

The Intellectual Biography of *Pracasha* (1928-1937) as a Contribution to the Cultural Study of Democratic Thought in Goa

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Abstract

An intellectual biography of a newspaper aims a methodology that should disclose an editorial line, its agents and the means by which they intended to reach the targeted audiences and who they were. In this way, the analysis of *Pracasha* allows us to discover the complexity of colonial relations in the cultural and political microcosm of Goa and at the same time the configuration of a global context. It is this ability to reveal the globalization of doctrinal debates for democracy incorporating the freedom fight against colonialism, that make this study of *Pracasha* an important contribution to the cultural history of the democratic thought in Goa.

Keywords

Colonial press, Democracy, Opposition and resistance, Colonial empires, Goa

Resumo

A biografia intelectual de um jornal representa uma metodologia cuja aplicação pretende divulgar uma linha editorial, os seus agentes, os meios porque pretendiam atingir o público alvo, e quem era este público. Por essa via, a leitura do jornal *Pracasha* permite descobrir a complexidade das relações coloniais no microcosmo cultural e político de Goa, ao mesmo tempo que através desse microcosmo permite configurar um contexto global. Foi essa capacidade de revelar a globalização dos debates doutrinários pela democracia incorporando a luta contra o colonialismo, que tornam o estudo deste jornal um importante contributo para história do pensamento democrático em Goa.

Palavras chave

Imprensa colonial, Democracia, Oposição e resistência, Impérios coloniais, Goa

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Introduction and Context

The intellectual biography of a newspaper calls for the definition and delineation of its editorial approach: the reasons that motivated its promoters to act through writing; the thought processes that lay behind that action and determined it, not only within the cultural and political context of the specific time, but also within the broader historical context; and the audience for whom it was written, with the aim of gaining readers and supporters, especially through the development of polemics and debate with its rivals and opponents. This particular type of talent for making its opinion public, as a means of intervening in reality, characterizes the intellectual profile of the Goan newspaper *Pracasha* in relation to its surrounding colonial context.

The intellectual notion of democracy that was conveyed by the newspaper was rooted in the international context of the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, a period which saw the birth of various cultural and political tendencies. Such movements need to be understood within the global context from which they emerged, i.e., they need to be viewed as part of the shared histories of the peoples, races, classes, castes, and genders that made the dichotomies between oppressed and oppressor, or colonizer and colonized, even more complex (Cooper, 2014:5). It would be an error of interpretation to assume that theorizations of democracy would be limited to the west, and that this concept, such as it is today, should not incorporate the whole history of revolutions, battles for freedom and the achievement of independence—both in the world of colonial empires and in the post-colonial world (Gandhi, 2014:1; Cooper, 2008:56).² These actions caused a series of chain reactions across the world, and led to the emergence of a notion of liberal democracy that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, was centered on the social question and was intellectually allied with socialist movements. It is within this global context that we must account for the exchange of world views that existed on so many different levels in the colonial world, and by using this approach, we can seek to understand the contribution to the theorization of democracy deriving from the struggles for autonomy and independence enacted at the heart of the different empires. The circulation of intellectual elites from the colonies resulted in the dissemination of the latest cultural and political commonalities that, as a consequence of the attitudes of authoritarian regimes, led to a greater rapprochement between anti-fascist and

² “The global disposition of democracy, as an affect or attitude of infinite inclusivity or as predicating the interconnection of self and the world, was intensified by an ethical turn in the transnational scene of early twentieth-century political thought, itself born of colonial encounter” (Gandhi, 2014:1).

anti-colonialist movements in various latitudes of the globe. This aspect of an intellectualized and self-reflexive democracy that could serve as a redemptive space freeing subalterns and reforming colonizers shaped the debate in that epoch by opening it up to the diverse topics and solutions introduced into the political agenda of the time by the colonial question and minority groups (Gandhi, 2014).

Of course, the imperial subjects/citizens as defined and legislated for in the various spaces of European colonization did not enjoy political equality in terms of their so-called citizenship rights. This was one of the key points to be noted in the insurgencies: the native elites' flawless knowledge of their individual and collective citizenship rights and responsibilities gave them a precise framework for comparing their own citizenship with that of the citizens living in the metropolis. On the other hand, those metropolitan citizens who had spent much of the nineteenth century fighting unsuccessfully for the right to universal suffrage now discovered fresh sources of inspiration and other reasons for their struggles in the concepts of "minority" and the "subalternity" of gender, race, and class. In the colonized world, the comparison between citizens and imperial subjects led to the incorporation into this latter group's fight of the right to full citizenship as a promise of equality (Jayal, 2013), while factors of identity and belonging shaped various opposing nationalisms.³ In other words, what degree of balance and juxtaposition between citizenship and national identity as a political category is permitted in a colonial society? Or, indeed, between an idea of citizenship and multiple cultural identities?

In response to the authoritarian, centralizing, and expansionist model of colonial empires, the novelty that was ushered in with the twentieth century was specifically a sense of willingness, while it was possible to construct political unities/equalities within a context of cultural diversity and social differences (Harvey, 2004). This clash molded the evolution of the idea of democracy, and there was a growing understanding that it was only through praxis, or the exercise of democracy, that real citizenship and responsible citizens could be generated. In the various progressive quarters outlined in the foregoing discussion, the idea came to be questioned that political democracy—defined as the right of everyone to participate in the public sphere and to elect or to be elected as representatives—was a process with several stages of education for citizenship. These groups believed that only the

³ In the colonial context, there is the nationalism that feeds on territorial expansion and on the defense of an empire that was established by force, and the nationalism that is born out of the fight for liberation and the search for identities rooted in an idealized past, a shared present, and an imagined future. Between one extreme and the other, various other nationalisms have been identified up to the present time. Later on in this article, the more inclusive nationalism that was proposed and argued for in *Pracasha* will be discussed in detail.

expansion of political equality could guarantee and reveal the natural vocation of democracy as praxis. In this sense, and for those intellectual currents, democratic experience was incompatible with the existence of the colonial situation.

Just like the idea of democracy, the idea of citizenship is similarly not watertight; rather, it is a fluid concept. This means that agents and decision-makers shifted over time, just as the discourse that defined them in relation to their narrative also altered (Cooper, 2008). After the history of kings and the history of civilizations, the history of peoples started to be written with all the alterations in their roles that were brought about by the masses as a product of the collective. The figure of the intellectual imbued the cultural and political intersections of connected histories with a necessary consistency, creating expansive networks of intellectual dialogue which extended far beyond the professional world or the university because they enabled the sharing of ideas and the constitution of movements of a reformist nature. Such movements acted in defense of causes that were considered just, such as the foundational example of the Dreyfus affair (Machado, 2009). It is important to remember that the intellectual groups formed in the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century were drawn from all parts of society. They mirrored the broad profile of the main liberal, socialist, and conservative political forces. While some maintained their political independence (Benda, 1927), others functioned as ideologues at the service of the various regimes as specialized consultants or engaged activists.⁴ For these groups, the periodical press was their principal means of affecting reality (Machado, 2018), and they expressed themselves through a manifesto that was successively unfolded from the first to the last issue. The agents of these manifestos, whether operating as individual intellectual elites or through the combined force of their efforts, did not recognize imperial borders and engaged in multi-directional relationships of support, opposition, and resistance. Whether through freedom of choice or reciprocal exchanges with the metropolis, the colonized were deeply engaged from the start, and this gave rise to equally strong opposition and resistance from their intellectual networks. Such networks provide clear evidence of the beginning of the end of the colonial empires, and are the focal point for this study.

By contrast, the idea of the Portuguese colonial empire as such, along with the empires of other European powers, was born from an expansionist desire that ultimately led to the creation of rules for the occupation of the colonized geographical space (Alexandre,

⁴ It is worth noting here the controversy in the USA regarding the role of intellectuals either as specialists contracted to influence opinion, as Walter Lippman predicted, or as activists defending their cause in the face of public opinion, as John Dewey argued.

1993). The historical occupation of the territory favored the Portuguese, but these factors were definitively substituted at the Berlin Conference by the obligation to ‘civilize’ and to promote the economic development of the spaces under their colonial tutelage. As a result of these imperial rivalries, and under pressure from the United Kingdom and Germany, the Portuguese constitutional monarchy lost a large part of its African territory, namely the whole of the area between the colonies of Angola on the Atlantic coast and Mozambique on the shores of the Indian Ocean.

