mandur to Neura and rejoin the royal path near the Moula plateau. Similarly, Chimbel, mentioned in Appendix I, and Telaulim, are linked by roads converging behind two of Old Goa's hills. The royal path broke at the bank of the *Mandovi* and then ran its way via Divar island, again across the same river, into Bicholim (*Divcholi*) and up the Ghats to Belgaum and eventually Badami. Those were the days when Govapuri was the capital city of the Kadamba empire, that at its peak comprised 13,400 villages.

It is claimed that the Badami Chalukya Kirtivarman I subdued the Konkana Mauryas and the area of Goa was placed by him under his brother-in-law Vantuvallabha Senanandaraja of Sendraka. Fr. Cosme da Costa, claims that Vantuvallabha, as the ruler of Goa, ordered, in the sixth century, that the river be desilted in order to facilitate the navigation at Govapuri. On the other hand, Dr. George Moraes claims that the Kadamba king Shasthadeva built a large fleet of ships and assembled them on the river Aganashini (Zuari), in order to move his army to attack and conquer Govapuri.

In conclusion, neither do we know with any degree of precision when was Gopakatana built, nor, if that really was the case, it was destroyed. And if destroyed it was, by whom. As for the silting of the port, the geologist has a satisfactory answer. The rainfall in Goa is heavy (350 cms), weathering and erosion are intense and alluvia has spread along the courses of rivers and coastal plains. The sandy deposits occur all along the coastal plains. ■

CHRISTIANITY IN GOVAPURI

Goa, as well known, was conquered by the Portuguese in 1510. When Dom Rui Lourenço da Távora was Viceroy of Portuguese India, he handed over the abandoned hillock of Govapuri to the Reformed Franciscans, whose Master General was Luis da Conceição. The shrine of Our Lady of Pilar, inspired by the famous Basílica of Our Lady of Pilar at Saragosa (Spain), was then built. The first group of Capuchins (*Capuchos*) came from the Arrábida Province of Spain. The plan of the Pilar Monastery was drawn by Friar Manuel Baptista from Daman and it was executed by Friar Domingos dos Santos. The foundation stone was laid on July 17, 1613. A university of science, arts and theology was soon established. There were 21 students, candidates to the Capuchin order, studying at a time in this institution. In 1835 the Portuguese suppressed all religious orders in Goa and Pilar was abandoned. In 1855, the King of Portugal allowed some Goan Carmelites to occupy the Pilar Monastery as their religious house in Chimbel had crumbled. But this establishment, too, did not thrive. The last Carmelite died in 1886. By a decree of 1878 of the Overseas ministry of Portugal, Pilar was given to the Archbishop of Goa as his summer residence. The Society of Pilar, which now occupies the site, was founded in Agonda, Canacona, the southernmost subdivision of Goa, on September 26, 1887 by Fr. Bento Martins, a Goan priest, who died in 1927. By 1939, the Society was on the brink of extinction, but for just one survivor. On July 2, 1939, however, it was re-organized by five priests, one of whom was Fr. Agnelo de Sousa, and two lay brothers who joined the lone survivor. Since then it progressed rapidly. The Vatican has now initiated the process for Fr. De Souza's canonization.

The church has a vaulted roof over a nave artistically wrought and decorated. Some wooden altars and the pulpit are in baroque style and panelled in white and gold colours. In the walls and pavements, there are some sarcophagi and tombstones with elaborate epitaphs bearing coats-of-arms in bold relief. The two sarcophagi, at each side of the main altar, contain the remains of Manuel Mascarenhas Homem, former Governor of Portuguese India, and Lopo Barriga, Captain of Goa. The sacristy and the choir still present their antique character. The residential section of the monastery is to the right of the church and at the entrance lies the tomb of Fr. Agnelo de Souza. Inside, in the center of the vast courtyard, there is, an ancient, exquisitely carved, pillar. All over the monastery there are several ancient religious paintings and other objects of religious interest.

What is remarkable about Pilar is the turn history has taken at the place. Staunchly Hindu at one time, staunchly Christian at another, it is now the mother-house of a Christian a religious order that is Indian to the core. During Goa's liberation struggle, the Pilar priests were openly anti-Portuguese. They cooperated with freedom fighters and were known to supply information to Indian intelligence agencies. They had a major role in the liberation of the Portuguese enclaves of Dadra and Nagar Haveli in the Gujarat region in 1954, the first territories lost by the Portuguese in modern history. ■



An artist's impression of the original Saraswati river

VELHA GOA

As bulls enraged, or lions smear'd with gore

His hands sweep wide o'er Goa's purpled shore

— Luis de Camões, *The Lusíads*, Canto XV.xiii (Mickle's Translation)

Thus had Afonso de Albuquerque, the second governor of Portugal's then nascent Empire of the Orient, taken Goa, in 1510. He had taken it twice in the same year: the first time on February 17 and, after the sultanate of Bijapur regained it on May 23, he re-took it "definitively" as Portuguese chroniclers recorded the event, again on November 25, St Catherine's day who was the legendary saint and martyr of Alexandria. Christian hagiographers see her as the patron saint of young women, but to the Portuguese she was their protectress and, by implication, an enemy of the Muhammedans. The first Christian shrine in Goa, just a thatch hut, was dedicated to her in gratitude for her "intervention" before God.

It must be stated, even if briefly, that the first Portuguese ruler of Goa, Dom Francisco Almeida, a brave man from all accounts and of impeccable lineage—he, had the title of Viceroy, whereas Albuquerque whose pedigree was less distinguished (he traced his origin to Dom Afonso Sanches, the bastard son of King Dom Dinis) was ranked as governor — staunchly opposed Albuquerque's grandiose plans of founding an empire. From d'Almeida's point of view, which eventually proved to be by far more realistic than Albuquerque's dream, Portugal's strength lay in the sea. They did not have the military strength to conquer and occupy extensive tracts of land in India whose rulers and princes had large armies and capable soldiers. At sea they were unquestionably *the* masters. Small trading outposts and piracy were the ideal goal.

Albuquerque (he himself always spelt his name as *Alboquerque*, but Albuquerque is the more frequent spelling in Portuguese texts and documents) had a taste of d' Almeida's contempt for him on the very day he presented his letter of appointment to d'Almeida. On March 8, 1509 the papers, d'Almeida furiously declared shall remain "nos vê-lo-emos" (we shall see) For now, he was under arrest. And under arrest he remained till d'Almeida, in a cooler frame of mind, handed over the powers and left for Portugal on November 5 of the same year.

It also needs be said that Albuquerque was goaded by the Hindus of Goa and a corsair from Honavar, south of Goa, named Thimaya to take Goa from the Muslims of Bijapur, because the taxes of the Sultan were extortionate and his nobility in charge of Goa insufferably arrogant. After Goa's "definitive" conquest, Albuquerque wrote a long letter to the king. Dated December 22, 1510 it says that the Hindus were loyal and friendly. They had handed over to him the Muslim fugitives they came by who Albuquerque promptly put to the sword vowing that "in future he would have them roasted." It is true, however, that his soldiers, fierce and resolute "as bulls enraged or lions smear'd with gore," had stormed the bastions of the city, at that point in time, the second capital of the Sultanate of Bijapur, one of the five fragments of the shattered Bahmani Sultanate, which, much in the same fashion, had earlier splintered from the parent kingdom of the Tughluks. The Bahmanis had revolted against the tyranny of Muhammed-bin-Tughluk, in the course of rebellions that shook that empire between the years of 1343 and 1351. And now its own ineptitude and lack of wisdom had taken its toll. The five provincial governors of the Bahmani Sultanate (Berar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Bidar, and Golkonda) broke away, during the inglorious reign

of Mahammad Shah (1482 - 1518) who, in the words of Vincent A. Smith (*The Oxford History Of India*) was “a confirmed drunkard” and eventually killed himself by his excesses, in 1482.

A year earlier he had executed the scholarly Persian, Mahmmud Gawan, who had been his advisor and strategist, as he had been of his predecessors. According to Meadows Taylor (*Manual of Indian History*), “Gawan stood broadly and grandly, not only among all his contemporaries, but among all the ancient Muhammadans of India, as one unapproachably perfect and consistent.” It is said that Gawan’s end had been plotted by his rivals, but, when the Sultan discovered the deceit practised on him, it was too late. All Muhammad Shah could do “was try to remorse in drink”.

Of interest to our purpose is that Gawan had been so overtaken by Goa’s beauty, the excellence of its climate, the abundance of water, the wealth of its flora and the enormous potential of its port that he compared it to the “Cistern of Plenty” and goaded Sultan Muhammed Shah, the then Bahmani sovereign, to take Goa (1472) rather than Dabhol as his intention had, till then, been. And though the Bahmani rule in Goa was largely inconsequential, except, perhaps, for its bigotted and largely successful attempt to raze the splendid Saptakoteshwara temple at Divar island, it was in their time that the new city sprang on the eastern bank of the *Mandovi*. By then, Gopakapatana, the Velha Goa port-town that we just visited, had silted beyond redemption, and Goa’s international trade, particularly in horses from Arabia, had begun to flourish. This the Portuguese came to covet, and it spurred them to conquer Goa.

José Nicolau da Fonseca quotes Nikitin, the Russian traveller, who visited India at the time (*India in the Fifteenth Century*) to the effect that the Muhammedan power did not extend in the Konkan beyond Dabhol, which was then, along with Chaul in north Konkan, the main rival of Goa in terms of international trade. But if that was the truth, it, certainly, was not for lack of trying. They had made repeated attempts, before and even later, to capture Goa, one of them in 1469, in the reign of Muhammed Shah, with Muhammed Gawan himself in command of a large force, and investing it both by land and sea. It was a remarkable, if short-lived, victory. Ferishta (*Brigg’s translation*, Vol. II) recorded that the victory had been hailed in Bidar. “Court and capital vied with each other in celebrating it with pomp and festivity”. And the king ordered “the *nobat* (a shrill wind instrument) to beat the march of triumph for seven days”.

The second Muslim incursion was in 1489, when the former Bahmani governor of Bijapur, Abdul Muzaffar Yusuf Adil Shah proclaimed himself Sultan, with the title *Savai*, from Sava, where he had lived as a refugee, and had perhaps studied at that city’s university. The Portuguese changed the title to *Sabaio*.

The Portuguese took Goa in 1510 and stayed until India decided to order its armed forces to oust them in an action code-named *Operation Vijaya*, which was over in just 24 hours, from December 18 to December 19, 1961

A strange hoodoo haunted almost all of Goa’s many conquerors. Before Gawan, the Kadambas, and before them the Silaharas had peaked to great heights of glory and then plunged to despair and decay. The Sultans of Bijapur were not any luckier. Afonso de Albuquerque, too, the Portuguese master-strategist who conquered Goa for his king, died a sad death. His enemies and rivals had managed to poison the king’s mind and he was replaced by his most bitter foe. It was a slight he could not bear. He died in the ship that would take him back to Portugal, at the estuary of the *Mandovi*, and his last words were: “*Mal com Elrei por causa dos homens, mal com os homens por causa d’Elrei. Bom é acabar,*”

which loosely translates as: 'In the bad books of the king because of the men, in the bad books of the men because of the king, it's better to die.' It had been his wish to sip his favourite wine before he died. And those still loyal to him, thought it was a "favour from God," that a retainer could row a boat to town, fetch the wine and serve it up to him, in small, slow sips, before he expired, a smile of gratitude on his emaciated lips.

Just five years back, "mounted on a noble and richly caparisoned steed" to go by *Lendas da India*, by João de Barros (1496-1570), "Albuquerque entered the city amid drums beating and trumpets sounding, and proceeded to the palace of Adil Shah, accompanied by a large number of *fidalgos* and captains bearing their standards, and clergymen carrying before them a gilt cross, amidst the acclamations of an immense multitude of people who hailed the conqueror, and as he passed along showered on him flowers of gold and silver". When, later, the tide turned against him, he abandoned the city— because he was by now (May 1510) reinforced, overwhelmed by the Muslim forces and lived in his armada, along with his men, till the monsoon cleared. They were reduced to dire straits and, to continue to quote from *Lendas*, "they were forced to live on rats and other loathsome food". But, when taunted by the Muslims who had sent a boat loaded with abundant provisions, he had spurned the offer and held his head high. He ordered all the wine and biscuits which were preserved as contingency rations for the sick and infirm, who were many, be exhibited to his formentors and presented an image of cheerfulness and plenty. Then, when he reconquered the city on November 25, he had "embraced all his captains as they approached him covered with wounds and bearing swords still reeking with blood, praised them for the valour and energy they had displayed on that day and he bestowed on several of them the honour of knighthood. For three days the town was sacked and plundered. The booty was mind-boggling. The one fifth which was mandatorily reserved for the Crown yielded the equivalent of £ 20000!



