CHAPTER VI : ACHIEVEMENTS AND DILEMMAS

OF THE MOVEMENT

The preceding chapters have provided us with the socio-historical background and the cultural landscape of the Konkani movement. They have highlighted the nuances of the regional dynamics that have in turn led to a changing politics of recognition. Since the beginning of the 20th century language has been at the centre of public scrutiny in western India. This we have shown in chapter I. The decade of 1920s, in particular, makes an interesting study because of the public debate that took place on the status of Konkani as an independent language, and its enumeration separately from Marathi for the first time in the census of 1930. The following decade was marked by a growing mobilisation in the name of Konkani in North Kanara, in the form of the Mandals and the Parishad. The next decade - the decade of the Indian independence - witnessed the shifting of the centre of activity for Konkani to the metropolis of Bombay where the activity got transformed into movement with wider demands. In the post-independence decade the leadership of the movement worked towards giving the language a national image while at the same time developing the agenda of safeguarding a much smaller regional group. By the time of Goa liberation the elite leadership of the movement had found its safe ground within the larger movement. Immediately after liberation it ensured that the language promoted through education and communication would be defined by the specific caste section of Goa. The first decade after liberation was significant in terms of deciding the political future of the territory within the Indian federation. Democratic rights to the hitherto deprived masses were a threat
to elite interests and to ward off the possibility of the merger of Goa with the neighbouring state of Maharashtra the elite leadership of Konkani arranged the collaboration of Goan Catholics and non-Goan wage earners in Goa in the name of a distinct Konkani identity. Their monopolisation of the local Congress and their manoeuvring of the language organisations helped in maintaining their hold over the movement. Further their use of the media, to accommodate the masses, and their negotiating skills to sideline genuine differences, also came in handy. In addition their familiarity with the statutory arrangements, such as the VIII Schedule or Sahitya Akademi recognition, and their proximity to centres of power through individuals such as Kaka Kalelkar, gave them an advantage in terms of formulating demands on behalf of the language community. To achieve a constitutional recognition for the language, its secular character was projected, and to present a national image for the movement, regional groups were incorporated.

The ultimate aim of attaining equal status and national honour was realised within the period of less than a century. But in the process a number of issues with regard to language community and access to language resources, democratic rights in a multi-cultural setting, benefits to elites vis-a-vis the larger community, state recognition and community empowerment, competition for positional goods, concern for economic benefits, also the role of caste identities and question of traditional versus secular identities emerged as topographical features on the landscape of Konkani. The celebration of the success and achievement in ‘official’ terms, the ‘consensus’ on the conclusion in formal terms
of the language movement have produced a set of dilemmas that are still surfacing.

As recognised by scholars, Konkani has a number of dialects. Katre (1966) identified twenty of them and later studied six major ones. Jose Pereira (1992) spoke of seven dialects of Konkani. But neither has this variety and diversity been subjected to serious academic analysis by the initiative from the movement nor is there any consistent effort seen on the part of language leadership towards finalising the single standard for common use. Each of the regional variants in use have experienced exchanges with larger languages in the regions. With varying degrees of literary activities, in some of these variants, the popular common use of a particular style has not come about. This is so mainly because of the prevalence of a multi-literal situation. There have been repeated appeals and declarations, since the early decades of the 20th century, favouring Devanagari as the appropriate and ideal script for Konkani\(^1\) but different regional groups have continued using their regional scripts, while supporting Nagari publicly throughout the 20th century. Different communities and castes of Konkani speakers have lived under different political settings for the past few centuries, as a result of which their perspectives on language use and utility have been shaped differently. Issues of cultural and social identity, as well as concern for economic and political advantages, have guided the strategies and actions of these different groups. These considerations have transformed their activities into contests, which are grounded in the social formations of caste and community.

\(^1\) In 1923 Luis Mascarenhas of Konkani Divem spoke to a Mangalorean Catholic audience and stressed on the adoption of Devanagari script for Konkani. In 1940 Adv. M.M. Shanbhag, founder of the Parishad made a similar appeal in his public address in Mangalore. Shennai Goembab insisted on Devanagari.
crystallising further on a territorial basis. In this way the issue of script is linked with identity and power.

While the concept of Konkani identity is popularised through the use of organisational devices its content remains ambiguous and fuzzy. Goa is projected as the homeland of Konkani but being Konkani is not necessarily the same as being Goan. There are questions raised about this relationship. Some see the emphasis on Goanness or ‘Goenkarpomn’ as marginalisation or even subversion of the larger Konkani identity (Interview - Pratap Naik). Some others consider Goa as too small a territory for the potential of Konkani to flourish and want to expand the borders of Goa to include the neighbouring regions occupied by Konkani speakers, to make it a Konkani state (Interview – Gurunath Kelekar). For this they link the idea with the formation of the Parishad (e. g. Ravindra Kelekar), but others do not support this contention (Uday Bhembre) and fear the dissolution of Goan community in case of such territorial formation. Konkani language movement has been silent on these issues and has remained more as a literary activity controlled by a small elite section from Goa i.e., the Saraswat Brahmins. Their role as leaders of the Konkani language movement vis-à-vis their caste fraternity in Karnataka and Kerala on the one hand and in relation to the considerable Konkani population of Catholics on the other is one of the significant insights of this study. The study shows how the Konkani language movement of the 20th century is largely guided by the considerations and inner dynamics of this elite. Most of the moves, strategies, decisions and actions in the movement have followed the specific socio-cultural agenda of this elite forming part of their search for identity. The regional concerns and considerations
are shaped by the specific political administrative realities obtaining at a particular time. Hence the goal of creating a single integrated image of Konkani has remained a dream.

