CHAPTER THREE

GOAN RURAL HERITAGE

Land, Resources and People

The 'Old Conquests' region of Goa consists of three provinces, namely Bardez, Tisvadi and Salcete, and it lies almost at the centre of the west coast of India c. 250 miles SSE of Bombay. The three provinces are divided and separated from each other by rivers descending from the western Ghats. Thus, Bardez has Chapora river to its north and Mandovi river to its south; Tisvadi is an agglomeration of islands formed by the turnings of the Mandovi and Zuari rivers; and Salcete is separated from Tisvadi by Mandovi river and from its neighbouring eastern and southern regions by Sal river.

The entire region has a narrow littoral strip bathed by the Indian Ocean. The eastern side of the region is barred by a mountainous range covered with sufficiently thick forest. The lush greenery all over presents a fine contrast against the red of the laterite soil, and the idyllic impression is further enhanced by the silvery ribbons of the rivers and rivulets with their serpentine windings.

The three provinces of Bardez, Tisvadi and Salcete occupy an average land mass of 264 sq. kms., 166 sq. kms., and 355 sq. kms. respectively. The names of the three provinces are obviously derived from the number of the original settlements in each of them. Thus, Bardez derives from Bara + desa, meaning
twelve regions; Tisvadi derives from Tis + vadi, meaning thirty settlements; and Salcete is a corruption of Sanaashta or sixty-six (settlements). The earliest reference to these province names occurs in a Sanskrit copper plate grant inscription issued by Madhava Mantri, Vijayanagara governor of Goa, around 1391 A.D.¹

The climate of the region is of monsoon type characterized by sultry weather and by a long rainy season followed by a long spell of heat. The temperature varies between 16.3°C and 36.2°C, these two extremes being experienced in the months of December and February respectively.²

Paddy cultivation constitutes the main occupation of the rural population, and the chief paddy crop known as gorod depends upon the heavy monsoon rainfall in the months of June, July and August. The serpentine river net and the seasonal lakes enable several villages to raise a second crop known as vaingan during the months of December-April. Where the vaingan crop is not feasible, generally beans of various kinds are grown, as well as several other kinds of vegetables.

The sandy soil of the areas lying along the extensive sea-shore is responsible for the poor yield in those villages that lie in the coastal region. But this deficiency is compensated manifold by the palm groves sprawling all over the seaside area. Besides, the fishing occupation constituted a compensating substitute to the better rice production in the hinterland. In this connection one can appreciate the hypothesis of the late Prof.
D.D. Kosambi regarding the origin of the settlement of the west coast. According to him, only the existence of coconut trees could have made that settlement possible. During the seventeenth century the rural population of Goa depended to a very large extent upon palm and palm products to satisfy many of their needs connected with habitation and food, including their need of expressing their joy and of drowning their sorrow. The only home grown export commodities which paid in part for a variety of goods that needed to be imported were copra, salted fish and salt.

A study of the natural resources of Goa cannot help referring to the sufficiency of pasture for the animals that gave to the territory its name Gomant and to its people milk for drink, cow-dung for house cleanliness, urine for sacred ablutions, and backs for plough, yoke and packs. The conversion to Christianity and the consequent dietary changes made of beef an important diet ingredient. For the Hindus it continued to be an assurance of ultimate bliss to die holding on to the tail of a sacred cow.

Details regarding the population figures are sparse and inexact. We are relatively fortunate to have such data for the areas where the Jesuits exercised their missionary activities and recorded these in their regular reports sent to Europe. A conservative estimate based on such information would give population figures for Tisvadi and Salcete during the seventeenth century as 30,000 and 80,000 respectively. The limited information from the Franciscan sources suggests that the population of
Bardez did not depart very much from the pattern of density in the other two provinces. There must have been about 70,000 inhabitants in that province during the seventeenth century. The population growth could not have made any significant difference, because during that century the region was plagued by wars and famines, which must have heightened the otherwise high rate of mortality. This situation was particularly true of Bardez and Salcete which were more exposed to invasions and were more easily affected by disturbances of trade contacts with the hinterland. The great famine of 1630-1, the invasions of Bardez and Salcete by the forces of Adil Shah in 1654-9, the invasion of Bardez by Shivaji in 1667, and a renewed Maratha attack against the entire Goan territory in 1683, were some of the major disasters which could not leave the population and economy of the region unaffected. Fresh demands for war contributions, religious fanaticism of the Inquisition aimed at the Hindus, as well as at the poorly catechized native Christians, and constant threats of invasions were further responsible for the reduction of the population by way of large scale migrations. While most of the emigrants moved towards Kanara where rice was more cheaply available, there were bolder spirits who sought their fortune in distant places, including the gold mines of Mosambique. It was the beginning of a tradition which has made of the Goans eternal pilgrims.

Those who continued stuck to the land could not have had much incentive for any improvement in their standard of living
owing to stagnant technology and increasing burdens upon a stable productivity. In such conditions the growth of population meant an increase of consumers. Even though agriculture is labour-intensive occupation and the population growth could be an important source of production increase, the prevailing system of land tenure was not directed towards the expansion of settlement, cultivation and production. The arrival of the Portuguese surely provided new avenues of employment, but these sought more the artisan class than the landed gentry which had more to lose than to gain with the new situation.

Origin and Distribution of the Village Communities

The efforts of the early sixteenth century Portuguese officials and chroniclers did not lead them beyond the mist of tradition in their attempts to trace the origin of the Goan village communities. Affonso Mexia who codified the customary legislation of the village communities in 1526 could only ascertain from the learned natives that in remote times four men had cleared the island of Tiswadi and brought it under cultivation. Mexia had come to the conclusion that it was impossible to discover anything more about the origin of the village communities.9

The Portuguese chronicler Barros traced the origin of the Goan village settlers to some poor immigrants from Kanara who descended the Ghatar and reclaimed the land for cultivation. And when the soil had been made productive and the population had
grown sizably, the territory was overrun by a ruler of Kanara, who left the people to cultivate their lands in peace, but only after they had agreed to pay him a fixed annual rental per village on the basis of joint responsibility of all the original settler-families of each village.¹⁰

There is one curious attempt made by a noted Jesuit in mid-seventeenth century (1641) to explain the origin and nature of the Goan village communities. Alfonso Mendes, S.J. traced the origin of the settlement of Goan villages to some time around eighth century A.D. basing his calculations upon a copper plate grant inscription issued by the Kadamba king Jayakesi II (sic) in 1099. Reading in it that there had been nine rulers before the grantor-ruler and that their rule must have covered a span of nearly 200 years, our Jesuit investigator placed the rule of the first ruler of Goa around 899 A.D. In order to arrive at the final conclusion he deducted another 100 years, which he assumed, must have been necessary for settlement and cultivation.¹¹

The calculation of Alfonso Mendes, S.J. was based on the assumption that the tradition of Barros was fully reliable, and for that reason he did not think of the possibility of any other prior dynasty of non-Kanarese kings ruling in Goa. The discovery of a statue of Buddha at Golvale (Bardez) by Rev. Heras, S.J. and the results of the limited excavations conducted recently by the Archaeological Survey of India at kotta, which was once the capital of the Goa Kadambas, have left us with no
doubts about the existence of an organized society in Goa already in the early centuries of the Christian era.\textsuperscript{12}

A number of theories have also been proposed to determine the ethnic origin of the first settlers. The Faurian tradition recorded in the Sahyadri-khanda of the Skandapurana refers to Sarasvat Brahmins migrating from Bengal-Bihar region to Goa c. fourth century A.D. at the invitation of the Kadamba king Mayuravarma in order to support his throne.\textsuperscript{13}

The late Prof. Kosambi has upheld this tradition with arguments drawn from religion, linguistics and ethnology.\textsuperscript{14} According to another view propounded by Prof. G.M. Moraes, the Senvi Sarasvat Brahmins of Goa must have migrated from the Kutch-Saurashtra region some time around eighth century A.D., probably under the pressure of the early Arab invasions of that area.\textsuperscript{15}

Prof. P.S.J. Pissurlekar had tried to reconcile the tradition recorded by the chronicler Barros with the tradition recorded in Sahyadri-khanda and Konkanakhyana. He visualized the possibility of an earlier migration of the labouring classes, possibly of South Indian origin, and a later migration of the Sarasvat Brahmins who then established themselves as administrators.\textsuperscript{16}

It is true that the village community set-up as it was found on the arrival of the Portuguese was controlled by the Brahminical exegesis of Dharma-sastras and Smrities.\textsuperscript{17} The immigration of the Goan Brahmins from somewhere in northern India is corroborated by the peculiar nature of the Goan village communities, because these bore similarity to those in the north...
and differed from those in Central and Peninsular India. The Goan village communities belonged to the joint village type, as distinguished from the severalty type, in which the entire village owned the lands, arable and waste, in common and acted as unit of land revenue. If joint villages originated, according to the opinion of B.J. Baden-Powell, by acquiring lordship over earlier settlers, then it becomes easy to explain the fact of non-Brahmins continuing in the Goan village communities as their effective members-administrators. Apparently the immigrant Brahmins failed to displace the earlier settlers entirely, and this could be due to the limited number of the Brahmins. The migrations of the Brahmins must have also happened in successive waves and at pretty long intervals. This can be inferred from the observation of significant differences among the Sarasvāt of the three provinces. In Salcete, with the exception of the Senvi Brahmins of Cortalim and Quelossim, who are Smartas or disciples of Sankaracarya, the other Brahmins of Salcete are Vaisnavas. To this latter group belong also the Bardezkar Brahmins, but their deities are more akin in their designations to the Kṣatriya deities of the non-vedic type. Besides, the Sastikar Brahmins tended to look down upon the Bardezkar Brahmins, because the latter had the habit of eating in the fields without performing the required pre-meal rituals. Until very recently intermarriage among the Sastikars and Bardezkers was unheard of. It is likely that the Brahmin immigrants achieved predominance through the good will of the local rulers, as well as by
their superior education and skill to tackle the rulers, the latter reason explaining the control of the Brahmins at the desa or province level. Each desa had a General Assembly (Cámara Geral) of the village communities consisting of the representative desas or chief elders of certain villages of each province. Thus, there were nine chief villages in Bardez, eight in Tisvadi and twelve in Salcete, each of which was entitled to send one or two representatives depending upon the usage. In this total of twenty-nine chief villages, there were seventeen consisting exclusively of Brahmins, and these along with the other chief villages represented 135 villages among which there were only thirty-six exclusively Brahmin-controlled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village Control</th>
<th>Bardez</th>
<th>Salcete</th>
<th>Tisvadi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Brahmin Control</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mixed Control</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Non-Brahmin Control</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It must be noted that even though the villages controlled exclusively by the Brahmins are comparatively few they are all
the most fertile areas of Goa and all of them lie along the upper courses of rivers. Such choice was possible only to the favourites of the rulers or to the ministers of religion who could play with the superstitious nature of the people.

