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## CARIM-INDIA – DEVELOPING A KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR POLICYMAKING ON INDIA-EU MIGRATION

Co-financed by the European Union

### *Goans in Portugal: Role of History and Identity in shaping Diaspora Linkages*

Rupa Chanda  
Sriparna Ghosh

CARIM-India Research Report 2012/19



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**CARIM-India**  
**Developing a knowledge base for policymaking on India-EU migration**

**Research Report**  
**Case Study**  
**CARIM-India RR 2012/19**

**Goans in Portugal:**  
**Role of History and Identity in shaping Diaspora Linkages**

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## **CARIM-India – Developing a knowledge base for policymaking on India-EU migration**

This project is co-financed by the European Union and carried out by the EUI in partnership with the Indian Council of Overseas Employment, (ICOE), the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore Association, (IIMB), and Maastricht University (Faculty of Law).

The proposed action is aimed at consolidating a constructive dialogue between the EU and India on migration covering all migration-related aspects. The objectives of the proposed action are aimed at:

- Assembling high-level Indian-EU expertise in major disciplines that deal with migration (demography, economics, law, sociology and politics) with a view to building up migration studies in India. This is an inherently international exercise in which experts will use standardised concepts and instruments that allow for aggregation and comparison. These experts will belong to all major disciplines that deal with migration, ranging from demography to law and from economics to sociology and political science.
- Providing the Government of India as well as the European Union, its Member States, the academia and civil society, with:
  1. Reliable, updated and comparative information on migration
  2. In-depth analyses on India-EU highly-skilled and circular migration, but also on low-skilled and irregular migration.
- Making research serve action by connecting experts with both policy-makers and the wider public through respectively policy-oriented research, training courses, and outreach programmes.

These three objectives will be pursued with a view to developing a knowledge base addressed to policy-makers and migration stakeholders in both the EU and India.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: <http://www.india-eu-migration.eu/>

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## **Abstract**

The Portuguese colonial era in India began in 1502 and ended in 1961 with the annexation of Goa by India. This long standing colonial relationship led to a deep-rooted historical, cultural and social relationship between Goa and Portugal. Migration from Goa to Portugal, over different periods, played an important part in forging this relationship. This paper examines the history of migration from Goa to Portugal, the characteristics of the Goan community in Portugal, and its engagement with Goa and with India, based on secondary and primary sources of information.

Section 2 discusses the different waves of migration from Goa to Portugal. It finds that Goans migrated to Portugal during the colonial period in search of education, then following the annexation of Goa by India in 1961, and subsequently during the 1970s when Goans “twice migrated” to Portugal from Mozambique and Angola following their independence. In recent decades, Goans have been migrating to Portugal to seek access to the larger European market. Today, there is a sizeable Goan community residing in Portugal.

Sections 3 and 4 explore the question of identity as perceived by this community in Portugal. The findings indicate that history, the causal factors underlying migration, and the heterogeneity within the community in terms of background, economic and social status have a major influence on the notion of identity. One section of the community does not consider itself as a diaspora group or as expatriates or migrants as it sees itself as fully integrated with Portuguese society. Their connection is with Goa, not with India. Another section of the community views itself as belonging to India and also Goa, realizing that they have a distinct identity within Portugal. For the twice migrated, the issue of identity is even more complex as they identify with a third country and many have never lived in Goa or India.

Section 5 discusses how this issue of identity has manifested itself in different ways, such as through the community’ position on issues of minority representation within Portuguese society, through diaspora associations and networks, and the extent to which the community has engaged with and contributed back to Goa and India. It finds that due to the dilemma over identity, the community has had very weak economic and philanthropic ties with the homeland.

Section 6 highlights the growing engagement between the Goan community in Portugal and India in recent years and some initiatives at the government level to deepen this engagement. However, it finds that a long term strategic vision has been lacking on the part of both the Indian and the Portuguese governments.

Section 7 concludes by calling for a forward looking approach to engaging with the Goan diaspora community in Portugal. It recommends that this community be strategically leveraged not only to strengthen economic and cultural relations with Portugal but also to serve India’s larger foreign policy and geopolitical objectives in the Lusophone countries of Latin America and Africa.

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## 1. Introduction

Silk, gold and spices had long enticed the foreigners to India. Since time immemorial the subcontinent had seen invasion by powers that have sought to exploit her riches. Early relationships with foreign countries always started with commerce but the eventual outcome in many cases was invasion or an attempt to the same. India's rich natural resources (silk, gold and spices) and its skilled artisans (weavers of muslin, goldsmiths) attracted many European countries to forge commercial relations with it. Almost all the European empires have at different points in time tried to invade India in order to secure this relationship.

The first European power to invade India was the Greeks, who arrived in India in 327-326 B.C. under the leadership of Alexander the Great. Thereafter, at the end of the 15th century, the Portuguese sailor Vasco da Gama was the next European to visit India. His discovery of a new sea route between Europe to India in 1498 A.D. paved the way for direct Indo-European commerce.<sup>1</sup> The control of trade routes and the spice-producing regions were the main reason for Vasco da Gama's quest, which was sponsored by the Manuel I, the then King of Portugal. Over the centuries, India's natural resources also attracted other European powers, such as the Dutch, English, French and Danes who also came to India for trading in the early 17th century. Taking advantage of the decadence of the Mughal Empire in India as well as the weak and corrupt regional rulers in India, the European powers gradually started taking control over the country.

Although among all these European powers, it was the British who gained a firm political foothold in the subcontinent (following the Battle of Plassey in 1757) the first major power to colonize India was Portugal. The Portuguese colonial era in India began in 1502 when they established their first trading centre at Kollam, Kerala. In the same year during Vasco da Gama's second visit to India, he forcefully expelled the Arab traders from Calicut and paved the way for political control over the region by Portugal.<sup>2</sup> In March 25, 1505, *Francisco de Almeida* was appointed *Viceroy of India* by the Portuguese Empire.<sup>3</sup> The Portuguese started to build forts along the South Indian coastal areas with major trading ports such as in Calicut. In 1510 the Portuguese admiral defeated the Bijapurs, the then rulers of Goa and annexed it to the Portuguese empire. The Portuguese capital was shifted from Calicut to Goa in 1530. Moreover, the Portuguese expanded their empire by acquiring several territories from the Sultans of Gujarat, including Daman (occupied in 1531), Salsette, Bombay and Bacaim (occupied in 1534) and Diu (occupied in 1535). These were a part of the Northern Province of Portuguese India. Most of this Province was later lost by the Portuguese in their 1739 war with the Marathas. The Portuguese ruled in South India for nearly 160 years before they were defeated by the Dutch in 1660. The Dutch forced the Portuguese to move from the Southern region to Goa. The latter was the capital of the Portuguese State of India (*Estado Português da Índia*) from 1530 till the invasion of Goa in December, 1961 by the Republic of India.<sup>4</sup> In 1947, when India became independent, the Portuguese empire in India consisted of Goa, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli. Dadra and Nagar Haveli were conquered back from Portugal in 1954. The loss of the other three, namely Goa, Daman and Diu in 1961 marked the end of Portuguese rule in India.

The various conflicts between the Portuguese Empire and foreign or domestic rulers in different regions ensured Portuguese footprints all over the western coast of India. Though the English emerged as the imperial rulers of India, the imprint of Portuguese rule over the western sea coast of India, particularly the Konkan coast, was significant. This long standing colonial relationship eventually

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<sup>1</sup> Thapar (1966)

<sup>2</sup> Logan (1887)

<sup>3</sup> Menon(1967)

<sup>4</sup> [www.bharat-rakshak.com](http://www.bharat-rakshak.com) (accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2012)

led to a close tie between the ruler and the ruled. Portugal granted Goa the status of “Vice Kingdom” which gave the same rights (e.g., citizenship rights) to the inhabitants of Goa under colonial rule as those enjoyed by the Portuguese in Europe. As a result, Goa and Portugal not only shared a commercial and power-based relationship but also developed a deep-rooted historical, cultural and social relationship.

Migration from Goa to Portugal played an important part in forging this relationship. This migration has happened in different waves, through different routes, and for different reasons. Goans migrated to Portugal during the colonial period in search of education. Subsequently, following the annexation of Goa by India in 1961, many Goans took up Portuguese citizenship and moved to Portugal. During the 1970s, Goans (and other Indian communities) “twice migrated” to Portugal from Mozambique, Angola and Kenya following the independence of these countries. Goans have also been migrating to Portugal in recent decades to seek access to the larger European market. As a result of these successive waves of migration, there is today a sizeable Goan community residing in Portugal (though numbers are very difficult to estimate for a variety of reasons).

### *Outline and objectives*

This paper attempts to examine the characteristics of the Goan community in Portugal and the nature of its links with Goa and with India on the basis of both secondary and primary sources of information. Following the introduction, Section 2 examines the various waves of migration from Goa to Portugal, both direct and indirect, in order to understand the different forces that have shaped the creation of this community within Portugal. Section 3 looks at the question of identity by examining how the members of this community identify themselves, whether as Goans, or as Indians, or as Portuguese. Section 4 examines the causal factors and perspectives on the issue of a “Goan identity”. Section 5 discusses different ways in which the issue of identity manifests itself and how this has affected the way in which the community associations and networks function and the nature of the community’s engagement with Goa and with India. Section 6 highlights recent developments in the Goan community’s engagement with India. Section 7 concludes by discussing the possibilities for leveraging the Goan community in Portugal to strengthen economic and cultural relations with Portugal and also to strategically engage with Portuguese speaking countries in other parts of the world.