On the basis of the survey of the Konkani language movement over the 20th century it is suggested that the role of elites has been crucial during all the phases and in every region. These elite groups had differing agendas and interests. The GSBs of Goa had their dilemmas in the face of the strong Marathi influence. In their confrontation with the forces of state-supported church, they had to establish their cultural ties with Marathi during the 19th and 20th century which they sustained and strengthened through temples. Using the Portuguese colonial policy of streamlining the institutional set up they positioned themselves as the custodians of the major temples in Goa, which they claimed as their family deities (Keni, 1998). Using these Marathi links they spread education and produced literature that reflected Goan social reality of their caste. The first half of the 20th century is known for *Demand Mahaatmya* (A description of legal disputes for property peculiar to Goan Saraswat landed gentry of the time) and *Maanifest Puraann* (a poetic rendering of the gimmicks reflective of the time), both casting the colonial phenomena into traditional literary creations. Also the

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2. Chandrakant Keni, one of the strategists of the Konkani movement, has maintained that Saraswats are the natural leaders of Goans and has acquired an image of an intellectual within the saraswat community. His involvement in the *Math* affairs and his views on the importance of the Saraswats are well known. During the popular movement in Goa demanding the right of entry for the masses to temple managements, he wrote on the private character and family rights in the temple managements and opposed the idea of such change.

3. *Demand* is the legal suit - a practice that was common among the Goan Saraswats in the first quarter of the 20th century, mainly in respect of land and property. Many Saraswats were in Portuguese administration and were known for their interest in such suits, in which they gained importance.

4. *Manifest* was the term used for the allotment of land for cultivation by locals for which colonial government provided financial incentive. This was the arrangement to overcome the hardships of famine and food scarcity discussed by the *Congress Provincial* in its sessions in 1920s (See Naik, 1938: pp.67-94). This provision was misused by the Saraswats.
projection of ‘Bhaveen’ and ‘Bhatkar’ in Marathi prose writings of the time reflect the self-image of the Goan Saraswats. But during the same period the larger Indian political situation, to which Goans settled in Maharashtra in general and those in the metropolis of Bombay in particular were witness, influenced their sense of the self. This process was responsible for the establishment of organisations such as The Goa Hindu Association. By the end of the first quarter of the 20th century the Goan Saraswat emigrants in Bombay had growing anxieties about their status and position. The Saraswat Brahmann Samaj of Bombay organised the lectures of Shennai Goembab, in which a distinct Konkani identity was stressed (Goembab, 1928). As the caste was seeking parity of status with the other Brahmin sects of Maharashtra it had to invent itself through the language to establish autonomy. Sharing Devanagari script as the legacy of Sanskrit, the mother language of both Marathi and Konkani, was a part of this strategy.

In Karnataka, the issue was more complex with the Konkani elite divided into two political units having two strong regional languages. North Kanara Saraswats could easily identify with Marathi whereas the South Kanara group was at home with Kannada. The two regional groups served the two languages as writers, grammarians, lexicographers and used the two scripts – Devanagari and Kannada respectively – in their limited use of Konkani. As settlers and business community in the two regions they had to learn and use the two languages but in the phase of awakening of the caste consciousness in the

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3 Though the Association is for all Goans the original idea was to form it as a Saraswat body. Though membership is open to any Goan, it has always been under the control of Goan Saraswats.
early 20th century these groups sought to project Devanagari as their tradition. Their claim to northern origin (Pancha Gaudas) supported this claim. In real practice, however, they used the pragmatic approach of education in Marathi for women (as they would be married away to caste emigrants in Bombay and other places in the Marathi speaking region) and Kannada for men (who could continue family business, profession in the southern state), till the state language came to be implemented with vigour and intensity in Karnataka after 1970s. With land reforms North Kanara witnessed large scale migration of Saraswats to Bombay resulting in assimilation with Marathi speaking population and adopting Marathi as their language of culture and communication. South Kanara Saraswats supported Devanagari as a cultural strategy but continued with their use of Kannada script and language. Their service to Kannada language has been much more than that to Konkani. But their siding with Devanagari had two sides – one, in relation to regional Brahmin groups, they could claim an independent language with its own script, thereby removing a psychological subservience to the Kannada language group through their script, and the other, they could identify with the linguistic and literary resources in Devanagari produced and possessed by their counterparts in Maharashtra and Goa, thereby seeking strength to counter the Mangalorean Catholic claims to Konkani by virtue of their organised and sizeable work for the language.

