

## **Tracing Identity Theories in the Goan Context**

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### **Identity: An introduction**

Identity, in the genre of Cultural Studies which depends upon the roles played by people in a society, where the cultural constructs of a place shape and transform an individual's distinctiveness and place. The construction of identity is framed by experiences and the representation of these experiences have a substantial impact on the identity formation. When we see, a girl behaves in a 'feminine' way and the male in a macho way, is because of the 'feminine' and 'masculine' notions, which have been culturally inculcated over the time. Therefore, we see how external signs serve as markers of identification.

The term identity has derived its roots from the Latin word '*idem*' referring to sameness and continuity as pointed by Zygmunt. *Identity* (2004, 08). The sameness suggests the same nature of aspects and at the same time, its period of connection with the aspects in the time period. The use of the term 'identity' has been very common.

Nayar, Pramod in *An Introduction to Cultural Studies* (2009) says that Identity in sociological terms mean ones positioning of one self and marking feelings and his ideas about self (26). In other words, it refers to a distinct feature which differentiates you from the others. In this distinction the place in which a person lives contributes to his framing of individuality. This construction of identity begins from personal to social and differs as per the difference in geographic location.

The geographic location shapes the identity of its people over time. This process takes place over a long period of time. The places of the region influence and signify the various roles,

which it laid forth. These roles are generally associated within the society in which one lives. These roles help in the formation of understanding about self and of others and about the people in its geographical boundaries. The everyday life and situations help us to more actively present to us our identity by the roles which we play in our society.

The concept of identity comes into stronger force, when the process of ‘identification’ takes place. Identification is a process of naming ourselves with the place in which we live or with the elements or people we live with. This gives us a sense of one-ness and a sense of complete ‘self’.

Richard Jenkins in his work titled, *Social Identity* (1996), gives a clear depiction of Identity and social identity. He call them both as synonyms and unravels their stylistic flexibility in their usage. Identity being a verb, is very active and plays its role very evidently. It distinctively points the elements of difference and sameness. Exploring it further, in Macmillan Students Dictionary (1990), the verb Identify, means ‘to recognize something and understand exactly what it is’. Another meaning is that “to be a sign that shows who or what someone is” (1988), thus serving as the first step in the process of identification. With this understanding, the process of identification can begin only when one can establish his self with the things and people who surround him. This process takes place over a period of time, where people live and feel one with the environment where they live.

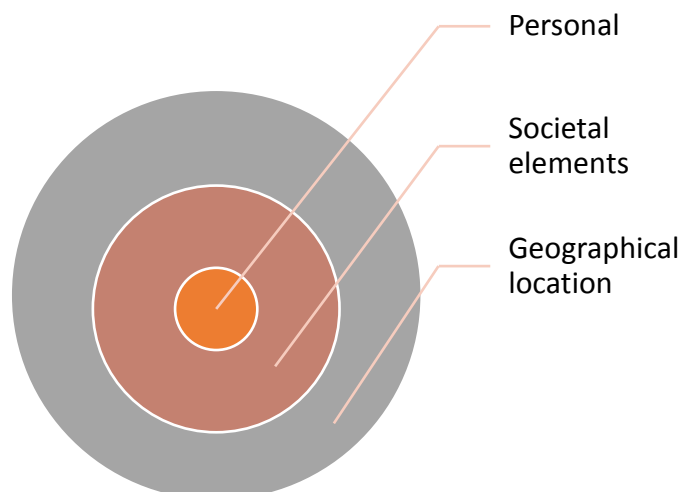


Fig. 1.1

These aspects vary from one geographical location to the other and also from person to person. Besides the geographical area, there are definitely other factors which help in the constitution of the sense of knowing self. There is now a need to trace the various theories of identity.

### **Theorizing identity**

The theories expose, identity and its discourse can be seen as a catalyst of various notions related to identity. These notions are an outcome of the recent centuries. The notion of identity can be seen as always changing and never static. It differed in meaning from one person to the other with difference to context and subject. Charles Taylor in his work *Sources of the self: The Making of Modern Identity* (1989), regards Identity as a notion as an “issue of agency and self-determination; that the individual is a ‘self-interpreting subject’.” (04)

Bethan Benwell, Elizabeth Stokoe in their book “*Discourse and Identity*” (2006) state the first traces of identity. According to the authors the term has been first recorded in 1570 as ‘identitie’, defining its meaning as “the quality or condition of being same in substance, composition, nature, properties, or in particular qualities under consideration; absolute, or essential sameness; oneness” (15). They also remark that the notion of identity is a unified phenomenon which has its roots on the etymology of words and in everyday used terminology, where the meaning has not changed much from its first use.

