

The (Latin) Christian Church in Post-Colonial Goa: The Portuguese Legacy and the Development Process

Sharon D'Cruz

University of Goa, Goa

Abstract: This study is a micro level study that is restricted to the role of the Church in the development of the post-colonial state of Goa. The pastoral effectiveness of the Church in Goa particularly after liberation, has definitely been on the positive side *kudos* to the 'educated' and self-confident clergy and laity of Goa. The priests, religious and laity have grown with experience at all levels and are well conscientised and equipped to continue the task of "building the kingdom of God on Earth without leaving all concerns to life beyond". The socio-religious dimension of the Church in Goa can be further studied and evaluated within the broader perspectives that are related to 'confrontation', 'governance', 'institutionalization' and 'policing' particularly after the State that was hitherto a 'standard bearer of the Portuguese State' has ceased to remain so in the post-liberation period. It is argued that much of the Church history is written by the missionaries and from the missionary perspective and this is never delinked from the Eurocentric, Christocentric and Lusocentric perspective. In analyzing the role of the post colonial Church in Goa, we undertake a dispassionate analysis so that we are able to understand the Church within a larger historical context.

Keywords: Goa, *Novas Conquistas*, colonialism, Church and development, Christian sects.

The 'discovery' of an ocean route to the East Indies by the Iberian seafarers was an important enigma as it marked the dawn of the 'Vasco da Gama Epoch' in the history of Asia¹: an 'Epoch' that drastically changed the subghat image of Goa into a thalossocratic one – at least in the colonial literature.

‘Discoveries’ are generally perceived to be “mere accidents in history”. But, this was not the case with the Portuguese because they did not come merely as traders, “...if there were no merchants who go and seek for earthly fortunes in the East and West Indies, who would transport the preachers who take the heavenly treasures there”². While the former were well known as *Conquistadores*, the latter can be termed as *Conquistadores das almas*.

Having consolidated their shoestring Empire in the East, the Portuguese established the Metropolitan Sé of the *Estado da India* at *Velha Goa*. The territorial jurisdiction of the Portuguese in Goa in the first half of the 16th century was limited to the *Velhas Conquistas*³. The geographical conditions of the land together with the appropriate socio-economic and political milieu enabled the Portuguese to set up an entrepôt port in ‘Goa’ and use it as a springboard for a delve into the Indian Ocean World Economic System. Further, the *Padroado* obligations and the close alliance between the Cross and the Sword ‘morally bound’ the Portuguese Monarchs to evangelize, christianize and lusitanize the “newly discovered lands”, Goa being no exception to this. From here, they undertook a ‘Spiritual Conquest of the East’⁴ wherein they tried to christianize and lussitanize the people and give a realistic form to the *Respublica Christiana*. This was a conscious effort that was legalized by the Crown and sanctified by Papal Bulls like the *Romanus Pontifex*, *Inter Caetera*, *Regimini Militantis* etc. The missionaries assumed the role of the ‘standard bearers of the faith’. The State supported them in this ‘divine enterprise’ of “swiftly possessing the souls and riches of the East”. Both, *a priori* and *a posteiori*, assimilative and discriminative and ‘carrot’ and ‘stick’ policies were used to lure the converts and punish the non-converts⁵.

This ‘conscious’ effort resulted in the ‘formation’ of *Goa Dourada* that is aptly described as “a tiny piece of Portugal that was implanted onto the tropical soil”⁶ and it was not uncommon for a casual visitor to remark, “*Aqui é Portugal.*” The *Gomantak Punyabhumi* of the yesteryears was temporarily forgotten and

gradually replaced by much the touted Golden Goa paradigm, that considered Goa to be “ a limpet clinging onto the West coast of India”⁷. However, it was not long before the Goans realized that they were denaturalized and denationalized to the extent of being “rendered as aliens to their own soil”⁸. The *Konkan Kashi* or the cool and refreshing land that was the “abode of the Gods” was superseded by the ‘Rome of the Orient’.