## **2. Waves of migration from Goa to Portugal**

In the European mainland, Portugal has one of the largest numbers of people of Indian origin. According to the High Level Committee Report on the Indian diaspora, Indians in Portugal, including recent immigrants and people with ancestral tie to India, together number around 70,000. However, as Catholic Goans have the same names and religion as the Portuguese it is difficult to get a correct estimate of the size of this community even from the census data.<sup>5</sup> The Indian diaspora is concentrated primarily in Lisbon and Porto but is also spread around Algarve, Coimbra, Guarda and Leiria. The Indian communities living in Portugal include the Gujaratis, Goans, people from Daman & Diu, and most recently Punjabis. A large number of Gujaratis and Maharashtrians joined the Indian immigrants in Portugal from the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique, Macau and Angola when these countries became independent and adopted policies of Africanization.<sup>6</sup> A noted expert on the Indian diaspora in Portugal, Constantino Hermanns Xavier has remarked,

“Indian immigration to Portugal has happened in different waves from the 16th Century onwards. The first wave was the Portuguese ships which carried craftsmen, tailors and others with specialised skills from India to Portugal. They have had a distinct influence on the architecture

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<sup>5</sup> Gomes (2007)

<sup>6</sup> Fonseca (2001)



and culture of our country. The second wave was of Goan intellectuals who went to Portugal to study and then settled down and the third and most significant wave was in 1961, when the people of Goa were given the choice of opting for Portuguese citizenship. That was when a large number of Goans in administrative services and military officers immigrated.”<sup>7</sup>

There are thus broadly four distinct groups of Goans who have settled in Portugal; (i) those who came straight from Goa and settled down in Portugal during the colonial regime, which can be classified as pre-1961; (ii) those who came from Goa post-1961 after Goa was taken over by India; (iii) those who came via Africa, especially the former Portuguese colonies, particularly after the independence of Angola and Mozambique; and (iv) more recently those who gave migrated to Portugal with a view to settling in other developed countries in Europe or elsewhere. The case of each of these groups is briefly highlighted here. The long history and ties that bind the Goan community to Portugal are evident from the discussion that follows.

## 2.1 Migration from Goa to Portugal Pre-1961

The migration of Goans to Portugal during the colonial period has a very long history. The first Indians to arrive in Portugal with the return fleets of Vasco da Gama and his immediate successors were individuals from Calicut, Cochin, Cranganore, and Anjediv Island, but not from Goa.<sup>8</sup> A few years later Hindu goldsmiths from Goa went to Portugal to produce objects of art for the royal court. Raulu Xett, a prominent name amongst this class of workers, worked there from 1518 to 1520. The influence of his work can be understood from the fact that in 1996 an art exposition entitled ‘The Heritage of Rauluchantim’ was held in Lisbon’s Museum of St. Rock in his honor.<sup>9</sup>

In 1820 the Constitutionalist Revolution of Portugal in 1820 led to a meeting of the *Cortes* (or Constituent Assembly). This movement was led by the liberal constitutionalists and the attempt was to create the kingdom’s first constitution. The movement also resulted in a political turmoil in Brazil and eventually Brazil declared its independence in 1822.<sup>10</sup> In this new liberal political climate, Goans too asserted themselves. During the Portuguese Parliamentary elections in Goa, white Portuguese officials supported mestizos (persons of mixed descent). Garnering the support of the local Goan society, Bernardo Peres da Silva and Constancio Roque da Costa became the very first Goans to occupy seats in the Parliament of Lisbon in 1822.<sup>11</sup> This event is particularly important in terms of its implications for Indian migration to Portugal as it opened up the avenues for upper class society in the Portuguese colonies in India to migrate to Portugal.

Following the loss of political control over Brazil and also a major part of their territories in India, the Portuguese sought to establish new colonies in Africa. However, tropical and other endemic diseases formed a major obstacle to this plan of colonization. In order to provide ‘doctors for the empire’ the Portuguese established *Escola Médico-Cirúrgica de Goa* (Medical-Surgical School of Goa) in 1842.<sup>12</sup> It was the oldest Medical College in Asia. This Medical School was the only institution of higher studies in Portugal’s Asian empire. For the Portuguese, graduates of this college were part of an imperial scheme, wherein these doctors served as mediators between the colonial centre and the colonial populations they served. At the same time they also faced discrimination as they were barred from practicing in Portugal without undertaking additional studies at metropolitan universities<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Duttagupta (2008)

<sup>8</sup> Correia (1869)

<sup>9</sup> Silva et al. (1996)

<sup>10</sup> Lustosa (2007)

<sup>11</sup> Vaz (1997)

<sup>12</sup> Borges (1997)

<sup>13</sup> Salgaocar et al. (2008)

Therefore many *Escola Médico- Cirúrgica de Goa* graduates went to Portugal to acquire practicing licenses. There they formed the largest group of Goans as first-comers or as descendants of those who stayed on. Political liberalization helped a few to win elections in order to represent Goa in the Portuguese Parliament as well. Political success eventually generated interest in law. Most of the Goans who came to Portugal in this early period, opted either to study medicine at Coimbra, Oporto, and Lisbon, or law at Coimbra and Lisbon. Though a majority of these migrants were Roman Catholics, several minority Hindus also migrated as doctors, lawyers, and even politicians.<sup>14</sup>

However, till the 1950s, the number of Goans in Portugal, remained quite small. Most of those who had gone to study either returned to Goa or went to the other Portuguese colonies while those staying behind (mostly Catholics) got married to Portuguese and according to one senior member of this community, in some sense “lost their Goan identity”. Starting in the 1950s, the Portuguese government instituted 6 to 7 scholarships for Goans seeking to pursue their higher studies in Portugal. In 1961, about 50-60 students migrated from Goa to Portugal, right before Goa’s integration with India. The Aga Khan Foundation also instituted 6 scholarships for Goan students at this time. Some also came to study on their own.

Hence, through the pre-1961 colonial period, upper class elites from Goa migrated to Portugal for higher education and work. They formed the earliest generation of Indian migrants to Portugal from Goa. These intellectuals became clerics, doctors, engineers, lawyers, magistrates, teachers, journalists, officials in the army and navy, in the bureaucracy in Portugal or in its colonies and occupied high positions.<sup>15</sup>

## 2.2 Migration from Goa to Portugal Post 1961

When India gained her independence in 1947, Goa was still a Portuguese territory. When the Indian Government insisted that the Portuguese authorities hand over *Estado Português da Índia* (the Portuguese State of India), the latter refused. In 1954, India took over the land-locked enclaves of Dadra and Nagar- Haveli.<sup>16</sup> On December 16, 1961, Indian troops crossed the border into Goa. 'Operation Vijay' involved sustained land, sea, and air strikes and resulted in the unconditional surrender of Portuguese forces on December 19, 1961.<sup>17</sup>

Following this take over, Goans were given the option of taking up Portuguese citizenship. Many Goan professionals in mid-life availed themselves of the opportunity to migrate to Portugal in the post- Liberation period. Those who opted to leave for Portugal were accommodated at Portuguese Government expense and then provided with a free trip to Lisbon. Those who had no family or means were temporarily lodged at government expense at Rua de Junqueira, in the old warehouses of the *Cordoaria* (rope factory). Those who were too old or had no motivation to acquire new professional training became victims of their own illusions or political miscalculations and eked out their living amidst great difficulties.<sup>18</sup> However, a majority of the Goans chose not to settle in Portugal but to migrate to the Portuguese colonies, especially Mozambique.<sup>19</sup> Many did not face any initial difficulty in getting assimilated into the new socio-economic milieu.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Salgaocar et al. (2008)

<sup>15</sup> Costa (1956)

<sup>16</sup> Lele (1987)

<sup>17</sup> www.bharat-rakshak.com (accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2012)

<sup>18</sup> Salgaocar et al. (2008)

<sup>19</sup> Malheiros (1996)

<sup>20</sup> Goa Migration Study (2008)

### 2.3 'Twice Migrant' Goans in Portugal

In the early sixteenth century, Goans had helped the Portuguese to penetrate inhospitable territories in Africa.<sup>21</sup> In the eighteenth century, Goan traders settled in Mozambique and other parts of East Africa, in order to take part in the trade in ivory and gold. In 1921, the East African statistics on business listed 426 Goans.<sup>22</sup> The Portuguese colonies, especially Mozambique, recruited Goans who were literate in Portuguese to work as clerks and administrators.<sup>23</sup> In Angola, Goans were mostly employed in public services or as doctors. In Kenya, the recorded history of Goans goes as far back as 1865 with the arrival and establishment of Goan business houses in Mombassa, but at the turn of the century, the influx increased; they arrived in Kenya in order to work as sailors, cooks, tailors, railway employees and clerks.<sup>24</sup> Estimates show that 7,000 Goans resided in Tanganyika before its independence in 1961.<sup>25</sup> The imminent independence of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda in the early sixties led to uncertainty for all Asians in Africa, particularly in East Africa.