THE CITY OF PLEASURES

It's typical of the Castileans to speak well, of the French to drink and eat well and of the Portuguese to make love well.

— Count Giulio Landi c. 1530

Landi was commenting on Portuguese society in Madeira, the island in the midst of the Atlantic which was the first overseas territory to be colonized by the Portuguese. But the Portuguese proclivities, if we may so qualify them, are glossed over by the chroniclers who followed their movements through Africa and Asia. What we know of the city of Goa is from the travellers who wrote about it. Curiously, the foreign travellers left more vivid accounts than the Portuguese. One of the most sensuous accounts is the *City of Pleasures* by Francesco Carletti.

Carletti was a daring Italian navigator, the fourth amongst his compatriots to circumnavigate the world and the scion of a rich family of merchants. He had come to Goa, via the "New World", where he had gone to buy slaves; he used a circuitous route, crossing the isthmus of Panama into Peru, then on to Mexico, the Philippines, Japan and Macau. He lived in Goa for 21 months. He was young, perhaps just out of his teens (he was born in 1573 or 1574). Goa had quite simply stunned him. The women, most of them racially mixed - sired by Portuguese men from women who hailed from China, Japan, the Mollucas, Malacca, Bengal, Pegu (modern-day Burma) and from other countries - were very beautiful. But, in his view, nobody outdid the Portuguese hybrids from Bengal. They were "most perfect and their round limbs seemed to have been polished on a lathe". They were tall and statuesque and "were more perfect than western women, no flab at all (on their bellies)" and they draped themselves in "transparent cotton that was superior to (European) voiles". He was a very observant man and graphic in his descriptions: "Rare was the drooping breast". Men and women, he observed, were very jealous. "There was not a day a husband didn't kill his wife which he could legitimately do if she betrayed him".



Anfiteatro de S. Jovani de Goa.



Anfiteatro de S. Mateus de Cochim.

Old Goa in 17th Century

Sketches by Plácido Francesco Rampori

A modern historian called such stories “delicious” - they are told, over and over again, by other travel writers, with little variation in the substance, but on every retelling they gain a wealth of new and titillating details. Wrote Jan Huyghen van Linschotten, a Dutch geographer — and from hindsight a spy — who was in Goa in the late 1500s (the English translation of his book *The Voyage* is dated 1598) that the women drugged their husbands with datura and “had their pleasures”, as if he were dead, in his own presence, with men they called “soldiers”. But for all their excesses, they were, he attests, “very cleanlie”, and washed frequently. Curiously, Linschoten’s most exciting accounts are of the Asian countries he never visited. Linschoten in fact merely adapted and embellished in his *Itinerario*, the versions of earlier Portuguese travellers, like Fernão Mendes Pinto (*Peregrinação*) who were endowed with a great flair for fiction.

The American scholar Boies Penrose (*Goa - Queen of the East*) lists a representative selection of travellers. We quote: Two decades after Linschoten’s departure, the observant French sailor, François Pyrard, reached Goa, after living for years as a castaway in the Maldivian islands. He lived in the capital for nearly two years (1608-10), and his resulting account is the most vivid, and provides the most complete picture of the city that has come down to us. Not only does Pyrard describe the lives and functions of the viceroys and archbishops at length, but his narration of the life of the town is a document of great importance. He surpasses Linschoten in that he gives an ample description of the public buildings, churches, and domestic architecture of the place, as well as a full survey of the various streets and quarters. During the period that Pyrard lived there, Goa was visited by a fellow-countryman, Jean Mocquet (1609), who served as apothecary to the Viceroy. His account is likewise of value, but is inclined to be sordid, and antagonistic to the Portuguese. Nor is it as full as Pyrard’s narrative.

Fourteen years later (1623-24), another traveller visited Goa, the Italian Pietro della Valle (*El Pelegrino*). His description is an excellent supplement to those of Linschoten and Pyrard, especially since he was a devout Catholic, and hence wrote at large on ecclesiastical life and church festivals. della Valle’s young wife, who he had met during his voyage to the East, died in tragic circumstances and he travelled thereafter with her embalmed corpse and her lady-in-waiting. On his return he buried her in Rome, married the lady-the-waiting and sired a large number of children, all, unfortunately for their by then widowed mother, “rotters” as a contemporary described them.

A briefer account is that of the Cornishman, Peter Mundy, who was in Goa with Captain Weddell’s fleet in the autumn of 1636. His account deserves mention as an early eye-witness description by an Englishman. Two years later, the German von Mandelslo, a member of the Duke of Holstein’s mission to Persia, visited Goa, and left descriptions, one of which is of a banquet by a Portuguese nobleman. He describes the Portuguese as accomplished hosts. They were abstemious, he vouches, and extremely jealous of their women. The only women he saw at the banquet were the nobleman’s many and pretty maids from Malacca. Of his wife, and daughters if any, he never saw even the faintest shadow. In 1641, the French traveller, Jean Baptiste Tavernier, called there, when on his way to the diamond mines of Golconda. He paid a second visit to the fast-decaying city in 1648. His notes about the Inquisition (he being a Protestant) are especially interesting. But he opined that, wherever they go, the Portuguese leave a better place for those who follow them.

Several other authorities visited Goa when it was in the state of final decay. Abbé Carré, who despite his religious rank, was in reality a diplomatic courier for Louis XIV, stopped over in Goa in December 1672, and left a brief but lively narrative, by no means favourable

to the Portuguese. Another Frenchman, the physician Dr. Claude Dellon, was in Goa from 1673 to 1676, but he spent most of the time in the Aljube prison as a result of having seduced the mistress of the Governor of Daman. He was finally subjected to a trial for apostasy and condemned to the galleys in Portugal. His account of the Goa Inquisition, the reliability of which is questioned by some scholars, bears all the marks of a singularly unpleasant and possibly first-hand experience. (See *Appendix*) In 1675, Dr. John Fryer, a surgeon in the East India Company, visited Goa, at which time many of the inhabitants had already migrated to Panjim. The last of the early visitors was the Calvinistic Scot, Captain Alexander Hamilton, who was in Goa in 1692 and again in 1704. His remarks, especially on the subject of religion, are cynical in the extreme, but his general picture of Goa at that period of stagnation is not without considerable value.

There was, also, Ralph Fitch, an English merchant, who visited Goa in the seventeenth century; like Pyrard, he had a taste of the Goan jails, and was freed thanks to the intervention of the English Jesuit Thomas Stephen, a scholarly man who authored the *Konkani Grammar* and *Krista Purana*, in Marathi verse written in roman alphabets; (both the books rolled out from the first printing press set up in Asia, by the Jesuits, in 1556) he evangelized in Salcette, (*not to be confused with Salcete in South Goa*) modern Mumbai, through "conviction" and never the use of force, unlike his co-religionists in Goa. Fitch had commented that the cost of living was so cheap in Goa, that his travails notwithstanding, to Goa he would gladly return if given a chance.

Perhaps the most inspired visitor of Goa was Captain Fredericks Marryat, who wrote the novel *Phantom Ship*. He created a character, Amine Poots, a Dutch young lady who had been through various misadventures and became the guest of the Portuguese captain of the *Phantom Ship*, and was tenderly guided by him through the city, then (1824-1825) already in decay but with some buildings still intact. She had a brief encounter with the padres of the Inquisition, on a charge of witchcraft. She had tried rather unguardedly to communicate with her mother's soul to seek help in locating her elusive Dutch husband.

But the most imaginative account will remain that of a British Major, Herber Drury, who served in Madras and visited Goa; he translated into English, from the original Dutch, Jacob Cantor Vischer's *Letters from Malabar*:

*There was a city, glorious and free,
Built on the shore of the dark blue sea,
Where towers and spires of gilded hue,
Shone over the waves of the ocean blue,
And palace and cottage smiling told,
How fair was that city in days of old!
Far, far above was the glowing sky
Where the sun shone bright o'er the turrets high
While the cocoa shade and the graceful palm
Hung o'er the waters so lovely and calm,
Thick and numberless, side by side,
Drinking the stream on the onward tide.
But now, from the spot where the glad sun shone
That glorious city of palms is gone,*

*Gone with its pride and people so brave,
Whelmed by the tide of the salt sea wave!
Yes! there below the surging deep
Fair Goa's sunken towers sleep,
All, all that once was glad and bright,
Reposing there in ceaseless night.*

—Major Herber Drury, 1862



PYRARD'S GOA

François Pyrard's account is generally rated as the most authentic and perspicacious. We reproduce below a brief summary. He arrived in Goa in 1608. He is aptly described by Maurice Collis (*The Land of the Great Image*). "He was a talkative and observant Frenchman of the seaman class, a brave *homme* as will be seen, honest and careful. Leaving France in 1601 on board a ship fitted out by the merchants of St. Malo, he was cast away on the Maldives, then an island monarchy, and did not reach Calicut till 1607. Moving south to Cochin, at Calicut, a Portuguese fortress, he was arrested because he had no papers and was thrown into prison. From thence, his health much impaired by the dreadful dungeon in which he was confined, they sent him in chains by ship to Goa."

Landing on the wharf near the Viceroy's palace, he expected to be lodged in the main gaol, the *Sala das Bragas*, and was surprised when out of pity the police took him to the Royal Hospital, a palatial institution controlled by the Jesuits. The Jesuit Society was the most cultivated and modern element in Goa, and the hospital was administered by them in so admirable a fashion, that many declared it superior even to the Hospital of the Holy Ghost in Rome or the Infirmary of the Knights at Malta, the two leading hospitals of Europe at that time. Poor Pyrard, after his rough experiences, thought it a paradise. He was carried up "a lofty and magnificent staircase" to a bed "beautifully shaped and lacquered with red varnish," upon which was a mattress and silk coverlet, sheets of fine cotton, pillows of white calico, luxuries unknown in Europe among his class. A barber immediately shaved him, he was given pyjamas, a cap, and slippers, and provided with a bedside table on which was a fan, drinking water, a clean towel, and a handkerchief. Under the bed he noted a chamber-pot, an article which appeared to him the most satisfactory piece of furniture in the place after his experiences in Cochin gaol, where he had been herded with two hundred others in one room without any sanitary arrangements whatever. Supper brought further pleasant surprises. Each patient was served with a complete fowl, and the plates, bowls, and dishes were of Chinese porcelain, that is, of Ming porcelain, then such a rarity in Europe that Lord Treasurer Burghley thought "a porringer of white purselyn garnished with gold" a very choice new-year present to give Queen Elizabeth.

When Pyrard felt better, he asked the head Jesuit physician for leave to go, saying that he longed to explore the great city of which he had heard so much. He seemed to think that the charge against him had been withdrawn, but the Jesuit knew better and out of kindness advised him to be in no hurry. Not taking his meaning, Pyrard agreed reluctantly to stay on, and when quite recovered pressed for his discharge. This time it was granted and he descended the grand staircase in the highest spirits. The Father had given him a new suit of cloth, a piece of silver, and his benediction. He had had a good breakfast, though, as he says, he "little required it for the haste he was in to be off". So it was a cruel shock when he was accosted by a sergeant at the bottom of the stairs and a warrant was flourished in his face. "His partisans" — they were giant negro slaves imported from Africa — "seized me and bore me off in rough sort," he writes.

However, things did not go too badly. In his new clean suit and with the silver piece, he won the heart of the gaoler's wife at the *Sala das Bragas*, for it was there that they took him. Instead of flinging him into the common dungeon where galley-slaves were confined, they put him, thanks to the lady, into a fairly decent room, a wonderful piece of luck, for the dungeon was "*le lieu le plus ord et sale qui au monde comme ie croy*", as he

notes in his old-fashioned French, in other words, the most orderly hall in the world in his experience.