But, what was ignored was that even by the 20th century, the Portuguese had been successful in alienating a small section of the Goans from their *Mai Patria*. The majority of the Goans, particularly those who lived along the peripheries of and in the *Novas Conquistas*⁹ or in British India, continued to follow the Indian lifestyle and had an emotional attachment to India; they represented the *Goa Indica* paradigm¹⁰. It must be noted that the *Velhas Conquistas* included only 1/5th of the present day Goa. The *Novas Conquistas*, that included seven *talukas*, were acquired only in the eighteenth century and even here, only 14% were converted till 1961¹¹. Before the arrival of the Portuguese, Goa was not a *tabula rasa* and hence we speak of *Goa Indica* and even *Goa Rustica*. The chroniclers and the chronicle-based historiography denied the Goan people and the hinterland a separate existence. They were relegated to the status of being mere objects and a geographical expression.

Even the Lusophiles, who were temporarily overwhelmed by the ‘Latin, Christian’ culture, gradually assimilated it and evolved a composite or syncretic culture. The product of the ‘cultural metabolism’¹² or a recreation of “what existed among and what was thrust upon the Goans” is an essential component of the Goan diaspora or the ‘Goan identity’. The presence of the Portuguese influences gave Goa an unique identity- an identity that was ‘essentially different from the Indian and Portuguese identity. This is evident in the popular myths, folk culture, festivals, symbols *et al* all of which provide a ‘base’ to a Goan. The composite or syncretic culture that grew therefrom is termed *Goa Indo Portuguesa*. This was Indian in form but Iberian in content. The converts, for instance, followed a

Lusitanian lifestyle, but they did not give up the Hindu practices. Goan Christians felt at home to seek greater affinity with their colonial brethren in religion. Incidentally, the Goan Hindus have their own variants of wounded identity and this cannot be resolved too simplistically. The Christian farmers cut paddy sheaves and took them in a procession to the village temple to be blessed by Brahman priests before the harvest¹³. Many Goans felt the oppression of the caste structure or of the traditional class structure. Many had changed their religion to escape from these structures and with the hope of improving their life conditions. The caste conflicts were obvious in the Confraternities that were created on caste-basis and the colour of the *opmus* clearly distinguished a *Bammon* from a *Charddo* and the two from a *Shudra*. The caste exclusivism is illustrated by an incident that occurred in the Parish of Guirim that had a Confraternity of Jesus and that of Our Lady of the Rosary. A friar instructed an old woman to call upon the name of Jesus on her deathbed but she was indignant and replied angrily: “*Jezú? Jezú nam! Jezú tencho!*” (Jesus? There is no Jesus, Jesus belongs to them) Obviously, she was of *Charddo* caste, and the Confraternity of Jesus was composed of the brahmins!¹⁴. The concept of the ‘colonial other’ existed whether consciously or unconsciously. But we cannot blame personalities or institutions that were involved in the ‘State sponsored’ venture because we have to see them “in the historical context in which they functioned”¹⁵. The psychology of the Portuguese has to be understood as ‘Conquerors’, ‘Traders’, ‘Discoverers’ and ‘Christianizers,’ while that of the Goans has to be considered in the context of their being the ‘Discovered’, ‘a Conquered People’, ‘a Captive Trading People’ and a ‘Christianised People’¹⁶. Several aspects of Christianization and the Cultural Encounters that took place thereafter are available and these can be used for a better analysis of the Colonial Church within the paradigm of Decolonisation¹⁷.

In history, a few theories remain static. Theories are generally based on facts and these facts constantly change as and when

‘new’ sources are ‘unearthed’. Moreover, theories are based on the ‘historiographical constructs’ that are adopted by the historians. As such, the Imperialist approach is generally contradictory to the arguments that are made by the Indologists and Nationalists, while those of the Orientalists are ‘essentially’ different from those of the Subalterns. In recent times, the Theory of Modernity, that focused on meta narratives and empiricism, was gradually abandoned in favour of Post Modernity: a theoretical construct that consciously ignores the foundational theories and macro-level analysis. Such an approach takes into account contextual micro-level variations. It is inter-disciplinary in approach and anti-foundational in content. The source value of Church records in recording the organization and activity of the Church in Goa are outlined by the scholars in Indo-Portuguese history¹⁸.