The independence of the African colonies left Goans with few opportunities in Africa. Though they enjoyed a high standard of living and generally did not think of returning to India, the new political scenario forced them to seek asylum in other countries. Those from British East Africa migrated to different English-speaking countries whereas those from Mozambique and Angola left for Portugal and Brazil.<sup>26</sup> It is estimated that around 10,000 Goan families who had mostly been serving in administrative and professional positions and some who owned businesses, particularly restaurants moved to Portugal in the 1970s, especially in 1974-75 after the decolonization of Angola and Mozambique in 1974. Another 20,000 or so families consisting of Hindu Gujaratis and Muslims from Daman and Diu, mostly engaged in small scale trade and businesses, are estimated to have migrated to Portugal from these African colonies after their independence. Many Aga Khan Ismailis living in Mozambique migrated to Portugal and some to London. The overall number of persons of Indian origin in Portugal increased significantly in the year 1975-76.

### 2.4 Recent Migration from Goa to Portugal

Following Portugal's entry into the European Union, there has been another wave of migration of less skilled persons from Goa. This trend has been prompted by a variety of factors. One primary factor has been the fact that Portuguese nationality law allows those born in Goa, Daman and Diu before 1961 or their descendants up to the third generation to 'recover' their Portuguese nationality (even if they do not know Portuguese). Hence, many Goans have in recent times sought to take advantage of this privilege. This route is seen as a means to enter Europe and to eventually migrate to the English speaking countries in Europe or North America, thus providing less educated Goans an opportunity to diversify their destination markets beyond the Gulf region (to which a large part of the recent migration from Goa has taken place). This recent wave has also in part been motivated by the presence of a sizeable and diverse Indian community in Portugal which is well settled in that country, which helps reduce the costs of migration and makes it easier for newer migrants to integrate culturally and socially. (In fact, the fact that PIOs are well settled in Portugal is now drawing Indian immigrants to the country from states such as Punjab).

It is difficult to estimate the number of such migrants, however. According to the Portuguese consulate in Goa, over 90 percent of the requests for Portuguese citizenship are done directly at the

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<sup>21</sup> Albuquerque (2000)

<sup>22</sup> Mascarenhas-Keyes (1979)

<sup>23</sup> Malheiros (1996)

<sup>24</sup> Goa Migration Study (2008)

<sup>25</sup> Goa Migration Study (2008)

<sup>26</sup> Mascarenhas-Keyes (1979)

Central Civil Register in Lisbon and so the Consulate does not have the full data for such migrants who are seeking Portuguese nationality. However, the setting up of a Portuguese consulate in Goa in 1995 has been instrumental to this new trend as it has certainly facilitated travel between Goa and Portugal. As per the Consulate's estimates, around 90 percent of these migrants are from the Catholic community, which has traditionally accounted for the majority of Goan migrants. They are mostly from the Tiswadi, Bardez and Salcete talukas in Goa (which are usually denominated as the "old conquests" as these were the first territories where the Portuguese settled). Most of the new wave migrants have limited educational skills and little or no knowledge of Portuguese though they have some rudimentary knowledge of English. They are mostly middle aged blue collar workers in their 30s and 40s. They are employed on ships, restaurants, shops, plantations, and construction sites. A number of them are unemployed.

According to one respondent, many Goans in recent years have been claiming Portuguese citizenship but do not eventually stay in Portugal. Some find it difficult to get a job or may work for 6 months or a few years in Portugal. Many go to Lisbon only to get their ID cards and then move onwards to the other countries in Europe, especially to the UK and eventually to the US and Canada where there is a bigger Goan community.<sup>27</sup> There are an estimated 17,000 Goans with Portuguese citizenship living in the UK.<sup>28</sup>

*Only a minority of these migrants remain in Portugal.*

The objective of this group of migrants is to make money to send back to their homes and for their children's education. According to an unconfirmed source, there is currently a waiting list of 12 to 13 thousand for passports at the Portuguese consulate in Goa and a few thousand passports are issued to such applicants each year. There are also some recent instances of non-Goans who have sought to apply for Portuguese nationality, using false papers.

In recent years, there has also been growing interest among skilled Indian workers to enter Portugal. This is in part facilitated by the concession on residence permits granted by Portugal for researchers and highly qualified persons and the country's points based visa system to attract workers in sectors where foreign labour is needed. There is also growing demand for business visas reflecting interest in setting up joint ventures. Some major Indian companies such as TCS and Wipro have set up offices in Lisbon with an eye towards the Latin American market. The business networks that have emerged due to the presence of Gujaratis have also created job opportunities for people from India and have contributed to the demand for employment visas. The large PIO population has also resulted in demand for family related visas.

## **2.5 Outcome of the various waves of migration**

As a result of these different waves of migration from India to Portugal, it is estimated that there are around 70 to 80 thousand PIOs residing in Portugal, as per the 2001 High Level Committee Report on the Indian diaspora. Portugal has the second highest PIO population in Europe, after the UK and possibly the largest PIO population in terms of the share of PIOs in the total population. These PIOs fall into two main groups, the Goans and the Gujaratis with the remainder consisting of Punjabis, Maharashtrians, and persons from Daman and Diu. Of the PIO population, about 80 to 90 percent, including both Goans and Gujaratis came to Portugal via Africa while a much smaller number came directly from Goa. Around 90

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<sup>27</sup> There is some pressure within the EU countries to decline visas to such immigrants due to the threat they pose to the domestic labour market.

<sup>28</sup> Estimates provided by the Portuguese consulate in Goa. It was also noted that despite the European economic crisis there is still continued migration of such workers from Goa to Portugal though some recent migrants may have returned to Goa due to the lack of jobs.

percent of these Indian immigrants speak Portuguese and pursue their education in Portugal. In contrast, as noted earlier, most of the recent migrants from Goa do not know Portuguese.

It is hard to know the number of Goans within the total PIO population. Many have been living in Portugal for generations and often those in the second and third generations are mixed as there is inter- community marriage with the Portuguese. It is also hard to distinguish the Goan Catholics from the Portuguese by their names. According to the estimate provided by an academic who was interviewed as part of this study, there are anywhere between 30,000 and 50,000 Goans residing in Portugal though another estimate puts this range at 11,000 to 50,000.<sup>29</sup> Although these numbers are large, it is worth noting that the Goans still constitute only a small percentage of the big immigrant community that is found in Portugal, which consists mainly of immigrants from the former Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, etc. who came to Portugal in search of better qualified education, more job possibilities and a 'better' life.

Notwithstanding the difficulties in arriving at reliable estimates of the size of the Goan community in Portugal, what is evident is the heterogeneity within this population. There are differences in terms of profile, history and length of engagement with Portugal and as a consequence with India, and the causal factors underlying the migration to Portugal. This heterogeneity and the unique migration histories of the Goans in Portugal in turn raises important questions about the identity of this community, in Portugal and vis a vis Goa and India. The question of identity and relations with the homeland resonates through much of the existing literature on the Goan community and in discussions with persons from this community. The next section highlights the key findings in this regard based on the existing literature.

### **3. Identity and Relations with India**

The concept of a 'Goan identity' has been shaped by the colonial experience in Goa and permeates much of the scholarly writing and academic debates on the colonization of Goa. It is important to understand how this identity was shaped as it continues to influence how the Goans living in Portugal perceive themselves as well as the manner in which they relate to their country of residence, Portugal, and their home region of Goa and their identification with India. This influence is present both for those Goans who migrated directly to Portugal from Goa and those Goans who migrated to Portugal via Africa.

#### **3.1 Colonial rule and the Goan identity in India**

General histories of India or South Asia are mostly written by Indian or British scholars. These writings tend to omit (non-British) Portuguese bearings in their accounts.<sup>30</sup> Their focus is limited to British possessions as the only colonizing power in the history of Indian subcontinent. As regards the Portuguese Empire, most authors tend to mention only the arrival of Vasco da Gama and thereafter portray Portuguese presence only as a trading power.<sup>31</sup> However a careful analysis of the annals of history gives a completely different perspective on the 450 years of Portuguese colonial rule, during which different cultural and religious traditions met, reshaped the socio-cultural landscape of Goa and gave it a distinctive history and culture from that of other Indian regions. It is argued that because of this distinct past, Goa acquired a distinct Indo-Portuguese personality.<sup>32</sup> This distinctive trait has later

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<sup>29</sup> Lobo (2006); Malheiros (1996)

<sup>30</sup> Nanda (1996); Bose and Jalal (2007); Spear (1975); Panikkar (1963)

<sup>31</sup> Kubiňáková (2010)

<sup>32</sup> Souza (1999)

been termed as the 'Goan Identity' which refers to self-perception with respect to social status, position and inclusion or exclusion in the cultural, national, or religious contexts.<sup>33</sup>

