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TYPES OF KONKANI SONGS

by JOSE PEREIRA

We have a vast inheritance, but no inventory of our treasures.

All is given us in profusion; it remains for us to catalogue, sort, distribute, select, harmonize, and complete.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, *Prophetical Office*, Introduction.

I. *The Goan Song Family*

ALL KONKANI SONGS can be divided into four main groups. The most important and best studied of these is the Goan. Its sphere of influence is the core of the Konkani-speaking zone. Second in importance is the Kerala Konkani, found in the Malayalam country, especially in the tract between Cranganore and Quilon; third, the Kanarese Konkani, occurring south of Goa in the corridor which is now part of Karnatak. Starting from the confines of Canacona the southernmost district of Goa, this terrain extends as far as Bhatkal. From there it runs into the Tulu-speaking countryside, and moves southwards for a considerable length till it touches Mangalore, where we find an island of Kanarese Konkani. The fourth group is the Maratha Konkani; it covers the area from Pernem in northern Goa to Vijaydurg—now in Maharashtra. These four traditions have their sub-varieties which are based on regional and other differences.

Konkani is no longer, as it once may have been, spoken along the whole Konkan coastal tract.¹ In North Konkan, Marathi has probably made inroads deep enough to replace Konkani with its own dialect. The people there who are nearest in spirit to the Goan are the so-called "East-Indians". They are the Christians of the old Portuguese "Province of the North"—which comprises areas near Bassein and Bombay. The landscape with its palms, churches and crosses can be mistaken for Goa and the patois, which is a considerable softening of Marathi, has many similarities to Konkani. The East Indians came under a greater influence of Marathi Song than the Goans; but were exposed to a less intense Latinization and for a shorter period. We must recall that Portu-

1. Valaulikar, in his *Goinkaranchi Gonyambaiti vasmuk, pailem khandd*, (Bombay : Gomantak Press, 1928) 2 ulaup, 53-54, gives a list of Konkani survivals in East Indian Marathi.

guese rule in the Province of the North ended two hundred years earlier than it did in Goa.² On the other hand, Goan Hindus have come more under the sway of Maratha than Portuguese cultural activity. This fact has given rise to a distinct sub-variety of Goan Song.³

Portuguese songs have been (and to a lesser extent still are) popular in Goa. Some Portuguese songs⁴ are in a Goan patois.⁵ But there are more bilingual songs, with some lines in Portuguese and some in Konkani.⁶ On the other hand, those that have come down to us from Daman, Chaul and Diu are entirely in Portuguese.⁷ Some of the melancholy and the lilt of the Goan Songs pervades them, and a few songs-of apparently Damanese origin-were sometimes sung in Goan Song sessions.⁸

Of all the song traditions, the influence of Kanarese is the most difficult to isolate. Songs in that language are little known in Goa and are found only in the Kanarese Konkani.⁹ Through Marathi and Kanarese, Konkani Song has been linked with two important traditions of the peninsular interior, the domains of which lie chiefly beyond Goa's mountains. In summary, the family of song traditions, to which Goan Song belongs is the following. The grouping has been made according to the degree of nearness of other songs to the Goan.

1. Goan
2. Kerala Konkani
3. Kanarese Konkani
4. Maratha Konkani

2. For East Indian songs, cf. Lawrence D'Mello, *East Indian Folk Songs and Dances, in Seven Scenes*, and *East Indian Folk Songs & Dances in Seven Scenes. Musical Notation*, Bandra, Bombay 1956. Cf. also his "East Indian Folk Songs & Dances", in *Bombay East Indian*, Vol. 1, no. 5 (15 October 1956), 9, 10 and 12.

3. For the works on Goan Hindu Song, cf. the articles by Vasudev Kanti-Vag, some of which are mentioned in nos. 11 and 38 below.

4. Miguel Vicente de Abreu, *op. cit.*, 120-121.

5. Cf. by the same author, *Ramalhinho de alguns hymnos e canções profanas em portuguez e concani offercidas a mocidade goana de ambos sexos, por um curioso*, número 2 (Nova Goa : Imprensa Nacional, 1870) 19-23. Only 3 números were published.

6. Of the few songs of this type, the following verse from a *dulpod* is an example :

*Faça favor, meu amor
Rupan distai tum kunvor.*

7. Some of the songs of Daman are published in António Francisco Moniz, *Notícias e documentos para a história de Damão*, 2nd ed. Bastora : Tip. Rangel, 1923 Vol. 1.

8. Like the following song :

*Remai marinheir
Marinheir
Quando chegar otra banda marinheir,
Levai seu dinheir.*

A Konkani translation of this, *Tanddy re tanddela*, is also sung.

9. See Severine Silva and Stephen Fuchs, "The Marriage Customs of the Christians in South Canara, India", *Asian Folklore Studies*, Tokyo, Vol. XXIV-2 (1965), 1-52.