The Berlin Conference had several political consequences in Portugal. The first was the nomination of António Enes as Minister of the Navy and Overseas Empire. With him, various legislative measures were introduced, from a perspective that was intended to be imperial, to ensure Portuguese sovereignty over its colonies (Silva, 2009). In that period, the regulations and laws relating to indigeneity (*indigenato*) marked a shift in Portuguese colonization that was not universally popular, as will be explained later on in this article. This shift prefigured the dictatorship and its colonial model, and led to Enes’ posthumous decoration with the Order of the Colonial Empire (*Ordem do Império Colonial*), created by the dictatorship in 1932.

A further notable consequence of the Berlin Conference was the opposition that was stirred up by republicans in the name of a liberal democracy, and which was grounded in the incompetence of the monarchy to protect national sovereignty in the colonies. The republican movement—in the form of the Portuguese Republican Party (*Partido Republicano Português*)—was realized on a wide front, and brought together people with diverse political sympathies, including socialists and anarchists. It gained strength and votes under the banner of its patriotic fight for the maintenance of the national territory against the British and European offensives in the dispute for colonial occupation and influence. As a result, the revolution of October 5, 1910 successfully brought about a change of regime in Portugal, and the republic was installed. The republican regime established certain structural changes in the relationship between the metropolis and the colonies. It embraced its civilizing mission, at least in theory and in its presentation to the other European powers, adopting (or not) a policy of assimilation of the natives at the same time as it initiated a process of administrative decentralization (Silva, 2016). Some republican currents of thought, which were echoed and supported among both European and native colonial elites, argued for processes that would lead to the complete autonomy and independence of the colonies, which may or may not be framed within an idea of an empire that would consist of a confederacy of provinces. This was one aspect of republican idiosyncrasy, along with the

laicization of society and the freedom of conscience and religion. In Goa, this dynamic process included the discussion of the colonial question that had been initiated by central government and parliament. At the level of local colonial power, it translated into organizations such as the Council of Government (*Conselho do Governo*), which came to have more members elected locally than those who were nominated by central government. This process meant that a large proportion of the Goan intellectual elite supported the liberal democratic ideal and believed that a significant change to colonial relations was underway (Lobo, 2013). As a consequence, and although they did not lose sight of the fight against the British empire in neighboring India, Catholic and Hindu elites believed that they were on their own path to democratization and the freedom from colonial power that would result from this. The coup that later installed the dictatorship rapidly extinguished this hope and the political ambitions that united diverse groups of Portuguese and Goan intellectuals. Contrary to what the new regime desired, however, the colonial legislation that followed the 1926 coup reinforced cross-sectoral alliances. In Goa, this led to specific shared initiatives between Catholics and Hindus, for which the newspaper discussed in this article served as a mouthpiece. *Pracasha* provides an example of the culture of opposition and resistance that those dictatorial measures provoked, to some extent, across the whole empire.

***Pracasha*, or the Light at the End of the Tunnel**

The newspaper *Pracasha* was published in Goa from 1928 to 1937. It was born of the necessity to respond to the various attacks perpetrated by the Portuguese dictatorship installed after the coup of May 28, 1926, and which were reflected, above all, in centralizing, authoritarian, and segregationist legislation that came to be summarized soon afterwards in the 1930 Colonial Act (*Acto Colonial*), forcibly imposed across the various colonies of the Portuguese empire. The 1926 coup interrupted the process of democratization set in motion by the First Republic of Portugal, bringing an end to the ideas of autonomy for the colonies that a large number of Goan intellectual elites had begun to debate and argue in favor of, in parallel with what was happening in British India. The centralizing nature of the dictatorship put an end to any form of colonial representation in the Portuguese parliament, and proceeded progressively to dismantle forms of representation within local colonial power structures, thus concomitantly also bringing an end to the space of negotiation that they permitted.

Venctexa V. S. R. Sar Dessai was the director of the newspaper, and Luís de Menezes Bragança became its chief editor. Both were reformists and moderate in their beliefs and politics. They turned *Pracasha* into a force that united liberal, democratic, and republican doctrines and principles. The main focuses of opposition and resistance to the Salazar dictatorship and the Portuguese colonial regime also found that the newspaper provided a place for participation, turning it into an important landmark within the network that gave substance to these values.

The intellectual agenda of that time and its manifold developments ran throughout the newspaper, with direct calls being made for action that would surpass cultural and religious differences.

It is the tendency towards indifference, the intellectual blindness, and the aberration of our educated, thinking folk that contributes to the current deplorable state of [Goan] society. This must all be corrected. It is urgent, therefore, that young people should unite now in a reformist league, and that, without becoming discouraged, they should undertake cultural, educational, and social reforms, correcting past errors and doing away with obsolete formulas and superstitions, organizing lectures, reading groups, and healthy, intense, and continuous propaganda to this end, through an appropriate intermediary organization created specifically for this purpose; and each member of that league should, in turn, take a solemn oath to strictly comply with the clauses that are stipulated. It is essential that this league should mercilessly combat religious fanaticism and the prejudices that derive from it, promoting the approximation of all religions and instilling feelings of equality and fraternity in everyone.⁵

Serving as a vehicle for the opposition to the dictatorial regime that had been installed in Portugal, *Pracasha* sought to establish itself within a European and global network of

⁵ “É o indiferentismo, a cegueira intelectual e a aberração da nossa gente culta e pensante que concorre ao estado atual deplorável da sociedade [goesa]. Há que corrigir tudo isto. Urge, pois, a própria juventude se unir agora numa liga reformista e empreender, sem desânimos, reformas no campo cultural, educativo e social, emendando erros passados e acabando com as fórmulas caducas e com as superstições, organizando para tanto conferências, gabinetes de leitura e uma sã propaganda intensa e permanente por intermédio dum organismo próprio e adequado, e tomando, por sua vez, cada membro da liga o compromisso solene de cumprir estritamente as cláusulas que forem estipuladas. É necessário que essa liga combata sem tréguas o fanatismo religioso e os preconceitos que dele derivam e promova a aproximação de todas as religiões, insuflando do animo de todos os sentimentos de igualdade e fraternidade.” Sripada Ragoba Nagorcencar, “Urge Reformar,” *Pracasha*, December 9, 1936.

cultural and political currents fighting against the expansionist and anti-democratic forms of power exercised by the Europe of colonial empires, and, in doing so, it provided an educational opportunity for its readers. It also denounced the economic imperialism that regulated the world in the period after the First World War without the obligation to establish the effective possession of, or sovereignty over, territories. The Goan freedom fighter Tristão de Bragança Cunha was a contributor to the newspaper in the early years of its publication. In relation to the worldwide reality, he sought to clearly present the connections between colonial empires and the new forms of international power that he called super imperialism, linking these to the appearance of multinationals as forms of expansion and global political influence.

One of the essential features of the present epoch is the intense economic and financial *colonization* of western Europe for the benefit of the United States of America. Within a short space of time, not only did the great European powers find themselves obliged to renounce the global predominance that they had enjoyed for more than a century, but they also rapidly became dependent upon the American colossus [...] All of the European countries that were involved in the last war have become financially dependent on the Dollar-King [...]. There is no shortage of people ready to explain the unusual stability of the Portuguese military dictatorship as being due to the financial support provided by American capitalists in exchange for advantageous concessions in Africa, and especially in Angola.⁶

At the same time, the newspaper sought to deconstruct this conception of imperialism, and to theorize and debate the multifaceted overhaul that was needed in order to create the egalitarian institutional scene of democracy. A *Pracasha* editorial that was taken from a Mozambican newspaper run by the Portuguese opposition to the dictatorship pointed out the incompatibility of the ideas of imperialism and democracy, and maintained that only democracy could liberate the people.