In case of Mangalore Catholics Konkani is the main symbol of identity to strengthen their community. They can justify their claims through their use of Konkani in literary, cultural and social life. But they have used only Kannada script for Konkani throughout the 20th century. With growing economic
compulsions and out of urge for social mobility the demand for English is on the rise. The church has used Konkani only as a means of religious activity and communication with people. With urge for upward mobility among people demand for English in education and religious services is on the rise. Activities of Konkani are conducted through some organisations in which contests for positions are seen between the GSBs and Catholics. As both these sections use Kannada script for Konkani, their contest is close. But the GSBs have a strategic advantage of being associated with their caste fraternity outside the state, which provides them psychological access to Devanagari. This imaginary relationship to Devanagari serves in projecting a strong side in the contest against Catholics. Another area of contest is the constitutional safeguards as a minority. While Catholics are a religious minority the GSB family of the Pais have succeeded in getting minority concessions in the name of language but on the basis of caste, guided by the Kerala GSBs. By establishing institutions in the name of linguistic minority this business family has succeeded in safeguarding its economic interests and promoting its commercial prospects. Its service to Konkani is cosmetic and ornamental, with no efforts to give it a place in education, communication and community life. The Manipal Pais have received benefits from Konkani in securing their economic interests through constitutional safeguards. To justify the status of linguistic minority institution gained through legal battle it supports the work of Konkani and operates as a power broker for the GSBs in their contest against Catholics in South Kanara with its centre in Mangalore.

In Kerala, the Catholic factor is absent and the Saraswats i.e. GSBs have used Konkani to promote their caste interests in the strongly caste-oriented socio-
political milieu. They have exploited the similarity in nomenclature of their caste and language to seek constitutional and state protection for the caste in the name of the language. To claim equality for ‘their’ language with other stronger languages in the region, they have supported Devanagari. Linguistic Minority status is claimed by the upper caste to protect their temples from the state intervention. Their language loyalty is thus guided by the sense of power and prestige, which is purely caste-based as shown in Chapter II. Others among Konkani speakers in Kerala have, under pressure of economic forces, and also largely due to GSB attitude, stayed away from Konkani.

This variety of region-specific considerations of different social formations has given rise to competition between different interests of these groupings. Elites in each of these regions have used the combination of selective collaboration and undeclared contestation with other groups in and outside each of these regions to further their limited interests. For Konkani speakers in the two southern states of Karnataka and Kerala, learning the regional languages is compulsory. Their economic, political functions and socio-cultural transactions at the state level can be best served only through the regional scripts. They have served Konkani through these scripts all through the 20th century. But when it comes to inter-caste relations, Brahmins prefer to distinguish themselves by their claims to Devanagari which is often in nominal use within the caste. Moreover, a large majority of them being in trade and business, their interests and prospects are linked to the regional languages and scripts. But their caste considerations strengthened by local socio-political environment provide them a psychological advantage of linking with the wider Saraswat world and state-sponsored national
language. Catholics on the other hand have specific problems in their regional concerns. Mangalore Catholics use Kannada and Goa Catholics use Roman script. Their religious material, creative literature and mass communication promote these two scripts. The inter-elite contestations within the Konkani speaking groups operate through scripts. Among all these elites, the role of Goan GSBs is very significant.

This role of GSBs of Goa is to be viewed in the scheme of power contestations with reference to Konkani. In their search for a political identity they worked to empower themselves through the language, which was to be the basis of state formation in independent India. In the metropolitan settings, Konkani speakers from different regions had their community linkages preserved through print media using the regional scripts. As members of their native states they had their economic and cultural interests already defined by the cultural and linguistic terrain of the respective states. Goan GSBs in contrast had the opportunity to make a choice in this respect, as Goa under the Portuguese was yet to find its place in the larger Indian state. Goan Catholics had a tradition of migration which made them ‘citizens of the world’. They remained Goans even when they accepted different nationalities as emigrants (Satoskar, 1954). Within Goa the attempt of the Portuguese government was to stress the spiritual ties of Goa with Portugal (Montalto, 1952), which was countered by Hindu Goans - particularly GSBs - through the Marathi press in Maharashtra, mainly daily Kesari of Pune. Those in Goa preferred to be called Marathi and associated themselves with the literary as well as cultural associations and institutions from Maharashtra. Saraswat Brahman Samaj of Margao (currently Gomant Vidya
Niketan) and such other institutions of the GSBs in Goa had guest speakers and invitees on regular basis from Pune and other centres of education and culture in Maharashtra since the early decades of the 20th century (Naik, 1938). Their sense of nationalism was nurtured through Marathi as against the Portuguese that considered Goans as Portuguese subjects. But in the metropolitan milieu, the cultural and political concerns were covered in the language identity sought to be acquired through Konkani. While doing this, the Goan GSB intelligentsia, guided by the ideas of Shennai Goembab, began to disempower others, by restricting ‘authentic’ Konkani to Devanagari. Those using other scripts were involved in the language programmes but they were advised through their own leaders (e.g. Prof. Armando Menezes in the Parishad, 1942) that Devanagari was the original and national script, hence all should adopt it for Konkani. Prof. Menezes, in his Presidential Address in 1942, was clear that Konkani was ‘one of ... (his) many interests’ and ‘not .. (his) mother-tongue’, ‘at least,...not (his) only mother-tongue’ (Menezes, 1942). He could advise others on the script choice as he had little to gain or lose in that process.