For two years Pyrard served the Portuguese as a private soldier and left an account of the way his companions lived. Most of the soldiers were recruited in Portugal. The prospects were good and, as a rule, volunteers came forward, but if they did not, they were pressed, even boys of ten years being taken, for there was a great shortage of manpower in Portugal, which had too small a population to meet the vast demands of its empire. Many of the soldiers were ex-convicts, released for the purpose, and all belonged to the lowest class, but as soon as they landed in India they became gentlemen. "*Des qu'ils sont là*" writes the traveller Mocquet, who arrived in Goa the same year as did Pyrard, "*pour vils et abjects qu'ils soient, ils s'estiment tous fidalques et nobles, changeant leurs noms obscurs à des noms plus illustrés.*" In short, even the vilest feigned royalty. The real nobility winked at this practice. If Indians could be induced to believe that all Portuguese were aristocrats, or, at least, that all Portuguese in India were gentlemen of quality, so much the better. In this connection, Mocquet cites the story of the swineherd, Fernando. On arrival at Goa this rustic followed the current practice and called himself Dom Fernando. One day, riding through the streets, well mounted and magnificently dressed, he met the son of his old master in Portugal. "Good heavens! Fernando, is that you?" exclaimed the young gentleman. Fernando was put out, he tried to ride past, though it was an effort to pretend not to know his master's son. When the other rallied him: "Come, come, Fernando, no need to pretend with me," he could keep it up no longer and sheepishly dismounted. "But don't tell anyone here," he begged, as he knelt and paid the customary respects!

Back to Pyrard's account. The common soldier was able to make this fine appearance for several reasons. His principal occupation was that of a marine on board the warships which protected the convoys from the Dutch and from pirates, but during the monsoon, from May to October, he lived in Goa as a private person. As there were no barracks, he rented a house along with a dozen comrades. Clubbing together they bought three or four good suits and engaged a few slaves to wait on them and cook. At home they would sit in loose shirts and pyjama trousers, playing the guitar or gossiping with those who passed, but when they went out, which they did in rotation, the grand suits were put on. "You would say they were lords," says Pyrard, "with an income of 10,000 *livres*, such is their bravery, with their slaves behind them and a man carrying over them a big parasol. There are places where these slaves are to be hired and one can be got for half a day for a copper."

Cheap though living was in Goa, the common soldier could hardly have managed on his pay alone to turn himself out so well. But he had another source of income. By 1600 the city was full of half-caste women. For a century the Government had been encouraging mixed marriages and there had also been the freest intercourse with female slaves. The Portuguese soldiers were, it seems, in great demand. To get a soldier some women were prepared to house him, feed him, pay for his clothes, see to his washing, and provide him with pocket-money. No marriage usually took place, though the Government recognized the relationship to the extent of giving the children the right to inherit from both parents.

But Pyrard notes that, for a soldier who left the house which he shared with his comrades to live with a Eurasian mistress, life was not a bed of roses. The girls were temperamental and uncontrolled. They were more jealous and less amenable than either Portuguese or Indian women. Their whole life was to keep the man they had got. But he was surrounded by temptations to infidelity, as there were far more girls than white soldiers. If he yielded to the solicitations of another, or, if, tired of his mistress, he sought to terminate the

connection, he was in imminent peril. Unless he used the greatest cunning and dissimulation in quitting her, says Pyrard, she would infallibly poison him. What poison they used, Pyrard never precisely discovered. But he describes its effects, which were so curious that, had we not also Linschoten's testimony in addition, it would be hard to believe him. The action of the poison could be delayed by varying the dose. After taking it the victim might live a month, even six months, and be none the worse. Then one day he would suddenly fall dead.

A soldier, were he good-looking or had he made a name for himself in fights with the Dutch, might also find women of the upper class eager for his acquaintance. In this class there were more women of mixed blood than of pure European descent. Even those of pure Portuguese extraction preferred rice to bread and ate curry without a spoon, we are told. Dressed in a gauze blouse, a flowered skirt, and loose slippers, they idled indoors through the day, listening to the gossip brought in by their slaves, chewing betel or sucking sweetmeats. It was to enliven this existence that they sought the attentions of handsome soldiers. "They used the slights and practices they could devise, they even, sent out their slaves and baudes by night, and at extraordinary times, over walls, hedges, and ditches, how narrowly soever they are kept and looked unto." For they were kept in a seclusion hardly different from the Indian *pardah*.

To introduce a gallant into the house would have been risky or impossible, had they not known how to use *datura*, a narcotic weed of the nightshade family, called in Europe *stramonium*. Administered in quantity it is a poison, but in small doses its narcotic properties merely weaken the will and confuse the intelligence. If a soldier-lover was expected, the husband was given enough to render him insensible, not wholly stupefied and sleeping, but rather in a trance - they remained oblivious to what happened even before their eyes; when its effects had worn off, they didn't even know that they had been drugged! Pyrard has a passage describing such a scene. After stating that the *datura* is put in drink or soup, he says: "An hour afterwards the husbands become giddy and insensible, singing, laughing, and performing a thousand antics (*singeries*), for they have lost all consciousness and judgement. Then do the wives make use of their time, admitting whom they will, and taking their pleasure in the presence of their husbands, who are aware of nothing."

In one of his most evocative passages Pyrard describes a woman of this upper class as she appeared at the Mass, practically her only distraction away from home. The scene is a medley of the Occident and the Orient, of the Latin and the Indian, of the Catholic and the Pagan. It is a feast-day, a special occasion, and the lady is "superbly attired in the Portuguese mode". Her gown is gold brocade, which glows under a mantle of black silk gauze. She comes riding in a palanquin, seated on a Persian carpet and propped on velvet cushions. On foot behind are a score of maid-servants, slave girls from middle or upper India or negroes from Mozambique, bought for their looks and dressed to set them off in coloured smocks falling to the navel and wide silk pleated scarlet petticoats, some carrying a mat, a carpet, a prayer book, others a handkerchief or a fan. Escorting the palanquin are two Eurasian footmen, handsome and sleek, who at the church door help the lady to alight or, if she prefers to be carried into the nave, are ready there to hand her down.

When such a lady was on her feet, she seemed very tall, for she would be wearing *chopines* or battens, a pattern with a cork sole six inches thick, an extravagant fashion which, Collis comments, was carried to fantastical extremes in Venice, and had even reached England, as is evident, he notes, from Hamlet's exclamation to the actress: 'By'r Lady, your lady-ship is nearer Heaven than when I saw you last by the altitude of a chopine.'

The progress down the aisle then began. Owing to the height of the chopines, and because it was undignified for a person of rank to walk otherwise than slowly, the passage to her seat took some time, as she paced along, leaning on the arms of the two footmen, her air languid, an assumed lassitude. Her maids were gone ahead to get ready her place, spreading her carpet, with a mat on top for coolness, arranging her cushions or sometimes setting a chair. There she would sit in the semi-darkness, for the churches in Goa had mother-of-pearl or kapitz shells in place of glass window-panes, which suffused a soft yellowish under-sea light, sit there with her rosary of great gold beads, her pale olive face much painted, watching under her eyes, while her handsome maids fanned her nor dared smile back at their lovers who were signing to them in the shadows.

Writes Collis, "The life Pyrard is describing was the decadence into which the Portuguese fell when, no longer adequately reinforced and supported from home, they were losing the original energy which had driven them east. An oriental conquest, the wealth it brought, mixed marriages on a grand scale, and, perhaps, most deadly, the extensive use of slaves, had transformed the hard-bitten Portuguese of early days, the paladins of the Lusiads, the intrepid navigators, into a luxurious society, still able to hold what it had taken from ill-armed native kingdoms, but losing ground to the Dutch, who were coming upon the scene animated with the same pristine virtues that a century earlier had sustained da Gama and Albuquerque."

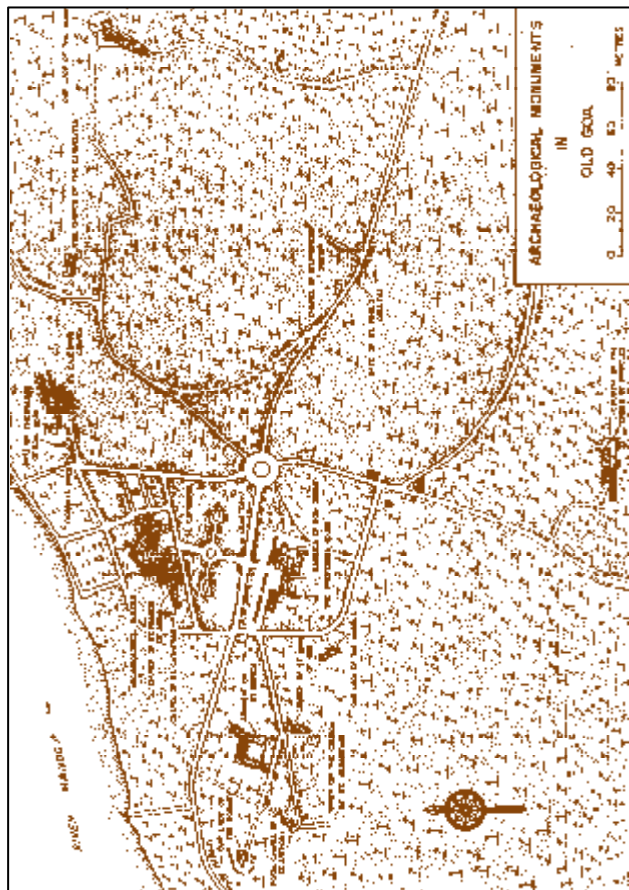
Pyrard's testimony is very valuable because it is not that of a mere traveller. Having lived for two years among the lower classes he knew what he was talking about. If you had good introductions, however, and were making a short stay, you might be dazzled by your reception and by the splendid palaces and churches, the richness of their baroque façades blending with the tropic scene and startling you with their beauty.

Pyrard was once allowed a peep into the Viceroy's Hall of Audience.

The entrance to the hall was richly furnished and hung with portraits of viceroys and governors of Portuguese Asia from the time of da Gama. (*The originals can still to be seen in the ASI Museum now situated near the Assisi Church*). The Resende MS. in the British Museum contains a coloured copy of each of these portraits. Pyrard occasionally caught sight of the Viceroy of his day, Ruy Lourenço de Távora, who succeeded the formidable Aleixo de Menezes, the Governor-Primate. Loiterers in the *Terreiro do Paço*, the square to the south of the Viceregal Palace, from which there was a flight of steps leading to the Hall of Audience, would see arrive a cavalcade of gentlemen, some four hundred strong, mounted on Arab stallions, attended by Muslim grooms, who flicked away the flies with horse-tail whisks. The guard, a hundred men in blue uniforms, carrying halberds, would line the steps. The Viceroy would emerge, mount his horse, and set off with the gentlemen, their palanquins carried behind, for show or in case they tired; footmen held over the head of each rider a great parasol.

Each of them had in personal attendance twelve pages dressed in silk and six very tall negroes carrying drawn swords, fierce and devoted, made bulkier still by their padded mantles. It was in such guise that Pyrard saw Távora pass, not to dine out, for he dared not do that in a city where the use of poison was so well understood, but to attend a fete at one of the great religious houses. Like all the Viceroys, he was a very rich man, for his salary was £ 14,000 a year — a sum that may be multiplied by ten or more for the twentieth-century equivalent — and every Viceroy hoped to make £ 300,000 during his three years of office from presents, bribes and the sale of offices. But before they could enjoy

their fortune, they had to get home, and, as Pyrrard notes: "It happens often enough that, as all this wealth of the Viceroy's accrues to them from pillage and robbery is lost in shipwrecks on their return journey. So the sea inherits it and all is miserably lost."



ONCE UPON A TIME

"Every morning the sun rose at Goa upon scenes which may be easily realized. The sailors and coolies loading or unloading in the river; the busy shopkeepers displaying their wares; the slaves bringing in the supplies of water and provisions for the day. There was the Palace of the Viceroy, surrounded by majestic *fidalgos* giving and exchanging the profoundest courtesies. Many were perhaps making their way to the great Hall of Council, which was hung with pictures of every Viceroy and Governor from Vasco da Gama downwards. There were also the palaces of the Archbishop, with a crowd of black-robed priests, missionaries and clergy of every description, native as well as European. Besides these were the courts and offices of the king's council and chancery, with busy clerks labouring at their desks, but all in grave and stately fashion, after the proud manner of the noble Portuguese. Meantime, above the noise of offices and bazaars, the bells were ever ringing from the numerous churches and monasteries, and filling the whole city with an ecclesiastical clangour."

— James Talboys Wheeler, *History of India from the Earliest Ages*

The following description of the main edifices of the city of Goa is based on Boies Penrose's reconstruction of the city in *Goa, Queen of The East*. Penrose, in fact, only paraphrased José Nicolau de Fonseca's *Sketch of The City of Goa*. We have tried to correct some of Penrose's descriptions on the basis of the report of the Archaeological Committee appointed in 1910 and the work the successor Committee left behind in 1931. (The existing monuments are identified and described in Appendix I - *Remains of the Empire*.)

