

स्वामिनाथी गोमंतकचें शिक्कपी राष्ट्रीय म्युझियम

राष्ट्रमत्त



ब्रह्मास्त्र



Lokshae: Preserving Goan Identity through Rashtramat Newspaper

A Dissertation for

Course code and Course Title: HIS – 651 Dissertation Credits:

16

Submitted in partial fulfilment of Masters in Arts in History

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation report entitled, "*Lokshae*: Preserving Goan Identity through *Rashtramat* Newspaper" is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the History Discipline at the D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioral Studies, Goa University under the Supervision of Professor Dr. Pratima P. Kamat and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will be not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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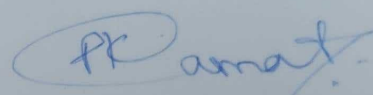
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COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Dissertation report "*Lokshae: Preserving Goan Identity through Rashtramat Newspaper*" is a bonafide work carried out by Ms. Ravina Jayant Raut under my supervision in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters ⁱⁿ Arts in the Discipline of History at the D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioral ^u Studies, Goa University.



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29/04/2024

Place: Goa University.



CONTENTS

Chapter	Particulars	Page numbers
	Preface	i
	Acknowledgement	ii
	List of Figures	iii
	Abbreviations used	iv
	Abstract	vi
1	Introduction	1 - 4
	1.1 Identification of research problem	4
	1.2 Hypothesis	4
	1.3 Research objectives	5
	1.4 Literature review	5 - 13
	1.5 Methodology	13 - 15
	1.6 Chapterisation	15 - 16
	1.7 Scope of research	17
	1.8 Relevance of the Study	18

History of the Marathi
press in Goa.

2.1 The Second Phase of the Marathi Press in Goa. 20-22

2.2 The Third Phase of the Marathi Press in Goa. 22-25

2.3 The fourth Phase of the Marathi Press in Goa. 25-27

2.4 The fifth Phase of the Marathi Press in Goa. 27-31

Rashtramat: Its Establishment, Contributors and Various Themes. 32-38

3.1 Role of *Rashtramat* newspaper during the time of Opinion Poll, Konkani language issue and Statehood. 38-42

3.2 The reason to write it in the Marathi language. 42

3.3 Various other Columns of the *Rashtramat*. 42-43

3.4 Diwali Ankh of *Rashtramat* newspaper. 43

3.5 Hidden Treasure of the *Rashtramat* newspaper. 43-45

4	<i>Bramhastra</i>	
	4.1 Opinion Poll: The first Milestone of <i>Bramhastra</i> .	49 – 52
	4.2 The Konkani language Agitation and attaining Statehood of Goa through <i>Bramhastra</i> .	53 – 58
	4.3 Miscellaneous	59
5	Conclusion	62- 64
6	Bibliography	65 - 70
7	Appendix I	1
8	Appendix II	2

PREFACE

Newspapers are a powerful medium for disseminating ideas, opinions, and news to a broad audience. They serve as a vital platform for individuals, organizations, and governments to communicate their messages, share information, and engage in dialogue with the public. As a primary source of information, newspapers offer a rich and diverse range of historical data about the social and political conditions prevailing during the time of publication.

During the liberation period of Goa, the press in Goa reflected the opinions and concerns of the people on the merger issue. The newspapers played a significant role in shaping public opinion and informing people about the political and social changes taking place at the time. Among these newspapers, the Marathi anti-merger daily, *Rashtramat*, stood out for its efforts to preserve the unique cultural identity of Goa during the post-Liberation period.