Besides the earlier discussed aspects of identity, Freud gives a different perception to the process of identification. In the *Identity- a reader*, Freud’s psychodynamic theory of ‘Identification’ (13) states the point where the child comes to assimilate with its external persons or objects. This slowly leads to the continuous process in the construction of identity of self and this becomes the stepping stone of establishing a sense of unification with the surroundings. Erik- Erikson, psycho- historian saw identity, as a process that is ‘located’ as

the central part of the individual and his group culture, thus drawing a link between the individual and his community. As identity not given but created by those living there, over a period of time. (2000, 99)

The notion of identity signifies, the notion of self that has roots in enlightenment, rationalism and idealism. The notion of self-identification, nostalgia and improvement are traits of everyday life, despite the theoretical challenges within the account of the modern, post-modern and other critical studies of globalisation.

Until the Early Modern Period, the dominant status-based social structure, characterised the right to enlist the human limitations of those who the right or ability to contribute in social or literary affairs. A challenge to these limitations of human agency came with the 'Enlightment Period' during the Renaissance and reached its zenith in the eighteenth century. The backbone of this period was the human reasoning, which led to the birth of Renaissance two centuries earlier.

Benwell in *Discourse and Identity* (2006) discusses identity in the postmodern era. Benwell points to what Woodward explains the twentieth century identity as an over-socialised self with concepts of challenge and conformity to essentialism (17). During this time, the theorists emphasized on the concepts such as 'diaspora', 'migration' and 'marginalisation'. Attention was also given to the individuals' sense of identification of self in the world. These areas of exploration gave rise to various psychological searches of self.

In everyday life, the question of identity is a major question, which is established. Identity is acquired just like that, instead it is something that is established to classify things and people of who they are and whether they belong to something or someone. People choose their own markers of identity which makes them flexible towards social relations in practice and through process.

How can we define social identity? This question is allocated by Richard Jenkins in his book *Social Identity*, defines social identity as “the expression refers to the ways in which individuals and collectives are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectives” (1996, 04). Human being a social animal lives in society and thus when he lives with people in society, he slowly identifies, establishes recognition and understands self with the common and unlike elements of social identity construction. In Goa, we can see that, people see each other as fellow Goans or people of the place, instead of keeping all the differences and similarities in mind which are negotiable. It is a social understanding of who we are and who other people are and in return other people’s understanding of themselves and others.

In the process of exploration of society, besides the ‘skin’ identification one can also find an identification which explains the relation between identity and place. Does place in which people live contributes to identity construction? Place refers to the grounded is the abstract Identity manifests at two levels – through ‘skins’ and place. Every place proposes the natural environment along with the built structures as its identity. The factors like cultural, social and environment together form shape identity.

In the *Identity Reader*, Stuart Hall (2000), points to the process of identification as a construct formed “on the back of recognition of some common sense of origin or shared characteristics, with another person or group or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation” (16).

Furthermore, in the social identity theory, the identification process helps in the building of the social identity. The common sense of belongingness, common ideas, instill a common sense of origin and therefore we like-mindedness of attachment in surroundings brings the people together to share a common cause. The collective identity strengthens when people from one locality share a common history and ancestry which help in the establishment of the oneness and cultural belongingness which underlines all other differences.

According to *The People, Place, and Space Reader* edited by Jen Jack Giesecking and et al (2013), outline a notion of Place identity and describe it as “a core concept in the field of environmental psychology which proposes that identities form in relation to environments”. This term was first introduced by the environmental and social psychologists Harold M. Proshansky, Abbe K. Fabian, and Robert Kaminoff, who display that place identity is a constituent of a person’s self-knowledge, with knowledge and feelings developed through the daily experience of physical spaces. The sense of place identity springs sense of belongingness and attachment with the natural surroundings.

When attachment to place grows, we gradually begin to start identifying ourselves with these places. And over a period of time, people refer to themselves by describing what country/state they live in and where they come from. For instance, when two people communicate they tend to name the place where they come from first rather than the country.

The individual becomes the centre of the society and thus everything in it has representations. The formation of identity is a result of an individual or group experiences in the locality he belongs to. The objects (in all forms) gives meaning to the people who are living in it. These meanings are subjective and irrational and are based on the differences. The meanings given to these objects are thus represented with the context of the place and region. Hence one can see the representation of the society through the meanings given to the objects.

With reference to the above discussed theories of Identity, one can see a change in the perception of identity. The earlier understanding of it shifts from individual to collective, formed as an agency with foundations of oneness to a socialised self and open to changes and challenges, yet maintain its distinctiveness.

This collective discovery of self is enriched with the common ideas of origin and common characteristics which boost the cohesion and establish the foundation of self-knowledge. Identity in the twentieth century, transforms to a different paradigm, where identity is marked by place, people and space as revealed by Jen Jack Giesecking et al in *The People, Place and*

*Space Reader* (2013). Thus developing fondness over time, giving rise to unpleasant emotions at the time of detachment or any change in the environment.

It is very important that this discussion to be made with the Goan context for which it is necessary to understand Goas historical events chronologically.

### **Goa: A historical overview**

Identity as discussed earlier is said to be an ongoing process and has its roots deeply ingrained in history. History of a place puts forth various possibilities to portray how history, place and identity are intertwined. The history of a place can reveal many multiple hidden identities and therefore there is a need to throw light upon the history of Goa.