Codification of the Rural Customs and Usages

Afonso de Albuquerque was not just a conqueror. He had displayed also the other qualities necessary in an empire builder. In order to conquer Goa and retain it, he sought the good will and cooperation of the majority of the local Hindu population by presenting himself as their deliverer from the oppression of their Muhammadan overlords. Following the conquest of Goa, Albuquerque exterminated the Muslim inhabitants of the city and confiscated the lands that had belonged to them. But he left the Hindus undisturbed in possession of their lands, remitted one-third of their land-revenue payable to the State, and appointed some prominent Hindu leaders to collect the revenues and to exercise justice among the local people in accordance with their customs. 22

It is obvious, however, from the letters of Albuquerque that he was not moved by purely altruistic motives of pleasing and helping the natives. He required their military assistance against the continuing threats of the Muslims returning, and besides, he had no other way of knowing the dues payable by them to the State. It may be noted in this connection that even after taking the natives in confidence, they had been withholding such information. A type of revenue known as Coxivarado, which amounted to an addi-
tional one-fourth of the regular land-revenue, did not come to the knowledge of the Portuguese, and naturally was not paid to them until thirty years after the conquest of Goa.¹³

True feelings of Albuquerque about the natives can be construed from the tone of a letter addressed by him to the king of Portugal on April 1, 1512. It makes it very clear that he would not care a hoot if, as a result of his pet-scheme of colonization through mixed marriages, the native inhabitants were disposessed of their lands. He wrote: "If the Portuguese continue to marry and settle down at the present rate, it looks to me that Your Highness may have to drive out the natives of this island and transfer their lands to the Portuguese settlers. These lands are nobody's exclusive patrimony, but they all belong to the king and lord of the land."²⁴

The scanty documentation at hand does not enable us to say much about the treatment meted out to the Goan village communities during the first few decades of the Portuguese administration. But the efforts at codifying the local customs and usages in the form of a Charter (Poral) and some other instances indicate that the Portuguese administration was feeling its way. It was an uneasy task for the Government to satisfy its own colonial interests without unduly upsetting the local inhabitants. Here follow two instances to illustrate the situation.

Firstly, a proclamation was issued by king Emanuel of Portugal on March 15, 1518, stating that all lands in the island of Goa were to be distributed among the Portuguese settlers, except-
ing the lands which might have belonged to native Christians prior to the conquest of Goa. 25 This could be explained as a move to treat the Goans as vanquished foes, or as due to ignorance of the situation on the part of the king, or due to misrepresentations on the part of the interested parties. It is also possible that all these factors were jointly responsible. We do not know what was the reaction of the natives, but we can guess that it must have been sharp, because the king issued a new proclamation a year later revising the earlier stand and declaring that only the lands that had belonged to the Muslims would be given to the Portuguese settlers and that none of the lands which had always belonged to the Canarines (meaning the native landowners) would be taken away from them. 26

The second instance is contained in a letter of the king of Portugal to the Portuguese settlers at Goa. It was a reply to certain complaints of the Portuguese city-dwellers. The king replied: "You have written to me about an order issued by Afonso Mexia and confirmed by the Chief Captain and Governor Lope Vas to the effect that no Portuguese city-dweller may buy any lands or palm groves that belong to any non-Christian inhabitant of the island, even if such properties are said to be belonging to the Crown. Your request is that I should not object to anyone selling what is his, or to anyone buying what is sold in this manner, provided the State receives its dues. I have no other information than what you have written to me. I am writing to Nuno da Cunha, my Chief Captain and Governor to inform me
about the motives behind the order against which you have complained." The same letter said little further: "I agree with your saying that you would benefit immensely with the acquisition of some forest lands which you have mentioned. You also write that the native landowners of the villages concerned have objected to your wishes. I wish to have more information regarding this matter before giving you any definite answer."  

In order to solve the administrative problems arising from the ignorance of the local tradition on the part of the Portuguese, the chief revenue superintendent Afonso Mexia undertook the task of codifying the customary law prevailing in Goan villages. As a result the Charter of Local Usages was issued on September 16, 1526. The information was gathered from the learned Brahmans of the Goa island, as well as from the natives of the mainland provinces of Bardez and Salcete to which the Charter was made applicable after they came definitely under Portuguese jurisdiction in 1543.  

The Charter, consisting of forty-nine clauses, enumerates the village functionaries and their functions, lays down the rules of succession and repayment of debts, clarifies the property relations of the village inhabitants among themselves and in relation with the State, and notes down some traditional practices in favour of certain individuals, groups and villages. This Charter is the earliest detailed description left by an European of the village communities in India.
Leaving most of the minor details to be clarified in the two following chapters of the present monograph, we shall presently concentrate only on what the Charter had to say about the property relations in the Goan villages and about the nature of their representation in the organization of the village communities. In this connection we wish to clarify certain concepts which have not been properly explained in many of the studies that have treated Goan village communities.

The village administration was entirely in the hands of a village council or ganvkari, which was made up of the representatives of the vangad or clans that claimed to descend from the first settlers of the village. Every male member of such a vangad became a ganvkar on attaining a certain age, say between twelve and eighteen in most of the villages. Though the presence of all the ganvkars was not required for the quorum of the village council meetings, every ganvkar could, if he wished, attend the meetings, express his opinion and block the proceedings with his single nake, which was the way of expressing a veto.

We wish to recall in this connection a theory expounded by H.S. Maine regarding the evolution of the Indian village communities. It was held by him that "in those parts of India in which the village community was most perfect the authority exercised by the headman was lodged with the village council." Maine's contentions were branded as unwarranted generalizations by A.S. Altekar, who wrote his *History of the Village Communities in Western India* with an ostensive purpose of revealing the regional
peculiarities of the village communities in Western India. However, by stating categorically that Maine's theory was without foundation at least where Western India was concerned, Altekar appears to have fallen prey to the generalizing tendency which he wished to exorcise. The situation that prevailed in Goa seemed to disprove the universality of Altekar's counterstatement. In Goa we do not find headmen as executive heads of the village communities, though we come across historians who have understood the situation that way. What we do observe in Goa is some kind of gradation among the various constituent vangads of a village, a gradation which probably originated with the importance of the contribution of each vangad towards the development of the village during the first years of settlement. The most respected elder or elders of each vangad attended the village council meetings, but the representative elder of the first ranking vangad (or vangads, if two were placed as equals in the first rank) was regarded as chief ganvkar and was granted certain social privileges which are mentioned in the Charter. Thus, when at the approach of the rainy season the houses had to be covered with palm leaves to protect the mud walls against the lashing rains, it was the chief ganvkar's privilege to begin work on his house first. Also, at any festive gathering the chief elder was the first to be honoured with betel and garlanded with a strip of white cloth called pachodi; at seed-time and at harvest, the first field to be taken in hand was that of the chief ganvkar; the dancing girls
had to perform first before the house of the chief ganvkar, and then before the others. Beyond such privileges there were no special powers that a chief ganvkar enjoyed. The administration was conducted with nem or unanimous decisions of the entire village council. The execution was entrusted to some hereditary officials, whose functions are described at length in the next chapter.

It is obvious from the above that the ganvkars alone had a say in the decision-making. However, as exceptions to the rule, some non-ganvkars were in some villages given right to express their opinion during the village council meetings, but they had no right to vote. These non-ganvkars belonged to the categories of kulacari and vantely. The kulacari were like the upri tenants-at-will of Maharashtra, but the designation also included the village servants whose non-agricultural services were required for the self-sufficiency of the village and were compensated with rent-free grants of land. A vantely was an outsider to the village, but was associated with the ganvkars because of his skill, say in building or repairing clay levies. As a payment of his services he received a land grant or a share in the annual profit of the village. There are even cases of vantely being awarded the rights of full ganvkars, as in the village of Calangute in Bardez and in the village of Kaya in Salcete.

The right of the ganvkars-in-council to make grants of land freely is already an indicator of their joint ownership of the
village lands. This joint ownership and community interests were also safeguarded by the Charter which enabled the village community to prevent any unwanted outsider from acquiring property in the village. It stated that if a ganvkar or some other person wished to sell his property in the village, such a sale would not be effective without a prior consent of the village assembly and without respecting its right of pre-emption. 37

The joint ownership of the village community was most manifest in the distribution of the paddy fields which in the ancient times of early settlement the entire community had laboured together to bring under cultivation. Altekar presents the khoti system of joint ownership of land as an exception to the rule in western India. This system prevailed in the Konkan regions of Maharashtra and consisted in farming out lands for the purpose of revenue collection. 38 We must accept that khoti prevailed also in Goa but to a limited extent and for quite a different reason. Only the khazan or reclaimed lands were farmed out to a khot, who was generally one of the ganvkars, and the main purpose was to ensure cooperative labour to maintain the clay levies and the sluice gates which protected the lands reclaimed from rivers or sea. The khot would sublet land parcels to individual cultivators, who formed an association called bhaum. Every member of this association was required by its superintendent (called kamat) to contribute with free labour whenever necessary for the protection of the khazan lands. 39

Most of the other lands of the village which were not khazan
lands did not come under khoti and were auctioned triennially directly to the cultivators. This system of auctioning to the highest bidding ganvkar, and sometimes to outsiders as well, provided the latter could find a ganvkar to bid for them and to stand as surety for them, was an expression of joint ownership which did not allow any individual ganvkar to keep any definite lands for an indefinite period. In this connection we are led again to question the assertion of Altekar that "the communal ownership of lands had never existed in India." 40 We are told in a recent study on the "Disintegration of the Village Communities in India" that cases of communal ownership were observed in Tanjavur, Mysore and Carnatic. But the author explains these instances as characteristic of the villages called agrahrah vadiky, which were originally grants of kings to Brahmins. 41 In Goa, however, the system was universal and embraced even the village communities which were controlled exclusively by non-Brahmin ganvkars.

Defining further the proprietory rights and their representation in the village communities the Charter ensured their permanency and exclusivism. It is important to stress this point because it was on this issue that the village communities found themselves very soon confronting new economic interests that were bent on destroying the traditional set-up that was unfavourable to them. The Charter determined that if the ganvkars of a village were unable to pay their revenue to the State, only the exercise of their rights as ganvkars were to be suspended until they showed
readiness to resume their obligation of payment.42 However, in case of an individual ganykar absconding because of unwillingness to pay or inability to pay, a time was fixed for his return. If he failed to turn up, his heirs were given an opportunity to assume the ownership and the obligations annexed to the property; if they declined, the village assembly could bestow it on whomsoever it chose, provided he was ready to pay the tax and the arrears.43 Hence, while in case of a village there was the possibility of its being entrusted entirely to outsiders for effective administration, the danger of alienation was more remote in case of individual ganykars. Only in some cases of certain villages a stricter rule was applied and the movable property of the absconding ganykar was straightaway confiscated by the State, while the immovable property was auctioned to the highest bidder from among those entitled to it and the proceeds were forwarded to the Crown.44

The Charter also established in favour of the ganykars that their rights and privileges could be passed on only through direct male heirs. The same applied also for the transmission of property: Women were categorically denied inheritance.45 The dignity of the ganykars was further protected by that clause of the Charter which stated that ganykars could not be deprived of their rights despite any sort of misconduct on their part. Even if a ganykar deserved punishment, he was to be punished bodily or on his possessions, but his male heirs would in no way suffer in their rights because of him.46
Whatever might have been the regional variations of the proprietary rights and their representation in the village communities of Goa, it is beyond all doubt that the core of the rural heritage as recorded in the Charter was very much steeped in the Hindu Law, and this was particularly true of Goan usages regarding property and inheritance. The stipulations of the Charter in this regard reflected the practices sanctioned by the Mitakshara school of Hindu Law to which the concept of joint family was basic and central.47

To conclude, we may note that the Charter compiled by Afonso Mexia was far from being a very comprehensive register of local customs and usages.48 It was meant as a manual for the administrators, and therefore, it concentrated only on the issues which were raising constant problems to them. And even regarding such issues the information collated by Mexia was defective. Thus, for instance, some natives remonstrated against the Charter in 1534 in connection with its stand regarding the division of property in a polygamous family. The Charter had recorded just one view, but the learned men invited from the mainland expounded two equally observed practices. The Charter was accordingly modified to accommodate both views.49 This accommodating attitude of the Portuguese, however, did not last long. Not long after the Charter became an obstacle, and its stipulations, chiefly regarding inheritance, were positively disregarded and violated in order to favour conversions to Christianity and colonial interests.50
NOTES


2. Almeida, Aspects of the Agricultural Activity in Goa, Daman and Diu, 36.

3. Kosambi, The Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical Outline, 189: The propagation of coconut on the west coast is traced back to 2 c. A.D. brought from Malaysia.