5. East Indian
6. Marathi
7. Damanese
8. Kanarese (or Kannada)
9. Chaulese
10. Diuese

II Classification of Konkani Song

The variety of Konkani Song types is staggering when we consider the small number of its language speakers. We have been able to trace as many as 35 types and cannot be sure that this list is either exhaustive or clearly defined.¹⁰

Only one of these types, the Mando (or as in Konkani, *Manddo*) has been investigated in any detail and some study has been done on the Dulpod and Deknni—the two types sung after the Mando at social functions. The rest still remains to be studied, and further research will no doubt show redundancy and confusion about many of them. They must be analysed with more definite criteria: As the types logically precede the criteria, we shall begin with a brief description of the former, based above all on their literary content.

1. *BANVARH*. Hindu song for a "day of the dead".¹¹
2. *BOAT SONGS*. Sung in Kerala.
3. *BRAHMIN NUPTIAL SONGS*. Sung at wedding ceremonies and rituals outside the church services.¹²
4. *CHILD SONGS*. Sung by the mother at other times than when lulling the child to sleep.¹³

10. OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS OF GOAN SONG. For other classifications of Goan Song, cf. Manuel Rodrigues, "Folk Songs of Goa" *Goan Tribune*, 6 October 1957, 9 and 10, and Ansther Lobo, *op. cit.*, 54-55. Lucio Rodrigues, in his various articles, does not seem to have noticed the Banvarh, Dirge, Divallo, Launnim, Random Folk Song, Street Hawkers' cries and Talgarhi. He mistakenly classifies the Mando as a folksong, and fails to include Popular Art Songs and Teatr songs in his lists. He lists fishermen's and toddy tappers' songs, which can well be brought under our "Work" Songs, distinguishes between the secular and religious Ovi, but forms marriage songs into one category.

11. Studied by Vasudev Kamti-Vag in *Konkanni lok-kavyantso ollensar* (MS in our possession), published in part in *Parmall*, Goa, 18 February 1967.

12. *Ramalhetinho*, no. 1 (1866), 1-6; no. 2 (1870) 24-27, 31-32, gives *ovis* for

- a. the farewell of the bride.
- b. the soup-party of the groom.
- c. the washing of the groom's feet.
- d. blessing the couple with gifts.
- e. the praise of the bride's physical charms.

13. Propercia Correia-Afonso de Figueiredo, "A magia do folclore na vida da criança indo-portuguesa", *O Oriente Português*, Panjim 1938, nos. 19, 20 & 21, 333-369.

5. *CHILDREN'S SONGS*. Sung during games, etc.¹⁴
6. *DEKNNI*. A song imitating Hindu music in Christian musical idiom, dealing in the main with Goan Hindu life.¹⁵
7. *DHALO*.¹⁶ Hindu songs sung during marriages (?).
8. *FUNERAL DIRGES*. Recitative pieces improvised by mourners at funerals.¹⁷
9. *DULPOD*.¹⁸ A song with a quick rhythm, which as a rule describes everyday Goan life, notably that of Goan Christians.¹⁹ A "genre" song.²⁰
10. *DUVALLO*. A Pregnancy song.
11. *FELL SONG*. A *fell* (Standard Konkani : *khellu*) is a popular folk play performed by wandering players,²¹ usually during Carnival, Christmas and Easter, and sometimes on special occasions like weddings. *Fells* are of three kinds, according to the social levels of Goan life they describe. One has to do with the three upper castes of the Christian districts, Brahmins, Chardos and Sudhirs; another with the Kunnbis and the third with the Hindus.

14. *Ibid.*

15. See Lucio Rodrigues's "Konkani Folk Songs of Goa, 2. Dacni, The Song of the Dancing Girl", *Journal of the University of Bombay*, January 1955 65-75; and José Pereira & Michael Martins, *A Sheaf of Deknnis*, Bombay : The Konkani Cultural Association, 1967.

16. Vasudha Mane, *Govyantil dhālo*, Bombay : Makarand Sahitya, 1964, King Someśvara III, in his *Mānasollāsa*, written around 1131, mentions a folk song type called *dhavalā*, from which our *dhalo* may well have been derived. Cf *Mānasollāsa*, c. 16, v. 552, 81.

17. The Goan dirges can be compared to the Hungarian, which are described thus by Zoltan Kodaly: "The significance of Hungarian dirges lies in their being the sole musical examples of prosaic recitative songs and the only opportunity for improvisation". Quoted by Gyorgy Kerényi, "The System of Publishing the Collection of Hungarian Folk Songs, *Corpus Musicae Popularis Hungaricae*" *Studia Memoriae Belae Bartok Sacra* (Budapest : Aedes Academiae Scientiae Hungaricae, 1956), 462. Cf. also Zoltan Kodaly, *Folk Music of Hungary* (tr. from the original *A Magyar Népzene* by R. Tempest & C. Joly. London : Barrie and Rockliff, 1960) V, 76-81, "Dirges".

18. The *dulpods* are best described in Szini's phrase "folk songs of the nobility". See Kodaly, *op. cit.*, 18.

19. The earliest printed examples of the Dulpod are found in the *Rama-lhetinho*.

20. Lucio Rodrigues's "Konkani Folk Songs of Goa, 3. Durpod : The Song of Joy", *Journal of the University of Bombay*, January 1959, 26-49, is still the fullest treatment of the subject.