Goa has a history which has its roots deeply ingrained in its imperial power. Goan history is one that is long and has survived various influences. The identity framed in historical terms illustrates the multiple dynasties which administered power in Goa. Goa's story can be traced right from the early Stone Age and the Neolithic age about 2000 B.C. This was later succeeded by the Iron Age where the tinges of this age and place can be traced in Mahabharata. During the legend of Harivamsha Purana, it is believed that Lord Krishna fought a war with the devil, on the mountain of 'Gomanchal', which is known as Goa in the present-time. Another legend also claims the origin of Goa and that is by Parshurama. The historian, and sociologist Olivinho Gomes in his book *Goa* (2004), mentions, "Parshurama, the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, is credited with having reclaimed the Konkan belt from the sea, and the Govarashtra or Goa is one of the seven divisions." (38). He further continues and informs that the arrow that he shot fell in a village in Goa (Bannavli - Bann (arrow) + Halli (village)). Thus forming its roots of origin from there.

Another legend narrates, a new way to trace the Goan origins is by the legend of Lord Shiva. In this legend it is said that Lord Shiva had abandoned his beloved Parvati in the Himalayas and he took refuge in Goa. After years of search in the country, Parvati finds him in Goa which was earlier known as Gomantakesh. Gomes points an Indian classic text '*The Suta*

*Samhita* where we can find a mention of the place Goa. It is believed that according to the Saptarishis or the Seven Great Sages performed a strict penance and Lord Shiva was so pleased that he himself came to bless them. Just then “by the sight of Govapuri (The city of Goa) all the sins committed in a person’s existence, are destroyed, as at sunrise darkness disappears. Certainly there is no Ksetra (region) equal to Govapuri” as read in the classic text, Olivinho displays Goa as a region with divine association.

Besides this, traces of various ruling dynasties can be traced in Goa. The residues found and excavated in Goa at multiple times, narrates a tale of its own with its own historical and cultural significance. This flux of various historical reigns portrays heritage and identity vestiges. The earliest traces of the Buddhism of the Hinayana sect dates to their settlement in Goa in the second century A.D followed by Jainism and then the Satvahana Dynasty in the second century along with the invasion by the Kadamba Kings in the third century A.D. at large. The remains of sculpyures of Gajalaxmi, sati-stones Saraswati, etc signifies their presence about 1500 years back. The other influences of dynasties is seen by the Chedi Samvat or kalachuri in 249-50 A.D who were succeeded by the Mauryas of the Konkan in the 6th-7<sup>th</sup> century. Then came the Chalukya dynasty who ruled Goa from 540-757 A.D., who was succeeded by the Rashtratukha of Ratnagiri until 973 A.D. The Shilaharas made thei who were settled in small number in 750 A.D, overpowered their reign and ruled until 1020 A.D. in parts of Goa like Salcette, Quepen, Tiswadi and other parts of Goa.

The Kadambas ruled over Goa and South Konkan till 1162, where Chandor Village of Goa was the capital chosen by them. The Kadamba throne was then again succeeded by the emperor Allaudin Khilji of Delhi who sent his army and in 1327 emperor Mohammad –bin-Tughlak who made his way from the Arabian Sea. At the same time, their second invasion in 1328 was devastating as the Kadamba capital was destroyed, leaving the traditions and beliefs in the minds of its villagers as a dark memory which they would fear to revisit. The conflicts and attacks kept going for few more decades between the Kadambas and the Muslim invaders. With the fall of the Goa Kadambas, there were frequent tussles between the Vijayanagar Hindu Empire and the Bahamani Muslim Sultanate for power over Goa. By



1369, the Bahamanis took over Goa, until in 1472, a King from Belgaum Vikram rai attempted to regain power over Goa. After the death of the Bahamani emperor Sultan Mohammas shah, his empire shrivelled off and was taken over by Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur and made Ella in Old Goa as his capital.

Goa saw the first traces of the Portuguese in 1498 by Vasco da Gama, who crystallised his force and defeated the Adil Shah of Bijapur on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1510. Their trade with the Muslim traders gave them a strong boost to succeed in their power struggle and became the sole invaders of Goa. They built factories and forts to build friendly relations with the Vijayanagar Empire and Afonso de Albuquerque with his first fleet entered the Mandovi River and landed Goa.