4. BCH-JNS, I, 270; Almeida, op. cit., 59, annexure n.7; HAG: Monocoes 54, fls. 50-4.


6. Wicki, DI, IX, 507; Souza, OC, I, 103; ARSJ: Goa 35, fls. 324; all these documents on Jesuit sources give an average of 80,000 as the population of Salcete during the late 16th and throughout the 17th century. The figures for Tivad are approached as merely approximate after excluding the city population: Of. Wicki, DI, I, 253; IV, 645; V, 229; XI, 363; HAG: Monocoes 26B, fl. 407.

7. Meeraman, The Ancient Franciscan Provinces of India, 157: The average of the figures presented here does not take us beyond 50,000. However, calculating the population on the basis of a tobacco substitute tax collected from Bardez @ one budgrook per household we have nearly 72,500 people paying 14,500 xerafins. A household is taken to consist of five persons. This was in 1664-5. Cf. AHU: India, Caixa 26, doc. 61 (28.1.1664), doc. 137 (5.1.1665).
8. TdT: MS Junta da Fazenda Publica (Estado da India), III, ffs. 2-3v; HAG: MS 1172 (ACP, XIV), fl. 265; MS 1127 (Peticoes Despachadas do Conselho da Fazenda), fl. 138.

9. Baden-Powell, "The Villages of Goa in the Early Sixteenth Century", JRAS, London, 1900: 263 (Clause 1). This translation of the Charter has been followed in the present Chapter unless otherwise stated.


11. ARSJ: Goa 22, ffs. 59-65v: This report was written in defence of the rights of the Jesuits of the College of St. Paul in the city of Goa over certain village community lands that were granted to them and were being withdrawn. Cf. Moraes, The Kadamba Kula, 166-7: It provides a chronological chart of the Kadamba kings of Goa, and there we find Guhalla-deva III ruling during 1080-1100.


16. Pissurlencar, Goa Pre-Portuguesa através dos Escritores Lusitanos dos Seculos XVI e XVII, 35-8. Konkanakhyana was compiled in 1721 and it has preserved the traditions current among the Sarasvat Brahmins of Goa.


18. Baden-Powell, The Indian Village Community, 403, 430-4; Srinivas (ed.), India's Villages, 21-2; BHC-JMS, II, passim.

20. The chief villages of Tisvadi were: Greater Neura, Gansim, Ela, Azosy, Karbelly, Batim, Kalpur, and Greater Morumby.
   The chief villages of Bardez were: Sirula, Asaganv, Pomburpa, Calangute, Aldona, Kandoly, Nachinola, Parra, and Salganv.
   The chief villages of Salcete were: Madganv, Verna, Kurtory, Lotly, Raya, Banavly, Betalbaty, Colva, Kortaly, Kelxy, Nagoa, and Sankval. Cf. BHC, II, 24-5.

21. The exclusively Brahmin-controlled village communities were the following: Greater Neura, Gansim, Ela, Azosy, Sirula, Asaganv, Pomburpa, Nachinola, Salganv, Madganv, Verna, Kurtory, Lotly, Banavly, Kelxy, Nagoa, and Sankval, all these from among the chief villages.


23. APO-CR, V, 962-3: Coxivarado is described in this document as voluntary contribution and most of the writers who have dealt with the history of the revenue administration of Goa have interpreted it that way. They have derived the term from khushi, meaning wish in Konkani language, plus vrat designating contribution. This explanation, however, sounds too simplistic. The term stands most likely for kusavrti or tax on grasslands or forestlands. It could also be taken to mean the chief source of income for the Kusa or Public Treasury.


26. Ibid., 97-8.


29. HAG: MS 8791 (Livro Vermelho), f1s. 147 ff. contain the most

30. BHC, II, 21 n. 40; Appendix I a (Companion Volume).
32. Altekar, A History of Village Communities in Western India, 1-2, 10.
33. Almost all the authors without exception have imagined the situation at Goa as similar to that in the neighbouring regions. Hence, their tendency to equate headmen with elders. There was no equivalent of Maharashtrian Patil in Goan village communities.
34. Baden-Powell, op. cit., 265 (Clause 46).
35. Ibid., 265-6: Clauses 41-2, 46-8.
36. BHC, II, 40 n.247; 41 n.296.
37. Baden-Powell, op. cit., 272 (Clause 15).
40. Altekar, *op. cit.*, 81
41. Bhatia, "Disintegration of Village Communities in India", 91.
42. Baden-Powell, *op. cit.*, 270 (Clauses 6, 7).
44. *Ibid.*, 265 (Clause 40).
47. Kane (ed.), *HD*, III, 558, 561 ff.

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CHAPTER FOUR

AGRA RI A N ORG A N I Z AT I ON AND PRAXIS

By and large the rural agrarian life of Goa during the seventeenth century continued to be ruled by the Charter of Afonso Mexia. The Charter, however, just delineates the outline of the agrarian organization with its essential characteristics. In order to capture the system at work with its functional details one has to go beyond the Charter and scrutinize the contemporary records of the individual village council proceedings and accounts. This is precisely what has been attempted in the present chapter, and the actual working of the agrarian system is described in the context of land tenure, land distribution, land revenue, and distribution of profit and loss. The chief village functionaries and their functions, as well as the non-agricultural services have also been discussed.

The Village Council

The difficulties of transport and communication, and the consequent isolation, were the chief factors that required each village to be a self-contained and self-supporting unit. For all practical purposes the administration of the village was in the hands of the village council, and it was only for the purpose of revenue collection and certain judicial cases, or law and order problems which the village administration was unable to cope with, that there was State machinery and a link
organization between the State and the villages at the province or desa level. At the State level the highest authority to which belonged the administration of the villages was the chief revenue superintendent. On certain issues pertaining to the crown lands in the villages the crown attorney had a say before a final decision-making by the chief revenue superintendent. At the provincial level there was a chief thanadar in Tiswadi and military captains in Bardez and Salcete with general supervisory powers over the administration of villages in their respective provinces. They possessed administrative, police and judicial attribu-

tions. To help them in the collection of revenues there was a collector in each province (recebedor) assisted by a clerk (nadkarni). As a more direct link between the provincial administration and the villages there was a General Assembly (camara geral) formed by the representatives of the chief villages of each province.

Normally, it was the village council that took all the administrative decisions in the village. The meetings of the village council, consisting of the elders of each vangad, were held as needs arose and they were frequent. They would meet generally at open places where there was shade and cool atmosphere. Hence, these meetings (gavypun) would take place under a mango tree or a banyan tree. When only a few met, the meeting was held in the house of a gavvakar or in the Church veran-
dah. Occasionally meetings were called by the chief thanadar.
or the province captain at his residence.4

The ganvkars in council always had the village clerk (kulkarni) with them to declare the nem and to record the proceedings. The office of the clerk was hereditary, but in addition to this so-called escrivao fatiosim there was in a village another clerk-accountant, who kept the register of village lands and revenues, and he was known as sanbuka, which was a corrupt version of senabova or senaboga. The Portuguese designation for the same was escrivao corrente. This latter category of clerks were examined and approved by the Revenue Department and their appointment to a particular village had to be accepted by the village council concerned.5

Land Tenure

Hindu law codes had always recognized that the land belongs to the clearer of the wood.6 It was on this basis that the village communities regarded themselves as rightful owners of all the village lands. However, the Muslim rulers all over India, including Goa, had the tendency to overrule the ownership of the original soil-cleaners by their right of conquest. Muslim domination had set in the process of feudalization in Goa at the time of the Portuguese arrival.7 This process was halted by Afonso de Albuquerque, who invited the native Hindus to cultivate their lands in peace and pay their revenue, which he reduced by one third in order to win the good will of the Hindu population and to utilize their cooperation exterminate the Muslims.8 The policy of Albuquerque

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was confirmed by a royal proclamation of December 18, 1519, revising an earlier proclamation and stating that the lands that had always belonged to the natives would not be taken away from them. The issue of the Charter in 1526 marked a very significant step towards the recognition of the village community tenancy rights, though the Charter retained quite a number of rules that had been introduced by the Muslims and were detrimental to the village communities. Thus, for instance, the rule in the case of failure of a whole village strikes us as very harsh; for here the other villages, not the treasury, are to bear the loss, although they are in no wise to blame for it. Moreover, the rules of 'escheat' (on failure of heirs) have been largely extended to benefit the Government, and collateral succession is not recognized. These rules were responsible to some extent for the dispossession of the village communities of their lands, which became crown lands and passed into alien hands by way of grants. This happened soon after the conquest of Goa when the lands that were owned by the Muslim inhabitants of the city and the suburbs were distributed among the Portuguese as tax-free grants, and since these lands had to pay revenue to the village communities to the tune of 1460 ½ tangas and 14 leaes, this sum was discounted from their dues to the State. In the wake of the conversion policy and the subsequent destruction of the Hindu temples, the lands which the village communities had applied
to the maintenance of cult and ministers of the cult were handed over to the Jesuits and other ministers of the new religion in violation of a written convention guaranteeing that the lands would remain in the possession of the village communities and that they would only pay an agreed sum for the upkeep of the new cult. Some of the entire villages were confiscated in the Salcete province to punish their rebellious villagers and they were given as grants to certain individuals, who in turn passed them on to the Society of Jesus by way of endowment. Thus Kola, Ambely, Assolna, Kunkoly, Veroda and Velim became properties of the Jesuits in Salcete. In Bardez the village of Anjuna lost some of its lands as punishment for rebellion, and the villages of Nadora, Pirna and Revora were given as grant to a certain Mukunda Rane in 1609, probably for ensuring more effective defence of those border areas.

In addition to the official action of the State there were private interests trying to invest their capital in the village lands. With the beginning of the seventeenth century this tendency becomes more marked because the Portuguese seaborne trade was becoming more and more risky for investment. In this rush for investment in the village lands the Religious whites proved to be a serious hindrance to the lay whites, who had to be contented with a poor show compared with what the organized and concentrated capital of the Religious Orders was achieving. Besides, the Religious pastors of the villages
had a firm grip on the villagers, and they did not mind exploiting their social and spiritual position to promote the temporal interests of their Orders with the ostensive seal for implanting Christianity in the new soil. The frustrated anger of the Portuguese laymen took the form of loud denunciations of the clerical success. Thus, for instance, the Portuguese settlers of the Goa city wrote to the king of Portugal in 1603 that "if this this State of India is lost, it will be solely because of the Society of Jesus (...). They are absolute masters of a great part of this island (of Goa), most of which they have bought, and at this rate there will be no house or palm grove left which will not be theirs within ten years from now. The Portuguese settlers find themselves impoverished, because they have no lands to invest on, and whatever capital they had they have lost it in the sea. The income which the Fathers (of the Society) derive from their properties in Salcete alone should be sufficient to maintain all the Religious houses that we have here".  