⁶ “Uma das características essenciais da época presente é a intensa *colonização* económica e financeira da Europa ocidental em benefício dos Estados Unidos da América. Num curto espaço de tempo, não só as grandes potências europeias se viram obrigadas a renunciar à preponderância mundial, que detinham há mais de um século, mas rapidamente passaram à categoria de dependência em relação ao colosso americano [...] Todos os países europeus implicados na última guerra caíram na dependência financeira do Rei-Dollar [...] Não falta quem explique a singular estabilidade da ditadura militar portuguesa pelo apoio financeiro prestado por capitalistas americanos a troco de vantajosas concessões na África, sobretudo em Angola.” Tristão de Bragança Cunha, “Super-imperialismo: Ford e General Motors,” *Pracasha*, August 7, 1929.

Portuguese Colonial Empire! How supremely ridiculous. [...] Imperialism today means subjection to the strongest. And between the Motherland and the Colonies, it is the former that is the stronger, so that the latter must accept imperialism as a tendency to absorb. Let us counter the idea of imperialism with the idea of democracy. [...] Anyone who knows a little history has no right to ignore that the colonies, like all organisms, are subject to the fatal law of evolution. [...] Once these have achieved an appreciable level of development, what right has the Metropolis to want to keep them bound to it, to its interests, to its mentality? None. [...] The idea of dominion can only survive as long as the population has no possibility of making itself heard. The people must surely make themselves heard in the very near future.⁷

This fight for democracy and the secular values that it transmitted created several transnational connections that were disseminated by the newspaper. *Pravasha* opened its pages to intellectual currents such as the freedom movement in India and to its mentors, debating the exercise of democratic political power served by institutions that would respect minorities in an independent India.

Compatriots [Goans]! May we learn to extract from the hidden depths of our legacy the ideal that we are lacking, and to defend it as the most essential of all rights: the right to honor our past and to direct our destiny according to our own wishes and feelings. If we already have it, let us defend it with full force, and if we do not have it, let us win it, but without the help of a humiliating guardian, without the admonishment of being favored by this influential figure or that powerful man, with only the strength of our own arms, the force of our own principles, the firmness of our character, and the justice of our cause! This is our foremost duty as men.⁸

⁷ “Império Colonial Português! Que suprema irrisão. [...] Imperialismo significa hoje sujeição ao mais forte. E como entre Mãe Pátria e as Colônias a mais forte é aquela, para estas há que aceitar o imperialismo como uma tendência de absorção. Ao conceito imperialista opomos nós o conceito democrático. [...] Quem conhecer um bocadinho da história não tem o direito de desconhecer que as colônias, como todos os organismos, estão sujeitos à lei fatal da evolução. [...] Uma vez que elas tenham atingido um grau de desenvolvimento apreciável, que direito há de as Metrôpoles quererem mantê-las presas a si, aos seus interesses, a sua mentalidade? Nenhum. [...] A ideia de domínio só poderá viver enquanto o povo não tiver a possibilidade de se fazer ouvir. Ele há-de fazer-se ouvir num futuro ainda próximo.” “Imperialismo e Democracia, editorial extraído da *Democracia* de Lourenço Marques,” *Pravasha*, March 10, 1934.

⁸ “Conterrâneos [Goeses]! Saibamos ir arrancar ao recôndito da nossa herança o ideal que nos falta e saibamos defendê-lo como a essência de todos os direitos: o de honrar o nosso passado e dirigir os nossos destinos

In the *Pracasha* editorial of January 12, 1929, Menezes de Bragança, writing under the pseudonym of Lucifer, commented on a speech given in Calcutta by Motilal Nehru:⁹

The author of these lines stated, just a short while ago, in this very newspaper, that the *dominion status*¹⁰ is the solution that, at this moment in time, is least divisive for India, while independence pure and simple is the solution that is most appealing for the public spirit. Put simply, the first is far from resolving the political problem of India, just as it is far from falling as a gift from the hands of the English. The other is not yet visible on the horizon of what is feasible, making it necessary, as one of those who support it has said, to create the mentality that the idea involves, by means of a systematic and sustained propaganda campaign.¹¹

The defense both of Goa and the rights of Goans in the light of the dictatorship, its repressive legislation, and the prior censorship of the press united those who directed the newspaper. Dessai was the leader in Goa of the Hindu reform movement,¹² which had been founded in British India by nationalist sympathizers. The movement, known as Shuddhi,¹³

segundo os nossos próprios sentimentos. Se já o temos, procuremos disputá-lo a todas as violências, e se não o temos, saibamos conquistá-lo, mas sem o amparo de uma tutela humilhante, sem a objurgatória do favor deste influente ou daquele poderoso, apenas o vigor do nosso braço, pela força dos nossos princípios, pela rijeza do nosso caráter e pela justiça da causa! É este o nosso primeiro dever de homens.” Santana Rodrigues, “O Primeiro Dever,” *Pracasha* June 7, 1928.

⁹ Motilal Nehru was the father of Jawaharlal Nehru. Both father and son were directors of the Indian National Congress. The newspaper promoted several homages to Motilal Nehru after his death in February 1931, and, in March of the same year, denounced the prohibition by the Portuguese authorities of public homages to Motilal in the Goan islands.

¹⁰ Autonomy granted by the British to various imperial territories.

¹¹ “Quem escreve estas linhas afirmou, ainda há pouco, neste jornal, que o *Dominium status* é a solução que, no momento presente, menos divide a Índia, sendo a independência pura e simples a solução que mais seduz o espírito público. Simplesmente, a primeira está longe de resolver o problema político da Índia, como está longe de cair das mãos inglesas à maneira de dádiva. A outra ainda não despontou no horizonte das realizações, tornando-se necessário no dizer de um dos seus partidários, criar a mentalidade que essa ideia implica, por uma sistemática e sustentada propaganda.”

¹² See the editorial of the first edition in favor of the Shuddhi movement, *Pracasha* supplement, April 1928.

¹³ The Shuddhi movement will be discussed here solely in relation to its intellectual slant as defined in the introduction, i.e., in relation to its cultural and political implications within the space-time of the newspaper. After the declaration of freedom of religion and conscience in the 1911 Constitution of the First Republic of Portugal, reconversions were facilitated, bringing with them the respective political consequences in terms of the powers that this established. Later, in response to the recently inaugurated dictatorship of May 26, 1928, the Shuddhi movement in Goa reinforced the social and religious aspects of its discourse. As will be explained later in this article, the opposition in Goa accused the Shuddhi movement of political indifference, which eventually led to its announcing the creation of a new social and political movement. For further information on the Shuddhi movement in Goa, see, above all, Pereira (2009), Kamat (1996), and Kakodkar (1988).

argued for the end of the caste system and encouraged the reconversion to Hinduism of Christian and Islamic converts, thus creating discontent among orthodox Hindus and Catholics (Pereira, 2009; Kamat, 1996; Nagordkar, 1988).

Today, the reasons are no longer in force that led the old Brahmins not to mix with the other castes, to consider some of them *untouchable*, to prohibit others from reciting the Vedic *mantras*, to the extent that, if they were to continue along this path, soon there would not be one who would recite them. It was necessary to react under pain of the total and fatal extinction of their uniquely ancient race, culture, creed, and civilization. [...] Let there be no confusion. The danger is there, but it is in religious fanaticism...¹⁴

The agendas of the aforementioned men were rooted in the defense of democratic values and genuine citizenship for Goans:

In Portuguese India, the rage of Catholic intolerance [...] contributed to the asphyxiation and atrophy of the Hindu class, whose regeneration finally commenced on the auspicious date of October 5, 1910, when the Portuguese Republic was proclaimed and the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity were established.¹⁵

Pracasha simultaneously followed the arguments put forward by Indian nationalists and the political tendencies of Hindus and Catholics who believed in the rise of a Goan nationalism. The newspaper asserted the key idea of the liberation and emancipation of colonized peoples,

¹⁴ “Já hoje não subsistem as razões que levaram os brâmanes antigos a não se misturarem com as restantes castas, de considerar algumas *untouchables*, de proibir a outras as recitações dos *mantras* védicos, a tal ponto que, a continuar por esta senda, não haveria, dentro em pouco, um que os recitasse. Era forçoso reagir sob pena de extinção total e fatal da sua raça, cultura, crença e civilização singularmente duradouras. [...] Não haja confusões. O perigo está, mas é no fanatismo religioso...” “C’est le ton qui fait la chanson,” *Pracasha*, March 29, 1928. This was part of the debate between the director of *Pracasha* and António Maria da Cunha, the director of *Heraldo*. It was signed “X” and followed a similar line to the article on “Reformas Religiosas,” April 5, 1928: “Quem conhece a história da Índia, principalmente sob o seu aspeto social e religioso, não poderá deixar de concordar que no seio do hinduísmo não faltaram apóstolos que pregassem a igualdade de homens perante a religião” (Anybody who knows the history of India, and particularly its social and religious aspects, cannot fail to agree that, at the heart of Hinduism, there is no shortage of apostles who would preach the equality of men in relation to religion).