If one approached Goa from the sea, one would find four great compounds along the southern bank of the *Mandovi*, which contained and enclosed much of the official and commercial activity of the metropolis. Each one of these enclosures must have been three to four hundred yards long on the riverside, and perhaps a hundred and fifty to two hundred yards in depth inland. Upstream from the bar one first reached the *Ribeira Grande* (or Great Embankment). This was the workshop of the city. Here were 'the arsenal and the gun-foundry, the mint, the naval dockyard, the offices of the *Vedor da Fazenda* (Comptroller of the Treasury), and also the elephant stables. The *Vedor* was a person of greatest consequence, in rank second only to the Viceroy. He had his residence within the *Ribeira*, and from its verandah he could view all that passed in the arsenal and along the river: the great ships, some lying in dock, others hauled ashore for careening; the smithies and foundries working full-blast, the naval stores being assembled in the foreground.

The sight of so many artisans working there must have been a marvel. Each of these craftsmen — carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, master mariners, caulkers, gunners, founders, were all or mostly Indians — had a grand master who was a Portuguese, having command over those only of his own art. Due to the nature of the work performed in the compound, security regulations were perpetually in force; the *Ribeira* was walled, and all workmen leaving the enclosure were searched by the guards on duty at its two gates. In fact this area was truly a city within a city.

Immediately to the east of the *Ribeira Grande* was the *Cais de Santa Catarina*, or St. Catherine's Quay. This comprised the landing place for fishing boats, as well as the fish market itself. Along its western side, abutting the wall of the *Ribeira Grande*, was the sinister

Aljube, or the Archbishop's prison, where the victims of ecclesiastical ire were kept. The Frenchman Dellon, writing late in the seventeenth century, described it as being "the most filthy, dismal, and hideous of all I ever witnessed, and I doubt if there can be any other ill in the world more repulsive." (We give a summary of Dellon's account in the pages that follow)

A far nobler edifice, both in its appearance and purpose, was the great Royal Hospital, managed by the Jesuits, which ran along the southern side of the quay and thus overlooked the river. This admirable institution had been founded by Albuquerque, and had been enlarged at various dates during the sixteenth century. (Pyrard has already described it for us). Adjoining the hospital was the Chapel of St. Martin, put up by Viceroy Dom João de Castro to mark the breach in the old Muslim walls that had to be made in order to admit his triumphal entry into Goa in April, 1547 after the siege of Diu by the Sultan of Cambay (the original gate in the wall having been far too small for all the pomp and circumstance of the victorious extravaganza). On its landward side this chapel stood quite appropriately across the street from the Chapel of St. Catherine: the one founded by Albuquerque after the conquest of Goa; the other, by de Castro, following his great triumph over the Gujaratis.

To the east of St. Catherine's Quay lay a smaller compound known as the *Ribeira das Galés*. This area was important as a landing-stage for shipping from Portugal, used alternatively for that purpose with the Viceroy's Quay. Beyond this enclosure was the largest and most important of the ribeiras: the Quay of the Viceroys. Extending for seven hundred paces along the *Mandovi* and running back from the river for two hundred paces, this great compound was the centre of the official life of the capital, containing as it did the Viceroy's Palace and its dependencies. As the principal landing-place for incoming cargoes, the area had great commercial importance as well. Here stood the *Alfândega* or Custom House, "a very handsome building resembling the *Palais Royal* at Paris in style," as Pyrard wrote; here was the *Bangaçal* or great go-down, where the incoming cargo was stored; here, too, was the *Peso*, or weigh-house, where the goods were put on the scales. Equally functional was the *Tronco* or civil prison. Luis de Camões, the great Portuguese epic writer who was forever in trouble for brawling, not repaying his debts and seducing all manner of women, had seen the inside of this edifice on more than one occasion.

The most important structure in the area was the Viceregal Palace itself. Originally the Adil Shah's fort, it had been completely reconstructed in 1554 and thereafter by Viceroy Pedro Mascarenhas, who moved his residence from the Sabaio's palace near the Cathedral, as he did not want to climb the steep flight of stairs there.

In the days of Linschoten and Pyrard, Mascarenhas's rebuilding was a handsome and stately erection, constructed around two courts, and celebrated for its picture gallery. This apartment contained paintings of all the ships that had ever sailed from Portugal to India, each with a notation of her history and achievements. Adjacent was the stately hall of audience, hung with full-length portraits of every Viceroy and Governor already described by Pyrard; here the Viceroys not only held their councils, but also received ambassadors from the princes of the East. In lavishness and size, the palace enabled the Viceroys to live in regal splendour, maintaining their courts in a brilliant manner that almost rivalled that of the Great Mughal or the Sophy of Persia. None-the-less, Goa was a city of contrasts, and despite all this magnificence, we are told that the populace of the town, with the Viceroy's full permission, made use of the whole of the southern margin of the *Mandovi* from the Custom House right down to St. Catherine's Quay, for discharging the necessary functions of nature!

Across a narrow creek to the east of the *Terreiro Grande* was the *Bazaar Grande*, or the great market of the city. This operated actively every day in the year, since the Goans never kept provisions from one day to the next, but bought a fresh supply each morning. Just to the east of this colourful and animated place of trade stood the Church and Convent of St. Dominic, the handsome headquarters of the Dominican order in the Indies. These fine buildings were erected between 1550 and 1564, forming a huge fabric with a magnificent façade ascended by many steps that quite surpassed the cathedral. From these portals Dominican missionaries went forth to preach throughout the Orient, and the festivals of the convent were celebrated for their pomp and ritual.

To the south of the four great compounds and the *Bazaar Grande* lay the town of Goa itself. From the Quay of the Viceroy it was approached through the celebrated Arch of the Viceroy. It was at the western end of the Palace. This elegant and lofty portico was rebuilt in 1599 from the designs of Júlio Simão, a Portuguese architect who built many of the churches and other buildings of Goa. It later collapsed on a few occasions and was rebuilt to designs that slightly differed from each other, the last occasion being 1954. In its upper stages, the arch contained a bronze statue of St. Catherine, the patroness of the city, while in the lower stage was a realistic figure of Vasco da Gama. Through this gateway one entered a spacious area known as the *Terreiro do Paço* or Palace Square: the south façade of the Palace stood on one side, while the other face of the *Terreiro* was flanked by the *Palácio da Relação*, the High Court. This square was the fashionable meeting place for all of Goa. The *fidalgos* would foregather there in their best clothes, either on horseback or carried in their palanquins.

Beginning at the Arch of the Viceroy and running through the square was the principal thoroughfare of the town, *Rua Direita*, the Straight Street, which according to some was a segment of the earlier Kadamba's Royal Path; but when the Portuguese took over, it was a cobbled road in typical Islamic style. This avenue proceeded almost due south for a mile or more, its course being somewhat broken about midway by the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia*, a cluster of charitable buildings. The portion of the street between the *Terreiro do Paço* and the *Misericórdia* was *O Leilão*, or literally "the auction," since public sales were noisily and frequently held there. The horse market and the slave market were both in this part of the road. Pyrard wrote that "this street is very handsome and broad, full of shops of jewellers, goldsmiths, lapidaries, carpet weavers, silk mercers, and other artisans. While the market is afoot, there is so great a crowd in the street that one can hardly pass. In short one sees there the wealth of the Indies in all kinds, and jewels the finest that can be seen."

The steeds were richly caparisoned and sold for as high as a thousand pounds each. More pitiable were the slave auctions, where pretty and elegant girls were sold. They could play upon musical instruments, embroider and sew very finely, and also make sweetmeats and preserves. If a girl was sold as a virgin, she had first to be examined by a discreet expert of her own sex. These female slaves were usually displayed in the nude, so that they would bring a better price, and girls from Mozambique were usually the most in demand. Once bought, they were used as domestic servants and not rarely as prostitutes.

Turning to the right, a short way down the *Rua Direita*, one entered the Cathedral Quarter, which lay behind the *Ribeira das Galés* and St. Catherine's Quay, and contained some of the most important buildings in the whole of Goa. On the left-hand side, and extending all the way to *O Leilão*, was the large and imposing building of the Inquisition, now lying beneath the Chemical Laboratory of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Originally the

Sabaio's palace, and later the residence of the Viceroy and Governors, it had been the headquarters of the Inquisition since it was established in Goa in 1560, and had been quite thoroughly rebuilt in the intervening years. It was by 1600 a stately and handsome edifice, three storeys in height and with a beautiful façade of black stone: "Its black outside appears a fit emblem of the cruel and bloody transactions that passed within its walls," as Captain William Francklin, a later English (and Protestant) visitor aptly put it. Its outside casing was five feet thick, and within were two hundred cells for the unfortunate heretics, apostates, bigamists, sodomites, and sorcerers who awaited the *auto da fé*, the trial by torture. Also, those accused of *manice*, a word derived from *mana*, Portuguese for elder sister, and a euphemistic usage for lesbians.

Towards the end of this grim structure the street opened out into the *Terreiro do Sabaio*, another memento of old Adil Shah's occupancy of Goa. On the western side of this square was the Cathedral of St. Catherine, or the *Sé Primacial*, as it was called. Although it had been raised to episcopal status in 1534, it was not until after it had become the see of an Archbishop (1557) that a rebuilding of the original parish church took place. Then, in 1562, a magnificent structure began to rise, which, however, took some sixty or seventy years to complete. In this lengthy undertaking the architect Julio Simão was especially active, and although still unfinished in the year 1600, it was nevertheless said at the time to have had no less than 8,000 parishioners. Even the staunch Anglican, Dr. Fryer, who saw the cathedral towards the end of the seventeenth century, wrote that it was hardly surpassed in grandeur by any church in England; and even in its present state it bears comparison, in its façade especially, with the best churches of the time in Spain and Italy.

Across the square to the left stood the Senate House, where the municipal officials of Goa held their deliberations; almost adjoining it was the *Casa dos Contos* or Treasury, where the financial affairs of the *Estado da Índia* were taken in charge. Between this building and the cathedral was the Archbishop's Palace, a simple but dignified two-storey edifice, erected in the 1560s. It must have been a very large home for any archbishop. It was two hundred and thirty feet long and almost half that in breadth; in fact the fabric still survives and is partly occupied to this day. Behind the Archbishop's Palace was a large garden, at the southern end of which stands the gorgeous Convent of St. Francis of Assisi, built on the site of the principal mosque of the Sabaio's day. This was founded back in 1517, and the building of the church began about three years later, so that it was one of the oldest Christian structures in Goa, as well as being the headquarters of the Franciscan order in the Indies, the first religious order to raise their structures. Here Viceroy Dom João de Castro was buried, but the church that he knew is no more, as the surviving edifice is a complete rebuilding of the 1660s. It is one of the most beautiful churches in the world.

Not far from the Convent of St. Francis, in the nearby *Rua de Santa Catarina*, stood the plain but venerable Chapel of St. Catherine. This is the oldest Christian shrine in Goa, having been erected by Albuquerque immediately after the conquest, on the site of the city gate through which his troops made their victorious assault on November 25, 1510. In 1550 the chapel was enlarged and a new altarpiece installed, altering its appearance from the pristine simplicity of Albuquerque's creation. A brilliant procession, in which the Viceroy and the leading *fidalgos* participated, wound through the streets of Goa from the Palace once a year on St. Catherine's Day, for mass at this chapel on the festival of the patroness. The Chapel is now a protected monument but, sadly, in a state of decay.