It was in response to repeated complaints of this nature that several royal and viceregal orders were issued to control the establishment of new Religious institutions and to check the acquisition of more land properties by the existing ones. The seriousness of the land grab on the part of the Religious Orders is sufficiently testified by the property registers of the various religious monasteries that flourished at Goa during sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Following the suppression
of these monasteries in 1835, a part of their records were salvaged and they are there for any scholar to consult at the Historical Archives of Goa. It is interesting to note that lands were acquired by the Religious Orders in Goa not just as foundations for their sumptuous houses in the city and its suburbs, but even for supporting their missionary activities abroad. Thus, for instance, the Jesuits had purchased lands in Goa to support their missions in Mozambique, Cochin and Japan.

Large consolidated plots of land became a novel feature in the village agriculture. The Religious proprietors employed local labour, but they did not as a rule sublet their lands. They cultivated their paddy fields, and particularly their palm groves along more scientific lines. Their large holdings and their large yield was not to the liking of the village ganvkars, who continued to claim hereditary powers guaranteed by the Charter while large tracts of the village land had gone and was going out of their control. Even their former tenants-at-will were becoming mundkars or rent-free tenants bound to the soil of the palm groves owned by the Religious Orders. In these circumstances, the foreign investors known as khuntkars were refusing to acknowledge the administrative exclusivism of the ganvkars and had found ways of infiltrating the village councils as new ganvkars. The protests of the ganvkars against this violation of their privileged rights evoked Government response and brought about a number of legis-
ative orders from 1604 onwards declaring that the khuntkars could not legitimately buy, or in any other way acquire, the rights of ganvkars, but the legislation was not applied with retrospective effect.²³ As a result of the land grab by the khuntkars, the village communities were becoming unable to meet the growing demands of the State, which was always short of funds and had developed the habit of milching them out of the village communities as much as possible.²⁴ The white khuntkars, particularly if they were Religious, did not easily yield to pressures. It was, therefore, in its own best interests that the Government interfered with determination to arrest the process of alienation of the village lands. This was done by a decision of the Public Revenue Council in 1649, declaring that all proprietary rights upon the village lands rested with the crown and that the ganvkars were mere lease holders (rendeiros) with no rights to make grants of lands or to alienate them in any way on their own. This decision was based on an entirely irrelevant document, which it quoted to prove that right from the early times the Government had farmed out the revenues of Salcete and Bardez in triennial contracts. The term designating revenues in the quoted document is rendas, which means non-agricultural revenues and not land revenue for which the term foro was invariably used.²⁵ Therefore, even though the validity of the decision was questionable, in the prevailing
circumstances it was a lesser evil to be chosen. The deci-
sion paid rich dividends to the State exchequer during the
period that followed, and at the same time the village commu-
nities were saved from further disintegration.

Land Distribution

The elevated areas of the village were, as a rule, set
aside for residential purposes, and these were perhaps dis-
tributed originally among the residents of the village accor-
ding to the number of the members of each family. Each family
was provided a plot for house and for an orchard close to it.
Such plots are designated in the village records as gharbata,
ghormanda, thikan. The residential areas were generally
isolated from each other by low lying fields which were used
for paddy cultivation. Each of the residential areas was
known as vado, and all the vade together formed the village or
gany. Among the paddy fields there were some reclaimed from
river or sea, and these were known as kantor or khasan lands.
The highlands were known as morod and molloi. The areas lying
in the vicinity of a spring or a lake were utilized for betel
nut plantations, and these were known as kulager.

The lands in a village were classified as first and second
class lands, and those belonging to either class were divided
into three portions, each portion being applied to a different
purpose. Thus, the first class low lying paddy fields were
distributed as follows: one portion consisting of the best
fields was set aside for the sustenance of the temple priest and temple servants, as well as for defraying the other expenses of worship. These were called nelly lands. The second lot constituted the fund of the village association, and the third portion was given as namasy to the village servants in lieu of remuneration for their services. Of the second class lands, one portion was granted to the temple and the village servants as namasy, the second portion was reserved for works of public utility, such as roads, tanks, canals, pasture lands, cremation ground, and so on. The third portion of the second class lands was given as grants to individuals for developing it into orchards, palm groves or areca groves against the payment of a fixed rent (kutumbana) or flexible rent (vanty).

The paddy fields which belonged to the village fund could not be alienated by way of grants and they were given on annual or triennial leases to the highest bidding village residents. Initially, perhaps, the auctioning of the paddy fields was done every year, as indicated in the Charter. However, the records of the seventeenth century refer always to triennial auctionings of the fields. This change was probably justified by the fact that people would take better care of their fields at least during the first two years, because it had already become common practice to leave the fields unweeded and without manure during the third year of the lease (tisalak sandunk). Also the excessive expenditure incurred in conducting the auctioning was a sufficient reason to discourage annual renewal of the leases.
The auctioning of a village fields could last some couples of days and the Government officials and their aides had to be paid for all the days of their stay in the village. Thus, for instance, the auctioning of the fields of Aldona in 1604 took four days. The crown attorney who was present was paid 40 xerafins, his personal attendant 10 xerafins, his clerk another 10 xerafins, his interpreter (dubhaxi) 4 xerafins, his navak 4 xerafins, and the machila or palanquin 3 tangas. The parish priest was paid 25 xerafins for having supplied meals to the Government official during those days. The total expenditure amounted to 102 xerafins, 1 tanga.30

The auctioning could begin only after the entire village was informed at least five nights in advance (pancaratri) by the village crier (parpoti) at the sound of a metal basin. Only the ganvkars, and rarely the kulacari, were allowed to bid. Any outsider could bid only through a ganvkar. The highest bidder had to present immediately his sureties in the person of one or more ganvkars owning lands, and failing to do so, the bidder was liable to pay a fine and the land was auctioned all over again.31

The leased plots of the sweet land were known as melaga, while the leased plots of the salty reclaimed land were called bandy or gutoga. These latter category of fields were generally farmed out for a period of three years to a khot who would present four guarantors and then distribute the whole area among its traditional cultivators forming an association that
was known as *bhaus*. This association had its president called *kamat*, which was an office kept in the family. He had his assistants known as *palny*, who kept watch over the clay levees and the sluice gates (*manduaa*) in order to prevent their rupture and inundation of the fields. The *bhaus* associates were bound to contribute with free labour whenever directed by the *kamat* to do so, and those who could not come personally had to send paid substitutes.\(^{32}\)

It was customary to check if there was usurpation of any village land. This was done at the time of the triennial auctionings, but more systematically every twenty-five years.\(^{33}\) More land was often added to their permanent holdings by their proprietors, and this additional area was generally obtained by reclaiming it from the rivers.\(^{34}\) Those found with usurped area for which they paid no rent were fined a *xerāfim* and a *larim*, whether the area was cultivated or not. This fine was applicable to the properties paying rent of *vanty* or flexible type. If the usurped area was added to a property having fixed rent, then four *larim* were charged for each coconut tree that was planted, and two *larim* for each empty pit. We have these rules observed in the Donkuly village of Salcete in 1629.\(^{35}\) A slightly different pattern of fining was followed in the Sirula village of Bardez in 1660: When cereal producing lands were usurped, these were confiscated in favour of the village community and the guilty proprietor would pay an additional fine of 2,000 *reis*. However, if the usurped land had already coconut trees planted on it and
could not revert to the village community, then a rent of one tanga was charged for each tree every year, and an additional fine of 2,000 reis was collected immediately.36

The measuring of the fields did not follow an uniform system in all villages. In the Karbelly village of Tisvadi the paddy fields were measured with vanva, which measured five and half cubits, and it was very similar to the kathí of the neighbouring lands of Maharashtra.37 In Salcete a cane of three varas of five spans each was in use during the mid-sixteenth century. In terms of cubits it must have measured seven and half cubits.38

The measuring of plots for coconut tree plantations was done with a rope (corda). This type of measure was not uncommon elsewhere in India, and Wilson's Glossary gives the length of a rasee as eighty cubits. In the Arthasastra of Kautilya we come across rajju as a unit of land measurement in cadastral survey. It was equivalent to ten dandas of four aratnia each.39 It has not been possible for us to determine the length of the rope used in Goa, but apparently the rope used in Salcete and Bardez was not equal in size, because from figures available the coconut trees were planted in Salcete at a distance of one rope from each other, while in Bardez an average of five coconut trees were fitted in an area measuring one square rope.40

A third kind of nomenclature was current to indicate the size of the areca tree groves. The least unit of measurement was a zambo, which indicated the area occupied by one areca tree.
The largest unit was known as kagany, which was the size of a plot for six hundred areca trees. Each kagany consisted of four kamby, and each kamby of four gida and two zambe.41

Land Revenue

An entire village acted as a unit for the payment of the land revenue or any other additional impositions. The land revenue was fixed for each village. It is not clear when and how the land revenue payable by each village was assessed, but the Portuguese retained the traditional assessment and mode of payment. However, calculating the proportion between the gross income and the land revenue (sidau) paid by the villages to the State (divan), it can be reasonably deduced that the raya-rekha system of assessment of Vijayanagar must have been introduced into Goa during the century long rule of Vijayanagar in Goa (1378-1472). There were additional impositions, but the land revenue (foro) was about one-fifth of the gross income of the village.42

In addition to the land revenue the people had to pay a variety of other taxes during the Muslim rule. More burdensome among these were Godevrat and Kusavrat. The first of the two was destined to support the Muslim cavalry. The second imposition was an additional one-fourth of the land revenue.43 These impositions must have surely been oppressive to the people, who could pay them only from the income they derived from the land cultivation. All these additional taxes were retained by the Portuguese. A report sent to the crown by an important

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Church dignitary in 1545 had described the natives of Goa as very poor people and paying a heavy duty on what they cultivated. Also a memorandum submitted by the General Assembly of the village communities of Salcete to the king of Portugal in 1643 represented the heavy burden of taxation and pointed out that the land revenue alone amounted to one-fifth of the produce, and that after discounting the labour cost and other expenses not more than six per cent profit was left to the cultivator.