While no much work was done on the selected topic, my research, titled "Lokshace: Preserving Goan Identity through Rashtramat Newspaper," delves into the critical role played by *Rashtramat* in preserving the cultural heritage and identity of Goa. The newspaper's writings had a profound impact on the people of Goa, inspiring them to take pride in their cultural heritage and safeguard their unique identity. Through my work, I aim to highlight the significant contributions of newspaper *Rashtramat* towards the preservation of the unique identity of Goa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am immensely grateful to my incharge supervisor, Dr. Pratima Kamat who has supported me throughout my dissertation work. Her expertise in the subject and guidance proved valuable to me. I am extremely grateful to D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies for giving me the opportunity to conduct the present research work. Further, I also acknowledge the guidance given to me by our Dean Dr. Ganesha Somayaji, and the esteemed faculty members, Prof. Nagendra Rao, Dr. Seema Risbud, Dr. Parag Parobo, Dr. Nalini Naik, Mr. Vinod Kankonkar and Ms. Sneha Ghadi.

I thank the authorities of the institutions like Goa University, Library of the Directorate of Archives and Archeology and Krishnadas Shama State Central Library from where I collected the sources needed to write my dissertation.

I owe my special thanks to sir Carlos Fernandes for recommending this dissertation to me.

I express my sincere gratitude to Adv. Uday Bhembre, Editor Paresh Prabhu and Mr. Prabhakar Dhage who had given me their valuable time to conduct an interview. I owe special thanks to my close friends, Geetanjali Shatri, Rahul Vengurlekar and Saish Nipanikar for supporting me throughout.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents who motivated me and boosted my morale when I was stressed. Without their unconditional love and support this work would not have been possible.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No.	Description	Page no
3.1	The original available first page of the newspaper <i>Rashtramat</i> .	46
3.2	The masthead of the newspaper <i>Rashtramat</i> .	46
4.1	The first logo of the column <i>Bramhastra</i> .	60
4.2	The second logo of the column <i>Bramhastra</i> .	60
4.3	The third and final logo of the column <i>Bramhastra</i> .	60
4.4	A photograph with Uday Bhembre.	61

ABBREVIATIONS

M.G.P. - Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party.

U.G.P. - United Goans Party.

K. P. A. – Konkani Porjecho Avaz.

K.B.M – Konkani Bhasha Mandal.

ABSTRACT

The press has an important role in the formation of the public opinion. Through the content and the tone of its writing, it can influence the masses by making them understand the various social and political issues of the society they live in. Goa under the Portuguese rule got the honour of becoming the first country in the Asia to have a printing press in the year 1556. The press in Goa reflected the struggles and aspirations of the Goans. The vernacular press developed more slowly as compared to the Portuguese press. Goa, after liberation, was divided into two fractions of the society wherein one wanted Goa to remain as a separate state, having its own identity while the other wanted Goa to be merged into the state of Maharashtra. From this struggle, the newspaper named *Rashtramat* was born. *Rashtramat*, a Marathi daily, played a major role in creating public opinion against Goa's merger with Maharashtra during the time of the Opinion Poll of 1967. It was successful in moulding public opinion in the post-liberation period of Goa.

Press, *Rashtramat*, Opinion Poll, Goan Identity.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"A Pen is Mightier than a Sword."¹

-Edward Bulwer-Lytton

The above mentioned expression indicates that the written words are more effective than violence as a mean of social change. The phrase has since been immortalized, serving as a rallying cry for the writers, journalists and intellectuals across the globe. In the field of journalism, the pen serves as a tool for keeping public opinion.

Today, the Press is considered to be a fundamental institution of society. In the democratic polity, the press always plays a vital role in creating, shaping and also most crucially reflecting the public opinion. It is concerned with the functioning of the state and contributes to socio-economic and political development. The press is described as an important institution that has a commanding position as a medium of mass communication, influencing almost every aspect of life that is to survive, to provide information, to offer guidance or interpretation of the news, to entertain and serve the public.

In a Democracy, it is expected that the people should play an active role in the functioning of the government. Their participation, involvement and identification depends on their awareness and information about the socio economic and political environment. Their effective participation

¹ https://www.age-of-the-sage.org/quotations/quotes/the_pen_is_mightier_than_the_sword.html.

* please cite the webpage.

and desired role in the political system depends on the attitudes and values that can be moulded and shaped and influenced by the press.