¹⁵ “Na Índia portuguesa, o furor da intolerância católica [...] contribuiu para a asfixia e atrofia da classe hindu cuja regeneração por fim começou na memorável data de 5 de outubro de 1910, em que foi proclamada a República Portuguesa e tiveram consagração os princípios da liberdade, igualdade e fraternidade.” X, “Reformas Religiosas,” *Pracasha*, April 5, 1928, p. 2.

and claimed such solidarity as being an inherent part of the fight against the Portuguese dictatorial regime:

What I know is that neither this newspaper, nor any other, has made the kind of assertion that, at the session of the Council of Government this past July 4, I myself made on behalf of the elected party, repudiating the unacceptable tenet that underlies the Colonial Act, and demanding for my country a right that nobody can refuse—the right of peoples to direct and govern their own destinies, in the fullness of their individuality, without guardianship or interference from anybody [...] I read, not long ago, the forceful pamphlet by Dr. Bernardino Machado. A vibrant protest, and, at the same time, a well-produced critique of the Colonial Act. What a formidable lesson for the youth of my land!¹⁶

The newspaper was open to reflecting on and constantly updating the democratic debate taking place among the multiple currents of thought that traversed the various nationalisms. It made the different reasons for agreement and divergence clear to its readers, but always demonstrated great respect for maintaining an open debate and for the tolerance of different beliefs.

In its fight for democracy and freedom of conscience waged against the dictatorship imposed by Portuguese colonialism in Goa, as well as against all forms of colonialism, *Pracasha* identified the developments taking place on various fronts, which it communicated through debate or by agreement with other newspapers and magazines, whether in relation to the issues with which it was concerned locally,¹⁷ or in relation to subjects that connected

¹⁶ “O que sei é que nem neste jornal nem noutra qualquer se fizeram afirmações como aquelas que, na sessão do Conselho de Governo, de 4 de Julho último, eu fiz, em nome da parte eleita, ao repelir a inaceitável doutrina que ditou o Ato Colonial e, reivindicar ao meu país um direito que ninguém lhe pode recusar—o direito, que têm os povos, de dirigir ou regular, na plenitude da sua individualidade, os seus destinos sem tutela nem interferência de quem quer que seja [...] Li, ainda há pouco, o vigoroso panfleto do sr. dr. Bernardino Machado. Um protesto vibrante, ao mesmo tempo, uma bem produzida crítica do Ato Colonial. Que formidável lição aos novos da minha terra!” Menezes Bragança, “Palavras claras,” *Pracasha*, October 25, 1930, p. 3. Bernardino Machado (1851-1944) was one of the founding republicans and an exiled opponent of the dictatorship. He had been a diplomat and was twice president of the First Portuguese Republic.

¹⁷ Some notable Goan newspapers and magazines that enjoyed close relations with *Pracasha* were *Bharat*, *O Ultramar*, *Heraldo*, *O Heraldo*, *Mascotte*, *Hindu*, *O Regional*, *O Anglo-Lusitano*, *Jornal das Colónias*, *Índia Nova*, and *Bandra Review*. On the other hand, important publications that were outspoken opponents and favored the regime of the time included *Voz de São Francisco*, *Diário da Noite*, *A Terra*, and *Voz da Índia*. The National Union (*União Nacional*), the political vehicle for the Salazar regime, opened a regional headquarters in Goa, which was directed by Egípsi de Sousa. *Pracasha*, April 1, 1933.

it to the rest of India and to other continents.¹⁸ The newspaper thus demonstrated multiple aspects of cultural and political contact that made the world smaller, because these questions could be read about in the pages of *Pracasha*, where the most relevant events and intellectual production from other continents were reported.

As an intellectual newspaper, the editorial line adopted a critical position that went beyond political parties and existing powers, and demonstrated a coherent link between thought and action, acting as an intermediary and demanding that privilege be given to the greater good of freedom and emancipation in the face of the colonial empires.

Pracasha was born in an environment that was truly hostile to the ideology of Freedom when the cross entrusted to the sword sought to prevent the spread of the religious convictions of a great number of citizens of a republic that itself claimed to be founded on the irrefutable rock of Democracy. It was born, therefore, to fight, and, in its battle for Truth, Justice, and healthy Democracy, [...] *Pracasha* has been struggling fearlessly for the purity and integrity of the true ideal of Democracy. Certain as it is that Democracy will one day triumph gloriously in every part of the world, *Pracasha* highlights for its readers the dangers that might tarnish its luster, and when one day healthy Democracy arrives in these lands to unfurl its glorious flag, *Pracasha* will show it the scars that cover its chest, and will take refuge under its standard, not as an *adherent*, but as one who has the right to a place of honor [...]. *Pracasha*, then, faithful to the very meaning of its name, continues to cast its feeble light along the paths of destiny of this land.¹⁹

¹⁸ There were various newspapers in Europe and America that gave voice to the positions shared by *Pracasha* or to the most current debates. Among these were *A Seara Nova*, *O Século*, *O Diabo*, *Diário Liberal*, *Notícias de Lourenço Marques*, *O Oriente*, *Vamos Ler* from Brazil, and, in translation, *El Sol*, *La Volonté*, *Le Monde*, *Vendredi*, *Marianne*, *Nouvelle Europe*, *Nouvelles Littéraires*, *The New Republic*, and *The Negro World* from the USA.

¹⁹ “Nasceu [o *Pracasha*] numa atmosfera verdadeiramente hostil à ideologia da Liberdade quando a cruz confiada na espada tentava embargar o passo às convicções religiosas dum grande número de cidadãos duma república, que se diz fundada sobre a irrefragável rocha da Democracia. Nasceu, pois, para combater, e combatendo pela Verdade, pela Justiça e pela sã Democracia [...] O *Pracasha* tem pugnado destemidamente pela pureza e integridade do verdadeiro ideal da Democracia. Certo, como está, que a Democracia há-de um dia triunfar gloriosa em todas as partes do mundo, o *Pracasha* aponta aos seus leitores os perigos que podem empanar o brilho, e quando um dia a sã Democracia vier a estas terras desfraldar a sua gloriosa bandeira, o *Pracasha* mostrar-lhe-á as cicatrizes que lhe cobrem o peito, e acolher-se-á debaixo do seu estandarte, não como *adesivo*, mas como quem tem jus a um lugar de honra [...] O *Pracasha*, pois, fiel à própria significação do seu nome continua a derramar a sua débil luz pelas sendas dos destinos desta terra.” “Mais um ano,” *Pracasha*, March 17, 1934.

Within the newspaper itself, *Pracasha* put its guiding principles into practice, using a democratic model for the management of its internal affairs, which was clearly manifested in the pages of the publication, as, for example, in Menezes Bragança's article published in one of the early editions during the election for president of the regime. The election of the sole candidate, Marshall Óscar Carmona (who had been interim president since 1926), inaugurated the period known as the National Dictatorship (*Ditadura Nacional*). Menezes Bragança's reflections became the subject of discussion and defined the newspaper's political stance in favor of democracy and secularism.