21. The earliest mention we have found of what appears to have been *fells* is in a text which speaks of them as staged on the occasion of the transfer of the body of St Francis Xavier to one of the chapels of the Bom Jesus on 24 April 1659 : "Varias danças de Salçete vierão para esta solenidade". P. S. S. Pissurlencar, "O túmulo, o caixão é o bastão de S. Francisco Xavier", *Boletim do Instituto Vasco da Gama*, no. 25 (1935), 79. In Konkani idiom, a *fell* is "danced" (*fell nassoitai*), and is thus by implication a dance.

12. *FUGRHI*. A Hindu dance song sung at religious festivals, particularly that of the god Ganesha (or Ganapati).²²
13. *GOD-DDE*. The folk *Ramayana* in 13 sessions. Survives in Kerala.
14. *KUNNBI NUPTIAL CHANTS* or *PITTAM*. Non-religious ceremonial wedding songs of the Kunnbis.
15. *KUNNBI SONGS*. Songs sung by the Kunnbis on various occasions,²³ mostly in Fugrhi style.
16. *LAUNNIM*. A popular song treatment of religious and legendary themes.²⁴
17. *MANDO*.²⁵ A generally regular verse or verse-and-refrain song with a metre and rhythm of its own, whose themes are love, personal tragedy and outside events.
18. *MANDO-DULPOD*. A quicker variety of the Mando, which makes it easy for singers and dances to go over from it to the fast beat of the dulpods.²⁶

22. Studied, with examples collected by himself, by Vasudev Kamti-Vag in *op. cit.*

23. Kunnbi and pseudo-Kunnbi style songs, now so popular, seem first to have been written for the stage by João Agostinho Fernandes (1871-1947) following the example of the more talented folk dramatist Mest Filip of Chandor.

24. For the definition of *launnim*, see M. V. Dhonde, *Marāthi Lāṅṅi* (Bombay: Mauj Prakashan, 1956), 16.

25. The word "MANDO" OR "MANDDO". Scholars derive the word in five different ways:

1. From the name of an African Tete dance *mandoa*. (S. R. Dalgado, *Glossario luso-asidico*, Vol. 2, Coimbra, 1921, 23). A groundless derivation.
2. From *manddo*, supposed to mean an earthen vessel, sometimes covered with lizard skin, used all along the Konkani coast (Antsher Lobo, *op. cit.*, p. 54, col. 2). We have discovered no such vessel in our researches.
3. From *maṅḍala nṛtya*, a dance of Krishna, whose name is said to have become the Konkani *manddo-nach* according to the laws of phonetic change in Prakrit (Mariano Saldanha, "O folclore goês, II" *Heraldo* 5 January 1949, 1) It is difficult to say what these laws are; further, as Saldanha himself admits, the Mando dance movements have little in common with those of the *maṅḍala nṛtya*.
4. From the Sanskrit adjective *manda* ("slow") which described the Mando's tempo correctly. However, this adjective is nowhere used in Konkani to describe slow movement, which leads us to abandon this view (earlier held by ourselves).
5. From the verb *maṅḍdunk*, which is the commonest derivation. Diogo Ribeiro's explanation of it seems to us to be final "*Mandditam Armar*, v.g. *Manddusa manddilea Tê armado a Ratoeira. Passa mandditam Armar lacos. Gannem mandditam. Começaram a cantar, ou emtoar a cantiga*". *Vocabulario* (1626, MS.), under *Mandditam*. Under *Gannem*, *ea*, he says "Canto. *Gannem mandditam. Entoar a cantiga*". These texts were pointed out to us by Aleixo Costa, former Librarian of the Central Library, Panjim.

26. See José Pereira, "The Mando Dance" *Sunday Navhind Times*, Panaji 2 January 1972, 3 & 5.

19. *OVI*²⁷ AND *VERS*. Under this heading come the songs which are similar to the Nuptial ones (also known as Ovi, or Vovi, and Vers) in style and musical characteristics, but deal with almost any theme outside domestic wedding ritual.²⁸ Originally (and still in a majority of cases) all these songs were in the *ovi* metre.²⁹ The Portuguese name for these songs is *verso*, which in Konkani becomes *vers*.

20. *PALNNAM*. Cradle songs.³⁰ This is the largest branch of songs sung by the mother to her infant and therefore deserves a separate heading from "Child Songs".

21. *POPULAR ART SONGS*. A miscellaneous category comprising art songs which have not a fixed form like the Mando.³¹

22. *RANDOM FOLK SONGS*. Folk songs without a set theme or name, but not necessarily without form. When there is form it is an individual instance, not constituting a type.³²

23. *SACRED ART SONG (CHRISTIAN)*. Hymns, antiphons and other species of religious vocal music, generally passed on through the written text.³³

24. *SACRED SONG (HINDU)*. Found in Kerala.

27. The Ovi is mentioned in *Mānasollāsa*, *loc. cit.*, v. 553, 81. Severine Silva and Stephen Fuchs derive the word from the Sanskrit *vri*, "to choose" or "to select". "From this root *vri* several other terms have been coined. Thus the bridegroom is called *voreth*, the bride is *vokol*, the invitation to a wedding *voulik*, the wedding party *voran*, a female wedding guest is *vouli*, a male wedding guest is *voulo*, a wedding song is *vovi* (plural *vovyo*) while the wedding procession is called *vor*". *Op. cit.*, p. 10. If this is true then Ovi was borrowed by Marathi from Konkani. For other (more fanciful) derivations see N.G. Joshi, *Marāthi Chhando-racanā* (Baroda 1955), c. 6, 130-132; they show how difficult it is to prove that the Ovi is a Marathi creation.