Goa under the Portuguese rule got the honour of becoming the first country in the Asia to have a printing press in the year 1556. This press was kept in the college of St. Paul in Old Goa. It was used for printing a number of religious works to help in proselytization.² Jesuits were motivated with religious zeal for conversion and did their best to master the local languages and to print literature in the vernacular to aid their missionary work. A number of books were published in Portuguese, Konkani and Marathi from 1556 to 1674. Then came a period of decadence where the printing press was neglected and, in fact, ceased to function.

~~In Goa, the last known printed work in the 17th century from the Jesuit press appears to be the *Soliloquios* of Fr. Joan de Pedroso. No work seems to be mentioned after it. But during the last decade of the eighteenth century, the press in Goa reappeared and a weekly called *Gazeta de Goa* was published. In Goa, the first private press was introduced by Bernardo Francisco da Costa. He also founded the first non- official journal, *O Ultramar* in 1859. The first daily newspaper in Goa was *O Heraldo* which was started in the year 1900 and continues in publication till today. Thereafter many others followed for different duration. Censorship and scrutiny of the press continued to terrify the people during the Portuguese colonial administration. The press through all this evolving phase in the history of Goa reflected the struggles and aspirations of the Goans.~~

In 1821,

The vernacular press developed more slowly as compared to the Portuguese press. The main reason cited is that the Marathi newspapers from Maharashtra especially Pune and Bombay

² A.K. Priolkar, *Printing Press in India: Its Beginning and Early Development* (Bombay: Marathi Samshodhana Mandala, 1958), 2- 16.

were able to satisfy the readers in Goa. *Kesari* was well received in Goa. In fact, before Liberation, there was no daily in Marathi published in Goa. Much before the arrival of newspapers, *Kesari* and *Kirloskar* in Goa, a number of weeklies and monthlies in Marathi were published here. The monthly, *Anandlahari* published in 1870 was the first Marathi periodical published in Goa. During the post-Liberation period of Goa, newspapers played a significant role. The newspapers underwent a major change and played an effective role in educating the people. The enthusiasm of the people to enjoy the new found freedom was reflected in the sudden spurt in the newspapers and periodicals published. In Goa, after Liberation there were two fractions of the society wherein one wanted Goa to remain as a separate state, having its own identity while the other wanted Goa to be merged into the state of Maharashtra. From this struggle, the newspaper named *Rashtramat* was born. *Rashtramat* daily played a major role in creating public opinion against Goa's merger with Maharashtra during the time of the Opinion Poll of 1967. The Opinion Poll that was held on 16th January 1967, was to decide whether Goa will be merged into the State of Maharashtra or continue as a Union territory.

During this time a prominent Goan, Uday Bhembre campaigned against Goa's merger with Maharashtra. At that time, Bhembre authored a column in the popular anti-merger Marathi newspaper *Rashtramat*. In his column entitled, *Bramhastra*, Uday Bhembre influenced Goans to support the anti-merger camp. The daily was printed in the Marathi language but its focus was to make Konkani as the official language of Goa. The anti- integration forces stood for the elevation of the Konkani language and proclaimed that it is a distinct language and not a dialect of Marathi. The anti-integration group of people used the Konkani language to preserve Goan identity in the intervening period of the liberation. The language became as a tool to usher in a separate linguistic

identity of Goa to counter the force of merger in the state. The *Rashtramat* daily adopted anti-merger stand and pro- Konkani leaning. It was felt that as the population, especially Hindus, read Marathi it would be better to use the same language to promote Konkani. On 4 February 1987, after a prolonged movement, a bill making Konkani the official language of Goa was finally passed by the Legislative Assembly and subsequent grant of Statehood on 30th May 1987 was given to Goa. These issues brought the logical conclusion to Goa's long quest for a separate political identity. This study aimed to investigate the role of *Rashtramat* newspaper in the post liberation period of Goa, shedding light on its impact on the Goan society.