The mass medium of All India Radio was used to promote spoken language of people, starting with Bombay station in early 1950s. At other places such as Dharwar the programmes were started in 1960s and were restricted to weekly broadcasts of half an hour duration, consisting mostly of music. This

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6. Introduction of Konkani in this medium was, in itself, the work of a Goan GSB bureaucrat. The programs were started by appointing Goan GSBs to man the Konkani section in Bombay; other places too had GSBs.
helped in creating a national setting for the language through the script that was identified with national image because of its association with Hindi. While Konkani had been used over a decade earlier in broadcasts from Vatican (Interview - Paul Moras) its purpose was religious. This time it had a different context and the promoters of the language managed to project it as a secular and a national cause. But in this process, the empowerment of the language amounted to disempowerment of the vast sections of its users. Because by introducing language to this medium its use and spread was enhanced. Konkani speakers could use the medium to reach out to their community which was scattered all over the country and also outside the country. Through this medium speakers of Konkani had an opportunity to establish links among their different regional groups and thereby develop a sense of unity and community. This also helped in exchange and sharing within the language community as well as with other languages. But while getting entry to broadcasting, which is essentially the medium of the spoken word, Konkani was sought to be written in Devanagari for preparing the written scripts of the matter to be broadcast. This condition of script restricted the access to the language and the medium. A large section of Konkani speakers used scripts other than Devanagari – Kannada in Karnataka and Roman in Goa - for Konkani. They had to rely on transliteration for getting an opportunity to use the medium. The producers and other staff members in Konkani section being largely Goan GSBs, they used Devanagari alone. Others had access to the medium through this script. This fixation of script was justified on the basis of its Indo-Aryan origin, national character and scientific nature.
In the early years of the post-independence language situation the sense of empowerment of Konkani was raised by a resolution in the Parishad in 1952 that the Konkani speakers reserved their right to demand their own state at a future date. The Union government was approached on the issue by a delegation from Karwar on behalf of Konkani speakers in North Kanara (Jaag May 1997). Later ideas such as ‘saagari Prant’ of Kaka Kalelkar (Sukhthankar, 1974) or ‘Konkan state’ by George Moraes (Bharat Mitra 1957) kept this feeling of Konkani land alive. But once Goa was liberated that Konkan became restricted to Goa. This was aptly revealed in the change of the theme song of the Konkani movement. from ‘Konkann Aamcho Des, Aavai Konkanni Bhaas’ (Konkan is our land, Our mother is Konkani language) of Bayaabhau before 1960 to ‘Goem Amchem Mullpeeth, Konkanni Aamchi Bhaas’ (Goa is our ancestral land and Konkani is our language) by Bakibab Borkar later. In liberated Goa Konkani in education was to be in Devanagari alone and that was implemented by the KBM through its text-books. Here again, the leadership of the language body was kept with a Catholic (Pedro Correia Afonso) in that phase to ensure better co-operation from the schools under missionary and other Catholic managements. The script restriction made a major difference to Catholics for whom the language had emotional value as it gave them a sense of cultural security and identity. In early 1960s Vatican II had made suggestions about education and religious life in the local language which facilitated open thinking on the part of the Roman Catholic church. This helped to some extent in gaining support of missionary schools for the move of Konkani education. The earlier developments such as the Report of the Justice Niyogi Committee (1956), which was appointed to enquire into the activities of Christian
missionaries, had led to a debate on the Indianisation of the church (Ketkar. 1969: 218). Liberation of Goa had also created a feeling of uncertainty and insecurity in a section of Goan Catholics (Melo Furtado, 2000: 481). There were many among them who were ready to take to Hindi seriously in their efforts to adopt the national language policy, which also helped in getting positive support to Konkani in Devanagari (Interview: Pundalik Naik). All these were used in introducing Konkani in education.

With introduction of Konkani in education as a medium of instruction at elementary stage and also as a regional language, in later stages of school education, it was expected that Konkani speaking masses would willingly support the language. But till 1970 Konkani was offered by Catholic students as a third language, since they had no choice. Being traditionally oriented to keep away from Marathi, a small section of Catholic students offered Portuguese and French, but for the first generation learners among them, Konkani was the only choice, which too was conditioned by the script. The language leadership conceded publicly to continuation of the Roman script for some time but leaders did not allow its use in education. As a result, these children’s own language became a nightmare for them, generally marginalised in the English medium schools, mainly in the missionary schools, along with Marathi and Hindi. There was no scientific study of the language in pedagogy, because the whole approach was to

7. In many of these schools Hindu teachers were appointed to teach these languages and they could not enjoy teaching these languages mainly because of the attitude of their superiors towards these languages. This is seen even today. This observation is based on the feedback on the issue from many teachers. Mr. N. Shivdas, a Konkani writer and activist, Vice President of the GKA for two terms (1996-2002), himself a teacher of Konkani in a Diocesan Society school has been critical of this apathy and indifference to Konkani in these schools.
‘make it easy’ mainly for the crista children. The higher stages of education were covered through Konkani as a language and also its literature after the recognition of the language by the Sahitya Akademi in 1976 but the use of this language in building knowledge in other disciplines of life with an academic perspective is still missing. The masses among Catholics, who used Konkani to express themselves in all areas of community life, are left out because of the script condition. Language leadership, while ‘prescribing’ Devanagari script for Konkani, ought to have provided time for the switch over, a kind of semi-open gate for a generation or two to facilitate the transition so that a sense of belonging would develop through the officially recognised script.