28. See *Ramajaiñho* for a selection of *ovis* on various themes.

29. *THE METRE OF THE OVI*. "It has three rhymed lines and one, unrhymed. The three rhymed lines each contain three or four words or more, and the fourth, one, two, or exceptionally three. The number of syllables is normally nine for the rhymed lines and four or five for the last line, but they can be increased or decreased within reasonable limits conditioned by considerations of quantity and pause, a facility which gives an opening to interpolations and omissions". Alfred Master, *A Grammar of Old Marathi* (Oxford 1964), 13-14.

30. Propercia Correia-Afonso de Figueiredo, *op. cit.* The *Purana* of Francisco Vaz de Guimaraes (published 1659) has *palnnam* verses in Marathi which Cunha Rivara (*op. cit.*, p. CCXII) thinks are based on "vernacular" (Konkani?) songs.

31. Some examples of Popular Art Songs are João Filipe da Cruz's (known as *Molaum*) *Ganvam bitory gaum-um Kut-tihalle*, and Domingos Valadares's (died 1890/1894) *Sonsram 'duru mul-llo' to vorhu*.

32. Some examples of Random Folk Songs are: *Esprit Sant Mirnil' cumpari*, *Goinchem gurguleto*, *Kali nuim re poiri*, *Patius tuzo fulola re kombo*, *Sogle rati modem*, *To azretso varu* and *Xemaim muji meli*.

33. *SACRED ART SONG* "As partituras sacras a floraram de leve sem prenderem fortemente as curiosidades artisticas e podem-se aferir n'essa pedra de toque. Vejo, porem, no album dos antigos cantos culturaes, folhas inspiradas e vibrantes de sentimento, escriptas n'uma hora de mysticismo profundo e lançadas consoante a maneira e a estylo nacional: o *Papianchi xeratinim* e tantas mais". Floriano Barreto, *op. cit.*, 135-6.

25. *SACRED FOLK SONG (CHRISTIAN)*. Hymns and popular catechetical songs and chants living entirely or largely in oral tradition.³⁴

26. *SACRED FOLK SONG (HINDU)*. Survives all over the Konkani territory.

27. *STORY SONGS*. Sung dialogues between various characters in a story, set in a narrative of unsung prose.

28. *STREET HAWKERS' CRIES*. Usually one-sentence melodies sung by a hawker to attract attention to his wares.³⁵

29. *SUDIR NUPTIAL SONGS*. Wedding songs of the Sudirs before and after the religious ceremony.

30. *TALGARHI*. A song of the Gaurhos.

31. *TEATR SONGS*. Sung in the Teatr (Portuguese: teatro) or Stage Play.³⁶

32. *WORK SONGS*. Sung by labourers in the course of their tasks in the fields.³⁷

33. *XOBHANE*. Hindu marriage song of Kanara and Kerala.

34. *ZAGOR SONGS*. The Zagor, a play by the Kunbis on their own life is elemental and often crude in character.³⁸

34. *DEVOTIONAL FOLK SONGS*. One of the few scholars to have studied Christian Sacred Folk Songs in Konkani is the late Lucio Rodrigues. He describes the devotional folk *ovis* thus: "Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross, for the Sign is the foundation of our Christian faith; that is how the folk of Goa open the *Ovi* session. It is a long session beginning late in the evening and going far into the night. Imagine a group of men seated round a fire, tuning a set of drums (*madiem* and *gumot*, as they are called); one intones a verse to the soft thud of the drums, and then the player of the *madiem* begins a series of rhythmic variations to the accompaniment of the *gumot* and cymbals. It is a music full of elemental vitality. The *Ovi*, is sung by fishermen and toddy tappers in Goa, at feasts, christenings, weddings, etc. The verses are from the *Christa Purana* of Father Stephens written about 1616. Besides these verses, there are others on the Seven Sacraments, the Sign of the Cross, etc., for the *Ovi* was used by the early missionaries for catechetical purposes. *Poili Santa Khursachi curu* is one such." *Konkani Folk Songs* (leaflet, Bombay: Bombay Madrigal Singers Organization, 10 April 1953), 5. The assertion that some of these *ovis* are from Stephens's *Purana* is however unverified.

35. These were first examined by Micael Martins "O folclore de Goa (Pequeno estudo analítico)" *Luta*, Panjim, 3 February 1962, 4.

36. See Chapter I, note 98. The *teatristas* rarely published their songs with the score: one exception is Sebastião Gabriel D'Souza ("Karachiwalla") in his *Cuxttoba* (3rd ed. Bombay 1923), 1-15.

37. We have come across work songs in Colva, Benaolim, Varca-Fatradra, Orlim, and Carmona (in Salsete). Antsber Lobo, *op. cit.*, 54, mentions Harvest (Reapers' and Threshers') Songs and Milkmaid's Songs, found "in the remoter regions of Goa".