The job of collecting the taxes of the village was auctioned every year, and one who agreed to exercise it for least payment had to present his guarantors and act as potekar or sacador. The collection of taxes was done in monthly or quarterly instalments depending upon the custom of the village. The potekar could approach the tax-payer only after the village clerk and a couple of elected ganvkars (louvad) prepared the account of dues to be collected from the individual tax-payers after deducting whatever village owed them by way of remuneration for services, or by way of discount for any theft of coconuts or damage to crops owing to the negligence of the village appointed watchman (terlu). Basing on the adau or the periodic balance sheet the clerk of the village had to work out a list of the tax-payers and their respective dues, and this list (uruvaly or bhatkula) he had to present to the potekar by the twenty-fifth day of the month at the latest. Only then the potekar could begin his rounds and obtain receipts from the clerk.
for the collection made. The money that he collected, plus
the sum he added (bartani) from his own pocket to make up for
the defaulters, was to be submitted by him to the province
collector (recebedor) before the beginning of the new month.
He had to bring the receipts issued by the collector and hand
them over to the village clerk to be noted down in the village
account-book. If there was any delay in the collection of
taxes and the payment to the province collector because of the
negligence of the potekar, then whatever expenses were incurred
due to the inquiries made by the province collector by sending
his navaks and peons to the village had to be borne by the
potekar.\[47\]

The methods of tax collection were very severe and dreaded
by the tax-payers. The potekar would pay for the defaulters, but
then with a kusa or a notification issued by the village clerk
and endorsed by the province collector he proceeded to confiscate
cattle, grain, or any movable goods he could find in the house
of the debtor and auctioned them to cover the value of the tax
payable by him. In the meantime the debtor was taken to prison
by the navak of the province collector and released only after the
debt was satisfied. The confiscation of the goods was done in
accordance with the valuation of goods done by the village grama-
varika, in the presence of the village clerk, and by the parpoti
of the village. Nothing more could be taken than required for the
satisfaction of the debt.\[48\] If the debt could not be made good
with the goods of the debtor, then those who had stood surety for
him at the time of land auctioning were taken to task.\textsuperscript{49}

The potekar was entitled to collect interest on the money he paid for the tax defaulters. The interest when collected in grain was known as bhatkado and when collected in the form of coconuts it was known as narlmodo.\textsuperscript{50} The rate of interest varied at different times of the year and the highest rate was probably charged for the months when the rice supply was most scarce. The average rate was approximately 11\%, but reduction was made in times of natural calamities, as it happened for instance in 1652 when the region was still recovering from the great famine. The collection of the interest was done along with the sixth and twelfth instalments which were paid at the time of the harvest. No cultivator could lift any amount of paddy from the field without presenting to the watchman a chit issued by the potekar declaring that the cultivator owed no dues to the village.\textsuperscript{51}

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<tr>
<th>Order of Instalments</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td>Interest per xeralfim</td>
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<td>in kudav of paddy</td>
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The tabulated information refers to Kortaly in Salcete, and the blanks for the fifth, sixth, eleventh and twelfth instalments indicate that these instalments were paid at the harvest time and as such the problem of collecting interest did not arise.
The village customs provided measures to be taken against the potekar if he exceeded his powers. If a wrong person was arrested by the navak of the province collector, the potekar was obliged to pay the person one bargany for each day of imprisonment. Also, if cattle not belonging to the debtor was taken by mistake, then various rates of indemnity were fixed depending upon the kind of cattle-head that was lost by its rightful owner. In Aldona, for instance, every head of cattle taken by mistake and returned had to bring along six zoitole per day. If a head of cattle died or was not returned to the owner, then the following dues were collected from the potekar to pay the owner of the cattle: four yaraha for an ox, three for a cow, two and half for a he-buffalo, five for a she-buffalo, and two for a calf. This was the compensation demanded at the beginning of the seventeenth century. However, the rates charged in Siuly and Sirula villages of Bardez in the early 70's of the seventeenth century differed very considerably. The charges in Siuly were four xerafins for an ox and three xerafins for a buffalo, cow or calf. But in Sirula the charges were much higher, namely eight xerafins for an ox, the same amount for a milk-giving cow, five xerafins for a buffalo, and ten xerafins for a milk-giving buffalo. This information is valuable to assess the labour cost and the living cost in an economy which depended upon cattle for cultivation, transportation and for food supply as well.

There were provisions to prevent the potekar from collecting more cash than he was entitled to collect from the tax-payers. If
he collected anything more than six zoitole he could be required to return one and half xeratina to the cheated party; if, however, the excess collected was less than six zoitole, then potekar’s goods would be auctioned to give satisfaction to the tax-payer who demanded justice.55

In spite of all precautions taken to keep the potekar within the bounds of justice, he never ceased being a dreaded officer. That was chiefly due to his power to despoil the debtors of their few belongings without any consideration of mercy. A few illustrations drawn from the village of Kortaly in 1631 may help us to understand the fear of the tax-payers: For being unable to pay four tangas branca and five leaes of his rent, one khandi and seventeen kudav of John Vaz’s sorod crop of paddy was auctioned. For his inability to pay two tangas branca and one bargana, Diogo Franco Purso lost an ox. Francisco Purso could not pay six leaes, and for that his canoe was handed over to the creditor for one month. Diogo Bhairo Purso owed three bargana and one leal, and for that his best cow was auctioned.56 Potekar jetolo is a Konkani expression, meaning the potekar will come, commonly used by older people in Goa to frighten kids into doing things which they would not easily do.

Distribution of Profit and Loss

A general dhaatudodo or balance-sheet was prepared yearly or half-yearly by the ganvkara and the village clerk. In the section indicating the adau or income the various sources of in-
come and their respective revenues were noted. The chief among them were always the paddy-fields and the palm groves. Meagre income was derived from some other sources, such as the rent of the village shops, the auctioning of the monopoly rights for killing fish in the khazan lands during the months of the year when they were kept flooded, auctioning of the river passage (penta), and so on. The section of expenditure was called vechu, and this included among other heads the land revenue and other taxes payable to the State. Then followed the stipends and the perquisites of the local functionaries and village servants, as well as expenditure on religious cult and public utilities. If the village had acquired any loans, these were also satisfied at this time. Whatever remained liquid after deducting all the expenses from the total income was shared by the jonkars and khuntkars. Whenever the expenditure exceeded the income the loss was made good by recovering proportionate contributions from the jonkars and the share holders. Thus, for instance, the dhaestudodo of Azosy for the year 1669 showed an adau of 1595 tangas brancas, 2 barganya and 14 leaes, but the vechu amounted to 1903 tangas brancas and 14 leaes. The deficit of 307 - 2 - 00 was distributed equally among the jonkars and each of them had to pay 4 - 1 - 01.

Jon was the privilege of every male ganvkar after reaching a certain age which varied from village to village. It was the right of the ganvkar to a share in the net profit of the village, and only where the jonkar held properties paying flexible rent
he was also required to contribute to cover the deficit. But mere jōn did not imply the obligation of contributing towards the loss. However, if a ganvkar was unable to pay his taxes, his right to jōn could be auctioned by the village, but this could be done only during the life-time of the debtor-ganvkar. In the beginning of the seventeenth century the indebtedness of ganvkars had led many of them to sell their jōn to their creditors, who were quite often outsiders to the village. The evil consequences of this practice was soon realised by the village communities and legislation was introduced to keep out intruders.

The distribution of jōn followed a different pattern in different villages. In some cases the profit was distributed per stirpes, that is, into as many equal portions as the number of vangad in the village. The amount that each ganvkar obtained then depended upon the number of ganvkars in each vangad. The custom followed in other villages was to distribute the profit among the ganvkars individually, and this mode of distribution was known as personal jōn. Quite often the village clerk, the widows and the orphans were also granted a full or fractional jōn. It was also usual to grant a permanent jōn to the patron saint of the village.

Some More Village Functionaries and the Village Servants

There were a number of subordinate functionaries that were elected or appointed periodically to help the village council carry out the administration of the village. Whenever a village
was required to supply free labour to the State, the village elected a couple of *gramavarikas* to make the necessary arrangements and to lead the batch of workers. The function of a *gramavarika* was also to act as an assessing officer in case of thefts or damage caused by cattle to crops. In some villages the officials elected to do this were known as *caugula*, *modestu* and *kumer*. They also judged petty cases and acted as justices of peace in a village. The chief *caugula* was generally appointed by inviting bidders, and the one who agreed to function with least salary presented his *gadelikar* or assistants. The job was farmed out with the conditions that these *caugule* should be just in their decisions and should be available at any time their services may be required by the people. A fine of two *barganya* was laid down if a *caugula* failed to answer a call.

The village also farmed out the office of the *terlu* whose duty was to guard houses, orchards, palm groves and the paddy fields of the village. Generally, each *vado* or ward had a chief *terlu* who was responsible before the village council and he would choose some men to assist him. The job was entrusted to them by the village council which specified their duties and fixed their *musara* and other perquisites. *Musara* was paid by each ward to its *terlu*, and the perquisites were collected from the lease-holders of the paddy fields and palm groves in accordance with the village customs. Thus, for instance, in Cortalim village the *terlu* received six coconuts out of every hundred coconuts plucked and two *kudav* of paddy from each plot (*ganvo*).
of cultivated paddy field. At Aosy a terlu watching paddy fields was paid between five and nine measures of unhusked rice per each handy of cultivate land.

The village council also appointed the padai or padekar for each ward of the village having palm groves. Only these village appointed padai were allowed to pluck the coconuts in the presence of the terlu. If there was any theft of coconuts, the owners of the palm groves had to produce before the village clerk the sworn testimony of the padai confirming the theft and specifying the quantum of loss in order to get the terlu to make good the loss. At Siuly a padai was given three coconuts out of every hundred coconuts plucked when the palm grove was subject to kutumban rent, but those who paid vanty type of rent gave the padai two coconuts per every two tangas of rent. The padai were also called upon to help at the time of field auctioning to hold the measuring stick or the rope.

Not rarely villages appointed their solicitors to defend the interests of the village in the courts of law.

Every village had a definite number of servants whose non-agricultural services were essential for the economic self-sufficiency of a village. The available records of the Goan village communities in the seventeenth century contain references to the carpenter (thovoi), blacksmith (vinani), washerman (dhobi), potter (kumbhar), barber (malO), basket-weaver (mabar) and cobbler (chamar).

The services of the barber and washerman were almost exclu-
sively of personal attendance, while the services of the other village servants were more directly associated with the agricultural needs of the village. The carpenter had to fix the sluice-gates which prevented the inundation of the khazan lands. He also collaborated with the village blacksmith to keep the villagers supplied with ploughs, hoes and other agricultural implements. The potter supplied clay vessels for home use, as well as for watering purposes in the fields. The mahar manufactured the gudve, which were used to water the raingan fields. He also did the weaving of mats and baskets and other bambu products such as supa, varlo, etc., which were essential for operations connected with threshing, cleaning and storing of paddy. The cobbler provided the ganvkars with footwear, and also with leather thongs for the whips and leather-bags for water.

There is very scanty documentary evidence to illustrate the mode of payment to each of the above artisans or to deduce their relative importance in different villages. Each artisan who served the village had the revenues of a namasy land or lands assigned to him in lieu of payment. Such grant was hereditary and could not be revoked, but if a person consistently failed to do his duty, the grant could be transferred to another person belonging to the same family and who would agree to serve the village.71

In addition to the income derived from the namasy lands, the artisans also received musara from the individual ganvkars, whom they served, in the form of grain. In case of some artisans
the remuneration was paid entirely by the village. Thus, for instance, the ganvkars of Azosy made a two-years contract with the cobbler Bras Fernandes to supply sandals. The village set aside a namasy for him, plus ten xerafins would be paid in cash every year in quarterly instalments. The ganvkars receiving sandals were also required to pay the cobbler a limited sum of one and half bargany per pair of two-strapped sandals and just one bargany for a pair of one-strapped sandals. It was also a practice in the same village that each household of ganvkars should give ten kudav of bhat or unhusked rice to the dhobi as his annual musara.

The artisans of all categories were welcomed by the ganvkars on the occasions of religious feasts in the village to have a share of special sweet rice cakes (sadana) prepared on such occasions. The artisans had to make their rounds of the village every week and attend to the needs of the ganvkars who may require their help. An artisan could be fined by the village council every time he refused to attend to any ganvkar. Ordinarily this fine did not exceed one tanga, but sometimes it could be as high as five tangas.