I read your newspaper with interest. I find the religious faiths quite strange, and I am not interested in the topic of conversions, nor, as I am sure you will understand, in that of reconversions, which is causing much agitation in this swamp. However, I am interested in it as a manifestation of religious freedom, and because of the dangerous and deplorable types of reaction that it has produced in this environment, laying bare the intolerance that dominates people's minds. Religious freedom, in a civilized country, has just one boundary that it may not cross. And that is the civil supremacy of the State, which cannot be restricted by the hegemonic pretensions of any other power, whatever titles it might invoke to affirm its superiority. Unless the State transforms itself into a theocracy that enslaves minds. There is no doubt that the Republic established the principle of religious neutrality and equality of creeds in its Constitution [1911].²⁰

In that presidential election, Carmona won with a large share of the votes cast in the municipalities of the so-called New Conquests (*Novas Conquistas*). Menezes Bragança expressed his unhappiness with this fact because, according to rumors, this vote represented a rejection of the Shuddhi movement, whose leaders had called upon voters to abstain. On

²⁰ "Leio com vivo interesse o seu jornal. Estranho a qualquer das confissões religiosas, não me interessa no seu aspeto prosélito, como, compreende bem, o caso das reversões, que está agitando este pântano. Mas interessa-me como manifestação da liberdade religiosa, pelas deploráveis e perigosas formas de reação que determinou neste meio, pondo a nu a intolerância que avassala os espíritos. A liberdade religiosa, num país civilizado tem apenas um limite que não pode transpor. E é a supremacia civil do Estado, que não pode ser coartada pelas pretensões hegemónicas de qualquer outro poder, sejam quais forem os títulos que invoque para afirmar a sua preeminência. A menos que o Estado se transforme numa teocracia a escravizar consciências. A República não há dúvida que consignou na Constituição [1911] o princípio de neutralidade religiosa e igualdade de cultos." Menezes Bragança, "Simples Reflexões," *Pracasha*, April 12, 1928. This article marked the beginning of a long-term collaboration between the author and the newspaper, which lasted until the final issue was published under the directorship of V. Dessai.

the other hand, that same call had given the journalist a reason to criticize the movement. In fact, this article by Menezes Bragança received support from several Hindus. One of them, F. S. Molcornencar, requested that the director of the newspaper respond, which he did in a subsequent issue.²¹ Dessai retorted that the Shuddhi movement was non-partisan in nature, and that in the case of the election in question, with its sole candidate, they were completely indifferent to the result. In response, Menezes Bragança confirmed that the attitude of indifference was responsible “for giving democracy a good kicking.”²² It seems uncommon for a newspaper director and a contributor—who was a future editor himself, no less—to debate so freely in the pages of a newspaper. The discussion continued with several interlocutors and, soon afterwards, Sar Dessai and two other Hindu intellectuals, the Viscount of Perném and Vamona Naique Carandé, helped to found Gomantaquia Hindu-Sabha in Goa. This was a nationalist association that, although it continued to be a part of the Shuddhi movement, sought to go further in bringing about social and political reform in Goan society.

Luís de Menezes Bragança also professed his opposition,²³ presenting in the newspaper a coherent critical assessment of the various efforts and errors of the First Portuguese Republic, which had inevitably led to the dictatorship.²⁴ With this analysis, he asserted that he no longer believed in the possibility, or even in the advantage, of Goan autonomy being achieved within the framework of the Portuguese empire—an autonomy that had been thought through and planned during the period of parliamentary democracy, being designed to mirror the so-called British Dominion status that had been granted to the British colonies of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. The position advocated by the Goan journalist had many followers, who recognized that the future of Goa was necessarily linked to the future of the rest of India.

²¹ *Pracasha*, April 26, 1928.

²² “por dar um pontapé na democracia.” Menezes Bragança, “Notas à margem,” *Pracasha*, May 3, 1928.

²³ “Eu não acredito que alguém que lute por liberdade política possa suportar a situação que surgiu do 28 de Maio” (I do not believe that anybody who fights for political freedom can support the situation that emerged after May 28 [1926]). Menezes Bragança, “Notas à margem,” *Pracasha*, May 3, 1928.

²⁴ As would eventually be confirmed, the newspaper’s position in relation to the period of the First Portuguese Republic displayed considerable lucidity. The political advantage that was taken of that period opened up a debate on various fronts. Firstly, there was a comparison to the period of dictatorship that they were living through, and which had serious consequences for the freedom of expression of colonized peoples; this gave rise to the newspaper’s annual homage to the implantation of the Republic. Secondly, there was a critical approach to the cultural and political reforms that had been lost during the Republic, and the accompanying debate in which the colonies had partly participated, and which had fallen on deaf ears. Finally, this led directly to the observation that Goa had exhausted the possibility of dialogue with Portuguese colonialism and should therefore direct its efforts towards guaranteeing an autonomous place in the Indian Federation, once that region had freed itself from the British empire.

In spite of its importance for Goa, there will be few who have considered this aspect and dared to ask themselves what the political status of our country will be when the rest of India has been granted independence [...]. Goa is watching. It is what Goa has done for centuries. But let us not exaggerate. The young blood of Goa was already inoculated with the new virus. The names of Indian heroes are on the lips of its new generation. The young people of Goa, whether in Portugal²⁵ or in the land of their birth, display in their press, and by their political attitude, their ardent sympathy with, and enthusiasm for, the Indian cause. Their political vision stretches beyond the borders of Goa [...]. Nor should it be claimed that a free India would result in a return to barbarism. Independence, on the contrary, will make us equal to the free nations among which we will occupy a position of perfect equality, having to solve problems of an internal nature that are shared by them all.²⁶

At the same time, in each issue of the newspaper, a contributor demonstrated the importance of maintaining a global dimension in the cultural and political discussion, which would leave nobody out:

Independence is worth nothing if we do not conquer it for ourselves and show that we are worthy of possessing such a valuable thing. This is the reason why Goa must alter its political perspective. Goa needs a new and more intensive civic education that will prepare it and instill in it the spirit of self-determination.²⁷

²⁵ Reference to the magazine *Índia Nova*, which was launched by young Goans in Coimbra (Lobo, 2009).

²⁶ “Apesar da sua importância para Goa poucos haverá que tenham encarado esse aspeto e ousado perguntar a si próprios qual será o estatuto político do nosso país quando o resto da Índia tiver atendido a independência [...] Goa observa. É o que ela tem feito durante séculos. Mas não exageremos. O sangue moço de Goa já foi inoculado do novo vírus. Os nomes dos heróis indianos estão nos lábios da sua nova geração. Jovens goeses tanto em Portugal (Lobo 2009) quanto na sua terra natal, manifestam, por meios dos seus órgãos de imprensa e pela sua atitude política, a sua ardente simpatia e o seu entusiasmo pela causa da Índia. A sua visão política alcança mais longe do que as fronteiras de Goa [...] Nem se pretenda que a Índia libertada voltará à barbárie. A independência, pelo contrário, tornar-nos-á iguais às nações livres no concerto das quais ocuparemos um lugar de perfeita igualdade, tendo de solver os problemas de ordem interna de que são comuns a todas elas.” Armando Menezes, “O Futuro de Goa,” *Pracasha*, March 23, 1929, p. 3. As indicated in the introduction to the article, it was initially published outside Goa in the *Bandra Review* of the Goan Institute of Bandra (*Instituto Goês de Bandra*). Several articles on this theme taken from Portuguese newspapers and magazines such as *Seara Nova*, *O Século*, *Índia Nova*, and *Jornal das Colónias* were published by the Goan doctor, Santana Rodrigues, who was in Portugal at that time.

²⁷ “De nada vale a independência se ela não for por nós conquistada e se não nos mostrarmos por qualquer forma dignos de possuímos tão valioso bem. Eis o motivo por que Goa deve mudar da sua visão política. Ela

Although the Indian cultural dimension, in the broadest sense, was missing from education in both Goa and British India, it was never forgotten in *Pracasha*, just as the newspaper always included contributions from other latitudes that circulated globally. By way of contrast, it was argued in the newspaper that democracy would be nourished by an inclusive nationalism, while the dictatorship strengthened itself by means of exclusion and through all kinds of discrimination and pathetic hierarchies. It was this perspective that united some Catholic and Hindu Goan intellectuals.

