

Inside/Outside Lusofonia

The Case of Goa

ABSTRACT: In answer to the call for papers on "Lusofonia and Its Futures," a group of researchers from the academic community focusing on Goa decided to reflect collectively on this topic. The individual statements compiled below represent the productive dissonance in this community, where everyone contributes and listens. They address the concept of Lusofonia in the context of issues of identity, self-definition, academic visibility, cultural memory, and global networks.

KEYWORDS: global mappings, Lusosphere, genealogies, invisible Lusofonia.

Alternative Global Mappings

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The term Lusofonia has been used as a descriptive concept to define the borders of a particular academic field whose object of study coincides with the use of the Portuguese language across a variety of geographical locations, expressing their respective cultures. Such a transversal definition of the term seems neutral enough, and promotes the idea that a network of affinities and spontaneous empathy might connect different peoples, favoring a productive global network. I have nothing against this celebratory view of Lusofonia, nor do I reject its positive potential to structure solid networks of cultural (and economic) exchange, relying on Portuguese as a convenient working language. However, after Foucault, Derrida, and Gramsci, we know that there is no such thing as an innocent use of language and that subtle hegemonic agendas have often relied on discourse, dominant ideologies, and cultural production as effective means of social and political control. Its positive potential notwithstanding, what are the perverse meanings inherent in the notion of Lusofonia? My tentative answer considers two elements of the concept: the visibility of the Portuguese language and the geographies the word invokes.

If the principle defining the limits of the lusophone universe is the domi-

nant status of the Portuguese language in a given society (regardless of token references to minority languages and cultures), then Lusofonia refers to a set of Portuguese-speaking national units. As such, the geography of the use of the Portuguese language (and of English, French, and Spanish) in fact emulates old colonial mappings of the world, hidden under postindependence uses and appropriations of the language. I believe that the historical heritage underlying these linguistic maps is not neutral, and that collective amnesia is neither cathartic nor wise when it comes to working toward positive outcomes in international relations. Lusofonia, Francofonia, and World English are collective concepts that inscribe an agenda and point to one horizon of preferential relations instead of others. In addition, these concepts undermine the concepts of diversity and difference in their assertion of a collective project. And what are the centers of decision in this collective project? Did the new orthographic agreement on the writing of the Portuguese language include references to standard Portuguese in several African countries? And do graduation courses in English studies devote the same number of hours to English, American, and Nigerian literature? Languages, in other words, have their hegemonic centers and peripheries in spite of being shared. Consequently, if the Portuguese language unites us in our diversity, I would prefer actual references to the language itself, instead of an umbrella term like Lusofonia.

Another point worth making in discussing the negative reverberations associated with the lusophone world is the invisibility of communities that lack the status of nations. If Lusofonia refers to countries where Portuguese is the dominant language, then communities of Portuguese-speaking emigrants are not properly acknowledged by the term. Consider the residual scholarly work on the cultural activity produced within these emigrant communities, and you will understand the dimensions of their marginalization. Working with a notion of Portuguese-speaking communities might give such communities the visibility and acknowledgment they deserve.

While writing a postcolonial history of Goan literature in Portuguese, I became even more aware of the limits one adjusts to when going along with the established debate.¹ If Portuguese is becoming a language of the past in Goa, why does the invisibility of Goa in the core debates around Lusofonia change into visibility when accompanied by Timor and Macau? The answer must be that within this set Goa gains new symbolic meaning. These are colonial geographies of cultural encounters being translated into contemporary epistemologies.

In Europe, within the frame of postcolonial theory, there is growing awareness of the necessity to think about alternative networks and working platforms that do not necessarily reproduce colonial logic. Otherwise, the West remains perpetually the center and the norm in shaping global relations. However, if you replace certain types of hierarchical world order for multicentered networks, the balance of knowledge or power distribution shifts in a democratic direction.

Goa seems a good place to start thinking along these alternative lines. Its written culture, ancient and multiple, evolved as a hybrid that accommodated tension, fragmentation, and forms of synthesis. As Goa related to different sources of influence in an active way, studying Goa offers knowledge on a great variety of issues. Not only did it produce forms of resistance and subversion against colonialism and Western influence, but it also assimilated romantic aesthetics, modernism, and neorealism, integrating them in an Eastern cultural location. Moreover, its ex-centric situation in relation to Portuguese late colonialism, to British India, and to Indian core cultures creates a unique vantage point that illuminates other realities. Consequently, it is productive to think about concepts such as Lusofonia (and its respective theoretical mappings) from the perspective of Goa, suggesting that alternative, ex-centric mappings of cultural heritages in Portuguese may prove productive vantage points from which to question established epistemologies, or at least to confront their hidden agendas and ambiguities.'