Due to the implementation of the Portuguese educational system, press and Church, Portuguese authorities were long blamed for the alienation of the Goan population from India<sup>34</sup>. Scholars have argued that "the peculiarly tyrannical and intolerant ways of the Portuguese have destroyed and disfigured the national character of the Goan people," and created a wholly imitative culture of Goan Catholic elites.<sup>35</sup>

The Portuguese empire of India is not only significant for being the first colonial expansion of Portugal in the Eastern part of the world but also for being a by-product of the protection and expansion of trade and of Christian gospel among the 'heathen'.<sup>36</sup>

The establishment of Catholic seminaries and schools in 16<sup>th</sup> century marked the forceful imposition of a Portuguese way of life in Goa. These were primarily attended by the local elites from the Brahmin community and Chardó castes (who later converted to Catholicism).<sup>37</sup> The usage of Konkani, the Goan local language, was prohibited.<sup>38</sup> These newly formed Goan Catholic elites changed their original family names into Portuguese ones. They also assimilated many Portuguese cultural elements into their daily lives, such as music, poetry, cooking and even dress codes (the traditional sari was replaced by gowns).<sup>39</sup>

Unlike Brazil and Africa where the Portuguese were both colonizers and emigrants, in Asia they merged into local societies in order to create an unofficial empire, where they allegedly "shed more sperm than blood". In order to put emphasis on procreation Catholic policies were adopted.<sup>40</sup> The term 'Portugalidade' designates the Portuguese colonial implementation of a Portuguese way of living in Goa. The process of Portugalidade in Goa resulted in a complex social matrix and an eventual creation of three social categories: the Goeses (individuals of Goan origin, regardless of religion) the 'descendantes' (individuals of Portuguese descent who were born in Goa), and the Portugueses (individuals who were born in Portugal and tended to return to Portugal after some period of time in Goa).<sup>41</sup> This complex social fabric had a distinctive western flare of its own and resulted in a debate over the Indian-ness or Western-ness of the 'Goan Identity'.

Present-day historians and sociologists are broadly divided between two schools of thought, namely Luso-centric and Indo-centric and views regarding the influence of the Portuguese regime on the Goan identity also varies accordingly. Historians like P.P. Shirodkar, T.R. de Souza and L.A. Correia etc. are the primary proponents of the Indo-centric approach. According to them, Portuguese rule had a primarily negative impact on the community due to the disruptive effect of the Catholic Church's repressive policies on the social and religious fabric of the local Goan society.

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<sup>33</sup> Kubiňáková (2010)

<sup>34</sup> Desai (2000)

<sup>35</sup> Cunha (1961)

<sup>36</sup> Newitt (2005); Klíma (2007); Arnold (1983); Pearson (1987). The account of Tomé Pires' describing the early period of the capture of Goa depicted a picture of a grand kingdom with civilized inhabitants. He was convinced that the kingdom of Goa had rich and honored citizens. However, while describing Goans, he used the term 'heathen' particularly to indicate Hindus who were considered a pagan sect. See, Pires (1515)

<sup>37</sup> Sardo (2004)

<sup>38</sup> Sardo (2004), 93-94

<sup>39</sup> Sardo (2004)

<sup>40</sup> Souza (2000)

<sup>41</sup> Rosales (2010)

However, these scholars argue that the Indian character of the Goan identity was nevertheless stronger and thus survived the test of time.<sup>42</sup>

Hence, in their view, Portuguese rule did not leave any lasting impact on Goa and the Goans. According to journalist Luis de Assis Correia, only “few Goans, outside of small, economically and politically dominant *Lusophone* elite [ever] had any identification with Portugal”.<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, Luso-centric authors like K. Bhemró, J.S.J. Correia- Afonso and M.A. Couto argue that Portuguese rule and Portuguese culture left a significant imprint on Goa and its people.

### 3.2 Colonial Rule and the Goan Identity in Africa

The Goan Catholic elite migrated to Mozambique during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Emigration to Africa was highly encouraged by the Portuguese authorities in Goa.<sup>44</sup> It played an important part in Portugal’s effective occupation of its African territories by providing much needed human resources to expand Portugal’s administrative structures in these colonies.<sup>45</sup>

The social position occupied by the Goans within the colonial society in Mozambique reflected two main features: (i) their professional and educational skills which put them in an advantageous position given the scarcity of qualified people in this territory and; (ii) their familiarity with Portuguese culture and language which was an outcome of the Portuguese colonial policy in Goa. The migrated Goans were mostly Catholic; they spoke the official colonial language; and also had adopted Portuguese family names. These features enabled the Goans who migrated to Mozambique to develop a very different relational model with the Portuguese colonial elite than that shared between the British and Indians in East Africa. In Mozambique, many Portuguese and Indians had personal relationships.<sup>46</sup> These factors prompted most Goans to choose to relocate to Portugal rather than India when Mozambique gained its independence.

### 3.3 Goan Identity in the Post Independence Era

The question of ‘Goan Identity’ took centre stage when India got independence in 1947 from British colonialism and the pockets controlled by the French or Portuguese remained under the corresponding foreign powers. In 1955, Jawaharlal Nehru commented that India would not tolerate the presence of the Portuguese in Goa. The Indian Government also instituted a blockade of Goa, Daman and Diu. In December 1961 India forcefully entered the territory of Goa and liberated the province from foreign rule. At this time, the identity and thereby the justifiable inclusion of Goa in India became a politically debated topic in the arena of world politics. The relationship between the Goans and the Portuguese and the identity of the Goans as Indian or Portuguese was an important part of the debate that took place between Nehru, the then Indian prime minister and his Portuguese counterpart, Salazar. According to Nehru, Goans were Indians as their roots belonged there and the Portuguese interlude in the history of Goa was a period of colonial domination. On the contrary, Salazar argued that the Portuguese colonial presence had a great social as well as cultural impact on Goans. He also argued that the century long co-existence had transformed the Goans into Portuguese.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Shirodkar (1997); Souza (1999); Correia (2006)

<sup>43</sup> Correia (2006)

<sup>44</sup> Gracias (2000)

<sup>45</sup> Thomaz (1998); Malheiros (2000); Zamparoni (2000); Sardo (2004)

<sup>46</sup> Westin et al. (2010)

<sup>47</sup> Kubiňáková (2010)

The notion of a 'Goan Identity' again came to the fore when the territory voted against its merger with the state of Maharashtra in 'The Goa Opinion Poll' on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 1967. The argument given was that Konkani's existence as a separate language would lose its identity if Goa were merged with Maharashtra as the Marathi language would then become predominant. Many Goans felt that Goan culture, with its distinctive combination of East and West would eventually be lost. It is interesting to note that during its struggle for Independence, Goans fought on the basis of the 'Indian-ness' of their identity whereas after independence many Goans insisted about the 'Western-ness' of their cultural identity and thus distinctiveness as a region within India.

#### **4. The 'Goan Identity' in Portugal: Primary Evidence on Causal Factors and Perspectives**

It is evident from the existing literature that the question of the "Goan identity" has remained important all through the colonial period and even post-independence. There are two levels at which this question arises. First is the issue of "Indian-ness" versus "Western-ness", i.e., whether the Goans identify themselves with India or with their colonial ruler Portugal. Second is the issue of "India" versus "Goa", i.e., whether this community identifies itself with India or with Goa given the latter's distinctive history and culture as it was not a part of India for a long period and even at the time of India's independence, as well as the manner in which it was integrated into India in 1961, all of which set it apart from other regions of India.

Discussions with several Goan academics, professionals and community leaders who have settled in Portugal for one or more generations revealed the significance of this question of identity for both direct and 'twice migrated' Goans. These discussions which were carried out over phone and email over the January to April 2012 period indicated that the aforementioned aspects of identity influence how members of this community view themselves, the role they play in Portuguese society, whether and to what extent they maintain their relations with India and with Goa, how they contribute back to their source regions, the manner in which they network, socialize and engage with each other as a community in Portugal, and the role they can potentially play in shaping Indo-Portuguese relations. The following discussion highlights the nature of this question of identity and some factors underlying it.

##### **4.1 Role of history and heterogeneity in shaping identity**

At the heart of this question of identity is the background and profile of the Goans in Portugal. All respondents were quick to point out that this is not a homogenous group. There are differences among the Goans residing in Portugal in terms of religion, caste, source villages and regions, educational and occupational profiles. The first group of direct migrants is very different from the subsequent groups of Goan migrants to Portugal. The former has a longer history and is well integrated with local society. The latter is more recent, identifies less with the local society and sees itself as a distinct diaspora community.

The first generation of Goans which went to Portugal pre-1961 was upper class and very educated. This group primarily went to study in Portugal and numbered in the hundreds. Today, this section of the Goan community in Portugal is influential and constitutes the elite Goans. It is well settled and well integrated into Portuguese society, economy and political life. Most have assumed visible positions in Portugal, including high positions in government and society. Many among them are well respected lawyers, doctors, professors, civil servants, diplomats, researchers, scientists, writers and musicians. The community can boast of many well known influential personalities, such as the current mayor of Lisbon and the number 2 of the Socialist Party (who may also become the Prime Minister of Portugal one day), the Deputy Speaker of the House and several Ministers. For the last



thirty years, key positions such as Foreign minister and Health minister have been held by members of the Goan elite community. There is even an ophthalmological hospital named after a Goan.