In studying the role of the post-liberated Church in the Goan context, I have made use of tradition-modernity continuum to explain the formation of a post colonial identity in what can be called a *Gemeinschaft* and has grown into a *Gesellschaft*. In addressing the formation of such an identity and the expression of the same through the participation of the institutionalized Church in the various social movements in Goa, one has to take into account the historical facts as well as the Little Traditions that “existed in the minds and hearts of the people” in general and the Church in particular that were never allowed to be expressed fully either because of the close alliance between the Sword and the Cross, or because of the obligations of the *Padroado Real*, or later because of the division of loyalties between the *Padroado Real* and the *Propoganda Fidei* that was fully manifested in post 1961. But it must be noted that an identity *per se* has its base in the past and the discourse between the past and the present can be best understood by those communities who have lived through the past and have been assimilated into the present.

In the post- Republican period there was a whiff of liberalism. The global struggle with the Dutch assumed severe proportions.

Besides this, the Portuguese had to deal with the Marathas, Sondekars, Mughals and other local enemies. The mainland was also engulfed by a 'hydra of nativism'¹⁹ that took the form of spontaneous insurgencies and nationalist discourses. The revolts of the 'unsung heroes' and the ideologies of the 'voiceless in Goan historiography' need to be analyzed. Ironically, the Portuguese were unable to sustain the colonial vestiges because the sea-borne Empire was undergoing a twilight. There was a strong demand in favour of the secular clergy. The Thalocratic State and the *gaonkars* refused to contribute for the maintenance of the Christian cult. The Portuguese had to use their own methods to extract the agrarian surplus and gain the support of the locals. In fact, the Lusitanian culture was now dependent on the local realities.

During the liberation movement, Salazar stated "...what needs to be noted in Portuguese India is the mentality, the outlook on life and the spiritual atmosphere... Goa is a transplantation of the West onto the Eastern lands; the expression of Portugal in India"²⁰. His close alliance with the Pope (*Concordat* of 1940) had become a subject of criticism even in Portugal as were his anti-liberal policies. Even Nehru admitted that Goa was different from India. Most Goan Christians who were faithful to the Goan Church Magisterium collaborated with the 'civilizing mission' that was emphasized by Dr. Salazar in the *Acto Colonial do Estado Novo*. The Nationalists were forced to change their domicile to the neighboring Indian territory and they along with those who rose against the Fascist Regime were condemned as 'bad Catholics' or excommunicated and even denied a Church burial on grounds of being 'communists'. What was forgotten was that one cannot understand the Latin or Christian aspect of Goa *en masse* without delimiting the geographical parameters and defining its components. Microcosm studies have to be undertaken, as a Goan is a patrilocal individual. It is important to pose new questions to the old issues and in certain cases pose a counter perspective to the dominant ideologies.

After liberation, the local, national and international press eulogised the Indian intervention in the liberation of Goa. In December 1961²¹, there was an announcement that Rome had appointed the Lisbon based, Dom Jose Pedro da Silva as the new Auxiliary Bishop of Goa with the right to succeed as the Patriarch instead of a qualified and experienced Goan in accordance with the *Mater et Magistra* of John XXIII. Hence, the liberation of Goa did not cause any violent upheaval in the administration of the Church of Goa²². Following liberation, the Portuguese Patriarch in Goa maintained a low profile and moved out after the Second Vatican Council. At that time till 1971, there was a decrease in the Christian population from 38% to 34% while the number of Hindus increased from 384378 to 496389. Over the next decade, the number of Christians was 31% and in 1991, this figure stood at 29.86%²³. In 1963, Msgr Francisco Xavier da Piedade Rebello then emerged as the 'natural leader': the Bishop and Administrator Apostolic of Goa²⁴. Thereafter, the Church in Goa found it difficult to retain the colonial legacy. Some Christians felt that it was this legacy that gave Goa a distinct identity vis-a- vis the others who took the *longe duree* into consideration and asserted that the Goan identity had its roots in the pre-Portuguese setup and hence, it was not very different from the larger Indian identity. This issue rang out loud and clear during the Opinion Poll.

The political developments of the post-Liberation period have been complex. In less than a year after liberation, the Panchayati Raj Institutions were established in the Goan villages. Further, the elections in October 1962 changed the 'very nature' of the political process in Goa as they were based on universal suffrage. The Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP), with its *Bahujan Samaj* ideology and Marathi language, was used as an expression of populism that sought to whip up communal feelings²⁵. While the Hindu elite vote got divided between the Congress and United Goans Party (UGP), most of the Christians rallied around the UGP, but the MGP won with an absolute majority in the first elections and continued to rule over Goa for more than a

decade. The church of Goa has been accused of encouraging a vote to keep Goa out of Maharashtra in the first Assembly elections and in the Opinion Poll of 1967. Incidentally, a large number of under-aged seminarians of the Rachol Seminary voted in the Opinion Poll against the merger of Goa.