These Languages That Separate Us

SANDRA ATAÍDE LOBO

If we accept as a given among the different ideas supported by the concept of Lusofonia that it implies the existence of Portuguese-speaking communities, then in the case of Goa this community is not only insignificant but also confined to an older generation. Consequently, it seems probable that it will vanish with its last members. It is true that the search for a basic knowledge of Portuguese has increased in the territory, but this seems connected more to migratory fluxes than to a new appropriation of Portuguese. On the other hand, there are a number of scholars interested in studying Portuguese: those who take degrees in Portuguese language and literature at the University of Goa, and those whose research interests "force" them to learn at least written Portuguese. I do not know whether somewhere, somehow, these scholars coincide or work on common projects, but these academic interests do not necessarily mean that these

scholars use the language in colloquial or even academic communication. In view of this panorama of divergent interests, it seems reasonable to assume that Goa would generally be forgotten or marginalized to a subaltern space in the debate around Lusofonia.

However, considering a relevant part of contemporary Goan intellectual tradition, between 1921 and 1961 or even later, it seems rather unfair, and thus unacceptable, to relegate Goa to this subaltern status, for there has been a huge amount of Goan scholarship in the Portuguese language, in such diverse fields as literary criticism, historiography, medicine, law, economy, politics, ethnography, colonial debates, cultural and political identity—the list goes on and on. Furthermore, the invisibility of Goa in lusophone debates is equally unjustified because of the intervention of a significant group of Goan intellectuals in Portuguese public debates, which has contributed to the development of different trends in contemporary Portuguese thought. Goan scholars have also played an active role in promoting Portuguese language and culture abroad. Note that I am not referring exclusively to the role they have played in Africa, an issue that is only now beginning to garner the attention it merits. There are other dimensions to this stream of Goan activity: Plácido and Vicente de Bragança Cunha, brothers of T. B. Cunha, were responsible for the first lectures on Portuguese language and literature at the universities of Calcutta and Bombay, respectively. When Vicente de Bragança Cunha was in England, he played the same role at the University of London. Other examples could be mentioned, including scholarly contributions in the United States. All of these Goan scholars are important to the adequate construction of a collective memory concerning Portuguese language and cultures and their international context, as well as to the memory of Goan culture itself.

Returning to the subject of Goan contemporary reality, I would submit that both local intellectual activity and the construction of collective memory have much to gain from a wide and extensive dialogue with their own diverse scholarly heritage, but this dialogue depends in part on access to texts that were produced in the past, in Portuguese. Thus the role that the Portuguese language played in Goa until 1961 in the medium of print reveals how serious and disruptive the cultural consequences of obliterating this Portuguese heritage would be. When I try to explain the object of my studies, I'm often met with ironic questions like "Where are there intellectuals in Goa?" Goan acquaintances, most of them well educated, have made such comments, reflecting the local perception of Goa

as a subaltern realm in terms of intellectual life and scholarly production. In my view, this question goes beyond the problematic concept of Lusofonia and the debates surrounding it, for the focus of study needs to be shifted from the preservation of Portuguese memory in Goa to the importance of Goan memory in Portuguese expression. Contrary to the common belief that the Portuguese language in Goa would be exclusively related to the Catholic community (where it was undeniably dominant), this heritage also concerns the Hindu community, for relevant Hindu intellectuals sometimes had their works published in Portuguese. This problem has begun to be tackled by a group of Goan intellectuals, several of them less than fluent in Portuguese. They are doing what they can to address this difficulty, promoting the local appropriation of Portuguese and investing (within financial constraints) in translations of local Portuguese texts into English. There is also an increasing trend to publish studies of Goa's diverse intellectual traditions. The limited institutional impact of these efforts becomes clear on a visit to the Goan university website. The recommended reading in the social sciences and humanities is in English, in contrast to the multilingual character of Goa's past and present. In the case of Konkani and Marathi literature, local tradition at least receives the attention of the respective departments. But one cannot find a definition of Goan Portuguese literature on the webpage of the Portuguese department.

I would like to examine a final aspect of the issue by looking at the academic situation in Portugal. Most history syllabuses in Portuguese schools and universities fail to grant Portugal's former colonies any historical autonomy; they are always viewed through the lens of Portuguese colonialism. Nor does the study of these ex-colonies take into account their reciprocal influence on Portuguese politics and culture. Only now are some Portuguese scholars beginning to take a broader approach to the study of the former colonies, one that appreciates their diversity, autonomy, and historical importance in their own right, and not merely in their relation to Portugal, but this trend has yet to make a significant impact on mainstream curricula. Finally, in the area of Oriental studies in Portugal, it is very strange that one can take classes in Sanskrit, Hindi, Arab, Japanese, Chinese, and Persian, but there is not a single course in Konkani or Marathi. This makes it difficult for Portuguese historians of Goa to gain access to fundamental sources. Moreover, most Portuguese scholars do not consider the absence of courses in these languages a problem, which in itself suggests the extent of the invisibility of these cultures in most Portuguese eyes.