Each village also had its shepherds. Depending upon the size of the village cattle there was one shepherd for the entire village or even one shepherd for each ward of the village. Apparently, every eighty heads of cattle had one shepherd, who was paid not more than one xerafim per cattle-head a year.
It was the duty of the shepherd to watch the cattle while grazing and to prevent its entering cultivated lands and damage crop. It was customary to impose a fine of two baravanva for each head of cattle that entered a cultivated land and each time it entered the field. 77

A village had also a goldsmith (shet), who stood higher than the other village servants in the social hierarchy, and he even claimed to belong to the class of the dvijas while the latter treated him as a vaisya. 78 The goldsmith did the piercing of the ear-lobes of the females and sometimes of the males as well, and he provided the villagers with the gold and silver ornaments. He also acted as a shroff and checked the genuineness of the currency which the village officials had to collect by way of revenue. For this latter service he received a remuneration from the village. 79
NOTES

1. HAG: Moncoes 53, fls. 50-1; BHC, II, 17-8.


4. HAG: M3 10148, fl. 63v: "... Shrimatu Mhal-Goye grame padri vegairache ghari bhaisike..." (= in the village of Goa Velha, they (the ganvkars) met in the residence of the parish priest); HAG: M3 10017, fl. 15: "... talyachya ban-dauchya ambvayva baisike..." (= by the lake side under a mango tree); HAG: M3 10204, fl. 10v: "... Raichura pobaatu Sinoru Gasparg Simauche gharaayva bhaisike..." (= at the residence of the Captain Gaspar Simao in the village of Rachol they (ganvkars) met...).

5. Ghantkar, An Introduction to Goan Marathi Records in Halkannada Script, 54; HAG: Moncoes 93, fl. 388v; AHU: India, Caixa 24, doc. 158; Collection of Mr. Avelino Soares: Siuly village records for the year 1672 contain references to Sambuca, samoch, sanbuqua, always meaning clerk-accountant.

6. Kane, HD, II, 867.


8. Ibid., 470-1.

9. BHC, II, 8-10.


11. Ibid., 271, 280.

12. BHC, II, 10.

13. Ibid., 11-6.

15. Rocha, As Confrarias de Goa, 424, n.133; DWT, V, 439; HAG: ACP, IX, fl. 31v.

16. HAG; ACP, V, 66-7; BHC, II, 61. Ganoba Rane of the same family served the Portuguese in Ceylon with 400 men in 1639.


19. HAG: MSS 824, 830, 3026, 3029, 3038, 3041 are some of the codices of the long series entitled Papers of the Suppressed Convents that may be usefully consulted for studying the land grab by the Religious Orders.


21. BHC, II, 45-55: contains a short manual of instructions laid down by an early Jesuit in Goa for growing coconut trees in a scientific manner. Cf. HAG: MS 1498 (Ordena Regias, n.2), fl. 98: contains a report sent to the crown by the Bishop-Governor of Goa praising the skill and industry of the Jesuits in cultivating lands and making them productive (22.1.1636).

22. Appendix I c (Companion Volume).


24. Appendices I h, I k (Companion Volume); BHC, II, 130 ff.


26. BHC, I, 3.

27. Ibid., II, 7, 10, 44. Clause 9 of the Charter enabled the ganvkars to arrange for the cultivation of the waste lands by leases and at any rate of rent they please up to a period
of twenty-five years, but thereafter the customary rent had to be put into effect. According to this customary rent a property with hundred palm trees paid five tangas of four barganya each. If the area was smaller or bigger than that, the payment would vary accordingly. Twelve paces was the conventional distance between one tree and another. Clause 10 of the Charter determined the usual rate of rent charged for the areca groves. It was four barganya per year for a plot of hundred trees having only well water available, and six barganya when there was running water. The distance between one tree and another was of five cubits.

31. HAG: MS 10026, fl. 21 (Cortalim); MS 10022, fl. 12v (Azosy); The fine for failing to produce a guarantor was laid down as five tangas branças.
32. HAG: MS 10029, fls. 20, 35-5v; MS 10037, fls. 14, 15; MS 10038, fl. 15; MS 10039, fl. 12. A Kamat in the village of Azosy was paid with a rent-free grant of two bandys. He had only to pay the dues of the terlu. If any kulacari belonging to the bhaus failed to come for work when called upon to do so, he was liable to pay a fine of one tanga branca.
33. Appendices I f, I g (Companion Volume).
34. Xavier, P.N., Colleccao das Leis Peculiares das Communidades, I, 209-12; HAG: Moncoes 85, fl. 123v.
35. HAG: MS 10204, fls. 23-23v; Appendix I g: ll. 18 ff. (Companion Volume). The term used for additional usurped land is gabun.
36. Collection of Mr. Avelino Soares: Sirula village book for the year 1660, fls. 2v-3v.
37. HAG: MS 3069 (Tombo dos namoxins), fIs. 51, 241v; Ghantkar, op. cit., 49-50; Kulkarni, Maharashtra in the Age of Shivaji, 150: the length of the kathi was five cubits and five closed fists.


39. AS-K, Bk. II, Ch. 20.

40. HAG: MS 3070 (Foral de Salcete, 1567), fIs. 124-4v; MS 7587 (Foral de Bardez, 1647), fIs. 185-6.

41. Faria, G., "Medidas Agrarias das Comunidades", OP, XVI (1919): 89-91; HAG: MS 10226 (Kortaly), fl. 97: two gidas and 19.25 zambe are referred to as a visavo or twentith part of three kagany, three gidas and 13.5 zambe.


43. BHC, I, 48-55; II, 55 n.276.

44. DWP, III, 207.

45. Appendix I h: ll. 112-4 (Companion Volume).

46. Appendix I j: ll. 74-84 (Companion Volume).

47. Ibid.

48. HAG: MS 10226 (Kortaly), fl. 36v.

49. Appendix I j: ll. 22-4 (Companion Volume).

50. HAG: MS 10226, fIs. 5, 11v, 15, 17v-8; MS 10254, fl. 13v. The naimodo paid in the village of Donkuly in 1638 was at the rate of 25 coconuts for each xeraflim of debt.

51. HAG: MS 10227 (Kortaly, 1630), fl. 26v. The auctioning of goods or properties to effect the payment of debt at the time of the payment of the sixth and twelfth instalments was known as kadsany; Collection of Mr. Avelino Soares: Bastora village records (1679), fl. 10.

53. Collection of Mr. Avelino Soares: Suly village records (1671), fls. 2v-3; Appendix I j: ll. 26-9 (Companion Volume).

54. Loc. cit.

55. Ibid., ll. 50-5.

56. HAG: MS 10226 (Kortaly), fls. 10v-11.

57. HAG: MS 10207 (Donkuly), fls. 13-13v.

58. HAG: MS 10029 (Azosy), fl. 5.

59. Gomes Pereira, Jonos, 7 ff.

60. Appendix I b (Companion Volume); Vide supra n. 23.

61. BHC, I, 62-4; II, 29, 39, 141.

62. HAG: MS 10032 (Azosy, 1667), fl. 27.

63. HAG: MS 10045 (Karbely), fl. 32; MS 10033 (Azosy), fl. 12; Collection of Mr. Avelino Soares: Bastora village book (1679), fl. 10.

64. HAG: MS 10056 (Karbely), fl. 50v.

65. HAG: MS 10228 (Kortaly), fls. 23v-4: The terly received by way of perquisites 10% from jackfruits, bananas and areca-nuts, and 6% from coconuts. He received no perquisites in case of a theft. Cf. Gchantkar, op. cit., 64.

66. HAG: MS 10035 (Azosy, 1688), fl. 8v; MS 10038 (Azosy, 1694), fl. 15.

67. Appendix I i (Companion Volume).

68. Loc. cit.

69. Appendix I g: 23v, ll. 5-6 (Companion Volume).

70. HAG: MS 10037 (Azosy, 1691), fl. 15; Moncoes 85, fl. 126.

71. Baden-Powell, op. cit., 268 (Clause 12); Chicherov, India: Economic Development in the 16th-18th Centuries, 15-43.

72. HAG: MS 10027 (Azosy, 1666), fl. 3v.
An excessively high fine of 10 tangas brancas was established by the ganvkars of Azosy in 1672 against the village barber who had become very negligent in his duty. The charges levelled against him were that he was too often found drunk and using blunt tools.
Goan villages in the seventeenth century continued to be communities with their corporate organization which attended to the economic as well as social needs of the native population. Whatever might have been their self-sufficiency and degree of isolation prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, the impact of the mercantile capitalism and the introduction of post-Tridentine Christianity forced changes in the agrarian relations and brought about a very significant change in the modus vivendi of the Goan rural population.

Religious Worship

When the Portuguese adopted the policy of conversion in the forties of the sixteenth century, they destroyed nearly three hundred Hindu temples in each of the three talukas. An average of four to five temples in each village suggests an unimaginable control religion must have exercised upon the village life. The village life was centred upon the temple: every activity had to be timed in consultation with the jyotisi and had to be initiated and ended with offerings to the family and village deities. Religious festivities were also occasions for gathering fairs which promoted inter-village economy. Temples served as repositories for the village records, including the land survey and the land revenue registers. It was in the temple premises that children were educated and where the adults organized their cultural activities,
particularly their sagor or dramatic performances. The banyan trees in the vicinity of the temples served as venues for the village council meetings. It was also in the temple that a final solution was sought in case of property disputes which could not be solved with the help of written evidence. The revenue of some of the most fertile paddy fields of the village was applied to the expenses of the cult and to the maintenance of the temple priests and other servants. In addition to these nelly lands and namesy lands there were several other customary contributions in cash and in kind offered to the temples on different occasions during the course of a year.

The forties of the sixteenth century proved to be roaring and stormy to the cultural life of the village communities. On the eve of the arrival of the Society of Jesus in Goa two gentlemen occupying positions of influence in the Church hierarchy of Goa had set up a confraternity, known as Confraternity of Holy Faith, for initiating a positive drive for conversions to Christianity. This confraternity got round the Government authorities to pressurize the chief ganvkara of Tisvadi into making a grant of 2,000 tangas brancas every year from the revenues of the lands which had been set aside for the temples which were there no more. This was done, but the authorities recognized the claim of the chief ganvkara that the lands had always belonged and would continue to belong to the village communities.
The Society of Jesus that had then just come into existence in Europe as the shock-troops that led the vanguard of Counter-Reformation did not take more than a couple of years to reach Goa and to impress upon the Portuguese Catholic authorities the need of applying to their overseas possessions the principle 'cuius regio, illius religio' that was being enforced by the Reformers in Europe. It was through the Society of Jesus that Goa was infected with the zeal of Counter-Reformation.

The Goan inhabitants saw for the first time since the arrival of the Portuguese that both the Church and the State were serious and worked in unison to force upon them the Roman Catholic Church. We need not question whether what was done is to be condemned or justified, but it is relevant to note that the impact of the drive upon the corporate life of the Goan village communities was impressive and far reaching. The methods adopted for propagating Christianity disrupted several social bonds and traditional attachments which were keeping the village communities together. Among other measures adopted, the Hindu temples disappeared, religious and social celebrations of the Hindus in public were banned, the Hindus were made to wear a dress that would distinguish them from the converts, the convert ganykars of whatever rank in the social hierarchy of the village would precede a Hindu ganykar in affixing their initials or signatures upon the village community records, and in the villages where the convert ganykars were already a majority the Hindu ganykars could be dispensed with in the meetings of the village councils.
The economic pressures were no less intimidating: No Portuguese officials were to employ any Hindus in the Government or private service; the *Senvi* brahmins, who had been traditionally the village clerks, were to be replaced by capable converts; the converts were to be preferred as State tax farmers, if their bids were as good as of a Hindu bidder; the Hindu artisans were not to produce anything connected with the Christian worship; Hindu sailors and fishermen could be forcefully recruited to help in the State galleys; and the traditional laws of inheritance were modified to enable the convert females to inherit when a Hindu head of family died without a male heir.  