Goan GSBs prescribed the solution of single script for Konkani through their efforts and their counterparts in other regions subscribed to the ‘policy’, without making any arrangement for the actual shift. Some efforts in Mangalore came from Raknno when Fr. Mark Valdar was its editor in 1970s. Institute of Konkani started Amar Konkani in two scripts - Kannada and Devanagari – in 1981, which has now completed twenty-two years. GSBs in Mangalore have their own educational institutions but Konkani finds no place in them. They still carry on with Kannada script and find Devanagari of little practical value. In Kerala though Konkani in Devanagari script is introduced in schools, many people who write in Konkani use Malayalam script. The state promotes Malayalam language and for the masses it is a vehicle of their socio-economic life activities. As for the two schools where Konkani is introduced as a subject, the arrangement is in

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8. This fact was admitted by Shri. Suresh Borkar, a senior teacher, a leading member of the school textbook committee in Goa and writer of Konkani Grammar, in a workshop on Konkani orthography organised by GKA at Farmagudi – Ponda on 13th March 1999.
relation to the linguistic minority status acquired by the GSBs running the institutions. There are no plans to extend the facility to any other institution. The process of disempowerment of other sections among Konkani speakers through the script has led to shifts in peoples’ language choices. General trend to adopt English for mobility and development has been strengthened by this disempowerment process.

This leads us to another point related to script. Devanagari is essentially an exercise in National imagination. In the first half of the 20th century, the stress was on Hindi and Devanagari as national language and script respectively. Goan leadership has repeatedly stressed on the need to learn Devanagari to make learning of Hindi easy, or conversely, they plead that as children learn Hindi as a compulsory subject in school, Devanagari is known to them and that makes learning Konkani easy. The thinking behind this argument is that Devanagari provides an access to other Indian languages. This national imagination has served the elite interests and is true for them. For the masses state and regional languages come as the top priority and a natural choice, for which the scripts they use are essential. Their political identity is defined by the language and script in use within the borders of their state of domicile. Forcing them to give up their scripts in favour of Devanagari amounts to deprivation in a pluralist set up. It is like asking them to give up their long lived regional identity for an ‘invented’ national identity.

This invention is to be seen in the light of the past century in which GSBs had a psychological battle with the Chitpavans. The concerted emphasis on Nagari is a part of this battle. For GSBs, Chitpavans were ‘the other’ and this
caste confrontation in the region had to be necessarily based on the resource of script which claimed vedic legacy. In their battle with the Chitpavans the GSBs produced a language and literature to claim as their own but in this claim they used the strength and resources of other castes and communities. The oral folk tradition in the language or the literary and cultural treasure of the larger language community has been appropriated but the transaction is one sided because building of wherewithals to facilitate and support transition of these people to the 'modern' language is not done by the GSB leadership. Efforts in that direction on the part of others (non-GSBs) have not been reciprocated adequately. While creating organisations and associational arrangements the approach is to ensure that their control is with the community members. This has led to multiplicity of organisations with little or no co-ordination (Prabhu, 1989). Feeling of being left out and ignored is aired by many, who work within the organisational structure of Konkani movement°. Hence, while the language called Konkani has benefitted in formal and legal terms the community that sustained the speech has yet to receive a share in those benefits.

The roots of this paradox lie in the elite production of a socio-historical identity through mobilisation and invention over the past century. The mention of Maths and temples as the centres of language (Mallaya — Interview) is only symbolic because no temples or Maths have promoted Konkani. But the GSB leadership has used the good office of their Swamis (Math Heads) to create an image of language activities as their community affairs. Many among GSBs

° Paul Moras, the ex-President of KBMK feels that the Goan GSB leadership does not recognise the Mangalore leadership. Dr. William Madtha of Mangalore and Shri. Pundalik Naik of Goa, both past Presidents of the Konkani Parishad have questioned this approach. Edwin J.F. D'Souza, who presided over the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Parishad at Karwar in 1989 has the same view.
too admit that their temple authorities and Math managers have the potential to contribute to language development in a big way, but the two institutions have become more of estate managers and corporate ventures of the community rather than cultural centres. Over the 20th century the mobilisation of the GSB community was effected through regional associations such as Kanara Saraswat Association (Est. 1911) or wider organisations such as the All India Saraswat Cultural Organisation – AISCO (est. 1972). Invention of the sense of community and a rich past was transformed into regional pride linked to Goa and an imagined national role through Konkani, which was to counter the Marathi hegemony of the Chitpavans in the region. Exposure to metropolitan cultural-political dynamics combined with strong influence of the Marathi language and culture led to the shaping of this socio-historical identity, which was articulated and circulated widely with access to print media. Political transformations in the region during the first half of the 20th century (Portuguese Republic, The Language Policy of the Congress, Promotion of Hindi as a National Language. principle of regional autonomy based on language formalised later as linguistic states) provided scope for growth of this community feeling and allowed it to take the language as the symbol of their identity.