After 1967, there were major changes within the Catholic Church at the National and International levels. The Second Vatican Council stressed the responsibility of the laity and motivated the Church to introspect into its functioning. Termed as an 'Ecumenical Revolution', it propagated the concept of 'Liberation Theology' that focused on the involvement of the Church in societal issues. To implement the decisions of Vatican II, a Seminar on 'The Church in Goa Today' was held in 1968 as a preparation for the National Seminar on 'The Church in India Today' that was scheduled for 1970. The latter gave importance to the establishment of a Senate for the priests, Diocesan Centres for Social Apostolates and a Pastoral Bulletin. At this Regional Seminar, the socio economic welfare activities of the Church were reviewed and the Church acknowledged that it had made valuable contributions to promote the socio-economic welfare of the people through Parishes, religious congregations and lay organizations through its own limited means. Further, the Church in Goa stressed Recognition, Respect, Cooperation and Multireligious Solidarity²⁶. Though it took ten years to set up a Diocesan Pastoral Council and to establish Parish Level Councils, it was a sort of 'Democratic Revolution' that took place within an ecclesiastical set-up that was led by the laity along with the Diocesan and Religious priests and nuns²⁷. There were appeals in favour of indigenous saints. It was accepted that Fr Agnelo deserved to be canonized and that Fr Jose Vas would serve as a model to the Diocesan secular clergy²⁸.

A scan of the leadership of the Church over the last four decades indicates that it was both enlightened and pro-active. In the '60s the Church played a pivotal role in influencing the voters. In the '70s, the Church lent its open support to the

Ramponkars or one of the ‘traditional’ fishing communities in Goa who were fighting against mechanized fishing and purseing that was carried out by the trawler owners. On January 30, 1978, the Archbishop issued a Circular which pleaded that an exclusive zone of 5 kms. from the shore should be reserved for the *Ramponkars*²⁹. As a sign of solidarity, several nuns and priests participated in the agitation. One of the religious who was involved in the issue stated that the “official Church which was silent upto now... for the first time in recent years had come out openly and officially against the adamant attitude of the Government and opted for justice for the voiceless poor”³⁰. The then Chief Minister extended the war by supporting a rebel nun and even tried to humiliate the Archbishop by threatening to withdraw his priority pass for crossing the ferry. This largely tainted her popularity before the Christian voters, who were strongly agitated over the issue of the Freedom of Religion Bill, 1978 and the hostility of the Chief Minister to the same. In 1973, the Church raised its voice against the Zuari Agro Chemicals Limited that was situated at Zuarinagar in Vasco da Gama area on the ground that it polluted the coastal waters. Given the seriousness of the situation, the Church backed the Anti-Pollution Campaign in 1974 to fight the menace of pollution.³¹ The Social Action Forums have been instrumental in organizing the clergy and the laity to participate in anti-Goan and anti development projects. The Service Centre for Diocesan Action was set up in 1976. The contribution of the Church to the development of Goa and the “collaboration with other organizations to bring about the socio-economic development of Goa was the main thrust of this Centre”³².

Since the ‘80’s, the Church was directly involved and has indirectly patronized several NGO’s that were fighting a battle against Tourism³³. The ’80s witnessed a tussle between the *Konkaniwadis* and the *Marathiwadis* with the former asserting their stand that Konkani was the official language of Goa. On February 1, 1987³⁴, the Church expressed its solidarity with the pro-Konkani faction. Later, the pro-Konkani movement was used