Goa as India's Hub to the Lusosphere

CONSTANTINO XAVIER

India today is affected by a "lusophone paradox" that sees many of its efforts to internationalize its economy lost in translation. While its economic engagement with the eight Portuguese-speaking countries (CPLP) and Macau is booming (now at US\$15.3 billion, up by 400 percent since 2005), diplomatic and cultural engagement lags far behind. For example, India makes many scholarships and educational programs available to students and officials from the CPLP countries, but they are administered in English. And only a handful of Indian diplomats are fluent in Portuguese, and they are often posted in non-CPLP capitals.

But New Delhi's perception is changing fast, and Goa's historical and cultural specificity is now not only officially acknowledged but even seen as an asset in India's new focus on revitalizing relations with nations in the Southern Hemisphere. Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh emphasized this new focus on the occasion of the Portuguese prime minister's visit to New Delhi in 2007, when he noted that "the richness of Portuguese culture in Goa, Daman and Diu is well known to every Indian, and we celebrate this legacy."²

Whether strictly lusophone or not, as an Indian state that was intimately linked to other Portuguese-speaking regions of the world for several centuries, Goa plays a fundamental role in India's reengagement with this larger Lusosphere. If Punjab is used as a hub for Indian confidence-building measures toward Pakistan, Tamil Nadu as a bridge to Sri Lanka, and the seven northeastern states as a "Look East" platform, why not transform Goa into India's hub for the Portuguese-speaking countries?

China, which assumed formal sovereignty over the former Portuguese colony of Macau in 1999, is already using the region (where Portuguese is an official language) as a hub for its lusophone diplomacy, most notably through the Macau Forum, set up in 2003, which serves as a biannual ministerial meeting between Beijing and all eight Portuguese-speaking states. There is no reason why Goa should not also host such an official (or, initially, an informal Track II) dialogue. This idea is supported by many decision makers in Brazil and Africa, including former Mozambican minister Oscar Monteiro, who recently called for Goa to play a "driving role" in India's reengagement with his country.³ In India itself, former union minister for external affairs Eduardo Faleiro called in 2009 for a "biannual structured dialogue" between India and the CPLP countries.

Most important, India must in the meantime secure its status as an asso-

ciate observer of the CPLP. Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius, and Senegal have all succeeded in acquiring such a status, and even China and Indonesia have expressed their interest. As an associate observer, the Indian government would have privileged access to the formal settings in which its Brazilian, Portuguese, Angolan, Mozambican, and other Portuguese-speaking counterparts regularly discuss crucial economic and political issues, including technical cooperation, exchange programs, and peacekeeping missions.

Beyond the political and economic arenas, other avenues of potential cooperation should be explored, including sports. For example, the Indian Olympic Association agreed in 2006 to become a member of the Association of Portuguese-Speaking Olympic Associations. Since then, New Delhi has agreed to send an Indian delegation to the first two editions of the *Jogos da Lusofonia* (Lusophone Games, held in Macau and Lisbon), and has also backed Goa's successful bid to host the third edition in 2013 (defeating Brazil's competing bid). Similar possibilities should be explored in the realms of science and technology (Goa hosts the Indian Institute of Oceanography), education (through Indian technical and other degrees possibly offered in Goa, in Portuguese, to CPLP officials), and other cultural exchanges (in 2008 the Brazilian government supported a successful Carnival parade in Goa).

I am not suggesting that India's reengagement with the Lusosphere should be only about Goa. But the region's immense potential should not continue to be ignored, either. As New Delhi looks for new opportunities to reactivate its "southern" and "non-anglophone" diplomatic ties, Goa has interesting opportunities to reinvigorate its historical identity as a hub linking not only East and West but also North and South.

Lost Dialogues, Uncertain Genealogies

DUARTE DRUMOND BRAGA

In a recent book by Miguel Real, *A vocação histórica de Portugal* (2012), we find a distressing prophecy of the birth of a new kind of Portuguese citizen within the next two or three centuries.⁴ Ideally, Real believes, this citizen would be a *mestizo*, the result of impending political and social alliances among lusophone countries. The distressing element in such a prophecy is its ideological link to a Lusotropicalist heritage that a few Portuguese thinkers have reclaimed as the traditional means of promoting a certain idea of Lusofonia.