In the Goan context, this socio-historical identity was important for the generation that had no sense of history because of its neglect in the local cultural life. The Portuguese colonial intervention had its contrasting effects on the two sections of the Goan community. With the awakening through education and

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10. A few individuals among GSBs in the course of their interviews openly criticised the approach of their maths and temples to enhance their properties and assets and their little contribution to education and development of the community. But everyone felt that it is the narrow perspective of the authorities that comes in the way. Temples have become their grounds for power tussles as they possess resources.
access to liberal democratic institutions the organised caste group of the GSBs managed to utilise the opportunity to relate to the larger Indian world and at the same time to create their own cultural world. The power struggle between Catholic and Hindu elites in Goa during the Portuguese Republic continued and transformed into the script contest in the new dispensation of linguistic states under the Indian Union. The growing middle class among the GSBs looked for status whereas the church controlled Catholics had cultural anxieties and political uncertainties looming large on the eve of liberation. All these contributed to the making of this socio-historical identity. Metropolis not only brought the scattered Konkani speakers together but also enabled the organisers among them to understand the worries of those living under other linguistic regions. This added awareness of the grounds available for formulation of startegies helped in using the Konkani strength outside Goa to devise a scheme for consolidation under Goan control. The establishment of KBMK in Mangalore, making Konkani Parishad a Goa-based statutory body and demand of statehood for Goa on the basis of laguage shaped and styled in the 20th century were a part of this exercise in appropriating power. This evolution of Konkani movement also presented its own dilemmas for the Konkani language community as a whole.

While the GSBs of Goa had their plan of action for Goa the caste groups in other states had to work out their own strategies to capture symbolic power. In Kerala, the trading community of the GSBs had its problems in the caste-ridden environment and the socialist government. To protect their temporal interests they used their temples as symbols of cultural autonomy and managed to get the constitutional protection as a linguistic minority. Their support to
Devanagari too came out of their need to seek autonomy to their caste (Konkanis) which they used to signify language. This enabled them to:

a) answer the local detractors of Konkani (about its independent language status with its own script), thereby claiming social prestige and political power.

b) address the issues of economic security (checking the state interference, reducing political threats to their interests, retaining institutional control) through minority status and related benefits, and

b) address the issues of economic security (checking the state interference, reducing political threats to their interests, retaining institutional control) through minority status and related benefits, and

c) avoid claims of the larger sections of Konkani speakers on their cultural space (by keeping the forces challenging their hegemony e.g. Devadasis - who claimed the legal status of Non-Brahmin Saraswats, or Kudumbis who freed themselves from the traditional hold of GSBs and mobilised themselves for concessions from the state and even Vaishyas who had shared temple rights with them in the past) or even on the statutory positions symbolising share in state power.

Ironically, the state government of Kerala has not recognised Konkani language as such, though 'it can be considered as a minority language in the state, as it is in the VIII schedule of the Constitution'. Neither any Konkani institution receives grant from government nor is there any scheme for such grants.

In Karnataka considerations have been more economic as can be seen from the activities in Mangalore region. The role of the Pai family of Manipal, pioneers of commercial banking in South India, has been highlighted in

\[\text{\textsuperscript{11}}\text{ This information is gratefully received from Shri. P. G. Kamath of Trichur, President of Kerala Konkani Academy, a Konkani institution and Member, Advisory Board for Konkani of Sahitya Akademi - 1998-2002) vide his letter dtd. 2, 7, 1998.}\]
Chapter IV. Their interest in language issues is reflected in their support to the *Konkani Parishad* and KBMK as well as to many other activities through Dr. T. M.A.Pai Foundation. A number of organisations, associations and individuals are benefitted by financial support to their publishing and other activities for Konkani. All India Konkani Drama Festival, Annual Literary Awards, Felicitation of Konkani Personalities are the major activities of the Foundation. But the very basis of the Foundation is the Kerala case of recognition to the Gauda Saraswat Brahmin caste as a Linguistic Minority. This cultural platform has helped the Pais to establish their linguistic concerns and their major commercial or economic interests are covered under this patronage. While these activities of recognising literary, cultural and social wealth of Konkani are symbolic, the real need of Konkani language promotion is long term planning and investment in education. But sadly, Konkani is conspicuous by its absence in education-related activities under the management of the Pais. There are institutions of higher learning in specialised professional faculties such as Medicine, Engineering, Information Technology, Business Management, Law, Education and colleges of General Education at the Under-Graduate level as well as schools and Junior College. but teaching of Konkani is not even considered for future, as there is ‘no currency’ and ‘no particular advantage, but every disadvantage’ seen in it. The Management sees no possibility of introducing Konkani as it is possible to carry on without Konkani. As regards privileges as a linguistic minority, K. K. Pai feels that by themselves they are not important but act only as ‘enabling things’. The

12 According to K. K. Pai, President of the Parishad (1974-1976) and the spokesman of the Foundation, practical use of Konkani is ‘almost nil’ and Konkani will survive as a spoken language. He considers working for the preservation of Konkani as a ‘denominational patriotic duty’ of Konkani speakers and recommends creating literature to popularise it.
House of Pais have a daily newspaper in Kannada language with good circulation while the cause of Konkani is served only by the monthly ‘Panchakadayı’ which is circulated mainly among GSBs published by Konkani Bhashoddhar Trust. As organs of a linguistic minority management the Manipal educational institutions provide the best of educational facilities at a premium. Neither language nor community come into the picture.