Returning to the *Rua Direita*, one proceeded down to the *Misericórdia*, which obtruded across the street in the middle of *O Leilão* and was hence one of the most conspicuous buildings in Goa. This foundation was an orphan asylum run by a pious association of

laymen, modelled after a parent institution in Lisbon. Founded within a few years of the conquest, the building had been put up during the period between Albuquerque and de Castro. Adjoining the *Misericórdia* stood the beautiful church of *N. S. da Serra*, which had been started by Albuquerque after his return from the Red Sea in 1513, in fulfilment of a vow made, when his flagship, the *N. S. da Serra*, was in great distress off Aden. The old warrior chose the site at the principal gate of the Muslim city, through which the fleeing defenders ran for their lives on the famous day of St. Catherine, when he took Goa and he evidently had great regard for his foundation, for he was buried there in accordance with his will. His remains were later translated to Portugal and re-interred in *N. S. da Graça* in Lisbon in 1556. (*N.S.* stands for *Nossa Senhora*, Our Lady)

If one were to continue south on the *Rua Direita* beyond this church, one would enter a broad square known as the *Pelourinho Velho*, or the old pillory, where corporal offenders were exposed. An old pillar, now known as the *hat katro* — Konkani for the place where hands were cut, one of the more common punishments at the time — still exists. It is believed to be haunted by the ghosts of those who died on the spot. This open space was surrounded by 48 shops, which Albuquerque had built so that their rents might support the Church of *N. S. da Serra*. Half a dozen streets intersected here, and it was the site of a flourishing fruit market. After sunset it was the *Baratilha*, the flea market where cheap and often stolen goods were sold. Here, too, the Eurasian medical men — bleeders, barber-surgeons and apothecaries, — performed their operations.

Beyond the *Pelourinho Velho*, the *Rua Direita* continued for several hundred yards more, commercial all the way, past the lesser square of *Pelourinho Novo*, until the street came to an abrupt end at the church of *N. S. da Luz*. This building was erected after the cholera epidemic of 1543, and marked the southern end of the city, although suburbs straggled out beyond towards the middle of the island.

It would be far too tedious, if not impossible, to attempt a complete description of every one of the fifty-odd churches, convents, and other foundations and institutions that went to the making up of the ecclesiastical community of Goa, but (in addition to those already mentioned) there were three or four sacred edifices of such historical and architectural importance that they can on no account be omitted. Captain Hamilton claims, ironically, that he counted over 80 churches from a hill-top.

College of St. Paul: Lying in ruins in the south-eastern part of the city, it is a relic of the hey-day of Portuguese theocracy. Originally built in 1541-43 on the site of a mosque, it rose to very great importance when Francis Xavier came to reside there shortly after his arrival in India. Upon the demise of the original rector, Xavier took charge of the college in the name of the Society of Jesus, and it was thereafter always a Jesuit institution — in fact it was the headquarters of the entire Jesuit effort in the East. Here Xavier preached the Gospel to great crowds of enthusiasts; here the first Papal Jubilee for India was celebrated in 1550; here Yajiro, the first Japanese to become a Christian, was baptised as Paul of the Holy Faith; and here Xavier's body was originally laid out after it had been brought from China.

It was wholly rebuilt in the 1560s. Even then one of the walls started to bulge alarmingly, so that a strange three-arched buttress was contrived, which straddled the street on one side. Founded for the purpose of instructing recent native converts, and especially for qualifying them as preachers of the Gospel in their own languages to their own folk, the college in its prime contained 88 Jesuits in the faculty and over 3,000 pupils — a very large and important seminary by any standards. Its educational primacy was indeed recognized,

for on St. Paul's Day (*January 25th*) the Viceroy himself went to the college, accompanied by two or three hundred *fidalgos*, all mounted on horses with rich trappings. There the Viceroy was received by the students, who marched before him in their best clothes; after that there was a banquet and then theatricals by the students.

In fact, like most undergraduates, the St. Paul's boys were evidently a lot of extroverts, for on Sunday evenings all 3,000 of them would march through the streets of Goa, carrying crosses and banners, and singing hymns, much in the fashion of the Indian *yatras*. This was a conscious liturgical concession by the early padres who wanted to cushion the effect of the brusque conversion of the local population. The converts were also allowed to retain their Hindu caste system; the use of icons was encouraged.



Convent and the Church of Bom Jesus: If one took a street from the *Pelourinho Velho*, called *Rua dos Chapeleiros* (Hatters' Street), one reached an open space known as the *Terreiro dos Galos*, some little distance to the southeast of the Cathedral. This square took its name from the cock-fights formerly held there, but its later importance was enhanced because on its western side stood (in fact still stands) the Church and Convent of Bom Jesus. This was the great establishment of the Jesuits, along with St. Paul's, and was surely one of the most beautiful religious endowments in the world.

It included the Professed House or convent (built 1585-89), with a stately hall adorned with paintings; and the Church (built 1594-1605), notable for its lavish decoration within and its charming simplicity without. It now contains the remains of Francis Xavier. The body of the saint was not, however, translated from St. Paul's until 1613. It was kept in the Professed House and transferred to the church in 1624, February 19. The church was raised to Basilica in 1946 by pope Luis XIII.

Santa Mónica: Proceeding some little way to the west of the *Terreiro dos Galos*, the Cockfighter's Square, once a scene both lively and vulgar, one arrived at another square,

called the *Terreiro de Santo António*, or St. Anthony's Place, situated in *Monte Santo*, the Sacred Mount. On one side of this stood from 1606 the Nunnery of Santa Mónica which is now a post-graduate institution for nuns and is one of the most important training centres



in Asia. In a contention, bitter as such rivalries between the religious orders were, the Mónicas, the nuns of Santa Mónica, sided with the Augustinians against the Jesuits.

Convent of St. Augustine: Across the square was the principal seat of the Augustinians in the Orient. This convent was thought by some to be the finest and most stately edifice in the whole of Portuguese India. It had a magnificent staircase; its cloisters and galleries were very lovely; its vast dormitory overlooked a spacious garden, always green, and beautified with the best trees that India produced. Building had begun on the convent in 1572, but the work was still in progress in Pyrard's time, a generation later. The scholarly Dr. Claudius Buchanan was a guest there at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the fabric was still intact, and he was so entranced by the library that he felt as if he were suddenly transported to one of the college libraries of Cambridge. The ruined façade of the conventual church and one tower survived until 1931 to testify to the magnificence of the buildings. It is to this convent that the mortal remains of a Russian princess, Guativanda Dedapoli, the wife of Shah Abbas of Gurgistan (Georgia) were brought by an Augustinian monk who had them disinterred, packed in a bag and finally deposited in a box "near the second window of the chapel, on the side of the epistle".

Guativanda, referred to also as Ketevan, was the Christian wife of Shah Abbas, King of Ghursigitan, modern Georgia. She inspired in her lifetime and after her "martyrdom" in 1624, several works of literature and hagiography, praising her "heroic virtues", one of them being a poem (around 1628) by King Teimouraz I, her descendant. Roberto Gulbenkian, a relative of the legendary Calouste Sarkin Gulbenkian, the oil tycoon who settled in Portugal and was a great patron of art and culture (*he died in 1955*), wrote a well researched

opuscule, *Relação da Glorioso Marírio da Rainha Ketavan da Georgia* (Report of the Glorious Martyrdom of Queen Ketavan of Georgia). According to him, Pietro Della Valle, the famous traveller referred to earlier and who knew the queen, had considered writing a poem or, even, a book on her life, but had given up, such being the “vastness of the task and the time at his disposal.” Gulbenkian states that the church and people of Georgia have a special veneration for three saints : Saint Nino who introduced Christianity there in the fourth century ; Queen Thamar (1184 -1212) who, according to local legend, built all the more notable churches and forts of her land; and Queen Ketevan, whose martyrdom, in 1624, was “witnessed” by the Augustinian monk Ambrósio dos Anjos.

A delegation from Moscow University came to Goa in 1980, accompanied at the peak of Mikhail Gorbachov’s Perestroika zeal, a Russian delegation was sent somewhat quietly to Goa, in 1989, by the Russian Ambassador to Indra and, later, with the set mission of finding the Georgian queen’s mortal remains, part of which had been brought to Goa, in 1627, by Friar Manuel da Madre de Deus, one of the Augustinians held in captivity in Ispahan in March 1626, during the reprisals against the padres ordered by Shah Abbas. After the break-up of the Soviet Union efforts were made, in 1997,1999, and 2001 to recover Guativanda’s bones and teams of Georgian historians and archaeologists discretely visit Goa.

The British, who had excellent relations with Shah Abbas rate him as a wise and sagacious ruler and credit him for restoring order in the troubled kingdom. On the other hand, the Portuguese whose proselytist activities and territorial ambitions were resented, both by the British and Shah Abbas, have a diametrically opposite view of the king. In fact, the British view seems to be that the Catholic padres — the Augustinians prevailed in the area — spurred Ketevan against her husband and, eventually, made her leave him. As a consequence she was “martyred”, on the king’s orders.

The Russian endeavour to discover their former queen’s bones was fully supported by ASI, on instructions from Delhi. Those were the days of the ‘cold war’ and India had reasons to favour the Russians. It was a futile archaeological pursuit, however, which ended with the find of a great number of unidentifiable bones. Various theories were put forth but never pursued. Nearby was once the *Rua dos Judeus*, the Jew Street. Could the bones have been of Jews buried, perhaps clandestinely? The Jews had, it is said, well camouflaged synagogues to escape persecution and conversion. Or, might they have been the bones of Neo-Christians, as Jewish converts were known, executed for heresy or apostasy ? The least gruesome theory was that the bones were, probably, recovered from a dump, such as there were at the time, where human bones were stored and burnt, from time to time, around Ash Wednesday, in order to anoint the faithful with the ashes and remind them, as liturgically prescribed, that from dust humans had risen and to dust they would return.

Gulbenkian relies on the archives of Ajuda and of Tombo, in Portugal, for details about how she arrived in Persia, her life, the reasons of her martyrdom, her burial, and, not unexpectedly, the “punishment inflicted by God”, on her husband, Shah Abbas, for torturing his virtuous wife. The body was, it seems, disinterred by Friar Ambrósio dos Anjos, three months and thirteen days after her burial. The body had not yet fully decayed, but it emitted no foul smell, rather, on the contrary, “a lot of suaveness” emanated, a fact that “consoled all those present”.

Fr. Ambrósio took the remains, such as he found them, with flesh covering parts of the limbs, secretly, as circumstances demanded, from place to place, like the church of Shiraz (*Xeraz, in Portuguese texts*) and then, feeling insecure, to the Augustinian convent at

Ispahaan, where the king had the monks arrested. They had earlier tried to take the relics to Georgia and incite Prince Teimouraz, Ketevan's son, to accept them. Once freed, Friar Manuel swiftly moved to Goa, and took with him "the right hand with (still) flesh on it and one arm". On arrival, the Friar promptly reported to Pietro della Valle, on October 14, 1627, that he would be holding the relics in his custody till he (della Valle) took their delivery. The letter is still in the Archives of the Vatican. It is the bones that remain untraced.

There is yet another former Muslim queen buried in Goa. In the See Cathedral, inside the Chapel of St. Anthony, right near the front door, one finds the tombstone of Dona Domingas de Moraes, widow of Dom Aleixo de Moraes who is described as "Prince and the King of Abadax". After several years of research, the well known church historian, the late Fr. F.X. Gomes Catão unravelled the mystery. In an article entitled *Uma Rainha Sepultada na Se'de Goa — A Queen buried in the See Cathedral of Goa (Boletim do Instituto Menezes Braganca, No. 117)*, he explains: Her husband, Dom Aleixo had been a Muslim named Muhammed Zaman and king of Abadax, "a country between the kingdom of the Great Mongol and Tartary". He was a direct descendant of Timurlaine. Like a true Muslim he once went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. But, then, for reasons unknown, he took to wearing the costume of a *yogi*, travelled to Persia, then ruled by Shah Abbas, entered a mosque in Hormuz and, much to the anger of the Muslims assembled there, intently listened to the sermon being delivered by a respected priest, and thus offended the Prophet. He was later converted to Christianity by Augustinian monks and given the name Aleixo de Menezes and the honorific title of "Dom". His wife, Muslim till then, but whose name remains unknown, was also converted and given the name Domingas de Moraes, and the honorific prefix "Dona". Viceroy Dom Afonso de Castro (1604-1607), then ruling in Goa, gave them a pension and some indults.

The Grand Bazar:

Hectic activity was witnessed at the bazaars and shops. There was a road full of shops selling silks, cottons, Portuguese velvets and Chinese porcelains. There were booths dealing in ready-made shirts and other clothes at prices within the means of poor people and even slaves. In another street there were shops of ladies' dresses and ornaments; yet another was pre-empted by Banyas, trafficking in piece-goods from Cambay, and also in precious stones; elsewhere there was a highway with furniture stores, where beds, chairs, and tables might be had; in another quarter of town were the goldsmiths; those who collected rents and acted as brokers had their own particular pitch, as did the chemists and druggists, the saddlers, the shoemakers, the ironmongers, and the blacksmiths. Food of all kinds was usually sold in the bazaars and open squares that were scattered about the city. Visitors were invariably struck with the cheapness and abundance of everything; even at the street corners there were open stands, where native cooks served up dishes of shell-fish, with sauces and seasonings. Most observers agree that the ways were well paved and kept in repair, but during the wet season of the southwest monsoon even the *Rua Direita* would be flooded, and the back streets of the town became veritable morasses.