The Portuguese in order to form a strong hold over Goa, choose their purpose wisely and let his soldiers marry the local women and the Muslim widows. They built a chapel in honour of St. Catherine in Old Goa, and its feast day was marked as the date they conquered Goa. Albuquerque founded a hospital in Old Goa and established a Municipal Council for the city of Goa. They built various establishments for the State with churches to promote Christianity, offices for employment and development. They also took many Goans to other countries that were under their imperial power. They encouraged trade and commerce to restore their contacts and relations. Likewise, the Portuguese introduced their cultural practices and beliefs on the people of Goa. Many Goans had to convert to Christianity if they had to live in peace. This brought in the state various religious orders, who began to work in interacting and educating Goans into the Christian fold with methods of persuasion and violence. Several incentives were taken to divide the people on the basis of caste and colour. New policies were implemented for smooth functioning. This resulted in adverse effects where Goans who could not accept the new policies, left the land. Olivinho Gomes says, that realising this the Portuguese made “provisions of harsh laws were relaxed or were cleverly circumvented by the people, some of whom came back to their homeland, while others preferred to settle down wherever they had landed, mainly in Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra.” (2004, 56).

Goa in the hands of the Portuguese were exposed to the western culture and ideology. They were successful in their attempts of altering and also wiping off the culture of the colonisers to a great extent. The colonizers used their strategy and imposed the Portuguese customs, behaviours, religion and other religious and cultural practices at the same time they let the Goans practice their traditions. The traces of the dynasties before the Portuguese is vast but after 1510 is exorbitant. The tinges of various reigns are evident though the various findings of excavations, sites and documents.

### **Tracing Identity in the Goan context**

Identity construction is a social construct and one that is forever changing. It cannot be defined in definite terms. Being socially constructed, it is open to alterations and over time assimilates well with the changes undergone in its process. Goan identity like the identities of other places have undergone a series of changes. These changes hint the multiple cultural influences in Goa. Goa being under the colonial reigns for centuries has formed a 'hybrid identity'. Goa being the smallest state holds various cultural and historical influences of the rulers that once ruled it.

What defines a Goan? Who is a Goan? It is very debatable question to answer, because of the outside elements pushing forward their state identity. It is a complex whole of several elements influencing it. However, in Geographical terms one can say that 'A Goan' is an individual from the state region of Goa. Saying this, the ambiguity increases to if any individual from the state is Goan than what about the other Indians in Goa, are they Goans too? To analyse this one must analyse the historical, psychological and sociological facets which contribute to formation of identity.

A K Priolkar in his essay '*Who is a Goan?*' (Chapter 63) in *Pivoting on the point of return Modern Goan Literature* edited by Peter Nazareth (January 2010), clearly voices his opinion that a person cannot be marked by the political boundaries or territorial boundaries alone to be given an identity of the place. He further points the consequences and says,

“Who is a Goan? Are we not to claim as Goans those who were once certainly sons of Goa but have since migrated to other parts of the country? If we confine the term “Goan” to only those who have voting rights as Portuguese citizens, many of us who are Goans will lose all our claim to that designation. Nor is it satisfactory to make birth within the boundaries of Goa the criterion, for, in that event, many of our children will have to be classed as non-Goans.” (379).

As Priolkar rightly steps the difficulty in answering the answer of the questions, it is very difficult for any person to give one definite identity of himself. The past masking the complex histories in it, showcases the problem in defining one definite identity.

However, keeping the practicalities of the Goan culture and identity that is so amorphous and ever changing, he states to give a very practical way to use the term ‘Goan’. He states that the term Goan can be used, “to anyone, wherever his present whereabouts, whose forefathers have been domiciled in Goa at any time in history and who is aware of this connection and cherishes and values it.” (379-380).

Defining Goan identity is a highly debatable issue. This question has been raised by many in the past, discussed and finally left with vague responses. Every Goan had a different opinion contributing the debate to go to no ends. However, in this research, the researcher seeks to throw light on these earlier discussed Goan identity and also put forth a basis for Goan identity.

The Portuguese landed Goa and exercised its power for over four hundred and fifty years. This is the longest period of imperial rule in Goa, during which the imperialists enforced their ‘culture’ on the colonised people. By culture here signifies culture defined by Stuart Hall, denotes the term as “a way of life” (2002, 109) as stated by Lewis Jeff in his work *Cultural Studies- The Basics, Sage Publications (London)*. The Goan cultural influence thus serves as a fabricated mosaic with influence of various cultures and powers. The rich Goan cultural

identity attracted people from other parts of the world, resulting from a visit to settling in this rich culturally fragmented land. Goa was liberated in the year 1961.

Goan identity is therefore crafted as an amalgamation of a variety of historical influences. These influences form a blended identity with all the baggage of cultural effects. History stimulates the terms and outlines the lived values and identities of the past against the historical change.

Besides the historical perspective, there arises a need to discuss the other theoretical perspectives are the socio - psychological and literary aspects of identity establishment. The consciousness of identity can be defined in two ways – sociological aspect and psychoanalytic terms of self and society.

Goans tend to share a sense of togetherness due to the common history and heritage that they share. These common elements help them to do away with other differences and to accept each other as one. The Goan people are known all over for their harmonious behaviour. The Hindu and Catholic folk live in a peaceful and harmonious manner in spite of their religious differences since the beginning. They also participate and celebrate feasts and festivals of the other with great pomp and sentiments.