The Foundation has instituted prizes for literary works for which writings in any of the scripts used for Konkani are considered. While the central body such as Sahitya Akademi or the state funded Goa Konkani Akademi of Goa consider the works only in Devanagari the Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Academy awards are mainly for the writings in Kannada script. But by considering all the scripts for the award, the Pais have created a position of wider acceptability in the Konkani speaking community. This arrangement has also worked as a safety valve to safeguard their interests as GSBs whose support to Devanagari mainly in Karnataka is not truly convincing to the large Catholic section in the Konkani movement. The Pais have maintained balance between their ‘academic’ cultural view on Devanagari script and the practical economic interests involved in Kannada script. The Pais of Manipal and their institutions signify the change in character from their earlier strategy to seek constitutional protection to the later policy of rewarding the ‘disenfranchised’ sections. By this their attempt to promote regional and national image as Konkani institution gains credence.

What is seen as a language movement in Karnataka is organisationally managed by Konkani Bhasha Mandal Karnataka as a non-governmental body and the Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Academy of the state government. In both of them
the two communities have contested for positions and control, as discussed in Chapter III. Both sides are gripped by a sense of loss and want to make it up through different means. Catholics are engaged in a search for recognition in the name of Konkani which they satiate by conferring the titles such as ‘Konkani Kogul’ (Nightingale of Konkani) – Wilfy Rebimbus. ‘Konkani Sahitya Shiromani’ (Epitome of Konkani Literature) – V. J. P. saldanha, ‘Konkani kala Samrat’ (The Emperor of Konkani Art) – Eric Ozario etc. Literary world of Konkani in this region is monopolised by Catholic writers but financial support for Konkani comes largely from the GSB and other Hindu Business Houses and commercial enterprises. Paul Moras, ex-President of KBMK and Convenor, Konkani Jatha accepts that Catholics have manpower but have to work under the GSBs who provide funds. GSBs look at Konkani from caste perspective and consider their own dialect as pure and standard, also strive to project Konkani from their perspective. ‘Vishwa Konkani Sammelan’ in 1995 was an example of this GSB view. It had caste-wise exhibition stalls, which became a target of criticism in Goan Konkani circles. Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Akademi too had these caste – specific programmes in different regions of Karnataka viz. ‘Aami Konkani- Aami Navayat’ in Bhatkal, ‘Aami Konkani. Aami Kharvi’ in Kundapura, ‘Aami Konkani Aami Siddi’ in Yellapur during the tenure of Basti Vaman Shenoy as its President. In this sense recognising and celebrating castes has been a feature of Konkani movement, headed by the GSBs.

In the two southern states there is a limited practical value of Konkani, the fact recognised by the Konkani speakers there. But within the constitutional framework, the elites have managed to derive benefits for themselves as a caste
group on the basis of language, at the same time supporting Devanagari script as their cultural and spiritual treasure, while using the local scripts and languages in all their other public activities. Devanagari has helped them claim authentic national and Hindu character which they value in order to win the caste contest with other local Brahmins.

In Goa too, the contest has been for power through language and script, but the caste element is underplayed for practical reasons. Portuguese rule had made Hindus in Goa relatively more liberal and open to changes. As a strategy, the GSBs in Goa had to project Konkani as people's language and also a secular means of communication as against Marathi that was viewed by Goan Catholics as Hindu religious language. To build strength for Konkani in Devanagari script youth from Marathi-educated Hindu masses were roped in, which also helped in neutralising the anti-Saraswat mobilisation under the pro-Marathi Bahujan Samaj. The movement for recognition of Konkani was made a mass movement using the fresh creativity of the Hindu masses, traditional church-sponsored Catholic forces and strategy-wielding intellectual elements among the GSBs in the face of traditional Marathi sentiments among Goan Hindus as a whole.

In the liberal democratic political structure Goan strategy of making Konkani a secular medium worked despite misrepresentation of the literary reality till the recognition of the Sahitya Akademi in 1975. In Kalelkar's words: "How much literature there is in a language is another matter. The main question is whether the community that speaks the language is cultured or not. Whether its
life is rich or poor.’ (Sardesai, 1964: 6) 13. The poor man’s Konkani, written in abundance in Roman script was ignored but the ‘cultured’ Konkani in Devanagari with a few books made a literary world of the language. This is where the strategy of the Goan GSBs succeeded. Also, in contrast to Karnataka, the two communities had two different scripts promoted traditionally. Their literary worlds existed in seclusion from each other. The Roman script literature which was the treasurehouse of Konkani (Jot, 1955: p. 2) till 1960s suffered after liberation mainly because of non-recognition and lack of encouragement from the language leaders (Interview – Tomazinho Cardoso). The replacement of Roman with Devanagari was ‘imminent’ according to the disciples of Shennai Goembab, but ‘it (Roman script) had to be retained for some time not to hurt the minds of thousands of people writing in the Roman script’. However, ‘it would not be right to preserve it’ (Editorial – Jot, Vol.1 No. 1). While this was the view during the liberation struggle inside Goan prisons14 and till the Opinion Poll, a systematic sidelining strategy was followed thereafter.