38. Vasudev Kamti-Vag, "Amcha natkanchi paramara", *Navem Goim*, Margao, 15 April 1963) 3. Archbishops Frei Manuel de Santa Catarina (in office between 1780 and 1812) and Manuel de S. Galdino (between 1812 and 1831), banned the Zagor, but not much heed was paid to their rulings.

35. *ZOTI*. A form of song used either for nuptial chants by the Christians of Bardez or by the Hindus at their *Xigmo* festival. They include epic and narrative songs, sung by a group of boys in front of a house.³⁹

III *Criteria of Classification*

Some criteria which may be adopted for a critical analysis of Konkani Songs are :

1. Religion
2. Caste
3. Class and Profession
4. Linguistic Group
5. Education
6. Music
7. Literary Form
8. Content
9. Function
10. Religion
11. Sex
12. Age

These categories need no explanation (and will be applied to the song types listed in this chapter)—except that of music, as it includes the controverted notions of art and folk song. An enquiry into what distinguishes them will lead us beyond the scope of this article. In what follows we shall confine our discussion chiefly to the Goan branch of Konkani Song.

1. RELIGION. Goa has two main religious bodies, Hindus and Christians. In 1950 the Hindus numbered over three, and the Christians less than two and a half, hundred thousand.⁴⁰

39. THE ZOTI. Lucio Rodrigues speaks of the Christian *zoti* in these words: "The Zot is a small verse stanza of four lines, similar to the Marathi grinding song *ovi*. It is sung, chiefly by women, at all the different ceremonies connected with a typical village wedding. . . In form the Zot is made up of four lines. Each Zot is a complete unit by itself. The first two lines usually describe the beauty of some natural scene or object. Sometimes a general observation is made. The next two lines form the second section, which often has no obvious connection with the first two lines, except that the third line rhymes with the second. The last line mentions the names of the person to whom the Zot is sung as a gift, and the third line mentions a quality which is characteristic of the person sung to. The Zot is thus a tribute in song. . . "Konkani Folksongs", *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. 2, no. 2 (1948) 7-8. Example of the Hindu Zoti were assembled by Vasudev Kamti-Vag in his MS. *Konkani lok-kavyantso ollensar* (published in part in the magazine *Parnall* (ed. Suhas Dalal), Goa 18 February 1967). In 1846, Filipe Neri Xavier, who had collected several *zotis*, says that he was unable to publish them for lack of a press with musical types. *O Gabinete Litterario das Fontainhas*, p. 149, note 3.

40. Énio Pimenta, *Our Native Land* (Bombay: The Century Printers, 1952) 14.

Most of the examples of Goan Song are of Christian authorship specially those of Salsete. The types commonly sung by the Hindus are the Banvarh, Fughi, Launim, Ovi (or Vers), Sacred Songs, Art and Folk songs (Hindu songs found chiefly in Kerala), Story Songs and Zoti. In all these, except the Banvarh, the treatment of Hindu life is salient, but we cannot tell whether the Banvarh is Hindu in origin. As known today, it is exclusively Christian in authorship.

The following seem to be the work of Christians only: the Mando, Mando-Dulpod, Popular Art Song, Sacred Art Song (Christian), Sacred Folk Song (Christian) and Teatr Song. We have no clear knowledge of what the other types are for and when they originated. They may (in all probability) have evolved from song types now extinct. The Christian song tradition in Goa is connected with that in the Kerala, Kanara and Maratha Konkans, Chaul, Daman and the East Indian districts. The Hindu traditions also links up with those of the other two Konkans and Maharashtra.

2. CASTE. There is in Goa (as in the rest of India) a proliferation of castes and social divisions, especially among the Hindus. We know little of the types of song found in the Hindu community to be able to say with confidence which castes engendered them. We are already familiar with the three upper castes and the Kunnbis of Christian society. The Brahmins fashioned the Mando,⁴¹ the Mando-Dulpod and perhaps the Dulpod too. Christian Sacred Song is mainly a Brahmin and Chardo composition. The Fell originates chiefly from the Sudirs. The Kunnbi Nuptial Songs, the Kunnbi songs and the Zagor are all the work of the Kunnbis themselves—perhaps the oldest of Goa's inhabitants.

There was also a mutual adoption of forms. Joaquim Santana Menezes, a Brahmin, whose songs are still popular today composed *fell*s. Canon Antonio Dias, a Sudir, wrote important *mandos*. Besides affecting the work of Teatr writers (some of whom have written pseudo-Kunnbi pieces) Kunnbi influence has been strongly felt in many older types of Goan Songs; indeed, it has worked its way through the *dulpods* to the Mando itself.

3. CLASS AND PROFESSION. The significance of caste was originally religious among what is today the Christian community, and continues to be so among the Hindus. In addition to caste stratification, there is an economic one which often cuts across caste divisions. Society in the halcyon days of traditional Goan Song was divided into two classes, comprising those who owned property (*battkars*) and those who did not (*munddkars*)—and who in consequence had to work on the *battkar's* land. Goan Art Song is the work of the latter class only and Goan Folk Song that of both the classes, but more that of the *munddkars*.

41. For a description of the stratification of the Goan population in the days of the Mando, cf. Azavedo, *op. cit.*, 9-11.