One must bear in mind that despite its ideological connotations, Lusofonia

actually refers to the specific group of speakers that use the Portuguese language. However, the term carries ideological nuances, and it is imperative that we understand which discourses are molding the set of ideological implications related to this linguistic fact. It is important that we trace these implications and map their respective roots and influences. To that end, I would call attention to an article by Miguel Vale de Almeida, "An Earth-Colored Sea" (2000/2004), which introduces the question of Portuguese dialogues, adaptations, and projects converging upon Freyre's concept of Lusotropicalism. The key point to be made here is that beyond the colonial intelligentsia in the metropolis there were other scholars and thinkers, in the former Portuguese colonies, who directly or obliquely engaged in dialogue with Lusotropicalist tropes, creating new ramifications, forms, and meanings of this discourse, thus becoming complicit agents of Lusotropicalism. In order to get a full picture of the ideologies implicit in the Lusotropical version of Lusofonia, we must situate these thinkers in their specific contexts.

The abrupt ending of Portuguese colonialism in Goa in 1961—together with Goan marginality with respect to the Atlantic center of the lusophone map—makes Goa a revealing example of certain Portuguese discourses on Lusofonia. In terms of representation, Goa is usually placed in the lusophone symbolic map as a fragment or spillover inherited directly from the past. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Goa was part of the pragmatic construction of a social and economic empire, but its survival in or belonging to the postimperial Portuguese sphere is uncertain. In its current status as an inherited fragment, how have Goa and Portuguese India's ambiguous symbolic meanings been appropriated over time? One might argue that the flow of time, as a trope for Portuguese culture, has been stopped in India. From the late nineteenth century, in certain contemporary points of view, Portuguese culture has remained an uncorrupted symbol of empire itself. Consider, for example, the 1898 quadricentennial of Vasco da Gama's voyage and its ideological repercussions for the definition of the civic and literary agendas of Guerra Junqueiro, Teixeira de Pascoaes, and the young Fernando Pessoa, in which Portuguese India is often dissolved into the vague and mythical Indies (*as Índias*). One can trace the genealogy of this mythical heritage even to the recent quinqucentennial commemorations of the arrival of the Portuguese in India.

In contrast to the metropolitan appropriation of Lusotropicalism, local history and local scholars were rarely integrated into the ideological domain of Por-

tugal. The myth of Goa and India as nineteenth- or twentieth-century symbols of colonial empire has overpowered any real acknowledgment of the independence and integrity of Goan writing and local authors. Yet one can find dialogues, forgotten sources, and neglected contributions among the Portuguese-language literature and scholarly writing produced in Goa, and in that way retrace the lost genealogy of a certain lusophone discourse. The focus of such an endeavor would be the Goan elite, brought up in the context of Portuguese culture and social references, which defined itself as part of the colonial empire, even as it criticized Portuguese colonialism. It would be a mistake, however, to generalize about the whole of Goan modern literary production written in Portuguese. I would argue, rather, that one must look for certain historical moments and texts that reveal Goa's dialogue with the "lusophone idea."

One example would be the poet and fiction writer Vimala Devi—part of that Goan elite—whose writing emerged during the transition between Goa's colonial and postcolonial history. Devi clearly uses the concept of Lusotropicalism to structure her literary history of Goan literature, *História da literatura indo-portuguesa* (1971), written in Portuguese in collaboration with her husband, Manuel de Seabra. On the one hand, this work views Goan literature as a literary system exogenous to Portuguese literature and does not refrain from criticizing aspects of Portuguese colonialism. On the other hand, it undeniably interprets Goan culture through a Lusotropicalist lens. Thus Devi engages in dialogue not only with Freyre but also with the dissemination and assimilation of his ideas during the final stage of the Portuguese colonial regime.

Consider the editorial affiliation of her research: the Junta de Investigações do Ultramar (Office for Research on the Overseas Provinces). I am not suggesting that Devi is a clear supporter of the Lusotropical project in its Portuguese late-imperial incarnation, but she does apply a Lusotropical perspective to Goan culture, mainly through her desire for Goa's postcolonial survival as a culturally miscegenational product, even if Portuguese influence is no longer a political reality. In this way Devi's book, as a written history and an epitaph for a certain cultural and literary tradition, embodies an important disruptive tension inherent in this tradition: it is not a part of lusophone literature, exhausted before 1975, and yet, from the limbo it inhabits, it relates to the ideological configurations at the root of the unfolding lusophone project. Goa would then be an important missing link in the discourse on Lusofonia, in dialogue with Gilberto Freyre and the appropriation of his theories by Portugal's late-imperial intellectuals.

NOTES

1. *Literatura goesa em língua portuguesa nos séculos XIX e XX: Perspectivas pós-coloniais e revisão crítica* (forthcoming, 2012).
2. "PM's Statement on India-Portugal Bilateral Summit," 1 December 2007, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=33588>.
3. "Call for Better Ties Between India, Mozambique," *Times of India*, 9 January 2010, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/msid-5425432,prtpage-1.cms>.
4. The ideas presented here are a work in progress for an article to be published in a critical anthology on Goan literature in Portuguese organized by Paul Melo e Castro of the University of Leeds.

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