The shops and residences were two-storey structures, built of a lime-and-sand cement and had tiled roofs. The walls were painted with a wash of red, ochre, blue or white, which gave a very picturesque character to the streetscapes. Glass was seldom used, and the windows were customarily made of very thin and highly polished oyster and kapitz shells; lattice work and 'jealousies' were much in favour, enabling ladies within the houses to see the world go by without being exposed to public gaze; the upper storey windows had

spacious balconies, of much use in hot weather. The houses had ample gardens and orchards in the rear area, so that the terrain between the built-up fringes of the streets themselves presented a charmingly bucolic appearance right within the centre of the metropolis.

There were no brothels, but Goa had the reputation of being one of the most licentious towns in Asia. The city had many gambling houses, which, like so much else in this gilded Babylon, were done up in the grand manner. These establishments were licensed by the municipality; they contained apartments, sumptuously furnished, where cards, dice, and chess were played. To give the addicts even more entertainment, the management would thoughtfully supply the prettiest girls obtainable, who played on instruments and sang; there might also be jugglers to astonish the visitors with Oriental legerdemain, and clowns and buffoons to amuse them with low jests and ridiculous pranks. No wonder that some habitués would stay at these casinos for days together! ■



SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER — “THE LORD OF GOA”

“...one of the greatest Christian missionaries (ranks) with Patrick Boniface, Columba and Anskar”

— *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

Old Goa now derives all its importance from the fact that it is the resting place of St. Francis Xavier, known locally as *Goencho Saib*, a Konkani expression which approximately translates as ‘Lord of Goa’ — ‘lord’ more in the sense of a protector than a dominator. The posthumously awarded title, with its audible ring of dignity, was certainly neither expected nor sought by the man on whom it was bestowed — St. Francis Xavier. “If there were no heaven, he would love God all the same; and if there were no hell he would fear Him” — that, in substance, is the theme of one of the saint’s much-quoted sonnets in his mother tongue. His relics are treasured and venerated in the Basilica of Bom Jesus (perhaps the best specimen of baroque architecture in the Old Goa church complex).

Francis Xavier was in many ways a strange man. Few know that he was a Spaniard — a Basque, at that. Like his modern counterparts, he was stern and stoic and would never take ‘no’ for an answer; hence his remarkable success as an evangelist. His name was spelt in several ways — as diverse, perhaps, as the way he chose to live his life: Chavier, Chavyeres, Echabiar, Extaberri, Jabier, Javier, Savier, Saverio, Savierr, Saviere, Xabier, Xabiere, Xabierre, and Xavier. In his native Basque they mean the same thing. ‘New House’, a house in Navarre, was where Francisco de Xavier Jassu was born on April 7, 1506, Tuesday, in the Holy Week, to Don Juan de Jassu Antonio and Donna Maria de Azpilcueta Aznarez de Sada. He would go a long way in his forty-six years of life.

Soon after his birth, New House was razed in the cross-fire between the Aragonese and the French. Those were the days of brave — if often totally unprincipled — wars, pacts, and alliances, and Iberia, the saint’s home ground, was a hotbed of political intrigue. Francis Xavier, like his saviour and mentor Inigo de Loyola, had been nurtured and moulded in an ambience of belligerence and raw courage. The same hot Iberian blood fuelled their actions and attitudes. Inigo, felled by a cannon shot while defending what was left of his native Pamplona, the capital of Navarre, would rise from the battleground and retire to a life of penance and meditation. He would soon found the Jesuit Order. A few years later, Inigo would come across his compatriot Francisco in giddy Paris. Handsome Francisco, fond of the good things of life, was always short of money, much of which he squandered in gambling dens. And then one day Inigo, who had been quietly helping him out, suddenly asked Francisco this apocalyptic question: “What doth it profit Man to win the whole world and lose his soul?” That was the turning point in Francisco’s life — in fact in the progress of Christianity in the East: in Goa, Malabar, Ceylon, Malacca, Macau, China and Japan.

Xavier arrived in Goa in May 1542. Life in Goa in the mid-sixteenth century was no bed of roses. After the sudden and epic blast of valour and adventure, the Portuguese had become flaccid and weak and easily succumbed to the temptations of leisure and pleasure. State and church, professedly equal partners in the structuring of the Portuguese overseas Empire, were as a result stricken by the same lethal blight, and venality became prevalent in the respective hierarchies. ‘Rapio rapis’ lamented Francis Xavier in a long missive to the King of Portugal — it was ‘the most commonly conjugated verb’ in the Portuguese establishments in India, used in all possible moods, tenses and persons to describe the all-pervading rapacity that was in evidence. Xavier’s evangelism, often uncompromising and

at times blatantly severe (he was quite intolerant of any religious denomination other than Catholicism), was characterized by a sincere, though not always successful, effort to understand the "native" ethos, and he endeavoured to blend "native" elements into his liturgy. It must be emphasised that Xavier was deeply, and to all appearances, favourably impressed with the tenets of Buddhism. On the other hand, he was, at times unguardedly critical of Brahmanism, as practised in Goa. And his much-praised compassion did not prevent him from campaigning for the introduction of the Inquisition in Goa. We reproduce below his letter to the king, which, luckily, was not heeded then, but it did eventually come to Goa.

"The second necessity for the Christians is that your majesty establish the Holy Inquisition, because there are many who live according to the Jewish law, and according to the Mahomedan sect, without any fear of God or shame of the world. And since there are many who are spread all over the fortresses, there is the need of the Holy Inquisition and of many preachers. Your majesty should provide such necessary things for your loyal and faithful subjects in India."

D. João III did not pay heed to the request of St. Xavier and the Inquisition was not introduced in Goa during his reign. However, similar demands continued to be addressed to the authorities in Portugal and Rome from different quarters.

In Goa, he worked amongst the people, mingled with the seamen, tended the sick in the prisons and nursed lepers in the public hospitals. He was greatly sought after by the local populace, as much for his advice as for his medications. His actions, so unlike those of a conquering hero, angered the Portuguese gentry. He was soon sent off on a mission to Cape Comorin and the Konkan coast, but he kept making frequent forays back to Goa. Chroniclers place at 700,000 the number of conversions made by him during his decade-long stay in Goa. When Xavier left Goa in 1547 for Malacca and the Far East, he was not a particularly happy man. But he went, though "ill of body and tired of soul," with great hopes and the conviction that greater tasks awaited him elsewhere.

In 1549, Xavier and three other missionaries went on to Japan and landed at Kagoshima in August. The Daimyo of Kogoshima received the party in a friendly manner and allowed conversions. Xavier remained in Japan until November 1551, preaching at Hirado, Kyoto, Yamaguchi, Berugo and Kagoshima. He was the first Christian missionary to work in Japan. Eduardo de Noronha, a Portuguese writer, in his novelized biography *O Missionário*, narrates how on his arrival at Sanchian, the old port near Canton, Francis Xavier was met by the Portuguese traders settled in the area. Xavier wanted to enter the Chinese mainland and in order to please him his compatriots hired a Chinese guide, a merchant known to them, to conduct him from the coast to the hinterland. The Chinese guide wanted the missionary to come with him blindfolded. When Francis Xavier questioned this odd request, the guide promptly replied that it was more likely than not that, being a foreigner, Francis Xavier would be arrested and tortured by the powers that be. And if that were to happen, he (the guide) did not want to be seen at the crucial time by his unintended victim. Francis Xavier, it would appear, was ready and keen, regardless of the risk involved, but the guide then came up with another impediment. He had a hunch, he said, that this act of his, which no doubt would be financially well rewarded, could entail untold hardship, even death, to himself and the family. "If so, I shall not go," replied Xavier. He died about a month later, on Saturday December 3, 1552 at 5 a.m., at the age of forty-six, on the Sanchian Coast. His only companion at that time was a Chinese servant, who buried him on the beach.

Two months and fourteen days later on February 17, 1553, the Portuguese traders settled in that port-town had his body exhumed so that it could be shipped to Malacca. On opening the coffin, eyewitnesses found the body as fresh "as if it had just been buried". The body was taken to Malacca, amid much excitement and awe over its condition, and was once again buried on March 22, 1553. It remained there till December 1553. Then it was exhumed once more, and again his compatriots marvelled at the 'freshness' of the body. This time they were readying to ship the relics, after 'military and religious honours', to Goa. So had the saint willed, according to some of his contemporaries. On the caravel's arrival at Cochin, on February 13, 1554, it was found to be in no condition to proceed to Goa. The monsoon had already set in. Nonetheless, it inched its way to Goa at the speed of 'one to barely two leagues per day'. Another snag was that the Holy Week had already begun and this meant that the period of mandatory mourning would preclude the festivities being planned in order to celebrate the saint's 'return to Goa'.

The ship arrived at Ribandar, Goa, on Thursday, 'around eleven in the night'. At dawn, the body was taken to Old Goa in a 'catur' (a dugout canoe) and it was formally received at the ceremonial quay on March 16, 1554 by the Viceroy, the Jesuits and thousands of people. Later, the relics were exposed for the first time at St. Paul's College. The body was transferred to the Professed House of Bom Jesus only in 1613, and there too, it was kept at various sites. On February 19, 1624 it was placed in the Church of Bom Jesus in the Chapel on the northern side. On April 24, 1659, the silver casket was transferred to the chapel on the southern side. The mausoleum itself was completed in 1698, after ten years of tinkering.

A devotee, a Portuguese (or was she a German?) woman called Dona Isabel de Carom, anxious to possess a relic of the saint, bit off a big toe when the body arrived in Goa. It was said that blood flowed from the body, and the woman ran away in sheer panic, toe between her teeth.

Fr. P. Rayanna, S.J., records in his biography, *St. Francis Xavier and his Shrine*, that, prior to the official inspection of the 1782 Exposition, the Inspector General of Goa declared that the relic was lying with him. Part of it is still held by his descendants and part of it was taken, in 1902, to the 'Xavier Castle' in Navarre. Two toes, which either fell off or were mutilated, were encased in a crystal holder in 1894, and still exist in the Bom Jesus sacristy. Every Exposition held in Goa until 1952 was preceded by a physical inspection by a board of medical men and nominees of the Curia. One might quote the entry earlier briefly alluded to in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* :

"Xavier deserves to be ranked as one of the greatest Christian missionaries with Patrick Boniface, Columba and Anskar." The first Jesuit missionary and founder of the Christian mission to the Japanese, Xavier was a pioneer of the modern missionary method by his careful examination and occupation of the mission field. He favoured the study of the languages, religions and customs of the natives, made use of native collaborators, endeavoured to create a mission literature in the vernacular and strove to organize his missions thoroughly. Xavier was canonized in 1622.

The mortal remains of St. Francis Xavier are enshrined in the church of Bom Jesus, built in 1605, and raised to the status of a Basilica by Pope Pius XII in 1946. The chapel, sanctuary of St. Francis Xavier was constructed in 1665 at the southern extremity of the transept of the baroque church. The interior of the chapel is embellished with twentyseven panels representing the life and miracles of the saint. The body lies in a sealed airtight

crystal glass coffin, specially made by Italian craftsmen. This coffin is placed inside a beautiful silver casket, the work of a seventeenth-century Florentine jeweller named Giovanni Batista Foggini. The casket is entombed in a magnificent mausoleum, built in the Florentine style with a donation from the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

On the altar surrounding the tomb there is a large statue of the saint with a crucifix in the right hand and a staff in the left. It is a four-foot-high image in pure silver with a gold diadem set with precious stones. It was made by a Goan artisan to the order of Francisca de Sepranis, a Genoese lady and a devotee of the saint, who gave up a life of pleasure to found a religious order in the saint's name in Italy. (*The altar and the other details are described in the following pages*)

The vestry of Bom Jesus, itself worth more than a dozen cathedrals, was built at the expense of a Portuguese senator, Balthazar de Veiga. He died in 1650 and lies buried in front of the altar in the vestry. Lined against the walls on all sides are great cabinets of sandalwood inlaid with ebony and gold fittings.

It was realized, somewhat belatedly, that frequent Expositions had taken their toll and affected the general condition of the body. The Church presently accepts that a miracle need not be forever and that the 'incorrupt Body', as it was once officially held to be, would now be best described as the 'sacred relics of the Saint'.