to ensure the “separate status for Goa”. When the Official Language Bill was passed, the Pastoral Bulletin welcomed the compromise as “a better part of realism, though it did not hide its disappointment manifested in the use of a rather strong expression “bigamy” to describe the place accorded to Marathi in the Bill”³⁵. The Church played an important role in the Anti Merger Issue. It demanded a “separate political status for Goa” and was fully backed by the United Goans Party in this regard. There were several reports that the priests gave open and worse still ‘political’ speeches from the pulpits³⁶. Both the clergy and the laity made their presence felt at public meetings and marched on the streets against the proposed merger of Goa into the neighboring States. The Church also raised its voice against the commercialization of the Carnival that was projected as a ‘Christian tradition’ at the Carnival float that was held in Delhi in 1983 on grounds that it “jeopardized the ethical values”. The Pastoral Bulletin of 1 February, 1984, openly referred to the “coming *tamasha* of Carnaval” and warned the Catholics not to allow their children to fall prey and be pleasure toys for the benefit of the Tourism industry. The Church even went a step further and protested against the celebration of Carnival in the Panjim Church square and demanded a ban on the same. At the forefront was the Diocesan Centre for Social Action that carried out the propaganda campaign against this event. The citizens along with the Christians of Margao under the Diocesan Centre for Social Action paraded on the streets along with two MLA’s, priests and nuns against the Carnival parade. After three years of an ‘organised effort’, the Church forced the Government to withdraw its patronage of corporate-sponsored Carnival floats. In 1993, the Central Ministry for Tourism insisted that Carnival was important for the promotion of Tourism in the State, The State took precautionary measures and set up a Screening Committee that was headed by a Christian³⁷. This had an appropriate effect and since then, Carnival has been a muted affair.

The Church has vociferously opposed several developmental projects that were allegedly opposed to the interests of the Goans. It was in the forefront to oppose the coastal alignment of the Konkan Railway Corporation, as it was a threat to the fragile coastal ecology and to the 'space' and identity of the Goans. It was opined that it was passing through the thickly populated villages thereby disrupting the life of the Goans. The Church backed the 'mutinous' villagers of Salcette and other villages and was instrumental in the formation of the All Goa Citizens' Committee for Social Action that spearheaded the protests and pressurized the Court to change the alignment. Priests, nuns and lay Catholics participated in various forms of protests and extended full support to the campaign for realignment³⁸. The Archbishop himself wrote a letter to the Prime Minister requesting him to intervene in the matter, while "mobs of Christians" attacked the labourers and destroyed the equipment at the KRC construction sites. In spite of all these efforts that were put in by the Goans including the Church, the anti-KRC agitation failed.

The role of the Church in the anti-Metastrips agitation is too well known to be repeated. In opposing the setting up of Metastrips at Sancoale, the Church pointed out issues of spawned hutments, sanitation, public health, overcrowding etc and directly confronted the State against the implementation of the project³⁹. The logic was clear: the effluents from the imported scrap would pollute the Goan ecology. The Church encouraged the local Christians to rally around the Anti-Metastrips Citizens' Action Committee that was turned into the "public voice of the Church" overnight. Priests organised rallies and made passionate speeches at public meetings as the Church assumed an activist role. The newspapers carried the photographs of two priests who were injured in this agitation. Referring to the agitation on the Zuari bridge, the Church assailed the atrocities of the police and the Government on the 'innocent citizens'. The Archbishop personally visited those who were on a fast unto death outside the Secretariat⁴⁰. The Church also lent its support to the anti-

Nylon 66 agitation, a people's agitation that was intended to counter the polluting factory that was proposed to be set up in Keri, Ponda. The spokesman of the Church appealed to the State Government to pay "heed to the just demands of the oppressed people and to bring the crisis to a satisfactory solution"⁴¹.

In 1990, the Archdiocese of Goa hosted a Consultation on Tourism that was sponsored by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI). Since then the Church has been instrumental in raising the banner of protest against the bane of Tourism in the State⁴². In the elections of 1994, the Church launched an unscrupulous attack on the political situation in the State. In his message on the Justice and Peace Sunday, the Archbishop requested the Christians to vote out the "politicians who have been supporting projects that were detrimental to the good of Goa and the Goans".