Religion has played an important role in the integration of this community. Members of the elite Goan population in Portugal are mostly Catholic and unlike the non-Catholic Indian diaspora community in Portugal, they attend local churches and do not need to set up their own places of worship (which is often a primary means of establishing a distinctive identity among diaspora groups). Religion has also facilitated inter-community marriage between the elite Goans and the local population.

This deep integration of the elite Catholic Goans with the local society and economy has in turn influenced how the community perceives itself and to what extent their younger generations relate to their origins. As highlighted by many respondents in the course of discussions, while the older generation members of the elite Goans in Portugal still keep their connections with Goa by visiting family members who remain behind or by visiting their ancestral homes in Goa, the younger generations mostly identify themselves as Portuguese, though some are now visiting Goa to rediscover their roots. Many in the younger generation have married Portuguese as there is considerable intermarriage between the elite Goans and the local population. As one Portuguese diplomat noted, often members of this community are just seen as Portuguese.<sup>48</sup>

In contrast, the Goans who came from Africa in the 1970s, who are larger in number than the elite section, are from the middle class in Goa. They include first, second and third generation Goans. They are not as highly educated and well established. They mostly work in Public administration. In contrast to the elite Goans who are spread and completely integrated, this group is concentrated in certain areas and suburbs of Lisbon and has had problems with integrating and adapting to the local culture and society. According to some respondents, as many of them have never been to Goa or to India, they mostly identify themselves with Africa. For this middle class section of Goans living in Portugal, social links within the community and trying to maintain a distinct social identity even among the ‘twice migrants’ assumes importance. Among these twice migrated Goans, the Hindus tend to identify more with India than with Portugal and tend to be endogamous. However, there are divisions among the Hindus. The Goan Hindus do not mix much with the Gujarati Hindu community, which too came to Portugal via Africa, though there is no conflict between these or among any of the Indian diaspora communities in Portugal.<sup>49</sup>

The entry of blue collar workers from Goa in recent years, has added another layer to this heterogeneity. This group of Goans is not integrated with Portuguese society given its lack of knowledge of the local language and its often transitory presence in Portugal. Neither is this section integrated with the other sections of the Goan community given the very different motivation underlying its decision to migrate to Portugal.

The discussions also revealed that in addition to the role played by migration history in shaping identity, the manner in which Portuguese rule ended in Goa has also been important. As one respondent noted, “The way in which Goa was taken through military annexation was not liked by many Goans. Many identified themselves as Portuguese.” The annexation of Goa has according to this view, alienated the Goans who migrated to Portugal directly, from India. On the Portuguese side, for a long time there was resentment about the way in which India had intervened and annexed Goa, which in turn hurt relations between Portugal and India. Thus, as expressed by this academic,

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<sup>48</sup> In contrast, the Gujaratis who came to Portugal through the colonial channel from Mozambique and from Diu, maintain strong links with India. They have their own Hindu temples. They marry within the community and even bring priests from London.

<sup>49</sup> The Gujaratis who came to Portugal mainly from Mozambique run businesses here. They are wealthy entrepreneurs and have been attracting new immigrants into the country.

“History has coloured relations and the colonial attitude has bred a certain resentment of India among the Portuguese.”

#### 4.2 Different perspectives on identity

It is evident that the heterogeneity in economic, social, and historical background and the different motivations underlying the migration of Goans has been a major factor underlying the question of “What is the Goan identity in Portugal?”, to quote one scholar. However, discussions indicated that there is a divided opinion on this issue, also reflecting the differences in perspective within the Goan community in Portugal.

One section of respondents stressed the fact that the Goans in Portugal are not to be viewed as a diaspora community in the conventional sense, as they have been a part of Portugal for many years, are a part of the social and political elite there and are very well integrated with Portuguese society. This is different from the position of other diaspora groups from India who have migrated and settled abroad and also different from the position of Goans who have settled in countries such as the US or Canada. Those endorsing this point of view stressed the fact that many Goans living in Portugal today were part of the Portuguese state of Goa before the latter was annexed and have had Portuguese nationality for a long time. They have never resided in India. Hence, their connection is with Goa, not with India. Even though the older generation comes to Goa to see their family or ancestral home and the youth may come to get married in Goa or to touch base with their roots, they cannot be called Indians. As a result, it is also difficult to estimate the size of this PIO community as it does not identify itself as Indian but as Goan. In contrast, according to this view, the Gujaratis can be termed a diaspora community.

Interestingly, when questioned as to what would be an appropriate term to define the Goans in Portugal, the response was that none of the usual terms such as diaspora, expatriates or migrants was appropriate as these have certain ethnic and social connotations which cannot be attributed to the Goans. The Goan elite really cannot be distinguished from the local population in terms of name, religion or language. The term community is more appropriate as this is how the Goans in Portugal mostly organize themselves for social and cultural activities under the umbrella of various organizations.

In contrast, another section of respondents provided a very different view regarding the question of the ‘Goan identity’ and its ‘Indian-ness’. In this view, the identification of the Goans in Portugal as a diaspora group is not problematic. Although the Goans in Portugal are very different from the Goans in other countries due to the long colonial engagement between Portugal and Goa, they belong to India and also to Goa. Their history may be different from that of other communities but their roots are still in India. According to this view, although the second and third generations of Goans do not share this affinity with Goa or with India when they are young, as they become older, they become aware of their traditions and are keen to trace their roots. They realize that they are not Portuguese and that they have a distinct identity within Portugal.

The discussions, however, revealed that for the twice migrated, the issue of identity is even more complex as there is an added dimension to the land they identify with. To quote one respondent, who is himself a twice migrated Goan from Mozambique, “These are Goans but also Portuguese. They can never forget that they are Goans, *but they are not Indians*. They are proud of Goa, but not necessarily of India. The twice migrated from Mozambique who went to Portugal now say they are Goans, but when they were in Mozambique, they said they were Mozambiquans, not any more. It is actually very difficult to say Goan as they have little idea of what Goa is. It is only now that they are going to Goa, where they have never been before, as they need something to identify with. Africa is not their land. Even if they were born there, they cannot think of Africa as a motherland as they were sent out from there.” Hence, the twice migrated may not actually have more of a connection with Mozambique and their connection with Goa may be limited to aspects such as colour, food,

some traditions but not any deeper sense of Goan identity. But as pointed out earlier, among the Mozambiquan Goans, the Hindus tend to identify more closely with Goa and with India than the Catholics, reflecting differences in the degree of their integration with local society.

## 5. Manifestations of identity

The preceding discussion highlights the heterogeneity within the Goan community not only in terms of background and history but also in terms of their identification with Portugal, Goa and India and their notion of themselves as a diaspora group. This conflict over the issue of identity has in turn manifested itself in many ways, as the following discussion indicates.

### 5.1 Position on minority representation

The divided views on identity and integration with the local society are evident from the position taken by Goans on the issue of minority representation in civic bodies in Portugal, as explained by one respondent. Portugal, like France, does not give any special privileges or representation to minorities (unlike the Anglosaxon model of minority privileges followed in countries like the US and Canada).<sup>50</sup> However, in recent times, the Portuguese government has allowed ethnic minority groups, including the Goans to have representation in the Municipal Committee. This led to a big debate among the Goans in Portugal about how they should position themselves vis a vis Goa and vis a vis Portugal. A former President of a leading Goan association in Portugal, Casa de Goa (discussed at length later in this paper) refused to see Goans as a different ethnic minority community. The separate representation privilege was refused by the elite section of the Goans in Portugal on the grounds that they are well integrated into the society and are Portuguese unlike the Gujaratis who could be termed an ethnic minority. However, other sections of the community, such as the twice migrated Goans wanted to be recognized as a separate group with special minority rights and privileges. Hence, class differences and differences in the degree and nature of participation and integration with the local society among the Goans have clearly manifested themselves in terms of divided views on identity and representation.

### 5.2 Contribution and linkages

The dilemma over identity has also manifested itself in terms of weak ties with the homeland. The discussions revealed that there is no significant economic or philanthropic engagement between the Goans in Portugal and their home state of Goa or with India. The unanimous response from all respondents was that engagement by the Goans is limited to remittances to their family back in Goa, mostly for rebuilding and renovating old ancestral homes. It was also pointed out that the extent of remittances is not significant especially when compared to those sent by the Gujaratis. There are no cases of large scale entrepreneurial activity by the Portuguese Goans back in Goa or India. A few cases of very small scale individual proprietary businesses were cited, such as small businesses that have been set up to export salted and dried cod fish from Goa to Portugal, or the business of importing artifacts such as painted tiles from Portugal for sale in Goa, or conversion of ancestral homes into boutique hotels for renting out to tourists in Goa. Examples of second generation Goans from Portugal who are engaged in selling Portuguese handicrafts and food products in Goa or engaged in import-export of wine between Goa and Portugal were also mentioned. But clearly there were no instances of any significant economic contribution or impact. Most of these ventures are

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<sup>50</sup> As explained by a Portuguese official, "Portugal has a multi-ethnic society, where xenophobia has no place. Our immigration laws are one of the most generous in Europe. Any Portuguese citizen, regardless of ethnic background or religious upbringing should have - and has - a voice in society." This fact is evident from the prominent positions held by Goans in Portugal, including the current mayor of Lisbon, and a prominent personality in his political party, António Costa who is of Goan descent

limited to small shops and trading activities. On the other hand, there is evidence on engagement through cultural activities such as dance, music and exhibitions, mostly organized through community based associations in Portugal (as discussed at length later).