To millions of the saint's devotees, in and out of Goa, the wear and tear of his mortal remains is not a sign of the body's degeneration, but heaven's own way of expressing its unhappiness at the deteriorating values of life.

Each of the past ceremonial Expositions (the last one was held in the winter of 1994), has evidenced the saint's hold over the minds and hearts of thousands of people — not all of them Christians. The official records, in this regard, have some interesting details. When the relics of the saint were exposed in 1879, the then ruling (and from available oral accounts, ailing) Nizam of Hyderabad arrived after a tedious road journey from his landlocked state to Bombay, from where a special chartered ship brought him to Goa. Of the fourteen miraculous cures officially recorded during the Exposition, one, reportedly, relates to the Nizam, who was a Muslim....

Members of the Jesuit Order who succeeded St. Francis Xavier in his evangelist mission tried — and failed — to establish themselves in the North of India, where the Mughals ruled. But the 'native' priests who adopted St. Francis Xavier's methodology and probed South India and Sri Lanka seem to have been eminently successful.

In the seventeenth century Fr. Joseph Vaz and his 'Oratorians' did remarkable work in the missions of Canara and Ceylon (*as Sri Lanka was then known*). The Portuguese had already been ousted by the Dutch from their earlier strongholds of Cochin, Galle and Kandy. The Catholic Church itself was divided between the 'Padroado' — a branch owing allegiance to Portugal — and the 'Propaganda' group of proselytizers. By implication, the 'Propaganda' was averse to the Portuguese administration and it soon became a refuge of 'native' priests, like Dom Matheus de Crasto, who wanted Rome to 'nativize' the Church in India, particularly Goa, through the appointment of 'native' prelates. In the face of this two-pronged onslaught, from the 'heathen' Dutch and from the 'recalcitrant' Propaganda priests, Fr. Vaz and his Oratorians acted with a remarkable degree of tact and courage. Fr. Vaz's Seminary, in Old Goa, lies in a ruinous condition on Monte de Boa Vista, the Mount of Good View.

The last Exposition of the Relics of St Francis Xavier was held between November 21, 1994 and January 7, 1995. The relics of Saint Francis Xavier will be solemnly exposed for

the 16th time in the year 2004. Since 1964 the exposition is held every 10 years and for Goa. Two million pilgrims were expected in 1994 but actual figures were more modest. There were, however, several contingents from Portugal, Spain (his country of origin), France (he studied at Sorbonne), Japan (where he converted some members of the royalty to Christianity), Macau, Malacca (where he was provisionally buried) and Sri Lanka. ■



ORLEM GHOR

"The terrible acts of the Inquisition during the early period of its existence had caused terror to be so deeply rooted in the memories of the people that none dared to name the place where it was housed as the house of Inquisition but gave it the mysterious appellation *Orlem Ghor* (the Big House). 'While we were passing by the riverside, not having understood the aforesaid mystery, we were desirous of knowing the situation of the mysterious house which was not in sight, but they did not consent to our pointing out fingers in that direction — and this at a time when the tribunal retained hardly its name.'"

— *Instructions of Marquis of Alorna*, edited by F.N. Xavier

What we know about the Inquisition established in Goa in 1549, is what a French physician, Gabriel Charles Dellon, wrote about it. His *Relation de Ja Inquisition de Goa* is described by some as apocryphal, by others as authentic. It certainly is the only first person account of one held by the Inquisition and lucky enough to live to tell his tale. Dellon's inside account of an 'act of faith' ceremony, the *auto-da-fé* in Goa was published in Paris in 1688, and translated into English the same year. The events it describes took place between 1673 and 1676.

We have descriptions from other sources and these differ in their details, but the ferocity of that Holy Tribunal of Faith is unanimously condemned. We also know where the Inquisition Palace was situated, as we know the location of other landmarks of the old city of Goa and the layout of the streets. But, strangely, ASI decided to bury the past rather than bare it and built its chemical laboratory over the remains of the Palace of the Inquisition and grows lush lawns over the remains of the old city in the vicinity of the See Cathedral.

Dellon was considered the best European physician in India. By the time he reached Daman on the Gujarat coast — then a Portuguese city — he was as famous as he was vain. In Daman he seduced the Governor's mistress and imprudently made critical remarks about the Inquisition and about matters of faith, such as baptism and the adoration of images. Dellon was 24 when he was arrested by the Inquisition on August 24, 1673 for apostasy and blasphemy.

After two years in a cell of the Inquisition at Goa, to which he had been removed from Daman, he became convinced in December 1675 that the dreaded ritual of *auto-da-fé* was about to take place. The Inquisitors in the course of one of their many interviews with him had said he was liable to be burnt. He felt a mixture of longing and fear. If he were not burnt, perhaps he would be released. He was almost eager to take a chance. The prospect of another year in solitary confinement was horrible.

One night he was awoken by warders entering his cell. They carried lights — he had never seen a light during all the nights of his imprisonment — and the chief gaoler, who accompanied them "gave me a habit which he ordered me to put on, and to be ready to go out when he should call me". Leaving a lamp, they withdrew without any explanation, but Dellon knew that a special costume was worn by the victims of an *auto-da-fé*. If he had been frightened before he went to sleep, he was now terrified. "I was seized with a universal and so violent a trembling that for more than an hour it was not possible for me so much as to look upon the habit which they had brought me."

At last he summoned courage to get up and, kneeling before a cross which he had

painted on the wall, committed his soul to God's protection. Then he put on the dress. It was of black material, striped with white, and consisted of a blouse and a pair of loose trousers. At two o'clock in the morning the warders returned and conducted him to a long gallery. "There I found a good number of my companions in misery, ranged round about against the wall; I put myself into my place." All the prisoners were assembled; there seemed to be some two hundred, of whom only twelve were Europeans. Dead silence reigned. "One might easily have taken all these persons for so many statues set against the wall, if the motion of their eyes, the use of which alone was permitted to them, had not testified them to be living creatures. Dellon caught sight, through a door, of two more prisoners, beside whom stood monks in black habits holding crucifixes.

Having no knowledge of the Inquisition's procedure on such occasions, he was unable to glean a hint of what his impending sentence was likely to be from the clothes in which he and the other prisoners were dressed. But there being nothing about the blouse and trousers which had been allotted to him to distinguish his case from the others, he took a little courage, arguing it unlikely that so many people were for the stake. But now the warders began to bring in more garments. These were like scapularies or large capes of yellow stuff with a St Andrew's cross painted on them before and behind. Dellon knew enough to recognize them to be *sanbenitos*, the penitential garb worn by prisoners of the Inquisition during their procession through the streets to the place of sentence. The *sanbenitos*, of which there were 22 only, were distributed first to 20 Indians and blacks, one to a Portuguese, and the last one to Dellon. "My fears redoubled when I saw myself thus habited, because it seemed to me that, there being among so great a number of prisoners, no more than 22 persons to whom the shameful *sanbenitos* were given, it might very well happen that these should be the persons to whom no mercy was to be extended."

While he was in this state of dreadful apprehension, five bonnets of paper, like dunce caps, were brought. These were painted with devils amid flames and bore the legend 'Sorcerer' in bold letters. Instinctively he realized that such caps must denote a greater degree of guilt, and narrowly watched the warders as they began to fix them on the heads of the shrinking prisoners. One of those to receive a cap was standing next to him, and when Dellon saw the warder approach with the cap in his hand, he felt certain it was for him that the emblematic horror was intended. When it was put on the other, a sigh of agonized relief escaped him. "The face of him upon whose head it was set was drawn and haggard, as if he believed his destruction to be inevitable."

At last, after they had waited what seemed a dark age, the first greyness of dawn began to creep into the gallery. The light strengthened and, looking around, Dellon was able to observe "upon the faces of everyone present the diverse motions of shame, of grief and of fear, wherewith they were then tormented." Yet he thought too, that he could also detect relief, as if they were glad, though they might be going to their deaths, that their horrible captivity was at an end. As the sun rose they heard the deep note of the cathedral's big bell, which was only tolled on such occasions and was a signal for the inhabitants, Portuguese, Eurasian and Indian, to line the streets through which the procession was about to pass. The prisoners were then ordered to file out into the great hall, and when Dellon entered it he saw the Grand Inquisitor seated by the door with his secretary standing beside him, a list in his hand. To one side was a crowd of residents from the city, and as each prisoner stepped in, a name would be called. Then one of the residents came forward and the prisoner was allotted to him. These were known as Fathers-in-God and it was their duty to accompany their penitent throughout the procession and stay beside him during the

ceremony and produce him at the end of it. Dellon's Father-in-God was no less a personage than the Admiral of the Armada, a Portuguese nobleman, for it seems that the duty of attending upon penitents was regarded as an honour, not only by ordinary citizens but by the aristocracy.

When the business of appointing each his keeper was done, the whole concourse left the palace of the inquisition and descended the wide flight of steps into the great square in front of the cathedral. With the January sun gaining height about him, Dellon stood and sniffed the air of morning, which seemed to blow from paradise, so fresh and sweet it smelt after his long captivity. Now the procession began to form. At the head of it were the Dominicans, who had this privilege by the right that St. Dominic had been the founder of the first Inquisition. Behind them followed a long line of the penitents, each with his godfather beside him and a taper in his hand. About a hundred had entered the procession before the officers of the Inquisition commanded Dellon to do so. The procession was so long that he had passed out of the square before the end of it was complete and so was unable to tell who formed the tail.

There was a very large crowd, the inhabitants, European and Indian, not only of Goa, but of the districts in the neighbourhood, lining the route, business being abandoned for the day. As he walked, Dellon's bare feet were so cut by loose flints that they were bleeding profusely by the time the procession reached its destination, the Church of St Francis, the most gorgeous in Goa. Dellon took his allotted seat, with the Admiral beside him. When he looked round to watch the rest of the penitents march in, he saw, right at the end of the procession, a man and a woman behind a crucifix. The face of the Saviour had been turned away from them. They were both Indian Christians. Along with them were carried four effigies and four boxes. Their *sanbenitos* were grey, not yellow, and painted not with a St Andrew's cross but with devils, flames, and burning firebands, in the midst of which was a portrait of the wearer and in large letters, the name of their crime: *crimen magicae* – the crime of magic. They also wore the pointed caps. He surmised them to be those of whom he had caught a glimpse through a door earlier, with blackstoled monks holding the crucifixes. These monks attended still, marching instead of the godfathers.

The symbolism of the whole pageant was becoming clear to Dellon. If he were not mistaken, these were the victims destined for the stake. He shuddered, believing, yet not daring to be sure, that he had escaped an awful death.

The divine service of the *auto-da-fé* began. The Augustinian prelate opened his discourse. Among the points he made was a comparison of the Inquisition with Noah's Ark, between which he found this difference: "That the animals which entered into the Ark, went out again after the Deluge, invested with the same nature which they had when they entered it, but that the Inquisition had the admirable property to change in such sort those who are shut up in it, that in coming out we see those to be. Lambs who when they entered it had the cruelty of wolves." This was hardly a correct description of his case, thought Dellon, who had been as mild, if as foolish, as a lamb from the beginning.

The sermon finished, two clerks began to read the judgements passed upon the prisoners. In due course Dellon was called. For his 'crimes' he was declared excommunicated, his goods were confiscated and he was condemned to five years in the galleys, but the sentence was to be served in Lisbon, not in Goa. In a way, he got off lightly. Much more severe was the sentence passed on those indicted of the crime of magic.

And both the accused, to make it worse, had relapsed. As Hindus by birth this may have

just meant that they had practised such arts as astrology or divination or engaged in one of the many practices connected with Hinduism. But they had had the temerity to enter so strict an association as the Catholic Church of seventeenth-century Portugal, perhaps for reasons of temporal advantage, and now were paying the penalty for their rashness. They were to be burnt at a selected spot on the river bank. The four boxes that Dellon had seen brought into the church contained bones. In three of them were the remains of prisoners who died in the Inquisition. The fourth contained the bones of a man "plucked from the grave after they had formed a Process against him". The effigies carried on poles with the boxes represented these four deceased. The bones and the effigies were burnt at the place where the man and the woman suffered death.