In the above said terms, the Goan identity of an individual adds to the complexity of being called a Goan. When an individual who is not born in Goa, yet lives here and feels a sense of common belongingness and share common ideas towards this state, can we call him a Goan too? This is a common phenomenon, after the goa experiencing the wave of other Indians and foreigners settling in Goa and after some years, claimed to identify themselves as ‘Goans’.

Goan identity or any identity cannot be said to be formed in isolation with one individual, it is a social phenomenon. The society which includes people along with natural and built constructs reflect the selfhood of a person. Society serves as a mirror where the societal components serve as elements which help us to see ourselves in other things which are

embodiments of time. Mead suggests “that we cannot see ourselves at all without all seeing ourselves as other people see us.” (1997, 21). For him society is the “basic theorem of identification” (1997, 21).

Jenkins states “social change is often accompanied by rhetoric about ‘identity under threat’ (1996, 06). This is true with respect to Goa. The complexity of migration, urbanisation, development and globalisation had rapidly boomed to such an extent that in Goa, we find people from various parts of the world, who after living here claim themselves to be Goan. On the other hand, the native Goans, migrate to other parts of the country and world due to career upgrading and over a period of time, settle there. Yet they and their offspring who are born in that land, claim themselves to be Goans due to ancestral roots and common heritage.

On the other hand, identity being an ongoing process and elements like with the globalisation and education has shaped the personality of people. This results some of them to go back to their roots and for some, to reflect on the past and to forgo of these ‘identity signifiers’.

This discussion of being a Goan and the Goan identity is an incessant debated which has been going on since last five to six decades. After Goa was liberated from the Portuguese, Goa was believed not to have an identity of its own. However, with the changing times, another Goan identity has given shaped a new identity of money power. Vasco Pinho in his article points Changing Goan Identities (1999), discusses the various Goan identities which have been changed over the years with several external forces influencing its change. He sheds light upon the new identity of money power, as identity that has formed as a product of a globalisation.

### **Goan Identity through Goan Heritage**

Heritage is a term which represents something that is inherited from our ancestors. This aspect of heritage contours the distinct identity of goa. Goa as a place has its own distinctiveness and these factors over the years have given this land of Goa its individuality.

What are the elements which represent the Goan identity? This question raises various questions to its answers. The researcher seeks to answer some of them. Identity as discussed earlier refers to as not given but acquired over time. When an individual lives in a place for a period of time, he/she begins to identify and establish a bond with self and the external factors around him. The external elements that signify the identity can be said that they deal with the geographical elements of the area. Naming a few locations like Basilica of Bom Jesus in Old Goa, Menezes Braganza house Chandor, Fontainhas, Colva beach, and other sites of such monumental or environmental, remind of the place called Goa.

Besides the famous names of people from Goa like TB Cunha, Francis Luis Gomes, Menezes Braganza from Chandor and so on, one can also say that it's the locality constructs that help in identifying the place and the people. The same manner, this thesis will focus and show how heritage sites and monuments of Goa reflect the Goan identity.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once referred to Goa as a small pimple on the face of India. This land lies on the western coast of India and is widely known as a well-known tourist destination in India. Why is this so? This could be certainly because of its unique culture and heritage that has been preserved over the years. The favourable climate along with the multi-cuisine delicacies, also represent the colonial influences in this tiny land. The silver sands attract the heart of every Goan and tourist, with the roaring waves soothing the turbulent soul.

The concrete structures from the small stone laterite structures to the big spiritual constructs of temples of different faith, Mosques and hundreds of churches and chapels reveal the Long years of colonial influences. Besides the palatial Portuguese houses, the household assets also re-tell the past, so much so that it makes its viewer to re-live the past. The enormous garden area and green lands mark Goa's serene beauty.

The term Goan heritage immediately reminds any person of the monumental or structural elements, which consist of valuable materialistic importance and those that have been monuments or objects of ancestral dispositions, which reflect our heritage. Goan history

reflects the structures build by each imperial power in reign in Goa, for instance, the temples of Hindus and Jain, Muslim mosques and churches and chapels by the Portuguese. Erections of other influences seem to be less in number as compared to the ones during the four hundred and fifty years of Portuguese rule in Goa.

Keeping in mind of the Portuguese regime, it is very evident that Goa has many Portuguese elements which are noticeable which contribute to the identity of the Goan land. The long years of colonial rule have made the Goans feel different from the other Indians. The western influence touching the Goan shores and the native Goan in the sixteenth century and later, aroused a sense of being a western in the Goan hearts.

Major Goan identity markers are considered as the command over the language Konkani and the cultural heritage. However Teotonio De Souza in his essay *Is There One Goan Identity, Several or None ?\** (Lusotopie, 2000) says,

“.. the identity of any community is basically made up of its cultural uniqueness, including the environmental characteristics of the land of one's ancestors. The mother-tongue and the historical experiences of one's ancestral community are important constituents of that cultural heritage.”