4. LINGUISTIC GROUPS. These are formed according to caste and class. Each caste has its own dialect, which is a sub-variety of the regional form of Konkani. The Mando uses the Brahmin speech as a rule, and Goan Sacred Song does so in perhaps the majority of cases. The language forms of Konkani Sacred Song and the Mando have developed from the Standard Konkani of the 16th and 17th centuries, which later gave rise to seven literary dialects — Saxtti, Karwari, Koddaili, Kerali, Manglluri, Barhdexi and Antruzi.⁴²

Folk songs also make use of caste dialects. The wedding songs of each caste are composed in its own dialect, and this is also true of song-types that are the specialities of particular castes. In the *deknnis* there is a mixed dialect, which is intended to mimic Hindu speech but is really a Christian patois with features of Hindu talk that strike the Christians as peculiar. Such dialects are also employed in songs meant to ridicule the speech types of other castes.

In addition to caste dialects there are also those of class, which are linguistic varieties of speech within classes, and are salient among the land-owners. Comprising the mestizos and the rich landlords and a few others, there is the class which, due to historical and other reasons, was very near to its Portuguese masters, always moving closer to them both culturally and linguistically. Its members usually knew Konkani and used it with other Goans, but hardly ever among themselves. Below these came two other classes, of those who were bilingual in the family circle⁴³ and those who spoke Konkani at home almost always.⁴⁴ The latter may or may not have known some Portuguese—most of them did not. Goan Art Song rose among the last two classes, but at least one mestizo has composed expressive stanzas in Konkani.⁴⁵

5. EDUCATION. We know of the Mando, Popular Art Song and the Teatr Songs chiefly through the written media. They are thus primarily the work of the educated groups. Formerly, only the Brahmins and Chardos could afford education, particularly those with large landed properties. The Mando is the work of the generally literate Konkani-speaking class though many of the

42. Konkani has well over 15 spoken dialects, of which seven are literary! A few books have been published in the dialects of the Navayat Muslims and at least a prose piece and some poems in that of Savantwadi (Kudalli).

43. In the days of the Mando, educated Goans actually knew more Latin than Portuguese, as Jacinto Caetano de Barreto Miranda. *Quadros históricos de Goa*, Caderneta II (Margão 1864), quadro XVI, 89, tells us. Cf. also A. L. Mendes, "O Oriente e a America", Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa (1892), 17.

44. "Though Portuguese was the language of their 'political' make up, Konkani remained with them and in them, so that when they sought to give expression to their essential being, they used it in song and poetry, creating a new 'literature' through their new consciousness". Lucio Rodrigues, "Konkani Folk Songs of Goa", *Free Press Bulletin*, Bombay, 24 July 1954.

45. César-Mendes, author of *Dony tinim muinem zale muj' moga Fobor nax-leary maka*.

informants on it were illiterate. A large part of Goan Sacred Song came into being through the efforts of the talented Chardos of this class. As to the Hindu songs, it is difficult to say of what castes their authors were and what formal education they had.

6. MUSIC. As said earlier, this topic is better studied separately.

7. LITERARY FORM. Of the art song types, only one with a finished literary form was in general use — the Mando. Goan Sacred Song had one widely accepted metre, the *ovi*. There are a variety of other forms, which however do not seem to occur often. The *ovi* is employed in Goan Folk Song too, and is found in the song type of its name that is known to us. In nearly all types of Goan Song, while there often is a strict metrical organization of the material, the resulting form seldom becomes a model to be repeated, at least with a discernible frequency.

8. CONTENT. This is the hardest to categorize. At a comprehensive glance, the subject matter of Goan Song seems to comprise *life*, Hindu and Christian, upper caste and Kunnabi; *love*, the wedding and the child; *tragedy* and death; work; and lastly, *events*, social mythological and religious.

9. FUNCTION. Besides being a vehicle of aesthetic enjoyment,⁴⁶ song can also be put to other uses. In one of these, as in dance songs, the music and rhythm come to the fore; in another, the words become important, with music and rhythm assisting. The main purpose of this type would be to show what a human event means to a singer or his group, and at the same time to bring out its aesthetic character.

Song-dance forms are the Deknni, Dulpod, Fell, Fugrhi, Mando, Mando-Dulpod, and the Zagor songs. The human events described in song are endless in number. Not all peoples have songs for all or even most of everyday or usual human happenings. But there are some significant moments in people's lives (like birth and death) that have always found expression, and are often marked with great elaboration in song usage. More specifically, these events can be grouped into familial and social, profane and religious.⁴⁷ Family events are ones like pregnancy (Duvall), putting a child to sleep (Palnam), certain wedding ceremonies performed in the home (Nuptial Songs), mourning for a dead person (Dirges and Banvarhs) or telling a child a story (Story Songs). Social events include some of the above, such as Nuptial Songs and Funeral Dirges, and fresh ones like drama (Fell and

46. For the types and classification of song see Ralph Steele Boggs, "Types and Classification of Folklore", in M. Leach and J. Fried (ed.) *Funk and Wagnall's Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend* (New York: Funk & Wagnall's Co.), Vol. 2 (1950) p. 1142, col. 1.