1.1 Identification of the research problem.

The research focused on comprehending the role of the Marathi press in the post-liberation era and evaluated the role of the newspaper *Rashtramat* which worked for the cause of preserving the Goan identity. The study attempted to analyze the prominent role played by an anti-merger newspaper, *Rashtramat* which addressed the various issues such as the Opinion Poll, issues pertaining to the Konkani Language and Statehood of Goa.

1.2 Hypothesis.

The newspaper *Rashtramat* did abide by its motive in preserving the Goan identity. It was successful in creating awareness among the public on social and political issues through its writings.

1.3 Research Objectives.

- The researcher achieved the following objectives through this research.
- To reconstruct the history of Marathi press in Goa.
- *Rashtramat*: To document its establishment, principles and discuss the contribution of its editors.
- To know how *Rashtramat* helped in moulding public opinion in post-Liberation period in Goa
- To analyse the prominent role played by *Brahmastra* in preserving Goan identity.
- To discuss the emphasis put by Uday Bhembre on the connected issues of Konkani language and Goa's statehood.

1.4 Literature Review

This literature review is a survey of scholarly sources that has provided an overview of the research topic. It is a comprehensive survey of existing academic literature, research articles and other sources relevant to a focused study. The primary purpose of the literature review is to identify gaps for further research and provide a theoretical framework for the study.

The Printing Press in India- Its Beginning and Early Development by A.K. Priolkar, the first chapter, deals with the printing press in Goa, its early publication and the work of Jesuit

missionaries.³ It mentions that the printing press in Goa continued to prosper as long as the importance of local languages for the purpose of proselytization was appreciated.

The book *Behind the News: Voices From Goa's Press* is a compilation of articles, one of such article "why Konkani Failed its Readers" Raju Nayak mentions about how products of Marathi journalism *Rashtramat*, *Gomantak* and *Navaprabha* started to flourish in the Konkani dominated state. Whereas Konkani press failed to live up to people's expectations.

Between Empires- Print and Politics in Goa by Rochelle Pinto talks about the history of press in Goa. It briefly speaks about the role of Marathi newspaper, being important for the construction of regional, religious, and caste identities which meant that Goans were sometimes absorbed within what was emerge as a broader Maharashtrian identity. The book examines how publications such as newsprint, novels and pamphlets were printed in Goa during nineteenth century.⁴

The Gazetteer of India: Union Territory Goa, Daman, and Diu edited by V.T. Gune, is comprehensive in nature giving information about each topic related to Goa, ranging from etymology of Goa, the geo-physical setting of the land. It points out on the pre-historic period, pre-Portuguese phrase, the Portuguese rule on the land of Goa, freedom struggle in Goa and Goa after Liberation. The researcher has referred to the Gazetteer to get a general idea about the history of Goa and the developments that took place in the post-Liberation phase. It has a sub-chapter dedicated to the newspaper and periodicals that directly concern with the present research work. The sub-chapter deals with the press that underwent a significant change and an effective role in

³ Priolkar, *The Printing Press*, 113.

⁴ Rochelle Pinto, *Between Empires- Print and Politics in Goa* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2007), 78-80.

educating public opinion. It mentions the leading publications in Goa during the post Liberation period wherein it talks about *Rashtrammat* being the most predominant.⁵

The book titled *Language, Statehood and the Public Sphere in Goa* by Joanna P. Coelho is on the role of language in shaping community identity. In fact, language has been a major player in the formation of nation states. This book presents the language related public sphere in Goa during the later part of the 20th century when Goa witnessed political mobilization having language as a centre stage even after attaining statehood based on the principle of linguistic state. The book has a sub topic, "The Opinion Poll: The Politics of Language Use" wherein it mentions about newspaper *Rashtrammat* which was formed in Marathi as a strategy but its focus was Konkani.