The Church has raised its voice and even imposed bans to curb the proliferation of social evils among the Christian laity. The menace of alcohol is sought to be curbed by setting up units of the Alcoholics Anonymous in the Parishes. An official ban is imposed on the serving of alcoholic drinks within the Church premises. The Diocesan Pastoral Council vehemently opposed the steady growth of alcoholism and appealed to the State Government to curb the advertisements for alcoholic drinks and the issue of new licenses for bars and liquor shops. The Church also appealed in favour of the prohibition of the advertisement of alcoholic beverages at the functions that were organized by Church institutions⁴³. Periodic efforts are made to avoid the consumption or association of alcohol at and with Catholic rituals. The Archbishop of Goa spoke in terms of a Radical Church that could serve as an instrument of Social Revolution. He periodically called upon the laity to attack the "roots" of the problems that were faced by society and "to eliminate the causes rather than the effects of social injustice". The proposal to make Goa a Free Port was openly opposed as it would be a threat to 'Goa's Sovereignty'⁴⁴.

In the nineties, the Church in Goa had developed an 'ideology of resistance' and rallied against the politicians who wanted to sell Goa to the forces that were out to destroy Goa's economy, culture, social composition, demographic profile and identity. The Church as an institution and the Archbishop as the head of the Church in Goa periodically raised concerns about the undemocratic attitudes of the Government. The Church in Goa has had the benefit of being backed by a genre of 'conscious' laity. Recently, there was a statement that was issued by eight Goan writers and artists, who requested the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to put restrictions on Doordarshan so that it was restrained from telecasting road shows and beach parties in Goa as a part of the Millenium New Year celebrations on ground that "the telecast is a direct attack on our cultural ethos"⁴⁵.

The post-colonial Church has taken progressive steps to promote inter-religious dialogue and to strengthen Hindu Catholic solidarity. The Church has been vehement in denouncing acts of Communalism and Communal Disharmony as is evident from the strong critiques that were made against the allegedly 'communal' activities that included the minor bomb blast in St Andrews Church, Vasco da Gama, Saleli and later in Sanvordem and the minor outbursts in Kundaim, Chicalim, Assagao, St Estevam etc. When the Hindus in India wanted the Pope to publicly apologize for the atrocities' of the Catholic Church in the colonial past, the Goan clergy denounced this as they found it unjustifiable. Secularism has been the ideal of the Church of Goa as indicated in the proceedings of the Diocesan Synod. There are efforts even among the religious in favour of Indianization and Swadeshi. In 1999, the Archbishop of Goa voiced his dissent over the Target Asia Mission on the ground that the Church would be isolated if this target was followed. In the elections of 2002, the Church called upon the laity not to vote for the candidates who represented Communalism and corruption. The Archbishop even referred to a "Crusade against corruption"⁴⁶. Thanks to the efforts of the clergy, the voters of

Cortalim opted for a third alternative and outvoted the National Parties.

The post-liberation Church was instrumental in conscientising, mobilizing and bringing thousands of laity on the street to provide mass support to several issues that were detrimental to the 'development' and 'progress' of the State. The recent agitation against the Regional Plan 2011 witnessed the direct involvement of the Church in this anti developmental issue⁴⁷. The colonial Church tried to be where the rulers were. The post-liberation tried to be where the laity were⁴⁸. The Church particularly after the first two decades after liberation, has been a vigilant and pro active Church as is manifested in its opposition to several anti development movements. It is important to note that Social Action Cells are set up in several Parishes in Goa and these have been instrumental in playing the important role of 'watch dogs' in the Goan villages. Many of them have been active at Gram Sabhas and have raised their voices against the anti development forces. There are sincere efforts being made by Parish Animation Teams, Community Animation Teams, Family Cells, Social Action Cells etc in the Parishes across the State particularly after the Diocesan Synod. The Church has played a predominant role in the struggle for environmental rights, child rights, human rights and the rights of women and other marginalized sections of society. The concept of 'Justice and Peace', 'Campaign against Hunger and Disease' and the 'Preferential Option for the Poor' are among the many projects that were successfully championed by the Church on behalf of the CBCI as an institution. The Church promotes an annual campaign against hunger and disease by raising money for the needy and the poor so as to provide them with the basic human needs.⁴⁹ In December, 1984, the Church made it obligatory for the Parishes to start a fund for the relief of the poor⁵⁰. There was an organized effort to "conscientise the people about and to launch a protest against the injustice that was meted out to the marginalized, particularly the Christians of the Schedule Caste origin"⁵¹. The Church has distributed her land at Baida in