47. See George Herzog, "Song", *Ibid.*, p. 1034.

Teatr) Songs, festival songs (Fughri), wedding songs to be sung at receptions (Wedding Mando), songs connected with agricultural activities (work songs) and with religious ceremonies (sacred art and folk songs).

10. REGION. The Christian songs arose chiefly in the predominantly Christian districts, the "Old Conquests": Salsete, Bardez and Tisvadi (Ilhas). The Goan Hindu songs, as we know them today, are mostly from the "New Conquests"—where the population is predominantly Hindu. Pre-eminent in range and depth of output is Salsete, hence the use of its dialect is general in the *mandos* and in much of Sacred Art Song (Christian). The principal villages in which the Mando blossomed are Curtorim, Loutolim, Raia, Margão, Verna and Benaullim, all in Salsete.⁴⁸ Within its borders too, one of the first Indian printing presses was set up⁴⁹ and the first Konkani grammar⁵⁰ and prose text⁵¹ published. The most productive village of all was Curtorim, ministered, like the other villages of Salsete, by the Jesuits, but claimed as their own parish by the Augustinians—one of the most enlightened and rich orders working at the time in Goa.⁵²

11. SEX. Women take the lead in singing some of the song-types (though men too know many of them), such as several nuptial songs, obviously the pregnancy songs, *fughris*, dirges, palnnam and child songs, *ovis* (?), story songs, and *zotis* (?). The two principal voices of the Mando are traditionally male and female. It is

48. PREEMINENCE OF SALSETE Many writers witness to the position of Salsete as the chief province of the Konkan. In 1595 Francisco Paes wrote: "Estas terras de Salsete são . . . tidas pelas melhores de todo o Concão" (quoted by Cunha Rivara, in *Brados a favor das comunidades & c.*, p. 82). In 1697 Francisco de Sousa remarked that it was "o melhor pedaço de terra, que tem Portugal na India, e a Christandade mais lustrosa que tem a Igreja no Oriente" (*Oriente Conquistado*, conq. I, div. II, n. 60, p. 106). The province of Bardez began to dispute Salsete's primacy in 1862, and Filipe Neri Xavier, after his usual minute examination of the case, came to the conclusion that Salsete had precedence over Bardez as *tanadaria*, *concelho* and *município*. *Nobiliarchia Goana* (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1862), 173.

49. The printing press was set up in Goa in 1556 and lasted till 1674. See A. K. Priolkar, *The Printing Press in India. Its Beginnings and Early Development*. (Bombay: Marathi Samshodhana Mandala, 1958), ch. I.

50. The grammar of Thomas Stephens.

51. Thomas Stephens: *Doutrina Christam em lingua Bramana Canarim* published in the Colegio de Rachol in 1622 (2nd ed. by Mariano Saldanha *Doutrina Cristã em lingua concani*, Lisbon 1945), is Konkani's first important printed prose text.

52. Frei Manoel da Ave Maria, writing in 1817, says that the Augustinians had a church in Curtorim dedicated to St. Alex in his *Manual eremitico da congregação da India Oriental dos Eremitas de Nosso Padre Santo Agostinho*, in Silva Rego, *Documentação para a história das missões do Padroado Português no Oriente*, Vol. II (Lisbon 1955), 147. However, Thomas Stephens writing in 1601 does not say anything about the Augustinian origins of St. Alex's church (see A. K. Priolkar, "Two Recently Discovered Letters of Fr. Thomas Stephens", *op. et num cit.*, 121). Frei Manoel may only have been guessing that Curtorim was under his order from the name of its church's patron saint—popular among the Augustinians.

difficult to say if any of the types of Goan Song are exclusively or even primarily men's songs — except those of the theatre in its popular and stage forms (Fell and Teatr), where even the female parts are sung by male impersonators. Of course, women can and do sing theatre songs outside the plays. Some of the softness in Goan melodies is surely due to women singing its tunes.

Of no less consequence to the continuity of Goan Song and to the preservation of its authentic character is the important fact that women's singing is more ornamented than men's.⁵³ As Goan music employs a marked degree of ornamentation, the female version of a musical piece thus stands a greater chance of being more faithful to the original composition than the male. Women have the reputation of being better preservers of tradition. Examples of Konkani Song's rarer types can today be collected almost only from women, as for instance several of the verses of the nuptial songs.

12. AGE. Most of these songs have today become old people's songs. In the late years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, the villages in which the old grew up were still very much what they had been for many generations. Their agricultural economy could support a majority of the villages. Their age-old customs guaranteed a stable form of living and their time honoured types of entertainment—including songs and dances—were sufficient to ensure a large measure of satisfaction and mental equilibrium. All this cumulatively kept village morale high, and was the cause of a justifiable pride and self-assuredness in all that village life stood for.⁵⁴

However, the increased industrialization of India under the British ruined this. Its towns, especially Bombay dominating the Konkan Coast, held out the prospect of making money. The drift from the villages grew in strength and was, followed by the uprooting of age-old habits of its members and the severance of their associations with the land of their birth. Education acquired in the new surroundings taught them to look down on their traditional modes of expression. A weakening of the spirit of the village set in, and a feeling of inferiority for everything that village life meant sapped the sense of belonging which had kept it going.