The discussions also contrasted the Goan and the Gujarati communities in Portugal. They highlighted the much stronger economic and social ties between the Gujarati community in Portugal and India. Several respondents noted that the Gujaratis travel up and down between Portugal and India, have commercial links and also send remittances on a regular basis. They sponsor projects back in Gujarat, are much more enterprising, and forge stronger links within their own community through marital and commercial ties.

Several interesting insights emerge from these discussions. Firstly, the findings confirm the earlier point that communities which see themselves as an integral part of the society to which they have migrated and settled may be less likely to engage with and contribute back to their places of origin because establishing themselves as a separate entity is less important for them. As pointed out by a senior member of the community, one cannot expect any significant impact of this community on Goa or on India as many in this group do not feel connected to India and have not yet accepted the integration of Goa with India. Even though Portuguese ideology changed in 1974 with the acceptance of India's sovereign right over Goa, in the minds of many older Goans residing in Portugal and who had grown up in the pre-1974 regime, Goa is still not an integral part of India. Hence, while the younger generations mostly identify themselves as Portuguese, many in the older generation have no connection with India, which would explain the general lack of economic engagement by this community with India.

Secondly, the findings also suggest that the extent and nature of engagement and contribution to the homeland by a diaspora group is not just a function of identity (as the Gujaratis are also largely twice migrated) but is also a function of the basic culture, ethos, background and orientation of a community. Diaspora communities such as the Gujaratis are more entrepreneurial and have traditionally been engaged in businesses even when in Africa while the Goans have been largely engaged in professional and administrative occupations and so they are naturally less inclined towards setting up business ventures in India.

Thirdly, the limited engagement is also a reflection of the general lack of business and trade interests between Portugal and India. As one respondent commented, "Portugal does not produce goods which are of interest to India and vice versa." There is no Indo-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce despite several years of discussions to this effect. Thus diaspora linkages are also a function of the economic opportunities perceived by the host and source countries. In addition, issues of governance and transparency, including the problems of corruption, the murkiness of Goa's politics and its links with mining rights and wealth were also highlighted by some respondents as having deterred many overseas Goans from entering Goa's economy and its politics.

### **5.3 Indian diaspora organizations in Portugal**

Perhaps the most important manifestation of the question of identity is the way in which leading Goan associations in Portugal have organized themselves, the activities they conduct and the extent to which they have been able to link Goans with Goa and with India. There are several organizations formed by the Indian communities in Portugal, each with its own distinct identity and objective.

The oldest and largest diaspora organization in Portugal is the Casa de Goa or the Goan House. Established in 1987 in Lisbon, Casa de Goa is a cultural association which brings together the Goan community in Portugal. The momentum for setting up this organization came after the influx of Goans from Mozambique in the 1970s which helped provide a sufficient membership base that had

been lacking till then.<sup>51</sup> As of 1998, by a decree of the Prime Minister of Portugal, it was recognized as a public utility institution. The main objective of the association is (i) to rejoice the Goan Diaspora and the involvement of the Goans in the betterment of the society and (ii) to strengthen the efforts of the second and third age group Goans and uphold the traditions of Goan culture.<sup>52</sup> The association has around 800 members.

The main activities of this association are cultural and social in nature, such as tea time get-togethers where the community members enjoy food, music and old memories of Goa and also participate in games and competitions. All religious festivals- Christmas, Ganesh Chaturthi and Id are celebrated by the association. There are yoga classes every week and occasional exhibitions of paintings, book launches and conferences. The members eat, drink and sing songs. The association also organizes parties, musical performances and a Goa Lyceum. Courses are offered on Goan gastronomy and various sports popular in India, like carom and cricket. Through such activities, the Goans try to keep their identity alive and to keep their ties with Goa. The association also helps newcomers who come from India to Portugal by providing them with information on where to get their papers and on rules and regulations, by helping them to get their documents legalized and translated and by providing legal support services. But it does not help newcomers find employment in Portugal.

The main mode through which Casa de Goa has projected the Goan identity in Portugal is through music and dance, in particular through its music-song-and dance group named Ekvat which was set up in 1989. This group performs traditional Goan music and dances with the objective of making these known to a wider audience. The group has performed publicly throughout Portugal both at its own initiative and at the behest of municipal councils and other entities. Ekvat has also released a Compact disc which contains some original items, mainly "mandos", with lyrics and music composed by its members.<sup>53</sup> The group holds regular performances to promote Goan culture and has recently also performed in India, with financial support from the Goan government.

Although Casa de Goa has played an important part in projecting and maintaining Goan culture, it is facing many problems some of which are reflective of the issues of identity discussed earlier. The membership mostly consists of older persons in their 60s and above who have a sentimental and nostalgic connection with Goa and want to relive those memories. The organization has been facing difficulties in attracting younger members of the Goan community to its events. As a senior member and leading person in Casa de Goa noted, this lack of interest among the younger generation is largely to do with the fact that on the whole the Goans are well integrated with the local society and thus do not feel the need to come to these social events. However, according to this respondent, they do need to know about their past, to give back to Portuguese society, and to know about their distinct identity as a diaspora community. Many younger Goans are also leaving Portugal for the UK and other countries in Europe. Hence, it has been hard to expand membership. The EKVAT group is facing similar issues. It is trying to get the younger generation involved in singing and dancing and promoting Goan culture as currently the group mostly consists of persons in their 60s who play the guitar and violin. Hence, clearly there have been difficulties in keeping the engagement with Goa alive among the younger generations. In fact, as noted by some respondents, although the organization has very nice premises and excellent infrastructure (in a renovated Palace

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<sup>51</sup> As highlighted by a senior member of the Goan community in Portugal, the push for this organization came from the Mozambiquan Goans whose numbers were much larger than the original Goan residents in Portugal and who wanted to set up an association in Lisbon along the lines of their earlier community association in Mozambique. The original reason for Casa de Goa was primarily to express solidarity as Goans, to exchange views on Goa, to fight together for their livelihood in Portugal and to exercise their rights. It was not so much about expressing and promoting their Goan identity. After 8-10 years of its existence, however, the larger goal of promoting the Goan identity and culture took shape.

<sup>52</sup> [www.goa-world.com](http://www.goa-world.com) (accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2012)

<sup>53</sup> [www.goa-world.com](http://www.goa-world.com) (accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2012)

leased from the municipality), it is not very vibrant and does little else other than socializing. “The association’s spirit is going down as the younger generation is not picking up and the older generation is tired. There is a need to revamp it.”

Several respondents who were interviewed also pointed out that although Casa de Goa has no particular religious, political or class affiliation, its members mostly consist of the Goan elite and Portuguese intellectuals linked to Goa though membership is open to all sections of the community. A large segment of the blue collar workers do not figure in the events of Casa de Goa which is largely upper class, Brahmin Hindu and Catholic in its membership and has an elitist bias.

In terms of contributing to India-Portugal relations or making an impact in Goa, it was felt that the organization could potentially play an influential role but has not done so thus far. Due to the small size of its membership and the costs of running the organization and paying for the infrastructure, it has not been able to make any financial contributions to Goa at the organizational level.<sup>54</sup> There has been some ad hoc fund raising but economic contributions or philanthropy has been confined to individual initiatives and has been small scale in nature. Such funding initiatives are also not permitted in the statutes of the organization. There is thus no financial strength to permit a sustained economic engagement with Goa through the association. Several respondents stressed the need to reawaken the spirit of the association, to expand its membership, generate more funds, make it more community-oriented and get the younger generation to join its management, so that it can keep the ties with Goa alive in a more meaningful and long lasting way. An important step in this regard would be to open a branch of the association in Goa (which was attempted earlier but did not materialize due to regulatory issues with remittances) so that the organization can move beyond periodic shows and musical tours in India and have official representation in Goa and a means to channel funds at the organizational level.

While Casa de Goa is the biggest association, there are several other Indian diaspora associations in Portugal. One such group is Surya, which actually split from Casa de Goa, though many retain membership of both these associations. Surya has formed its own song and dance group and has staged some public performances. This organization is disappearing, however as its membership dwindles. There is also the Association for Recreation and Culture Indo-Portuguese (ARCIP) with a few hundred members, which is for the Goans from Mozambique and the recently established Cultural Association of Friends of Goa, Daman and Diu in Coimbra. There is a regular magazine of the Goan diaspora called ‘Echos de Orient’. The Friendship Association Portugal-India has a larger ambit than the Goan community, though at present its membership is very small. It aims to strengthen Indo-Portuguese relations and to disseminate information about contemporary India, including business and other opportunities in India, to those living in Portugal and elsewhere through a monthly newsletter.