They used different strategies at different times with state power. Sahitya Akademi recognition did not figure in the Parishad till 1967 whereas inclusion in the VIII schedule was demanded in 1962 Parishad. It was realised that staking a claim for literary status was necessary for further political gains and accordingly the Sahitya Akademi recognition was pushed through. For this an

13. The first anthology of modern Konkani poems (with English Translation) published in 1964 as Book I contained two poems by a single Catholic poet, that too from Mangalore. All others were GSBs from Goa. Other regions were not represented. This was strange as pre-liberation Konkani writing was largely in the Roman script and by Goan Catholics settled in India and abroad.

14. Konkani Abhyas Mandal was formed in June 1955 in the prison of Reis magos to study Konkani in all its aspects and to attempt increasing literature in it. The manuscript magazine ‘Jot’ was seen as a sacred task. The editorial policy was to encourage writing in Devanagari but entertain Roman script writings if and when received.
assortment of books on different subjects was published within five years through the first Publishing House started in 1970. Preparation of school syllabus in Konkani, preparation of text-books, starting of Konkani drama festival in 1976-77 at Kala Academy Goa on the lines of *Tiatr* festival and Marathi Drama festival involved the leadership of KBM and others, mostly GSBs and sought participation of Catholics and Hindu masses.

The decade of 1980s witnessed broadbasing of the organisations with KBM leadership shifting to non-GSBs after the formation of the GKA, different local cultural associations taking up Konkani work, and the historic KPA finalising the agenda for Konkani in Goa. During this period, however, certain moves of the GSB leadership had a setback. One of them was to have a Chair for Konkani in Goa University under someone who would be working as per the strategies of the established leadership. But with the selection of a person not acceptable to the GSBs as Reader in Konkani things changed. Other organisations of non-GSB Konkani activists supported the new Department of Konkani in the University and introduced a full-fedged course in Post-Graduate studies in Konkani. Almost every appointment in the teaching faculty in the Department raised eye-brows. With no ‘external’ challenges before the movement the internal dynamics were exposed over the years.

Though the movement has played its role, its objectives are yet to be fulfilled. Neither the apex national body (*Akhil Bharatiya Konkani Parishad*) of the language has any permanent office and administrative structure nor any of the local bodies such as *Konkani Bhasha Mandals* have any records of their decades of functioning. None of the objectives specified in the 1939 *Parishad* have been
achieved. But the leadership is convinced that Konkani movement has achieved everything it aimed at. The entire movement has shown the GSB skills of articulation, negotiation, strategizing come of age. Among all the elements of the movement Goan GSBs have proved superior than others in their strategizing abilities. This is illustrated in Chapter V. They pined for a land they could rule, because they ‘never had an opportunity to rule’. They wanted to be equal to others in India. But these others were the Marathi intellectuals, and Chitpavans in particular. The entire language movement moved in the face of Marathi and its role in Goa. Shennai Goembab spoke of Konkani invariably in comparison with Marathi, which continued as a tradition in Goa. Every move in the movement has been in reaction to or in response to something related to Marathi. As a result official matters and constitutional honours have been the main concern. After all the demands formulated in the course of the language movement have been met nothing much in respect of the language community has changed on the ground, except that the users of two main scripts viz. Kannada and Roman have found themselves out of the circle of beneficiaries from the linguistic and literary activities. The movement has produced a curious paradox of language and script. While the language has been empowered its share is not enjoyed by all the users of its scripts. Different groups using different scripts have lived this paradox. In coming to terms with it, they engage in competition for positional goods on the basis of caste and community within their regional settings.

Literature in Konkani has remained a regional and sectional or community production because of different scripts. Transliterations have been suggested as a way out but the veterans have expressed inadequacy of that measure (Prabhu:
1989), indicating thereby that those who do not adopt the official script lose their right to benefits from the language itself. This has happened in case of senior Konkani writers in Kannada script such as V. J. P. Saldanha who never received the Sahitya Akademi award. Many others in Karnataka remain unrecognised on the same ground. Even within the same script Konkani writings in Kannada are categorised on community lines. The movement has brought people together in a show of strength or in a moment of celebration and exhibition. There too ruptures are clearly evident (Rao: 1989).

Konkani has everything that other languages in India enjoy in official terms. Leaders of the Konkani language movement claim credit for their achievements. But their entire effort has been directed to making the state take up the responsibility of developing the language. Agencies and organisations have been created for this purpose. In the process popular creative movements for the language in their regional settings have ebbed over the years. The events such as Konkani Parishad and Sahitya Sammelan have been made into All India events in 1990s but the attendance has shrunk over the decade. The emergence of state on the scene of Konkani in the last two decades has affected the dynamism for Konkani adversely and the issues such as caste hegemony and regional elite monopoly, imposition of script and appropriation of spoils have surfaced openly on these ‘national platforms’ of the language. Appropriation of the movement by the state has made the movement docile, raising question on the very objectives of the movement (Souvenir, Parishad 1999).

15. Ravindra Kelekar in response to his assessment of the attainment of the script objective of the Parishad admitted that the experiment of transliteration has not succeeded.
The foregoing shows, that the Konkani story remains an incomplete story covering milestones from opposition, to identity, to language, to script and now perhaps to the future. It is a captivating story.