Pracasha gave voice to Jawaharlal Nehru's speech in Bengal, further lending its own support through a commentary by Menezes de Bragança, in which he summarized the key ideas that were pursued by the newspaper:

In order to love our own country, we need not despise foreign lands. Nationalism does not involve, as an essential feature, hatred, or disdain for everything foreign. Just because we love our own family, we are not going to loathe other families. It is true that there exists the nationalism of imperial peoples, which is oppressive, regressive, absorbing, exclusionary. It lives by breathing war and it is the enemy of popular emancipation. It serves as the *leitmotiv* of dictators, who use it to hypnotize the masses with dangerous dreams of expansion, and to silence the impetus to revolt against their power, which oppresses freedom. It feeds on the vanity of dead blond men when it sees that there is no ground for conquest. It is anti-internationalist. But there is a nationalism of the people who believe themselves to have the right to a free life, and who work to achieve it. They do not hate other peoples for being free. They merely claim an equal right. Their nationalism is only a starting point, let us say, for internationalism.²⁸

necessita duma nova e mais intensa educação cívica que a prepare e que lhe incuta o espírito da autodeterminação.” Armando Menezes, “O Futuro de Goa,” *Pracasha*, March 23, 1929, p. 4.

²⁸ “Para amarmos a nossa pátria não temos de detestar as pátrias alheias. O nacionalismo não envolve essencialmente o ódio ou o desdém pelo estrangeiro. Por querermos à nossa família, não vamos abominar outras famílias. Há é certo, o nacionalismo dos povos imperialistas. É opressor, regressivo, absorvente, exclusivista. Vive de soprar a guerra e é inimigo da emancipação dos povos. Serve de *leit-motiv* aos ditadores, que o utilizam para hipnotizar as massas com perigosos sonhos de expansão e calar ímpetos de revolta contra o seu mando opressor da liberdade. Alimenta-se da vaidade dos loiros mortos, quando vê que não há campo para conquistas. É anti internacionalista. Mas há o nacionalismo dos povos que se julgam com direito à vida livre, e trabalham para a ter. Não odeiam os outros povos por serem livres. Reivindicam apenas direito igual. O seu nacionalismo é apenas o ponto de partida, digamos assim, para o internacionalismo.” Menezes Bragança, writing under the pseudonym Lucifer. “Erro de Perspetiva” *Pracasha*, November 10, 1928.

At the same time, the leader of the nationalist opposition to the Portuguese dictatorship, Tristão Bragança Cunha, proceeded to publish in the newspaper his argument in favor of India's project for independence from colonialism.²⁹ He founded the Goan Committee of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta in 1928, along with various others who opposed the Portuguese regime, including Menezes Bragança.³⁰ Several news reports on the progress of the committee, including the election of its executive board, were published in the newspaper. T. B. Cunha gave a lucid summary of the reception afforded to this event in Goa, and of its detractors.

The formation, in Goa, of a Committee of the Indian National Congress, and some statements made by myself, in my role as member of that Committee, have provoked solemn and verbose protests on the part of a certain press outlet. [...] Never have I harbored the slightest illusion as to the character of one section of our press, which, for some disingenuous folk, represents the opinion of the people of this country. The sheer hostility manifested by them now towards Indian nationalism merely serves to confirm what the public has long suspected [...]. The Goan Committee only expresses the opinion of those who, not being domesticated and having pride in their Indian origin, aspire to achieve for their country a situation of perfect equality among the great free nations of the world.³¹

In 1930, after the suspension of *Pracasha* by the censors at the end of 1929, Menezes Bragança continued his journalistic work with the newspaper *Pradīpa*, which was directed by the Goan nationalist Balcrisna V. Sacardandó. It was later published in Bombay after having been prohibited in Goa.

²⁹ T. B. Cunha, "A Lição dos factos," *Pracasha*, July 3, 1928, pp. 1-2.

³⁰ Menezes Bragança, "Carta a um amigo ingénuo," *Pracasha*, January 30, 1929. They had all met in Calcutta for a public meeting of the Indian National Congress in December 1928. The speaker was J. Nehru, whose lecture was transcribed in *Pracasha*.

³¹ "A constituição, em Goa, dum Comité do Congresso Nacional Indiano e algumas afirmações por mim feitas, na minha qualidade de delegado desse Comité, provocaram por banda de certa imprensa solenes e campanudos protestos. [...] Nunca alimentei a menor ilusão sobre o carácter duma secção da nossa imprensa que para alguns ingénuos representa ainda a opinião do povo deste país. A franca hostilidade por eles agora manifestada pelo nacionalismo indiano vem apenas confirmar o que o público já há muito suspeitava a seu respeito [...] O Comité Goês exprime unicamente a opinião daqueles que, não sendo domesticados e tendo orgulho da sua origem indiana, aspiram para o seu país uma situação de perfeita igualdade no meio das grandes nações livres do mundo." Tristão Bragança Cunha, "Contra-Protesto," *Pracasha*, February 16, 1929.

At the end of that year, the alliances came to be more clearly demarcated around the opposition to the Colonial Act, whether in the press³² or in protests in Bombay and Calcutta.

The Goan Union has taken the initiative of organizing a rally in Bombay, with the patriotic and very laudable aim of stating the feelings of the Goan Community about the political and administrative regime installed through the Colonial Act that now forms part of the Portuguese Constitution, having been passed into law through a plebiscite, something that is absolutely unheard of in the history of public law in civilized countries. [...] For as long as the Colonial Act remains in force, the principles from which the regime of discrimination and administrative centralization emanate will remain intact. [...] The Bombay rally will be the mouthpiece for our land. Whether they listen to us or not, we shall state that the offending clauses of the Colonial Act and of the bills and acts dictated by those principles cannot remain in force [...]. In short, we shall say aloud, without obstacle or hesitation, that only through liberal principles can India live decently under the shadow of the Portuguese flag.³³

This dispute that was initiated by Menezes Bragança is well known.³⁴ In the years that followed, he managed to unmask in *Pracasha* all the measures that were inspired by and resulted from the Colonial Act. These measures simply restated the subalternity of the colonies and their respective natives in relation to the metropolis and metropolitan citizens, whose essential nature to colonize and civilize others was constitutionalized as law. A few issues later, after a close reading of the revision that was made of the Colonial Act at the time of the introduction of the new constitution in 1933, Menezes Bragança radicalized his argument. Although he acknowledged the period of the First Republic as a time of missed

³² Through its editors and contributors, *Pracasha* acknowledged various debates taking place among the publishers of Portuguese or bilingual Goan newspapers, such as Hegdó Dessai, the director of *Bharat*, António Maria da Cunha, the director of *Heraldo*, José Maria Furtado and Luís Cota of *O Regional*, or Carlos Cruz of *O Anglo-Lusitano*, which was published in Bombay. These discussions arose from occasional differences regarding the assessment of the situation, and from some more profound disagreements, such as the argument which saw Luís de Menezes Bragança oppose Pedro Correia Afonso, the conservative Catholic director of *Heraldo do Domingo*, on the problem of birth control—a question that was being discussed internationally at that time. Nevertheless, the personal relationships between the intellectual groups and their newspapers were maintained through their general repudiation of the Colonial Act as demonstrated by António Maria da Cunha of *Heraldo*, Bruto da Costa of *O Ultramar*, Messias Gomes of *O Herald*, Carlos Cruz of *O Anglo-Lusitano*, Hegdó Dessai of *Bharat*, and so on. This fact was duly acknowledged in *Pracasha*.

³³ Menezes Bragança, “Pelos Nossos Direitos,” *Pracasha*, June 21, 1933.

³⁴ Firstly as an elected member of the Goan Council of State, and later in the press.

opportunities, he now announced his complete disbelief in a return to a version of Portuguese colonialism on a pathway to political liberalism, and he turned his attention once more to neighboring India.

I confess that until now I had not read, article by article, the new and revised version of the Colonial Act, in the form in which it is incorporated into what, in a crassly inappropriate way, is called the Constitution and which would be better named Rules of the Dictatorship [...]. But to speak of “Portuguese political liberalism” today is nothing more than pure sarcasm. Political liberalism was killed by the Salazar-Carmona regime. To contrast our political situation with that of our neighbors is to close our eyes to reality. In order not to shock the sensibilities of the dictators, they even deny us the right to openly display our revulsion at the Colonial Act.³⁵

For as long as it survived, *Pracasha* denounced all the attacks directed against democracy and the democratic principles of citizenship that were perpetrated by the dictatorial government and its idea of a colonial empire, and the newspaper suffered the consequences.³⁶ It scrutinized the subsequent measures for segregation in the army and in the colonial public administration, which sent out a clear message: the negation of the culture of the other as barbaric and uncivilized throughout the so-called imperial space.