As in case of all legislation the above legislation was not always enforced with equal zeal and strictness, but even then the success was clearly visible. The practice of Hinduism was practically banished within the Portuguese jurisdiction of Goa; Christianity had been implanted and majestic church edifices in baroque style were beginning to occupy the sites where formerly stood the village temples; those who did not wish to conform to the change had begun drawing paths of emigration. What was not so easily visible was the growing bankruptcy of the village communities as a result of their lands, labour and money being coaxed out from them to establish a baroque style of worship that did not suit the modest agrarian economy of the Goan villages.
It may be remarked in this connection that it is not uncommon to hear that the early missionaries did no harm to the village economy by transferring to the Catholic Churches the paddy fields and the other benefices, which the village communities had already set aside since times immemorial for the maintenance of cult. Such way of arguing is fallacious, because it is based upon the ignorance of the fact that the revenue of such lands and benefices had never maintained any strangers to the village, but had always supported several families of the village connected with the temple worship and service. Obviously, this was no longer the situation when the foreign missionaries introduced the new religion and transferred the surplus revenues to the common pool of their Religious Orders. It must be said, however, in favour of the ministers of the new religion that they sincerely sought to prevent the exploitation of the poor villagers and introduced directly or indirectly several measures of social welfare.\textsuperscript{12}

Where social integration was concerned the preaching of equality of all men did not prevent the Jesuits from establishing religious confraternities based on castes; and, just as their doctrinal wealth failed to promote greater social cohesion, their temporal wealth and unlimited political influence did not achieve proportionate results in raising the standard of living of their native converts.\textsuperscript{13} Even concerning admissions to their own ranks, the Religious Orders, particularly the Jesuits, maintained strict racial qualifications.\textsuperscript{14}
Promotion of Education

The Portuguese did not meet uncivilized and illiterate masses of people when they took over Goa in the early sixteenth century, but it was not until some decades later that they took cognizance of the literary heritage of the natives. It was discovered that there were natives well versed in Sanskrit religious literature and were conversant with the contemporary Marathi religious literature as well. During their night raids upon the houses of the prominent Hindu Jesuits came across volumes of Anadipurana and Mahabharata. The Jesuit correspondence also refers to their discoveries of Viveka-sindhu of Mukundaraja, Bhagavadgita, and Yogaraja-Tilak of Amritananda. The Jesuits were deeply interested in having translations made of these works in order to refute more effectively the "errors" of Hinduism.

It is also known that a Goan Hindu from Kelxy, known as Krishnadas Sama, wrote religious poems in Marathi in 1526. Two of his compositions along with those of some others, such as Visnudas Nama, Dnyandeva, Sivadas, Nivritideva, Samayananda and Namdeva, are found transliterated in Roman script in a MS of the Public Library of Braga in Portugal.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century the Jesuits began writing Christian puranas in order to satisfy the desire of the converts to listen to their esteemed pauranic stories. Purana Christao of Thomas Stephen, S.J., and Purana of St. Peter by Etienne de la Croix, S.J., both written in the contemporary
style of Marathi with some mixture of Konkani, are worthy
expressions of the missionary zeal of the Society of Jesus
which had realized the value of inculturation as an effective
method of transmitting Christ's message. Besides these two
Jesuits there were some others who also composed works of re-
ligious and literary merit in the vernacular languages of
Goa. Though comparatively less in quantity the output of the
Franciscan friars in the field of literary production was not
less meritorious.

Prior to Christianization formal education must have been
imported in agraharas and brahmapuris. There is epigraphic
evidence to the existence of two such educational places, namely
in Goa Velha and Goalim-Moula, established in the 12th and 14th
centuries respectively.

The Senvi brahmins of Kortaly and Kelxy possessed a long
tradition of scholarship. The kulkarnis of the village communi-
ties all over Goa were mostly Senvi brahmins. Fr. Francisco de
Souza writes in his Oriente Conquistado that "all the Brahmins
from Kortaly are known as Xenem (sic), which means tutors. Through-
out the lands of Konkan they are the ones who teach the Brahmin
youths to read, write and count."

The Churches replaced the temples as centres of learning in
the wake of conversions to Christianity. The Church schools were
maintained at the cost of the village communities which paid the
school master for teaching the sons of the ganykars.

There is not much evidence to expatiate upon the way the
schools were conducted or upon the nature of curricula followed. But in the more developed schools run by the Religious Orders in Old Goa, by the Jesuits at Sáo Francisco de Assis, and by the Franciscans at Reis Magos, the curriculum included Latin language and literature, religious knowledge, and liberal arts, including vocal and instrumental music. There were also lessons in vernacular language intended to train catechists who were to go back to their villages and assist their parish priests in the conversion of their co-villagers. At St. Paul's boys' school run by the Jesuits in the city of Goa special attention was paid to arithmetic, because it was a subject very much appreciated by the business-minded natives. The contemporary Jesuit reports say that it was not unusual to find grown-ups in the arithmetic classes.

Although Marathi written in old Kannada script appears to have been the literary language of the Goans, the spoken language was Konkani to which the early missionaries refer as lingua canarina or lingua brahma. The earliest reference to the spoken language of the Goan people is found in the Juna Oriental of the Portuguese traveller Tome Pires, who wrote in 1514: "... the language of this kingdom (of Goa) is concanam.... The language of this kingdom of Guoa (sic) differs from that of Deccan as well as from that of Vijayanagar...." The Jesuit Henrique de Andrade, who had completed the writing of a Tamil grammar in 1567 and had begun preparing a grammar of Konkani, wrote to the General Superior of the Society of Jesus comparing the two languages: " A few words
are similar in both the languages, but the construction is very much alike; nevertheless, Konkani is the more difficult of the two." Thomas Stephen, S.J., who published his Purana Christao at Rachol in 1616, writes in the introduction that he did not use audha Marathy, because the middle class people would not understand it (madhima lokasy nakale dekuny). The same Thomas Stephen, who made a distinction between Marathy and the language of the Brahmins, wrote a grammar of Aonkani and a Catechism in Konkani, which he called lingua canarim.

From all the above it may be safely concluded that the village schools were administering the knowledge of the Christian doctrine in Konkani following the catechisms published by the missionaries in Konkani. The dictionaries of Konkani language compiled by the Jesuits during the first half of the seventeenth century, and the grammars of Konkani written by the missionaries, suggest also that they were trying to master Aonkani for instructing the people in their own language.

As the seventeenth century was coming to its end the Portuguese authorities were becoming painfully aware of the fact that their hold on Goa and other possessions in India was more precarious than ever before, and that the natives had never ceased to express their lack of feeling for the Portuguese. It was in this context that it was decided to impose the Portuguese language upon all the natives and suppress their native tongue. A viceregal decree of June 27, 1684, ordered that "the natives should apply themselves to the study and use of the Portuguese language, and the
parish priests and the school masters should teach the children Christian doctrine in the same language, so that in time it may become the common language for all, making thereafter no use of the mother-tongue." This attempt of the Portuguese turned out to be an exercise in futility. Konkani was never exorcised from the Goan households, but what did happen is that Konkani was denied an opportunity to develop as an independent language and to have some literature worth the name.

Law and Order

The Portuguese had introduced western judicial institutions in Goa and a High Court of Justice (Tribunal de Relacao) was established as far back as 1545. But if we were to compare the various departments of the Portuguese administrative machinery on the basis of their inefficiency and corruption, the administration of justice would have carried off the palm. We have the testimony of the great critic of the Portuguese overseas administration, Diogo de Couto, who wrote at the turn of the sixteenth century: "... here, one who has more power can have more justice and this cobweb cannot catch anything else than mosquitoes: a Gujarati is arrested and condemned for squatting while urinating; a Hindu is put in irons for quarreling with another of his kind or for abusing him; but if a favourite of the authorities or a wealthy person breaks open the safes of a Hindu and takes away his goods by violence, it is considered as a light issue and permissible." The Italian traveller, Niccolao Manucci, who had two
long stays at Goa during the second half of the seventeenth
century has left a sickening impression of moral degradation
and of a total breakdown of justice in Goa. He describes an
episode of a French merchant who had a row with a shoe-maker
over prices and had a stinking pot of excrement hurled at him.
He also refers to hordes of negro slaves roaming all over the
town causing disturbances. Wishing to give advice to visitors,
Manucci refers to three stone statues on a wall near the Jesuit
house of Bom Jesus in the city. He says that these three sta-
tues had their fingers touching the eyes, the ears and the lips
respectively, and they had a caption at their feet: "He who
sees, hears and says nothing, lives a life devoid of care."33

While the High Court was there for appeal, each taluka had
its own official of justice. Tisvadi had its thanadar, Salcete
had an ouvidor, and in Bardez the Captain of the taluka acted
as its Judge. Each of these officers had his beadle (meirinho)
and foot-soldiers to proceed to the arrest of the accused or
offending parties. There is abundant documentation pointing to
excesses and corrupt practices of these officials. A memorandum
presented by the General Assembly of the village communities of
Salcete to the king of Portugal in 1643 describes the ouvidors of
that province as idiots.34 Another memorandum of complaints sent
by the people of Bardez in 1688 contains a long tale of extorsions
and violence exercised by the Captain and Judge of the province.35
The beadles and their soldiers were well known for arresting
persons without cause in order to collect bribe money. They also
forced the village communities to pay for their journeys and stay in the villages which they quite often visited on false pretext of official work.36

As a rule the State officials intervened only when the local village authorities were unable to cope with their responsibility for maintaining law and order within the limits of their jurisdiction. This intervention was resorted to when the village community had to proceed to an unrest, which it could not do, or when there was any serious bloody incident in a village, or when a dispute was taken by the villagers on their own to the higher authorities.