This was particularly fatal to the Indian way of life, as a whole, because Indians were so deeply village-minded. The tradition in song, one of the stabilizers of the village, was everywhere unavoidably affected. From being the strong and vigorous thing it was, it soon drooped and withered. In a short time the mass media of propaganda, information and entertainment rendered

53. Cf. *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, 1960, 61.

54. Wilhelm Kutler, "Radio as the Destroyer, Collector and Restorer of Folk Music" in *ibid.* 1957, 34.

the folk methods for the same purpose pointless. Papers and journals replaced the personal narration of tales; and "mechanical music", the gramophone and the radio made music-making at home superfluous. The greatest enemy of all, the radio, swept like a tide through the villages and the countryside, drowning the rills of traditional music under its flood of noise. Submerged also by the spate of new material were the sources of strength of the song tradition — its continuity, capacity for natural selection and the creative impulse of its composers. New material, in right proportions, would have exerted a beneficial effect on folk song, as it always had in the past, because a vigorous song tradition has the power of converting what it receives into its own idiom. But the radio gave the village musician more than he could assimilate, and thus acted as a destructive instead of creative force on past music, seriously imperilling its continuity. Its capacity for natural selection— of choosing and assimilating extraneous matter into its own substance—was also constantly interfered with.⁵⁵ Lastly, mechanistic appliances formed a dead weight which almost crushed the creative impulse in the traditional musician's mind.

Of all the districts of Goa, the greatest victim, and also the most anglicized, was Bardez. Its inhabitants, exposed more than other Goans to the influence of industrial media, were among the first to produce records, stage pieces and musical performances based on Goan Song. Their programmes soon began to be heard over the wireless. So strong was their influence that the songs one heard (even when composed in Salsete) were mostly sung in their dialect — as in fact they often still are. It was also the people of Bardez who initiated the Teatr, — its main patois is still Bardexi, other forms of speech being brought in mostly for comic effect. In the field of Konkani journalism and novels too, they were again predominant,⁵⁶ and this was a fresh boost to their form of speech. The devotional manuals, which had earlier approximated Standard Konkani spelling, could be seen to shift to one suited to the Bardez dialect in the last quarter of the 19th century.

Not being too highly educated, most of these men were not haunted by critical misgivings. The penchant of the Bardez people for a music of a faster tempo,⁵⁷ and one less enamoured of ornaments and subtleties than the Salsete, also considerably vulgarized Goan Song. These popularizers of Goan music were thus more prone to the charms of sprightly contemporary airs especially to "pop" songs and jazz. Radio programme organizers,

55. Maud Karpeles, "Some Reflections on Authenticity in Folk Music" in *ibid.*, 1951, 13.

56. Some of the most important writers of Bardez are Eduardo de Sousa (1837-1905), the greatest poet in his dialect and founder of Konkani Journalism and the novelists Caridade Damasceno Fernandes (died 1948), António Vicente da Cruz (1885-1959) and José Lamartine Lobo (1889-1927).

57. Frederico de Aíala says that the Bardez people are an energetic race of mainly women and strong men. *Op. cit.*, 11.

no matter where they came from, were usually not fussy about what they put across to their audiences, and the latter rarely minded what they got. What awareness they possessed was drowned in a weird mixture of mush, nostalgia and slapstick humour. Anyone who offered to sing a Konkani song was allowed to. Even when the melody was correct, which was rare, the singing was false in its style and method of performance.⁵⁸ It became the fashion to turn an old song into a "pop" song. The tunes were not infrequently "jazzed up" to suit current taste, because the slow traditional manner was found to be "dragging". As it turned out, the fuddled musical faculties of a crowd desensitized by city life could only be excited by a full-scale "pop" orgy. For this purpose, the wild life of Goan Folk Song was slaughtered indiscriminately and the cries for help were only tiny squeaks in the general carousal and hubbub.

Because of this and other reasons the Mando, too, so far the preserve of an aristocracy, became the expression of Goa as a whole.⁵⁹ While this was otherwise a good thing, it unfortunately put the high-born queen of Goan Song at the mercy of a rabble of half-educated industrialized emigrants, who had little understanding or respect for her elegance. Crudeness and lack of critical sense were among the main causes of the tragedy of Goan Song. On the one hand its tradition aged prematurely and on the other it became coarse and vulgar. Thus, in every sense, the Mando was fated to become Goa's swan song.

The battering of the tradition of Goan Song by the cyclone of industrial vulgarization was paradoxically accompanied by an increasing critical clarity in its research. It was a tranquil glimmer of moonlight on a stormy sea, bright enough to reveal the flotsam of a shipwreck. The lucidity acquired only helped to lay bare the definitive disaster of a noble heritage, and make the tragedy in all its aspects even more bitter and complete.⁶⁰

58. Cf. Walter Wicra, "Concerning the Conception of Authentic Folk Music", *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 1949, 17.

59. Lucio Rodrigues, "The Love Song of Goa", *Marg*, *num. cit.*, p. 54, col. 1.

60. This metaphor is borrowed from Alberto Moravia's *L'amore coniugale* (8th ed. Milan: Bompiani 1958), XIV, 121.