Many Konkani stalwarts worked for the *Rashtrammat* in trying to bring social changes through their writings.⁶

The book titled, *Mass Communication in Goa* by Menino Peres speaks on development pattern in Goa of newspaper, radio, television, book publishing, internet and advertising. The author expertly deals with the basic functions of the media in post-Liberation Goa. The book provides readers with the state's perspective on the mass communication scenario. The author has entirely written on mass communication in Goa, the tools and techniques of mass media, audio visual media and advertisement.⁷ The book has a topic, Print Medium, where it focuses on the newspaper as a source of information and education mentioning its role in educating the masses in Goa. The book mentions the role of a Marathi daily, *Rashtrammat* which through its writings had created awareness against the merger of Goa into the State of Maharashtra.

⁵ V. T. Gune, *The Gazetteer of India: Union Territory Goa, Daman, and Diu* (Goa: Government of Goa, 1979), 28.

⁶ Joanna Coelho, *Language Statehood and the Public Sphere in Goa* (Panaji: Broadway, 2020), 51-54.

⁷ Menino Peres, *Mass communication in Goa* (Panaji: Ascent India Media Network and Services, 2015), 20.

The book, *Triumph of Secularism: Battle of the Opinion Poll in Goa*⁸ written by Rajan Narayan and Sharon D'cruz a book on the historic Opinion Poll of Goa, mentioning the scenes and the counterplots in the hard- fought battle. The book fills an existing gap in the socio-economic and political history of one of the most important events, not only in the history of Goa, but of the country itself. It gives the reader detailed information regarding the Opinion Poll, wherein it mentions that a large number of Hindus voted against merger although they were attached to the Marathi language because they were keen of being a apart of Maharashtra. The author gives the example of a case of the Konkani writer, Uday Bhembre whose column *Bramhastra*, in the newspaper *Rashtramat* campaigned in support of Goa keeping its identity though it was written in the Marathi language. The role this newspaper played was significant in moulding people's vote during the time of the Opinion Poll.

The book, *Bramhastra* published by Rajhaus vitaran is compilation of articles based on the work of Uday Bhembre in the Marathi language which were published in the *Rashtramat* newspaper.⁹ It speaks on the various political issues covered by Uday Bhembre in his writings. It mentions that the column *Bramhastra*, was an eye opener for the people of Goa after Liberation period, who were still in self-doubt about their own identity. The writings of Uday Bhembre helped people in knowing the political scenario in Goa.

The book *Gomantakiy Marathi Patrakaritecha Itihas* written by Prakash Prabhu, is in the Marathi language. It speaks of the various Marathi newspapers from the year 1870 to 1970. The book gives brief introduction to the history of press in Goa and also the history to the various

⁸ Rajan Narayan and Sharon D'cruz, *Triumph of Secularism Battle of Opinion Poll in Goa* (India: Goa Publication, 2011), 155.

⁹ Uday Bhembre, *Bramhastra* (Panaji: Rajhaus, 1996), 7-20.

Marathi newspapers that has evolved overtime. The author claims that the *Rashtrammat* newspaper which was in support of anti-merger during the time of Opinion Poll is the only newspaper which fought for Goa to remain as a separate state having its own identity.¹⁰ It mentions that this daily, *Rashtrammat*, played a major role in creating public opinion against the merger. The prominent role of Uday Bhembre in the *Brahmastra* is being appreciated by the author.

My Days of Journalism by Gurudas R. Singbal, deals with various issues faced in the Goan society. The book is written in the perspective of the author. He highlights topics such as free press, rise of editors, press then and now. The author also emphasizes the Opinion Poll wherein he calls it as Biggest Electoral event of Goan society.¹¹

In the book *Gomantakiy Marathi Patrakaritecha Ani Bharat Karancha Varasa*, written by Paresh Vasudev Prabhu in the Marathi language, makes a mention that Konkani language came out into literary circulation as it is a mother tongue of the people of Goa but one cannot forget that the Konkani language always needed the companionship of the Marathi language for its development.¹² The first section of the book is entirely based on the press and journalism in India but the second section of the book focuses on the press in Goa. The book has an article on ‘Muktipurv Khandatil Gomantakiy Patrakaritecha Ani Bharat Karanche Yogdaan’ written by Prabhakar Dhage who mentions about Marathi newspapers that prevailed in Goa during and after Portuguese rule. It states the names of Marathi newspapers that prevailed during that time. Another article from the book, *Vrutpatrancha Govachya Ganamansavar Prabhav* written by Mahesh Divkar,

¹⁰ Paresh Prabhu, *Gomantak Marathi Patrakaritecha Itihas* (Tiswadi: Goa Marathi Akademi, 2020), 230.