The collection of the land revenue and other taxes was the responsibility of the village community, and the village did it through its clerk and tax collector. These village officers had some limited powers to pressurise the villagers who were irregular in the payment of their dues, but it was often necessary to seek help of the province collector and to threaten them with arrest. It is interesting to note that in such cases of arrest the village communities expressed the solidarity of their members by making the village community pay the prison fees of the arrested ganvkars and the other expenses connected with the arrest. The village would make arrangements to recover the money from the arrested ganvkars after their release and in easy instalments.37

The village watchmen or terlu bore the responsibility of guarding land properties and houses against thieves. It was also their duty to report to the province Captain if there was any
stranger living in the village. The watchmen were instructed to arrest anyone moving outdoors after seven o'clock in the evening without a lit torch in hands. They were required to produce before the Captain or thanadar anyone sought for murder or any serious trouble. They had to arrest run-away slaves and return them to their masters. They could confiscate the mantle (kamboli) and the chopper (koiti) of anyone whom they caught cutting down branches of trees growing by the river sides, because these trees protected the clay levees against erosion.38

While the village watchmen acted their part as the ordinary guardians of law and order in a village, on exceptional occasions the village council is known to have taken extraordinary measures to meet extraordinary situations. Thus, for instance, the village council of Karbelly held a secret meeting on September 23, 1620, and it appointed ten ganykars to arrest some mischief makers who were wanted by the Criminal Judge of Goa and had sought shelter in that village.39

There are innumerable references in the official documents of the sixteenth and seventeenth century to the quarrelsome nature of the Goan natives, who would spend all their time and their lean savings to sue each other in the courts of law for most trivial reasons.40

Certain petty disputes in the villages were settled by village appointed officials called caugule and gramavarika. They were generally called upon to assess the damages caused to crops or even to assess the value of the goods of a debtor before
the goods were auctioned to pay the dues. But the guilty
could appeal to authorities above village level, and the
court procedure then could last for an indefinite period.
In such circumstances again the ganvkars showed their soli-
darity by protecting the interests of a fellow ganvkar who
was unfortunate to fall victim of a court case against him.
We read in the proceedings of the Karbelly village council
in the year 1613 that they took a decision to the effect that
"if any ganvkar or the village clerk is imprisoned owing to
the hatred or ill-will of any enemy, or owing to any dispute,
which God forbid, the prisoner will be freed at the cost of
the village community; the ganvkars will also sow and look
after the fields of the imprisoned ganvkar if necessary; and
the village community will pay one tanga per day for the pri-
soner until his release."41

In order to prevent the villagers from destroying each
other with the expensive court procedures, the Government had
introduced simpler and summary methods of justice for them. It
was ordered in 1562, and again in 1575, that all cases of the
natives involving value less than three pardaus ought to be
decided verbally by the presidents of the village Church con-
fraternities (mordomos das Confrarias).42 It was also deter-
mined that native Christians should not be imprisoned following
any futile accusations against them, but only in cases invol-
vring killing, crippling or false witnessing. Such cases only,
and cases involving substantial values could be referred to
higher officials of justice after depositing nothing less than
two hundred xeralfins. The jurisdiction of the confraternity
presidents was extended to cases involving up to twenty xeralfins
in 1618, but the villages in the neighbourhood of Ouvidor’s or
thanadar’s residence had to refer all the cases to these. A
new legislative measure created the post of Judge Protector of
the native Christians in 1682 to attend to the complaints of the
native Christians of Tiswadi. He could not levy a fine exceeding
twenty xeralfins. His functions continued to be exercised in
Salcete by its Ouvidor and in Bardez by its Captain, but these
being untrained in law could not levy a fine exceeding ten xera-
fois. Their decisions had to be oral, and only in cases exceeding
their jurisdiction an appeal could be made to the High Court.

In short, issues that affected the village good as a whole
were judged by the village council. Thus, for instance, a certain
Miguel Purtado was condemned by the village council of Azosy in
September 1670 to pay twenty-five tanguas brancas for cutting down
a banyan tree which the village community had planted for provi-
ding a resting place for the travellers. However, in case of
petty individual disputes the presidents of the village Church con-
fraternities constituted the courts of first instance. These pre-
sidents were invariably ganvkars of the village. They could decide
cases not involving more than three pardaus and they could sentence
with imprisonment which would not exceed three days. For all
cases within their jurisdiction there was no appeal. The next
court of justice was that at the taluka level, and the final court of appeal was the High Court.

**Social Welfare**

It is necessary to distinguish three different agencies that contributed towards the social welfare amidst the rural population of Goa, namely the village elders, the Church ministers and the Government authorities.

Making provision of certain public utilities had always been a responsibility of the village communities. A weary traveller, a needy Brahmana and a holy pilgrim could always be sure of a place for night’s lodging and boarding in an Indian village. In Goa the situation could not have been very different. We learn that concern was shown for the travellers who carried heavy head-loads by erecting *dowrni* at every kilometre or so along the roads leading to the village market or to the intervillage fair, and trees were also planted on the same spots to enable the travellers to rest under their shade.

The village communities had also worked out ways of helping out individual persons in need. Thus, for instance, in most of the villages the widows and the minor orphans were entitled to a share in the annual profits of the village in the form of an entire or fractional *jon*. Alms in cash or kind were occasionally sanctioned by village councils in favour of some indigent person of the village. And we read in a Jesuit report that one village of Tiswadi had even taken the trouble of making more permanent arrangement for helping the poor villagers in times of
food scarcity. Ten khandis of paddy were collected from the entire village at the time of harvesting, and with this fund the needy were succoured. ⁵¹

The Church played a very significant role in the line of promoting social welfare. Each province had a Father of the Christians whose sole concern was to look after the welfare of the native converts and to favour them in every possible way. Concretely, among other measures of social welfare the Father of the Christians made arrangements for the training of the converts in different skills which could help them to find employment, and he also sought to check the ill-treatment of the slaves. ⁵²

The parish priests were acting in their respective villages as the protectors of the oppressed. Backed by the higher Church authorities with the directives of the provincial Church councils and with Archbishop's pastoral instructions, the parish priests tried to curtail the oppression of the non-privileged peasant classes of the village by the ganvkaras, who tended to sublet lands for very high rentals or to reduce to bondage the tillers who could not pay their dues. ⁵³

The Church had also established controls over loans in order to check usury and rural indebtedness. The provincial Church councils had legislated that without guarantee or pawn the rate of interests that could be demanded was not to exceed 9%; for a loan with guarantee but no pawn 8% could be charged; and with guarantee and pawn the permissible rate of interest was only 7%. ⁵⁴
The Jesuits in Tiswadi and Salcete had been still more practical in extending help to the villagers by establishing some sort of granaries (celeiros) from where they would lend seed to the cultivators who had not been provident enough, and the cultivators thus helped were required to replace the same amount at the harvest time. It may be said in this connection that it was through such social welfare measures that the Jesuits had been winning the hearts of the rural downtrodden classes and at the same time irritating the spirits of the Portuguese laymen whose capitalist ideas of exploiting the rural wealth were frustrated thereby.

Over and above there was the central agency of the State Government legislating social welfare measures. Thus, a law was enacted in 1605 and renewed in 1674 banning the celebration of weddings with banquets for more than thirty persons by native Christians, Brahmins, Banias and Chardos. In case of lower castes the number was further restricted to fifteen. This measure was introduced to prevent wasteful expenditure.

Laws were also enacted to organise relief for the poor and crippled at the village level, taking care at the same time to discourage beggary on the part of the able-bodied. Also the same purpose was intended in the legislation ordering procurement of all surplus rice production of every village. The surplus was kept within the respective villages, but it was sold to the needy of the village through a fair-price shop administered by the village community. Along with these measures introduced during the last couple of decades of the seventeenth century it was also decided
to order each village community to set aside a portion of the annual profits to help the ganykara who were victimized by the notekara by taking over their properties bringing a revenue of thirty to forty pardaus in order to satisfy their debt which did not exceed four to six pardaus. The new measure was also meant to help the entire village community, because whenever the village was required to make any war contribution or any other extraordinary payment to the State, it was forced to seek the help of some individual ganykar or ganykara to satisfy the State demand, and these money lenders normally made the best of the opportunity by extracting 300 to 400% interest on the loans. Without a permanent fund to draw from, the village communities were not only condemned to see no annual profits, but they were often forced to mortgage village lands to the money lenders with long-term damage to the village revenue.

The same piece of legislation also tried to put an end to another serious form of exploitation that prevailed in the villages. Mortgage contracts were often signed with a clause stating that if the mortgaged property was not redeemed on the day indicated on the contract the mortgage contract would be considered as a permanent sale deed. With such a clause the creditors were usually trying to make themselves invisible on the day marked for redeeming the mortgage. The new legislation declared such transactions void and illicit.
NOTES

1. SG, III, 13-4; CEO, I, 286; DI, VII, 387, 396.

2. AHU: India, Caixa 3, doc. 19 (22.1.1615) refers to fairs in Tiswadi, Salcete and Bardez in which the natives disposed of their surplus products, and procured cheap provisions.

3. Appendix I h: 11. 25-6 (Companion Volume).

4. Altekar, A History of Village Communities in Western India, 115; HAG: MS 10045 (Karbelly, 1660), fl. 10: the village made the payment for the expenses of the zagan; APO-GR, IV, 251.


6. Gabinete Litterario, II, 70 n.1; HAG: MSS 3070-1 (Two copies of the Foral de Salcete, 1567), 7583-5 (Three volumes of the new Foral de Salcete, 1622): passim.


9. HAG: Moncones 46A, fls. 213-6, 258-60: legislation on the celebration of Hindu weddings; Moncones 14, fls. 183-3v: Count of Linhares proposes permission to Hindus to celebrate their functions against the payment of an annual sum to the Government; MS 7846 (Alvaras e Provisoes de Sua Magestade), fls. 136-39v: traces the whole history of bans on Hindu celebrations; Wicki (ed.), O Livro do Paiz dos Cristaes, 63-70, 49-51, 228-9; Priolkar, The Goa Inquisition, 114 ff.


11. Appendix I h: 11. 99-104 (Companion Volume); BHC, II, 123 ff.


15. DI, I, 328; IV, 339, 203; Pissurlencar, "Primeiros Livros Maratas", RIVG, n.73 (1956): 60-1, 76-8; DMP, VI, 470-1; VII, 221.

16. DMP, VII, 344-5; VIII, 220.

17. Pissurlencar, op. cit., 66-7; "Sarasvat Santakavi Khrisnadas Samacha Shodha", in Shri Shantadurga Chatuhshatabdi Mahotsava Grantha, 67-78.

18. Pereira, Konkani a Language, 1-3; Priolkar, The Printing Press in India, 241-81: has published extracts from both these works.


23. Meersman, The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India, 101; HAG: MS 475 (Cartas Patentes e Alvaras, n.7), fl. 266 contains a land-grant in favour of Diogo de Souza, a principal ganvkar of Moira (Bardez), who was educated at Reis Magos and then helped the Franciscans to catechize his co-villagers. Cf. also HAG: MS 2200 (Registo das Cartas de Aforamento), fl. 54: gives details of the grant (1618).

24. DI, V, 583-4, 595.


27. DI, VII, 442; VIII, 145-6, 172.
30. Ibid., 222 ff.
31. HAG: Moncoes 49, fl. 291; Moncoes 52, fl. 86.
34. Appendix I h: l. 247-8 (Companion Volume).
36. Wicki, O Livro do Pai dos Cristaos, 146; Moncoes 85, fl. 128-9.
38. Ibid., docs. 13, 21; HAG: MS 10228, fls. 23v-4; Appendix I i (Companion Volume).
39. HAG: MS 10056, fl. 43v.
41. HAG: MS 10042, fl. 33.
42. Wicki, op. cit., 202-3; Rocha, As Confrarias de Goa, 174-5.
43. Wicki, op. cit., 143-7.
44. HAG: Moncoes 87, fl. 14.
45. HAG: Moncoes 47, fl. 218; Moncoes 49, fl. 18.
46. HAG: MS 10029, fl. 29.


50. HAG: MS 8000 (Aldona), fl. 33v: A woman beggar called Sidul is given half *xeratim* for saree (*kapod*); MS (uncatalogued) of Chimbel village (1639-88), fl. 3v: The village paid six *barganya* to bury a poor villager, Jorge de Menezes by name; *ibid.*, fl. 14: The village council sanctioned one *bargany* as alms to a poor.


53. *Fondo Gesuitico*: 74-B/9/1443, Goa 43. Is an excellent report on how the Jesuits in Salcete tried to protect the peasants against the oppression and tried to exercise their spiritual ministries without seeking any remuneration from the natives.


55. *DI*, XII, 614.


57. HAG: *Moncoes* 53, fl. 26v.


59. HAG: MS 7846, fls. 169-9v.


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Planta da Forma da Cidade de Goa