Thus referring to identity formed by heritage constructs of past and environmental. The Goan identity also can be said to be formed by its ancestral tangible heritage and intangible facets which form a major part of the cultural heritage of Goa.

Manohar Rai Sardesai in his essay ‘*The Three Dimensions*’ from Indian Literature, Vol 35, 1992 published by Sahitya Akademi, remarks that ,“The hallmark of Goan identity is of course Konkani, the language of Goa, a language that was suppressed by the foreign rulers, spurned by the neighbours and neglected by its own speakers for centuries together.”

According to Percival Noronha, it was only after the World War II that the need for preservation and conservation came to make sense in Goa. In 1948, a special team consisting of three members was formed in order to document, and restore the monuments in Old Goa.

The team was headed by Balthasar de Castro, a well-known architect, the Director-General of the Archaeological Department of Portugal and a conservationist. They restored the Chapel of St. Catherine and the church, convent of St John of God which was in ruins. Besides this they also restored the Arch of Viceroys in 1954, which was on the verge of collapsing.

In 1958, another list was made to protect either monumental sites of Goa but in 1961 with the change in government, the Indian Government took charge of restoring these sites. The Government relisted the sites and increased the number of the sites by almost double. The churches of Goa are considered of invaluable varieties of Portuguese influence. The interiors, the pulpits, the carved wooden furniture and altar decorations, required to be preserved.

Moreover, the government tried their best to finish the undertaken task but their inefficient skills did not seem to do much good. The restoration work did not succeed in achieving the desired results due to the poor quality of labour and colouring places unnecessary led to many changes. For instance, the roof over the Chapel of Blessed Sacrament in the See Cathedral was replaced by a RCC slab. The climatic conditions in Goa gave rise to leaking to the point of damaging the rich paintings of the seventeenth century. After heavy pressure from the NGO's and others, the damage was taken into consideration and worked upon. The work done is extensively different from the original and visible even to the blind eye.

In 1972 UNESCO adopted a resolution for the identification and conservation of the World heritage in monumental and natural form. In 1977, India became an active member of this group with many of the churches included in their list. The list constituted of fifteen churches from Goa and four natural sites. The Archaeological Survey of India equipped with amateur artists and unprofessional plans took the initiative to organise seminars spreading the need to restore these monumental and environmental sites.

The desire to conserve and restore is taking a strong grasp of the Goan architects, NGOs, intellectuals, engineers and others. The conservation is not only by intention but also by scope of skilful hands for the specific purpose is necessary.



Goan heritage construct the rich tradition and culture of the land. Its heritage comprises of tangible heritage, intangible heritage and natural heritage. This heritage has been passed down from our forefathers and form a central stone to our past, which shapes our present identity. Each of the heritage signifier has an element of history in itself, which reminds us of our bygone days. Thus these heritage identity markers are reflected in the Goan literature, which need to be revealed.

### **Tracing Identity and Heritage in Goan Literature: A Study of Mascarenhas's**

#### ***Sorrowing Lies My Land***

The various theories of identity which have been discussed earlier will now applied to goa using a primary text *Sorrowing Lies My Land* by Lambert Mascarenhas. This novel remarkably exhibits the essence of Goan identity embedded in the heart of Goans and also reveals the cultural influences through its heritage signifiers. The novel at large brings about the 'Goanness' with a cultural flavour of Goa.

In a written interview of Lambert Mascarenhas on who is a Goan, He remarks,

“I would think that a person born in Goa or of Goan parentage or ancestry, who has been brought up within a family or cultural community with Goan values and a love for the homeland, is a Goan. A true Goan, according to me, would also have at least a working knowledge of Konkani.” (PI 2015)

Goa being an agrarian rich land, traces its roots to farming. In *Sorrowing Lies My land*, the protagonist Tobias Da Coasta, from Copena village is a farmer by profession, who toils in his field and is proud of his rich cultural ancestry. However, the same is not when it comes to the youngsters of the village. They prefer going abroad and making a better way of living there. Argentina's son, Leandro a young boy after his studies tells his parents that he wants to go to Africa instead of helping their fathers in the fields. But farming as an occupation is looked down upon and he goes abroad. Ema too feels embarrassed that her husband Tobias works in the fields.

Throughout the novel, one can see Tobias as a ‘True Goan’ and a nationalist. His love for the Goan soil was tremendous, so much so that he preferred to toil in his own soil and earn a living rather than doing any ‘white collar jobs’ under the Portuguese. He resists to accept the colonial power and tells his children how rich this land was before the Portuguese. He gets furious when Babush (Filipe) reports to him about his *Professora* who teaches them that Konkani is a dialect and Portuguese is a language. She says “Konkani is not a language. It is... it is... er... never mind that. Our language is Portuguese and we must all speak it even in our homes.” (Sorrowing Lies My Land, 1955, 28). Listening to this Tob gets furious and narrates to his son Babush the Goan cultural history before the Portuguese.