I do not know if there are only *citizens* and *natives* [*indígenos*]. In the legislation generated by the Colonial Act, there also appear *assimilated people* [*assimilados*]—an intermediate category [...]. The critical spirit that is the greatest characteristic of European culture has torn up the blindfold with which sectarian prejudice obscured the medieval mind [...]. Today there is not just one civilization. There are civilizations and cultures. And nobody more than

³⁵ “Confesso que até aqui não lera, artigo por artigo, a nova edição revista do Ato Colonial, tal como foi integrado nisso a que, numa crassa impropriedade, se chamou Constituição e ficava bem o nome de Regimento da ditadura [...] Mas hoje falar ‘na política liberal portuguesa’ vale por puro sarcasmo. A política liberal, matou-a o regime Salazar-Carmona. Confrontar a nossa situação política com a dos nossos vizinhos é fechar os olhos à realidade. Para que se não possa chocar a sensibilidade dos ditadores, ainda nos recusam o direito de manifestar francamente a nossa repulsa pelo Ato Colonial.” Menezes Bragança, “Para Pior...,” *Pracasha*, July 5, 1933.

³⁶ In addition to the suspension of *Pracasha* and the various legal proceedings, several Catholic priests in Goa also forbade their congregation from reading it. This fact was duly noted and criticized in the October 5, 1932, and February 27, 1937, issues of *Pracasha*.

the Portuguese has the historic duty to acknowledge this superior fact of the history of the last three centuries [...]. Ultimately, what matters is the Colonial Act. It is the new testament, inspired by an integralist ideology, which relegates everything that does not conform to the standard of “official civilization,” viewed in accordance with ultra-nationalist, absorbing, and exclusivist criteria, to a level of civil, political, and social inferiority.³⁷

Once it had been ratified, the Colonial Act also represented the end of room for negotiation that had previously been permitted between colonized peoples and the colonial power in local terms. Instead, a colonialist leadership was created, headed by puppets who received their orders directly from central government, and, from 1933 onward, from the dictator himself, to be more precise. As such, even the governors of the colonies were totally dependent on the central government of the metropolis. At the level of the local power and its respective hierarchies, Article 30 of the Colonial Act was categorical about the role of the governor, who was prohibited from taking any initiative, legislative or otherwise, without first engaging in prior consultation with the Minister for the Colonies.³⁸ Furthermore, in relation to the hierarchical structure, the factor of racial discrimination came to be considered a legal criterion.

One entirely new provision has been incorporated by those who revised the Colonial Act, and approved by the illustrious dictators with their official seal. It is yet another unequivocal demonstration of the prejudice of racial superiority that impregnates this magnum opus of political regression, with which Salazar sought to force the gates of history. It is Article 32 of the new version. The text says: “Local and municipal administrative institutions are represented in the colonies by municipal councils, municipal boards, and local committees, according to the importance, level of development, and *European population* of the respective district.” Where there is no *European population*, there

³⁷ “Não sei se apenas há *cidadãos e indígenas*. Na legislação gerada pelo Ato Colonial aparecem também *assimilados*—uma espécie intermédia [...] O espírito crítico que é a mais alta característica da cultura europeia, rasgou a venda com que o preconceito sectário obscurecia a mentalidade medieval [...] Hoje não há uma civilização. Há civilizações e culturas. E ninguém, mais que os portugueses, tem o dever histórico de não ignorar este facto culminante da História dos últimos três séculos [...] Vale, afinal, o Ato Colonial. É o novo testamento, inspirado na ideologia integralista, a relegar a um plano de inferioridade civil, política e social tudo quanto não se conforma com o padrão da ‘civilização oficial’ vista através dum critério ultra nacional, absorvente e exclusivista.” Menezes Bragança, “Um dilema,” *Pracasha*, March 22, 1933.

³⁸ Menezes Bragança, “Para pior....,” *Pracasha*, 15 July 1933.

cannot be municipal councils or boards, nor local committees. It is not an alternative condition. It is a cumulative condition.³⁹

The year 1935 saw the final update in this process, with a unilateral constitutional revision of the already unilateral 1933 constitution. On that date, a number of refinements were made to the Colonial Act that exacerbated the imperial concept of the “colony,” with the Supreme Council of the Colonies being replaced by the Imperial Council. This was a question of semantics, without doubt, given that the end of the elected representation of the colonies had already been decreed, but it clearly demonstrated the rise of Salazarism, the progression of which mirrored certain developments taking place elsewhere in Europe. The icing on the cake of the constitutional revisions was the end of lay education and freedom of conscience with an article that stipulated the teaching in public schools of Christian morality, which was established as the tradition of the metropolitan country and imposed throughout the empire.⁴⁰

Through its contributors, *Pracasha* never ceased to fight for the rights of colonized peoples. In 1934, the newspaper published a series of articles in which members of the European republican left theorized on democracy. In his introduction to one of these articles that analyzed the European situation, Menezes Bragança reflected on the fact that not all republics were democratic, denouncing, as he did so, the cases of Nazism and fascism while observing that history had demonstrated that only democratic, liberal republics served the people.⁴¹ The newspaper also published a range of articles from diverse political and cultural perspectives, written by world-renowned intellectuals,⁴² including members of the Portuguese opposition to the Salazar dictatorship.⁴³

The following quotation from the French intellectual Romain Rolland summarizes the message that the newspaper sought to disseminate through the works of the intellectuals

³⁹ Menezes Bragança, “Para pior...,” *Pracasha*, July 12, 1933.

⁴⁰ Lucifer, “Ecos de toda a parte: tudo se explica,” *Pracasha*, March 31, 1937.

⁴¹ Sanchez Roman, “Que é uma República democrática,” *Pracasha*, February 21/24, 1934.

⁴² Homage was paid to Tolstoy on multiple occasions. In every issue, *Pracasha* published texts by intellectuals from the European left, such as Romain Rolland, Juan Fortunato, Sánchez Román, Leon Blum, Julien Benda, Jules Amar, Benedetto Croce, Maria Montessori, K. T. Sørensen, George Bernard Shaw, Trotsky, and Lenin, among many others.

⁴³ Public tributes were organized by Catholics and Hindus to commemorate the deaths of the Portuguese anti-fascist republicans António José de Almeida and Afonso Costa. *Pracasha* published articles by opponents of the dictatorial regime, such as António Sérgio, Jaime Cortesão, Alberto Osório de Castro, Brito Camacho, and Bernardino Machado, to name some of the most prestigious figures of the preceding democratic republic.

whose writing it referenced and published. In this article dedicated to the Indian National Congress, Rolland's position is inextricably linked to that of the editors of *Pracasha*:

We know too well in the West the errors and crimes of a monstrous Nationalism, so that we desire for India that she should escape the deadly wheel that is crushing the people of Europe and America. May she rise even further until she reaches that stage of the Future of humankind, in which, through the harmony of all faiths, men will bring about the cooperation of all forces, and the union of all nations, for the well-being of all humanity.⁴⁴

The Sunday edition created a space of reflection for literary criticism that was transcribed from foreign newspapers, and, in the same vein, it also allowed for the dissemination of contemporaneous economic thought and socio-political theory. Cultural, philosophical, and historicist trends were also represented in many of the pages of the Sunday edition of *Pracasha*. One of the newspaper's most prominent columnists, the writer and poet António Ayala, usually published his opinions under the byline Repórter Z. In an ironic column about the terrible battle that he had waged with his pen (quill), he drew an analogy between writing and resistance, observing that the pen wanted to place literature at the service of resistance, and that he had tried to impede it, even by force, but with little success.⁴⁵

In 1934, an article by Menezes Bragança was censored from the respective edition of *Pracasha* although it had previously been published in Goan newspapers in British India, such as the Bombay-based *Anglo-Lusitano*. It had also been published in the Catholic newspaper *Oriente* in Mozambique. The article entitled "33.000 rupias" (33,000 rupees) argued against Goan participation in the colonial exhibition in Porto. The praise given to the writer and journalist in Calcutta, Bombay, and by Lourenço Marques demonstrated beyond all doubt the network of resistance and opposition that had been made irreversible by the Colonial Act and the whole imperial apparatus.