While the execution was being carried out, Dellon was back in his cell. He lay down on his bed, hoping for supper. This came at last, but instead of being fish or curry, the usual evening meal, consisted only of bread and figs, for the cooks had taken a holiday and were still out watching the burning. Dellon remained in *Orlem Ghor* for ten days after, in semi-imprisonment until the ship on which he was to embark for Portugal was ready to sail. On January 23 he was summoned finally before the Grand Inquisitor and made to swear: "I should keep exactly the secret of all which I had seen, heard or said or which had been acted concerning me either at the Table or at any place of the Holy Office." It was this oath, taken on the Gospel, which made him hesitate for ten years to publish his story. An Officer of the Holy Office, clamping irons upon his feet, took him to a ship which left on January 27 and reached Brazil in May, remaining until September, and then on to Lisbon.

The Inquisition threw up many strange and macabre cases. Garcia da Orta was 'punished' after his death. A descendant of converted Jews, he was among the first western practitioners to be interested and see much merit in the Indian systems of medicine, and wrote the classic and highly rated *Colóquios dos Simples e Drogas e Cousas Medicinaes da India*. Garcia da Orta had been a friend of a Portuguese nobleman, Martim Afonso de Sousa, and when the latter was appointed Governor of Goa he came to India and was greatly honoured. But soon the Jews, even the converted, became the target of envy and persecution. The Inquisition spared Garcia da Orta during his lifetime, perhaps because he was very influential. He died in 1568 (of natural causes). His brother-in-law, who had been arrested a few months after his death, 'confessed' to the inquisitors that da Orta "had maintained that the True Law was the Law of Moses and that Christ was not the Son of God but the son of Miriam. and Joseph." So Garcia da Orta was posthumously punished. Twelve years after his death his remains were exhumed and burnt. His masterpiece, the *Colóquios*, had been "condemned to the flames soon after his death".

The portraits of all those burnt at the stake were hung in the Dominican Church. Each face was painted surrounded by flames. "These terrible representations are placed in the Nave of the Church as so many illustrious Trophies consecrated to the Glory of the Holy Office," Dellon comments, with bitter sarcasm.

It is interesting to note that though Vasco de Gama had delineated, on his arrival at Calicut in 1498, that his goals were to "find Christians and spices", it was not until 1537 that the first bishop of Goa Frei João de Albuquerque, a Franciscan and a relative of Afonso de Albuquerque was appointed by the Vatican.

Fr. Cottineau du Klougen says it realistically (*An Historical Sketch of Goa*): between the first conquest of Goa, in the beginning of 1510, which lasted for just three months and the reconquest in November of the same year "there was no time to effect any establishments."

But there was no dearth of padres. The Franciscans, the more austere and severe of the lot, were the first to arrive and founded a convent. The Dominicans came not much later, and though they gained worldwide notoriety for their zeal in "detecting and punishing heresy" (A.K.Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition*, 1961) they, took 50 years to form their community at the Rosário Church. One of their conferes Torquemada (1420-1498) had played a prominent role in setting up the Inquisition in Spain thanks to his influence on Isabela of Castile whose confessor he had been from her childhood. It might interest the reader to know that, according to *Anquisicao* (apud Priolkar) an undated illustrated encyclopedia, Torquemada became a monk after having failed, when he was very young, to win over a woman from Cordova who preferred a Moor who took her to Granada. Torquemada didn't forgive the heathen's victory. He went to Saragoça, became a priest, joined the Dominican order and discovered in its archives the immense powers the inquisitors' wielded.

The Vatican took its time to establish the episcopal hierarchy in Portuguese Asia. Leo X submitted all conquests of the Portuguese in Africa and Asia to the Vicar of Tomar, in Portugal, by a Bull dated in 1514. A year later the recently established Bishopric of Funchal in the Atlantic island of Madeira was given the jurisdiction over "all the Portuguese possessions beyond seas". It was only in 1537 that the bishopric of Goa was erected.

Within four years, king Dom João III, the Pious, issued a crucial order. "The non-Christians have so far been under the influence of Satan. God has decided to give them deliverance (and) ordered that Hindu temples and Muslim mosques should not be allowed (and hence must) be destroyed." Sequentially, the temples situated in Teeswadi were razed and their properties forfeited in favour of the Comunidades. With the arrival of Fr. Francis Xavier the conversion zeal became more fervorous. A year later the Portuguese conquered the provinces of Salcete and Bardes and the Hindus were forbidden to practise their religion. Their priests, those who did not flee, were arrested. Hinduism, it was ordered, was to be rooted out. So, their religious books were destroyed and Konkani, their mother tongue, banned.

The neophytes were renamed and it was mandatory that they take Christian names, the choice was left to those presiding over the baptism and the surname was bestowed, as an act of charity by the respective godfather. The random listing by the famous Goan archivist Panduronga Pissurlencar published in *Boletim do Instituto Vasco da Gama* (No 68, 1952) is revealing. Beta Kudva, on his baptism in 1630, was renamed Antonio de Abreu. He was from Assolina (*Assolina* in its original transliteration). His covillagers were also renamed, in the same year (perhaps at the same mass baptism. And so we have a Roque Vieira in lieu of Damu Naik, Estevoao Velho (Rama Kudav), Luis Castanha (Rama Kudav, his namesake when they were Hindu). In Curtorim, in 1607, for whatever reason, Brizio became a name in vogue, and four of those listed by Pissurlencar came out of their baptismal ceremony with the same name and the same surname-Fernandes. A very possessive godfather, perhaps... In their Hindu past they were, respectively, Lakkarsa Kamath, Krishna Kamat, (another) Krishna Kamath and (another) Lakarasa Kamath.

Pissurlencar's research confirms what was known in Goa but seen by some people outside Goa as evidence of miscegenation. Indeed the Portuguese names of Christian Goans came from their Portuguese godfathers and, generally, not from their Portuguese ancestors. ■

A DEATH FORETOLD

"....their vanity is the cause of their ruin"

— Les Voyages de M.de Thevenotaus Indes Orientales (1727)

Unlike Daman (Damao), on the Gujarat coast, which the Portuguese built to a well established plan, the city of Goa wasn't. Opinions will, as ever, differ. There are those who describe Albuquerque as "an architect and planner," but a more realistic assessment of his, without a doubt, outstanding talents would qualify him as "anything but plain and functional" (Penrose, *Pearl of the East*). Goa, call it Ela if you will, was already in existence and for many years. And, therefore, the Portuguese let much of it remain as it was. Till at least the vicerealty of Dom João de Castro, (1545-1548) Goa retained its pre-conquest appearance.

Albuquerque, a militarist to the core, had his priorities well established. What he immediately needed was nothing fanciful. He had to rebuild the battered city, a citadel at that point in time. That is the task he gave to his master builder, Thomas Fernandes, Realizing that he didn't have the personnel for such a major task and the required despatch, he ordered even the chief officers of the army to put their shoulder to the wheel. Leading from the front, he set the example and worked as a common labourer in the free time at his disposal. He established a municipality, the first in Asia, but cleanliness and public hygiene were never the paradigms of the citizenry.

There being no plan, every vacant space was used to erect buildings, and, in course of time, churches and houses. John Fryer would later (1675) comment that "the city still presented a noble appearance" though "modelled but rudely". The "streets were paved and cleaner than the tops of the tops houses", where they did "all occasions leaving their excrements there". The streets "met disagreeably."

In 1543 a virulent cholera epidemic killed citizens in large numbers. It spared neither "the stalled beast nor the caged fowl". Such was the public panic at the frequent tolling of the bells that the then governor Martin Afonso de Sousa forbade the tolling of bells for funerals. Since only the Cathedral had the status of a parish and its priests and their minions were hardly able to cope with the "interments and commendations ", bishop Dom João de Albuquerque raised two more churches to the status of parishes, namely Our Lady of Rosary, built votively the very spot where Albuquerque stood as commander of his troops on November 25, 1510, and the church of Our Lady of Light, which crumbled without leaving any trace.

The city was, to begin with, surrounded by marshes and stagnant pools of water and at low tide the stink rose to high heavens. The situation was worsened by the irresponsible citizenry who littered the streets with refuse and garbage. *Arquivo Portugues Oriental* would record (*apud Fonseca, An Historical Sketch of the city of Goa*) that "the common people, with the permission of that Government, made use of the whole of the southern margin of the river, from the Quay lo of the Viceroy's Palace to that of St Catherine for discharging the necessary functions of nature". Viceroy Aryes de Saldanha (1600) issued an edict, "I make known to all who may read this order that, whereas in this city of Goa the roads are not clean, and there is not that cleanliness which is necessary for (good) health, owing to the filth which its residents allow their servants to throw out, and which they without any fear leave in the lanes and public roads, and whereas it is expedient that the nuisance should be prevented..... it is ordered in the name of His Majesty that the Municipal

Chamber nominate a Portuguese gentleman of good life, conscience and habits who may serve as an Inspector of cleanliness". To no avail... The Jesuit historian Francisco de Sousa records in his *Oriente Conquistado* (1710) that the recurring insalubrity was the result of one of the two causes : "either the cooling of the fervour of Christianity or the putrefaction of a dead elephant cast into the lake near the *Trindade* church."

Nevertheless, a grand city was built with monumental buildings and delicately worked churches. From 1534 onwards an unlimited amount of splendidly grained limestone, ("almost a marble" comments Penrose) was mined in Basein, near Mumbai, and sent down to Goa. The Portuguese, by nature ostentatious, drew inspiration from viceroy Dom João de Castro who, on his victorious return from Cambay, in 1547, after defeating the Sultan and retaking Diu staged a pageant that was "part a Roman triumph and part a parade". He ordered the wall of the fortress to be torn down for the pageant to pass through. The event was further commemorated with a series of splendidly woven tapestries that now adorn the Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna.

But such grand displays of pomp and grandeur could not camouflage the city's blemishes or prevent its impending ruin. Water to wash was scant. The only source of drinking water was the nearby fountain of Bainguinim. Long rows of black slaves carried it in sheepskins to their masters' homesteads. Some imaginatively built aqueducts supplemented the slave-based water supply. Bainguinim was vital to the Portuguese citizens, and in course of time came to be identified with survival and the tricks it trenches" Jái bebeu agua de Bainguinim", he has already drunk water from Bainguinim, was the sly euphemism for the corrupt and the astute. Captain Alexander Hamilton, the Calvinist Scot who visited Goa in 1692 and, again in 1704, and whose anti-Catholicism has been mentioned earlier recorded his observations in *A New Account of the East India*. With obvious derision he states that there were nearly 80 churches and 30,000 priests for a population of less than 160,000. All those numbers, it may be noted, were highly exaggerated. The churches, probably, were at no time more than fifty, the priests, probably, some hundreds. The population had been decimated by the frequent epidemics and, around that time, could not exceed some 50,000. Nevertheless, Hamilton's description is interesting. Each of those churches, he wrote, had a set of bells, one or the other of which continually rang and being dedicated to some saint, they had "a peculiar power to drive away all manner of evil spirits except poverty in the laity and pride in the clergy"!

We have other accounts of the decrepitude that crept in Santa Monica, the largest nunnery in Asia, once one of the most prosperous institutions of the Empire — to the point of the state itself resenting and trying to curb it — reached a stage when the nuns and their servants sustained themselves on the proceeds of sale of jams and pickles which they confectioned, and at which they excelled.

Apart from pestilence, there were other factors responsible for the decimation of the city. Vandalism was one of them. Gamelli Carreri tells us in his *Voyages and Travels* : "On Friday, the 8th (1695) I went to see the Church of the Italian Carmelites, standing on a pleasant hill. Though small it is very beautiful and arched as all churches in India The monastery is handsome and well contrived with excellent cloisters and cells, and a delicious garden in which there are Chinese palm-trees, which yield a pleasing shade with their low and thick leaves; there are also two cinnamon trees like those of Ceylon". Fourteen years after the suppression of the religious orders, in 1835, the convent was in ruins.

Worse was the fate of the convent and Church of St. Augustine. It was a marvelous

structure with a library that reminded its cultured guests and visitors of Cambridge. It was erected in 1572, stood well till 1835 when the Order was disbanded. In 1842 the vault fell burying part of the Church, including the colossal image of St. Augustine.

However, one will have to look beyond unheathiness and epidemics (cholera, malaria, dysentery and venereal disease), beyond insane pomp, endemic profligacy and pelf, beyond even the harassment by the Marathas and the aggressive hostility of the Dutch spurred by their intense hatred of the Catholic Portuguese. Truly, the eight-year long blockade (1637-1644) had a debilitating effect. But the fact also is that, from 1640 onwards, the Portuguese rulers and colonists progressively lost interest in Goa and whatever remained of their eastern empire. Brasil was now the promised land. ■