“Then he began to tell us of the great Ashoka whose empire extended to the shores of Goa, and the Kadambas who rules for nearly seven centuries and under whom Goa had been very prosperous. From the 11<sup>th</sup> century, went on my father, Goa had found herself involved in power politics but had outlived all the clashes. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century Goa was under the control of the Vijayanagar Empire. Later Bijapur attempted to liquidate it, and that gave Albuquerque the opportunity he had long desired and he exploited the situation fully. He infiltrated with the help of Timoja and in 1510 he made his sinister appearance before the Goan city of Panjim.” (29)

The cultural history is thrown light upon in other parts of the novel also. The assassination of Don Carlos and the Heir Apparent Filipe ‘in Portugal (SLML, 1955, 5). The death of Queen Amelia in Portugal in the early twentieth century, outlines historical facts underlying in the chapter one. The novel (part two of the novel) narrates the struggle for freedom of Goa from the European power.

Along with the Cultural history of Goa, the novel delineates the harmonious way of living in Goa. Keeping aside caste class and colour, they live in harmony and as one family. Goan Way of life forms the major crux of the novel. The opening scene of the novel gives a realistic picture of the Villages in Goa. As said by Lambert Mascarenhas in an interview about Goan identity, he says,

“Goan Identity’, according to me has been defined more by the physical attributes of our beautiful land than our history, which has only influenced certain aspects of it. Being a coastal community with a temperate climate we have been blessed with a lush, green, bountiful environment and the fruit of the sea. A certain level of ease in the attainment of basic necessities – food and shelter, has made us a happy and hospitable people”.

While reading the novel, the reader is taken on a tour of Goa, where he learns about the villages, green and golden fields, feasts like Sao Joao, Ganesh, and Christmas by Hindus and Muslims with great pomp and grandeur.

“[t]he excitement over the approaching Ganpati Festival of the Hindus. Though Christians we were mostly in the village, we had twelve Hindu families living here, most of them peasants, who did not belong to our village but having come from Novas Conquistas... The Ganpati festival was the greatest festival of the Hindus in these parts of India. They would celebrate it with as great eclat as we did our Christian feasts, decorating their homes making *lados* and *neureos*, which they offered everyone who went to visit them. ...The Hindus and Christians got on well with each other in the village ...” (27)

The traditions followed during marriages with elements of traditional Goan food with spices of imperialism. Ladianhas, prayer gatherings and litany in Goa marks the presence on any auspicious occasion. Christian marriage rituals in Goa is marked by the nuptial mass followed by celebrations and decorations of a “*mattou*, decorated with buntings and branches of trees”(45), bamboo matting floor, ancient instruments played by musicians from Majorda and other parts of Goa accompanied with *contradanca*, *manddo* and other Goan and Portuguese dances and music filled the Goan air.

The leisure sports of Goa are the bull-fights and football. Bull-fights were a great time of excitement and enthusiasm. Goan delicacies seen in the novel are *vodde*, *portho*, *mandare*, and other Christmas were made of rice and other grains.

Jenkins in *Social Identity* (1997) discusses about identity and how when two identities meet in a postcolonial land, there is first a clash but this intersession is worked on through cooperation, assimilate as one and result into one new body.

“Barth’s key proposition is that it is not enough to send a message about identity, that message *has to be accepted* by significant others before an identity can be said to be ‘taken on’. As a consequence, identities are to be found and negotiated at their boundaries, where the internal and the external meet”(emphasis added, 23-24)

These lines clearly echoes the character of clashes between the European culture and Goa, the ideology of the Goans, where some saw themselves as the Portuguese and others resisted to accept it. The character of Ema from *Sorrowing Lies My Land*, although being a Goan she whole heartedly accepts the Portuguese identity which the others reject. Though the geographical boundaries differ physically, there is still a union of the two countries in Ema through negotiation and acceptance, where her Goan identity meets the Portuguese acquired one. She presumes to be a Portuguese by heart but according to Jenkins ‘it has to be accepted’ by significant others. But in the novel we see that, the Portuguese have not given her an equal citizenship, which she presumes as her identity, but is not confirmed, creating an identity clash in her. She tries to acquire it as her own as bestowed upon her by the Portuguese forefathers. She establishes this bond and like the Portuguese, she encourages her family to do the same.

The Portuguese in their four hundred and fifty years of colonial power built many institutions and structures to mark their power and for public help. These built institutions in the present day mark as identity markers of the place and if acquired then also serve as markers of collective identity. In the chapter on Institutionalizing Identity in *Social Identity* (1996) by Richard Jenkins, he discusses what Ferdinand de Saussure, the Swiss linguist talks about, the irrationality in giving meanings in language. The meaning in language is derived from the similarity and differences. Thus when a signifier is signified, it does not have a rational meaning but it is mainly because it possess elements of difference. Thus the identities in

identification of institutions, refers to ‘the way things are being done’ rather than the regular ‘ways of being’ in institutions.