There are also non-Goan Indian organizations in Portugal such as the AFTDN for the people of Daman, the Coimbra association for the Konkanees which is based in North Portugal, the Comunidad Hindu de Portugal consisting mostly of Gujaratis.<sup>55</sup> All of these associations, Goan and non-Goan have their distinct identities and objectives but they also intermingle and perform activities together, such as celebrating festivals. Surya has been collaborating with the association

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<sup>54</sup> It was pointed out by a senior member that membership of Casa de Goa does not pay much. Most of the funds are from the profits made by its restaurant and charges collected for the use of its facilities for lectures and books. The organization is able to run on its meager collections mainly because the building has been offered by the municipality of Lisbon and no rent has to be paid but there are maintenance and employee costs.

<sup>55</sup> The COMUNIDADE HINDU DE PORTUGAL or the *Hindu Community of Portugal* association was established by the Hindus who mostly migrated to Portugal from Mozambique. It aims to preserve and uphold the cultural and religious identity of this community in Portugal, set up a temple in Lisbon, and organizes religious lectures and cultural activities to spread awareness about Hindu culture amongst the Hindu diaspora in Portugal.  
<http://www.nrrealtynews.com/portugal.php> (accessed on April 4, 2012)

of Daman and Diu and the Association for Recreation and Culture Indo-Portuguese (ARCIP) in its cultural activities.

The Goan and also other associations organize conferences and meetings and collect funds in case of natural disasters or emergencies back in their source regions in India.<sup>56</sup> There are a few instances of individual philanthropy within the membership of these organizations, such as the funds collected regularly by one doctor in Surya to send to the Foundation for Children in Goa. However, the discussions indicated that there are hardly any philanthropic or business related initiatives supported by the Goan associations and most contributions are at the individual and household level.

The issue of identity is evident from the very existence of these separate Goan associations, one mainly catering to the elite Goans (Casa de Goa) and among whom there is some ambivalence about being seen as a different community and another association which caters to those who came from Mozambique (ARCIP) and want to maintain their distinct identity as Goans. Thus identity has played an important role in shaping the formation of different Goan associations in Portugal. It has also manifested itself in the kinds of activities undertaken by some of these organizations. Surya has for instance invited ministers from Goa on issues such as tourism and environment and have tried to engage with local affairs in Goa in these areas.

A related point that emerged concerned the differences in the appeal and ability of the various Goan organizations to bring people from the community together. Several respondents noted that the Association for Goans from Mozambique (ARCIP), with very little infrastructure and facilities is able to get a lot of people together to its events as opposed to the Casa de Goa. Their events are much more vibrant. The reason given by one scholar for this difference was that the Mozambiquan Goans identify much more closely with themselves as Goans, including the younger generations as they tend to marry within their community whereas the younger generation of the elite Goan community often marry Portuguese and often do not see themselves as Goans. Hence, some of the organizations are able to sustain their appeal beyond the older generations of its community. Again, the issue of identity has played an important role in shaping their effectiveness in this regard.

Overall, the discussions indicated that though the Goans do organize themselves as a community under the umbrella of various associations, this is mainly for cultural activities. The Goan Catholics in particular have more of a strong professional as opposed to social network in Portugal. In contrast, the Gujaratis are much better organized socially due to their large and growing social network in the presence of intra community marriages and the entry of new Gujaratis. They also have a much more visible presence through their temples and their commercial linkages with the homeland. However, an important point that was stressed about these different associations was that most of them are quite inclusive of all sections of the Indian community. But there is self-selection, especially among the more stratified Hindu community which may cause the membership to be less broad-based than is intended.

## 6. Recent trends in engagement

In recent years, relations between the Goan community in Portugal and Goa have been changing. There is growing interest among the Goans to find their roots. There is also greater interest on the part of state authorities to strengthen relations with the Goan diaspora and on the part of Portuguese authorities to strengthen relations with India not only through the various Indian diaspora communities present in Portugal but also more generally through improved economic ties with India.

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<sup>56</sup> For example, when a bridge collapsed in Daman and Diu, the AFTDN collected and sent funds for its rebuilding.

## 6.1 Manifestations of growing engagement

Increased interest in Goa and in India among the Goans living in Portugal is evident in many different ways. To quote one respondent, “Earlier there were only emotional links with close family and friends. Many would spend 6 months in Goa during the winter period and the rest in Portugal. Grandchildren would spend time in Goa. They used to go home often and have their wedding and attend the chapel feast. But things are changing now. There are Goans going to work there. Some people are going for business and trade and not just holidays.” Things relating to India, such as films, music, dance, clothes, Indian cultural programs are all becoming popular among the Goans in Portugal and also among the Portuguese.<sup>57</sup> Some Goans are re-engaging with India for the first time. For example, the case of one Goan was cited who at the age of 75 visited Goa for the first time. The Indian ambassador in Portugal has discussed the possibility of granting Overseas Citizens of India status to the children of Goans residing in Portugal. This possibility has elicited much interest among the Goan community and has been endorsed by the Casa de Goa as more and more young Goans are beginning to consider going to work in India and rediscovering their origins. As one respondent put it, “Earlier the Indian community was ashamed of India, but now it is proud.”

More and more events are also being organized by the Goan community to preserve, celebrate and promote their culture in Portugal. The first Goan convention was held in 2007 in Lisbon to showcase Goan culture and also to develop closer ties with India. There is also the Goa Trends festival which has been organized in Portugal recently. EKVAT, as noted earlier, has been making concert tours of India and promoting Goan dance, music and culture. At the World Tourism Fair, the Goans in Portugal engaged with the Indian embassy and played the role of cultural representatives for Goa. There is also engagement in football and sports with some Portuguese players joining the Goan team and exchange of football players between the two sides.

A point worth noting is that this increased interest in India is not restricted to the Goan community in Portugal. It is more widespread and also evident in the wider Indian diaspora community in Portugal, such as the Punjabis and the Gujaratis, a reflection of the growing business opportunities in India. For example, one prominent PIO from the Ismaili community (Abdul Vakil) who heads a bank (Banco Elisa) and migrated from Mozambique to Portugal for higher studies has helped raise around \$400 million in equity and has placed a leverage fund of \$154 million for Indian IT companies.

There is also some interest among the local Portuguese people to strengthen relations with India through trade, investment and people mobility. For instance, some joint ventures have been initiated between entrepreneurs in Goa and those in Portugal in areas such as information technology and renewable energy. There has been growth in tourism between the two countries with increased interest among the Portuguese in visiting Goa’s beaches and experiencing its cultural heritage. More and more Portuguese youth are now traveling to India. Student exchange between universities and institutions between the two countries is also on the rise.

These changing trends across different sections of Portuguese society, diaspora and otherwise, are largely an outcome of India’s emergence as an economic power and the fact that India has become much more “fashionable” in the world economy. It reflects the growing recognition among the Goan and wider Portuguese community about the potential for increasing economic ties and building on Portugal’s historical and cultural links with India. As put by one scholar, “There is now a reengagement with Goa, through India. Today, India is far more visible in Portugal’s public culture than ever before.”

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<sup>57</sup> For instance, shows by Indian singers, a recently organized sponsored program on Tagore and a dance program at a university in Lisbon were sold out. There is growing interest in wearing saris and kurtas among the Goans in Portugal.



## 6.2 Role of governments

The recent developments which reflect a gradual deepening of relations between the Goans (as well as other Indian diaspora groups) in Portugal and their home state in India and also India more generally, are in part facilitated by government efforts and interest on both sides to improve relations. On the Indian side, almost all respondents cited the critical role that has been played by the former Goa commissioner for Non-resident Indian affairs, Eduardo Faleiro and of the NRI commission in Goa. The latter was set up in 2006 to provide an institutional framework that would facilitate networking between the state of Goa and its overseas community in the financial, economic, social and cultural spheres and which would help the state government to formulate policies and programs relating to PIOs and NRIs from Goa, with particular emphasis on investment promotion.<sup>58</sup> The setting up of this commission marks the institutionalization of a diaspora policy in Goa for the first time.

Some proactive steps have been taken by the Office of the Commissioner for NRI Affairs in Goa. Some of these initiatives to reach out to Goans, not only in Portugal but also worldwide, include organizing a Global Goan Meet every year, inviting non-resident Goans to invest back in Goa, and providing funding support to cultural troupes visiting Goa. For instance, the Office of the Commissioner for NRI Affairs funded 17 of the performers from EKVAT (jointly with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, with the remainder being funded by Casa de Goa) and provided all the logistical support for this music group during their recent concert tour in India. The Commissioner has also gone to Mozambique and approached the Goans residing there to help strengthen India-Africa relations.

The NRI Commission has also brought out a comprehensive report on out-migration, the “Goa Migration Study” in 2008. (A similar study has now been commissioned on the in-migration of Goans). Along with the Goan state government, it has also formulated a “Know Goa Programme” to enable the Goan diaspora youths to know Goa and India. The first and second rounds of this program were held in 2008 and 2009 and attracted the participation of Goan diaspora youth from many countries around the world. The participants were taken to educational, cultural, historical and industrial places of interest and were also given the opportunity to interact with elected representatives and to meet high level government dignitaries. This office has formulated the Goa Scholarship Programme for diaspora children, including NRIs, PIOs and OCIs of Goan origin who wish to pursue undergraduate studies in professional and general courses at institutions affiliated to Goa University or the Goa Board of Technical Education.<sup>59</sup>

More recently, the Commission has been trying to address issues such as the visits by the overseas Goans during the feast of St. Francis Xavier in Old Goa.<sup>60</sup> Thus, a variety of initiatives have been undertaken at the state level to facilitate greater understanding through commercial, social and cultural engagement between Goa and its diaspora.