Chinchinim to house nearly thirty families. Several Religious Congregations and Diocesan Parishes have started farms and yet others have started technical institutes. In Ambaji, the Society of St Vincent de Paul runs a night school for the poor and the illiterate. There is an Ozanam Library in Margao and a SVP Library in Verna. In Magao, Navelim and other places the members of the SVP have free Legal Aid Cells. In other villages, they have started Medical Clinics, Rehabilitation Centres for the Alcoholics, ambulances, Old Age Homes, KG and Primary Schools etc⁵². The members of the SVP that are animated by the parish priest champion the cause of the poor, the sick and the needy. The role of the Church as an institution in promoting charity is commendable as it runs 30 homes for the aged and the destitute, 5 hostels and boarding houses, 9 orphanages, 7 rehabilitation centres, hospitals, vocational training institutes (like St Bridget, Fr. Agnel Training Institute, Don Bosco's Crafts Centre etc) homes for the fallen women, creches, centres for the physically and mentally challenged etc. The Religious Congregations have established 6 hospitals and 5 dispensaries apart from health centres, mobile clinics etc. There are 13 primary, 6 Middle, 106 High and 13 Higher Secondary Schools, 5 Colleges and 7 technical institutes that are sponsored by the Church⁵³. The Church has also taken up the responsibility of rehabilitating the prisoners in the Goan jails through the Prison Ministry and undertaking Maternal and Child Health Programmes. The Domestic Workers attracted the attention of the Church that later organized the NDWM and took up the issue of Domestic Workers in Goa⁵⁴.

It is indeed very surprising that the Church had for some time acquired a very narrow, pro Goan view. The Pastoral letter of 1995, for instance, had clearly stated that "Our proverbial hospitality is being challenged today by ever-growing influx of non-Goans into our State threatening our security and comfort". Now that the number of immigrants has increased manifold, the Church has to officially accommodate and adopt the immigrants on terms of equality into its fold and the Church has undertaken

preliminary steps in this regard. Nevertheless, the Church has extended its full cooperation to the efforts to help those who had been victims of natural calamities. Among the others, the Church has extended generous financial aid to the victims of the Maharashtra earthquake (Rs. 6,20,996), Andhra Pradesh Cyclone Fund (Rs. 3,66,947), Kargil Fund (Rs. 6,56,000), Orissa Cyclone fund (Rs. 3,04,223) etc⁵⁵.

A large section of the Christian population has joined the 'Christian' sects that are mushrooming in Goa. The display of the Roman Catholic cult has become difficult as the State no longer favours the Church and funds are hard to come by on account of the post-global crises. Few people volunteer to work in 'Gods vineyard' and even those who are recruited are not up to the mark. The Diocesan Synod 2002 has attempted to empower the lay people and tried to monitor the cult and the flock through Parish Councils, Pastoral Councils, Community Animation Teams, Parish Animation Teams, Small Christian Communities etc. But, the questions are 'Hasn't the Church that had a basis in colonialism been able to assert its liberated status in the post-modern world?'; 'wasn't the Church in a position to maintain a consensus in taking decisions that allegedly alienated the contending, 'Christian' forces that dominate the opposition party in Goa?' and 'hasn't the Church pragmatically accommodated the new challenges and come up with an institutional response to the same?'.

An evaluation of the pastoral effectiveness of the Church in Goa particularly after liberation, has definitely been on the positive side *kudos* to the 'educated' and self-confident clergy and laity of Goa. A regular opposition is voiced both from socially concerned individuals and watch groups that have been keeping an effective check on the 'abuses' by powerful interest groups. Even the religious have grown with experience at all levels and are well conscientised and equipped to continue the task of "building the kingdom of God on Earth without leaving all concerns to life beyond"⁵⁶.

This study is a micro-level study that is restricted to the State of Goa. However, the socio- religious dimension of the Church in Goa can be further studied and evaluated within the broader perspectives that are related to ‘confrontation’, ‘governance’, ‘institutionalization’ and ‘policing’ particularly after the State that was hitherto a ‘standard bearer of the Portuguese State’ has ceased to remain so in the post-liberation period. There is much being said and written and efforts are under way for re-writing the history of the Church from the perspective of the Third World⁵⁷. It is argued that much that we have by way of Church history is written by the missionaries and from the missionary perspective and this is never delinked from the Eurocentric, Christocentric and Lusocentric perspective. In analyzing the role of the post colonial Church in Goa, we have to undertake a dispassionate analysis so that we are able to understand the Church within a larger historical context.