⁴⁴ "Conhecemos demais no Ocidente os erros e os crimes dum Nacionalismo monstruoso, para não desejarmos à Índia que ela possa escapar à roda mortífera que esmaga os povos da Europa e América. Que ela se eleve ainda mais até atingir esse estágio do Futuro humano em que os homens realizarão na sua própria harmonia de todas as fés, a cooperação de todas as forças, a união de todas as nações, para o bem-estar de toda a humanidade." Romain Rolland, "Mensagem," *Pracasha* March 23, 1929.

⁴⁵ Repórter Z, "Ecce iterum Crispinus," *Pracasha* July 7, 1937. António Ayala also published a poem in *Pracasha* lamenting the premature burial of his columns in the hope that a law regulating the press (*lei da imprensa*) would save them and allow them to see the light of day again. "Requiescant in Pace," *Pracasha*, December 9, 1933.

Imperialism, gentlemen, is *imperialism*: the British imperialist, the German Junker, and the Italian fascist with ambitions of a colonial empire, all have the same mentality, the same notions of expansion, the same aspiration to dominate other peoples, the same prejudices about race and color. Let there be no doubt about it! [...] India is weary of pompous speeches and florid rhetoric, and we in Goa are more tired of it than anyone. The time has come for us to translate ideas into actions and facts. And, in order to do so, something more is needed than the fleeting enthusiasm of meetings and speeches.⁴⁶

In its final year of publication, the newspaper continued to denounce the Portuguese dictatorship⁴⁷ while also maintaining its energetic political and cultural criticism, its openness to debate and the sharing of ideas, and its demonstrable solidarity with all the victims of dictatorship around the world. This stance shaped the intellectual mission of the newspaper.

Another page of this newspaper has been turned. *Pracasha* is another year older [it would be the final year of its publication]. It could have an existence as placid as the smooth surface of the swamp, without turbulence, only creasing from time to time with the effect of a slight breeze, amid smiles and the doffing of caps, and ultimately gaining the respectable position of an “organ of opinion.” Instead of these easy and comfortable advantages, it has chosen to lead a *difficult life*. It has opted for a minority position, going against the grain of the models that are in fashion, and consolidating around itself the disagreeable reputation of being suspicious or undesirable.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ “O imperialismo, meus senhores, é o *imperialismo*: O imperialista britânico, o junker alemão, o jingo americano, o fascista italiano que ambiciona um império colonial, são todos da mesma mentalidade, com as mesmas noções de expansão, com a mesma ambição de dominação doutros povos, com os mesmos preconceitos de raça e cor. Não tenhamos dúvidas sobre isso! [...] A Índia está farta de discursos pomposos e de retórica florida, e nós em Goa mais que ninguém. É chegada a hora de traduzirmos as ideias em ações e factos. E para tanto alguma coisa mais do que o entusiasmo efêmero de reuniões e discursos é necessário.” *Pracasha*, December 1, 1928. Taken from the speech by L. J. Sousa at a public meeting in Goa in homage to the recently deceased Indian nationalist, Lala Lajpat Rai. The speech ended with a statement made by the nationalist hero after the 1919 massacre by the British army in Jalianwala Bagh, Amritsar, in the north of India: “Rise up. New India, there is no time to lose” (“Levanta-te. Índia Nova não há tempo a perder”).

⁴⁷ The newspaper was attentive to the internal debates taking place within the dictatorship itself, and published news of discussions in the National Assembly between those supporters of the regime who were opposed to the discriminatory measures contained in the Colonial Act, and others who were in favor of them. Vasco Borges was in favor of the act and Pacheco Amorim was against its implementation because he considered it to undermine Christian values. Lucifer, “O Portugal Velho e a Nova Itália,” *Pracasha*, June 26, 1937.

⁴⁸ “Mais uma página deste jornal que se voltou. O *Pracasha* conta mais um ano de vida [seria o último]. Podia ter uma existência plácida como a superfície lisa do pântano, sem sobressaltos, quando muito enrugada, de raro

Notable features of the newspaper throughout its long existence were its close attention to all democratic ideas as globally constructed values, its reports on the progress of the freedom fighters of British India,⁴⁹ and the empathy that it showed on innumerable occasions toward Gandhi's resilience, the cultural and political tolerance of Tagore, and the political discourse of J. Nehru. All of this serves to demonstrate that when *Pracasha* finally fell in 1937 as a victim of censorship, it landed on its feet.

Conclusion

In the specific historical context of the 1920s and 1930s—part of the interwar period of great debates on revolutions and the emancipation of the people—the editorial stance of *Pracasha* revealed a newspaper produced by informed intellectuals positioned in the vanguard with regard to global political and cultural debates. Throughout the years of its publication, the newspaper adopted various stances in terms of its interventions, clearly justifying its reasons for expressing support or opposition. Internationally, it was opposed to Nazism, fascism, and all forms of dictatorship, and announced its solidarity with the opposition and resistance movements, especially in Spain, Italy, and Germany. It supported participatory democratic solutions, such as the French Popular Front (*Front Populaire*) or the left-wing struggle in the Spanish civil war. This battlefield opened directly onto the fight against the Portuguese dictatorship and colonialism at the same time as it gave voice to the thought and actions of diverse oppositions spread across the empire and in exile. In a direct connection with the right of populations to emancipation, British India emerged as a space for debate between various political perspectives that cut across the diverse religions and minorities. This was followed closely by *Pracasha* in Goa, both as an example and a means of opening up and expanding the debate as far as censorship would allow. Finally, in keeping with the newspaper's main target audience, it proved possible to observe the existence in Goa of an intellectual network that organized itself as an opposition and resistance, and engaged in

em raro, por uma leve aragem, entre sorrisos e chapeladas, acabando por ganhar a posição respeitável de 'órgão de opinião'. A estas vantagens cómodas e fáceis, preferiu *viver dificilmente*. Optou por uma posição minoritária, ao arrepio dos modelos que estão em voga, consolidando em sua volta a torva reputação de suspeito ou indesejável." "De Ocasão," *Pracasha*, April 14, 1937.

⁴⁹ This was achieved, above all, through the column by Bascora Dessai entitled "Pelo Hindustano" (In favor of Hindustan). In this section of *Pracasha*, as well as in some of its editorials, the works of numerous Indian intellectuals were remembered and published. Particularly notable among these figures were Swami Vivekananda, Roulu Xembu Xete Colopo, Sacarama Suria Rao Sar Dessai, Hegdo Dessai, Kalidas Nag, Ramnanda Chaterjee, K. F. Nariman, Sarojini Naidu, and Balcrisna Sacardando.

dialogue and discussion with those who were undecided, while standing apart from supporters of the regime by means of its criticism. The Colonial Act served to broaden the range of discontent and stimulated and clarified the separation of the different sides, because, as we have seen, it created an obligation for clearer choices to be made between explicit support or opposition within the Goan political system. It also promoted and reinforced alliances among a substantial portion of the Catholic and Hindu intellectual elites.

The newspaper was structured around the idea of democracy and the ideals of democratic thought, which would only be achieved in full citizenship and with freedom of conscience and religion. Accordingly, it sought to establish partnerships in Goa and further afield, expanding and disseminating the debate that was already underway. By opposing fascism, Nazism, and imperialism, it created room for other discussions in the democratic field and among democrats, asserting its editorial position and its contributors' points of view. Indeed, at a time when parliamentary democracy was being attacked as a failing system from various political angles, and was losing popular support due to the wave of financial crises after 1929 and their social consequences, the newspaper's reflections on democracy encompassed all of the global reality of revolutions in progress and the struggles for independence against the colonial empires, which served to modernize ways of thinking about and participating in democracy, and were means of fighting and guarding against the autocratic tendencies to which they were opposed. The intellectual profile of the newspaper that has been described in this article was framed within this tendency toward participatory globalization, and it engaged with the dynamic construction of ideas of democracy and national independence. In the context of the historic processes of Portuguese colonialism and the dictatorship, the newspaper chose to defend individual and collective rights and made its mark through the establishment of a public space for anti-colonial opposition and resistance. The cultural history of democracy in Goa, as seen through the eyes of the press and its agents, brought together here in this discussion, would remain incomplete without the intellectual biography of the newspaper *Pracasha*.

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