The Indian government on its part has also started involving the diaspora community in Portugal. Its efforts have not focused exclusively on any one community but rather, as pointed out by many respondents, there is an effort to involve all communities-Gujaratis, Goans, Hindus and Muslims in its activities. The embassy invites the heads of the various community-based associations in Portugal to its celebrations of national festivals and also holds meetings with leading personalities in these communities.

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<sup>58</sup> <http://www.globalgoans.org.in> (accessed on March 24, 2012) The commission is working with overseas employment agencies to defend the rights of workers, address issues of repatriation, death, fraud, insurance and land disputes, all of which are major areas of concern for the diaspora.

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.globalgoans.org.in> (accessed on March 24, 2012)

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.globalgoans.org.in> (accessed on March 24, 2012)

Information provided by Portuguese diplomats in India reflected a similar interest in strengthening relations with India, politically, culturally and economically. In particular, in the economic sphere, it was highlighted that more needs to be done and that bilateral trade and investment relations are well below potential. In this regard, like the Indian government, the Portuguese government is looking not just at the Goans but also at other Indian diaspora groups in Portugal, such as the Gujaratis to deepen economic ties. But it was repeatedly noted that this deepening should be forward looking and while the common heritage and colonial link may be useful, it is important to look beyond the past or “what could have been”. The focus should be on India’s huge economic potential in future and not simply on leveraging the colonial or diaspora link so as to build relations in future. Hence, the view expressed by Portuguese officials basically echoed the views expressed by those from the Goan community in Portugal, that the re-engagement between Portuguese Goans and Goa in recent years is not so much about Goa but it is more to do with India’s emergence as an economic power and the increased interest among the Portuguese and among the Goan diaspora in Goa, through India.

The shift in policy at the national and state levels is reflected in the recent decision to host the third Lusophony Games in 2013 in Goa. Like the Commonwealth Games, this event brings together athletes from the former Portuguese speaking colonies, including Brazil, Angola, Cape Verde, E Timor, Guinea Bissau, Macau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, with India and Sri Lanka as associate members. The decision to host the games in Goa is an affirmation of the 450 year long connection that India has had with Portugal through Goa and the re-engagement between the two countries in recent years.

Such commercial and cultural exchanges and renewed interest stand in contrast to the ambivalence that characterized the post-1961 relationship between the two countries. There was a conflict between India and Portugal over Goa until the Carnation Revolution in Portugal in April 1974 when Portugal finally recognized India’s sovereignty over Goa, Daman and Diu. Normal political relations were thus delayed for many years. As one scholar noted, “a modern image of India was absent and there was a parallel perception of an old India” among the Portuguese and even among the Goan diaspora community in Portugal. There was not even a Portuguese newspaper correspondent in all of India until recently. Diplomatic relations between the two countries only normalized in 2007 after the first ever visit by a Portuguese Prime Minister to India. But even then right wing groups in India lobbied and asked him to apologize for the Portuguese imposition in the 1600s. During the Portuguese Ambassador’s visit to Goa to attend the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Portugal’s Carnation revolution, members of the All Goa Freedom Fighters Association demanded the closing down of Fundcao Oriente and Institute Camoes which are Portuguese cultural institutions in India. The latter institutions were criticized as being “frontline organizations” to create awareness about Portuguese culture in India and a reflection of Portugal’s continued view of Goa as its own colony. These instances are reflective of an underlying resentment of Portugal’s colonization of Goa in some sections, which has no doubt marred relations between the two countries in the past. But as the preceding discussion indicates, these relations seem to be changing gradually, following efforts by both the governments and India’s growing importance in the world economy.

On the whole, however, most of the discussions suggested that this change is quite slow and not yet driven by any long term plan or vision on either side. While praising the efforts of the former NRI Commissioner of Goa to engage with the Goan diaspora in Portugal, several respondents pointed out that there is still no real institutionalization of these initiatives. They remain dependent on pro-active individuals. Some mentioned that they have really got no help at all from the Indian government in promoting Goan culture. It is also expected that with the coming of the new BJP government in Goa and the removal of the aforementioned commissioner, things will revert back to their earlier state. Furthermore, in contrast to the views expressed by Portuguese officials regarding their interest in strengthening relations with India, many of those interviewed were of the opinion that India is not a priority country for Portugal and that earlier perceptions about India as a poor third world country have not yet been replaced by the perception of an “emerging India” among

the general public and the politicians in Portugal. In this regard, although there are many influential Goans living in Portugal, the Goan community and organizations such as Casa de Goa as a group have not had much influence on Portugal's foreign policy or its economic relations with India as they are not well organized.

## **7. Looking Ahead to a Strategic Engagement**

Reaching a singular conclusion about the Goan identity is problematic because interpretations of it are almost always subjective in nature. Scholars continue to see the Goan identity in controversial and different ways. On the one hand is the Indo-centric view which emphasizes the Indian nature of the Goan identity and argues that Portuguese colonialism influenced or altered Goan culture either only in negative terms or did not leave any lasting impact. Although dressing, eating and other externally visible habits were influenced by Portuguese culture, the traditions, habits and mentality of the Goans remained Indian. On the other hand, the Luso-centric view argues based on the cultural mix that exists among Goans that there are more Portuguese than Indian traits in this community. However, there is broad agreement among most scholars on the fact that the migration of Goans to Portugal was an economic decision and not a decision that arose out of an identity crisis. It is also well recognized that the closeness of the relationship that was shared between the ruling Portuguese class and the Indian class over a very long period of time was unique and very different from the kind of relationship that was shared between the British and Indians. This cultural proximity not only helped the Goans to migrate to Portugal but also to integrate themselves well into Portuguese society. As the preceding discussion has highlighted, the historical, cultural, social and linguistic affinity that characterizes the Goan "diaspora" community in Portugal has in turn had its own implications for its identification with Goa and with India.

In view of the growing interest in strengthening relations with this community and between India and Portugal more generally, it is important to leverage this diaspora group in a more strategic and forward looking manner and to place this engagement within the larger framework of India's foreign policy and geopolitical interests. In this regard, the Goan community in Portugal could play a particularly interesting and strategic role. It can help India to diversify its foreign policy beyond the Anglophone countries to Lusophone countries such as Brazil, Angola and Mozambique. There is some evidence on such a diversification. India has recently become an associate member of the Organization of Portuguese speaking Olympic committees and as discussed earlier, has agreed to host the third Lusophone Games in 2013. India's diplomatic and economic relations with Lusophone Africa are growing with more bilateral visits by delegations and agreements being signed in recent years. Trade volumes have also increased significantly with these countries. But there is scope to engage in many other spheres, including art, culture, music, knowledge, innovation, language and most importantly through trade, investment and collaborative ventures in the areas of energy, IT, pharmaceuticals natural resources and maritime. There are business opportunities in computer engineering, robotics, textiles between India and Portugal which the well-educated and well-placed Goan community in Portugal and the large PIO community in Portugal more generally, could help leverage.

Just as China is looking to transform Macau into a Lusophone hub, India could potentially do the same with Goa. The Goan diaspora in Portugal can play a useful role in facilitating these links in various ways; through their knowledge of Portuguese; their earlier presence and networks in Africa and Latin America and; through the influential positions they hold in Portuguese society as professionals, administrators and policy makers wherein they can help leverage the good relations that Portugal enjoys with its former colonies in Africa and Latin America, to the benefit of India. Goans can thus play an important role in building India's economic and other relations with the Lusophone countries via Portugal. An example of this strategic trilateral relationship is already evident in the fact that Lisbon hosts the TCS office for Latin America and thus similarly can help Indian companies and institutions in areas such as hospital management, pharmaceuticals, engineering and education to

enter the markets of Angola, Mozambique and other former Portuguese territories in Africa and also to emerging markets such as Brazil.

India would need to pursue many tracks to achieve this engagement, including civil society, research, forums for dialogue, Portuguese language training, sports, linking of academic institutions, and investments in infrastructure in Lusophone countries. India could invest more in Portuguese language and culture as language can open up many new opportunities in these countries. Much would depend on the vision that India has with the Lusophone world if Goa is to serve as an entrepot- a meeting point of the West and the East. Thus far, however, according to scholars, such vision seems to be lacking in its engagement with Portugal. Perhaps nothing better sums up the evolving relationship between India and Portugal and implicitly the role of the Indian diaspora in shaping this relationship than the following quote:

“The ironies of history are truly remarkable. Half a millennium ago, Portuguese vessels roamed the Malabar coast, searching for ports of entry to the rich Indian and eastern spice markets. Today, Portugal comes to India promoting itself as a port of entry to the West and as a strategic platform for Indian interests in Europe, Africa and Latin America.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Xavier (2012)

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