Jenkins also gives a different ‘reverse’ argument when he states that:

“[I]nstitutions – events (e.g. an annual village fete), estates (e.g. marriage), corporate groups (e.g. universities), or whatever- are *sources and sites of identification*. They may not in themselves be collective identities, but they are productive - in Barth’s terms, *generative* – of identifications. The annual village fete, for example, has an organizing committee and a structure of tasks and offices. These are occupied by individuals, whose incumbency *differentiates* them from each other, from those who merely attend the fete, and may have wider resonance within the village. Being married differs from being single, being divorced, or being widowed; all of these, however, are identities which are rooted in the institution of marriage. Being university lecturer is an identity constituted in and by the institution of the university, which contributes to the frameworks of similarity and difference which situate it –... other” (emphasis added, 133)

Based on the above quote, a relation can be drawn to the institutions in Goa as mentioned in the selected primary text i.e. churches, houses, institutions (e.g. place of work), places, and all that of which constitutes to be Goan markers of identity. This is mainly because of the element of difference that it consists which differentiates one from the other. For instance, the churches, like the church in Copena in *Sorrowing Lies My Land*, were built in Goa first by the Portuguese and with the wide spread of Christianity as a religion in Goa, led to the building of other similar structures. However, one can always find each of them different from the other with respect to place where it is built, name of the church, the architecture, materials used, etc. Secondly these churches can be traced down as structures built in about two or three centuries earlier, thus aiding to its significance and importance as our historical and social heritage. Thirdly, while viewing church as a marker of identity, one does not refer to it as a ‘white built structure’ which reflects the Goan identity alone, although it is a

concrete symbol but attains its true meaning only when it is in use. In the novel *Sorrowing Lies My Land* (1955), Babush (the narrator) says,

“[I]t would come by houses, and still more houses roofed and *white-walled, spread fanwise, with the church* standing in the middle of the road *as a sentinel guarding the conscience of the people*. Indeed, *our life revolved around the church, and when there would be religious feasts there, all of us young or old would be excited, the girls...*”  
(Emphasis added, 04)

The significance of the white colour is revealed. The houses and churches were mostly painted white, which served as protectors of morality. Furthermore, “The church was our solace and our joy, I must say. There it stood, erect and imposing, on the left side of the road, with a big cross in front of it and ... stand by its side.” (04). He then moves on to describe the feast celebration and the fair surrounding the churches on feast days. The narrator also throws light on the procession which is led by the led and priest/s after the feast mass as done in Goa. The description of the fair is as follows,

“All round it was open space, except for the procession route which was fringed with coconut trees and *gul mohrs*, which on the feast day looked like a fairyland, with big stalls with shelves groaning under the weight of toys of variations, boxes of socks and stocking, handkerchiefs, veils, trinkets and other feminine wear; hawkers sitting on the ground and selling beads, bangles and balloons and combs and other knick-knacks; smaller stalls displaying varieties of meats such as *ladoos* and *kadios*, too tempting to pass by without buying them, stalls selling cold drinks and ice cream that would suddenly make your throat dry; other stalls full of baskets of gram, so hot that your hands would burn when you grabbed the; and finally the section devoted to hardware, furniture and sugar candies which, for children like us who hardly even went to town, would be a source of joy and delight.” (04)

In these fairs one can usually find the *lados* and *kadios* which are orange or yellow in colour and grams and peanuts which are roasted during the night. Besides this other goods of aid in household and other materials were also seen at the fair.

Filipe also known as Babush mentions, “The church was our biggest institution and the feasts celebrated there are of great importance. Every family would have their relations over ...bringing with them affection and joy.” (04) Feasts are seen as an occasion of meeting with joy. This joy when celebrated with family would bring a great time of joy and fun. The reference about various feasts at different places for instance St, Francis Xavier feast at Old Goa, Immaculate Conception Feast in Panjim, St. John the Baptist feast, reflect Goan religious ambience and colonial past.

As meaning enriches only when people use it over a period of time tend to develop a connection and results in the process of identification of self. A structure will be a structure, until meaning is created.

A Temple or church itself gives an identity of being a Christian or Hindu. At the same time, the practices are considered as acts of giving ‘newer sub-identities’ for instance, in the novel, Laxmi is baptised and Ema believes that through this sacrament of baptism she has bestowed Laxmi a different identity and now being a catholic, she is now one among them.

The existence of the palatial Goan houses in Goa adds to the distinctive Goan identity. The architecture and construction of these structures is different from others found in other places. Traces of this are reflected in the *Sorrowing Lies My Land* with references made to the *Balcao*, *Sala de jantar*, *Sala*, *cozinha*, and other assets of the house like *Portinho*, which is like a wooden door. These houses are markers of place identity and are also called as the heritage structures

Thus to conclude, having traced the elements of identity, Theories of identity and Goan identity in context to Goan identity and heritage, one can see these reflections in the Goan

literature. This paper illustrates the same in one of the selected primary text *Sorrowing Lies My Land* by Lambert Mascarenhas. Identity can be thus seen as not given but created in the process of time.

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