The Church in Goa started the New Year on a progressive note of renewing its commitment to promote the development of the State. She is “willing to be an active partner in this collaborative effort for regeneration” and has highlighted “her sacred duty towards humanity to help in the integral development of the human person...”⁵⁸. Such a commitment will go a long way in putting the post-liberation Church on the ‘right track’ vis-à-vis the development process that the State is undergoing.

Notes

1. Pannikar K.M., *Asia and Western Dominance: A survey of the Vasco da Gama Epoch of Asian History (1415-1945)*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1959
2. This statement is attributed to Fernao de Castanheda,
3. After the second Conquest of Goa on 25th November 1510, Goa was limited to the Islands of Goa that included Tisvadi, Chorao, Divar, Jua and Vamsi. These areas were under the political tutelage of the Adil Shah of Bijapur. After 1543, they acquired the adjoining areas of Bardez and Salcette
4. Paulo da Trindade’s magnum Opus is called *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*

5. For the conversion policies of the Portuguese refer to Kamat Pratima, *Farar Far: Local Resistance to the colonial hegemony in Goa (1510-1912)*, Institute Menezes Braganza, Panaji, 1999 and Mendonca Delio, *Conversions and Citizenry in Goa*, Concept, New Delhi, 2002 and P.P Shirodkar, 'Evangelisation and its harsh realities in Portuguese India' in T.R. de Souza (ed), *Discoveries, Missionary Expansion and Asian cultures*, Concept Publishers, New Delhi, 1994, p.33, pp. 80-82.
6. Ifeka Caroline, 'The image of Goa' in T.R de Souza (ed.), *Indo Portuguese History: Old Issues, New Questions*, Concept Publishing Co., New Delhi, 1985, pp. 182-183.
7. *bid* pp. 190-191.
8. Cunha T.B., *Denationalization of the Goans*, 1940, Monograph.
9. These included the remaining 8 talukas of Goa that were acquired by the Portuguese only in the late 18th century.
10. Sinha Arun, *Goa Indica: A critical potrait of Post colonial Goa*, Bibliophile South Asia, 2002
11. Even more shocking are the Statistics that are provided by the Official Census of 1891. Even after the Portuguese acquired the *Novas Conquistas*, the number of Christians in Goa was 232189 or 64.5% of the population. Sinha Arun, *Op. Cit.*, p. 27.
12. Coutinho Verresimo, *Education and Development in Goa*, ICSS, Rome, 1987.
13. Sinha Arun, *Op.Cit.*, pp.28-28. The issues on Goan identity are taken up by de Souza T.R., 'Goan culture and Identity:Historically speaking' in *Boletim do Instituto de Vasco da Gama*, Vol. 162, 1991, p.57.
14. de Souza Teotónio R., 'The Portuguese in the Goan folklore: *Some preliminary comments*', goacom_ culture.
15. de Souza T.R, 'The Christian Mission in the aftermath of discoveries: Tools for shaping the colonial other' in T.R. de Souza (ed), *Op.Cit.*, 1994, p.33.
16. Anthony da Silva, 'The Discoverers versus the Discovered: Psychological Perspectievs on Portuguese Goan prejudices in the 16th -18th centuries' in T.R. de Souza (ed), *Op.Cit.*, 1994, pp. 45-49.
17. These issues formed the content of the *Congresso Internacional de Historia: Missionacao Portuguesa e Encontro de Culturas*, Braga, 1993. For a base for the study of such an aspect in Goa T.R de Souza, 'Christianisation of Goa and cultural conflicts' in T.R de Souza (ed), *Goa to me*, Concept Publishers, 2000, pp. 86-97
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Pastoral etc as well as the State and Parish records will give us a better understanding of the Colonial Church. For details one may refer to de Sousa T.R., 'Voiceless in Goan History..'

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23. Sinha Arun, *Op.Cit.*
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31. Carlos da Gama, *Hacia una Evangelizacion Liberadora en Goa* , unpublished thesis , University of Salamanca, Madrid.
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48. Sinha Arun, *Op.Cit.*,, p. 116.
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