¹¹ Gurudas Singbal, *My Days in Journalism* (Porvorim: Gauri Kadkade, 2009), 30-35.

¹² Paresh Prabhu, *Gomantakiy Marathi Patrakaritecha Ani Bharat Karancha Varasa*, (Porvorim: Goa Marathi Akademi, 2009), 16.

speaks on the newspapers of the post-Liberation period mentioning about *Rashtramat*, a Marathi newspaper.

The Changing Face of Journalism is a collection of articles written by various authors, touching upon different topics related to the press ~~to~~ which includes the history of press and its evolution with special focus on the Goan scenario. The book has a chapter, ¹¹“The Fourth Estate,” wherein it discusses the press in Goa, where it gives details of the arrival of printing press in Goa which was intended to help missionary work. The printing activity continued to prosper so long as the importance of local languages for the purpose of proselytization was fully appreciated but when an order was passed to abandon the use of local language and take up Portuguese. This led to the decline of printing activities in Goa. The book also has a chapter, “The Press and Public Opinion” which states importance of public opinion in the society in bringing about a change. By giving example of *Kesari* newspaper of Tilak, it mentions how newspapers helped in bringing a positive Change in the society. The book also gives reference to the Marathi press in Goa where it speaks about *Rashtramat*, its editor and its year of publication. With the help of this newspaper, the people of Goa were aware of their lost identity after the long rule of the Portuguese in Goa.

Goa in the 20th Century- History and Culture edited by Pius Makekandathil and Remy Dias is a compilation of various articles. It speaks about Goa's Opinion Poll: Contest for Goan identity written by Maria do Ceu Rodrigues. Here the author states that the Goa's separate Identity had become a highly contentious issue after Liberation of Goa from the Portuguese rule. The fight between merger and the anti-merger has been written by the author.¹³ The press in Goa was also

¹³ Maria de Ceu Rodrigues, *Goa's Opinion Poll: Contest for Identity* (Panaji: Institute Menezes Braganza, 2008), 243.

divided and played a key role in the contest of identity. The Marathi newspaper, *Gomantak* left no stone unturned to discredit the forces of anti-merger. To counter the anti-merger propaganda the House of Salgoancars started a Marathi daily the *Rashtramat* whose strategy was to win over Hindus in Goa to support the anti-Merger camp. There is a mention of powerful column of the newspaper, *Bramhastra* through which dangers of merger were pointed out in the newspaper. Another article from the book written by Uday Bhembre mentions about Konkani being the language of Goans which got the status of official language on 04/02/1987.¹⁴

Goa Wins Freedom- Reflections and Reminiscence edited Prof. B. Sheikh Ali has an article on Role of Press in the Freedom Struggle in Goa by P. D. Xavier which gives a brief introduction to the history of press in Goa, it also talks about the role Marathi newspapers which began to appear in Goa in the nineteenth century and played a crucial role in strengthening society against the Portuguese domination in Goa.¹⁵

Urba, Udaybab is a magazine by Urba Prakashan wherein an interviewer conducts an interview with Uday Bhembre, a prominent Konkani writer and questions related to his role in political career and as an activists is discussed. In this magazine, the interview gives details of the early life of Uday Bhembre, his role as an assistant editor of the *Rashtramat* newspaper where he mentions about his prominent and well know column *Bramhastra* which he wrote for five years and also mentions that the column was successful in achieving its goal.¹⁶ Uday Bhembre also speaks about Konkani movement and its success. The magazine is important for the reader to know

¹⁴ Rodrigues, *Goa's Opinion Poll*, 243.

¹⁵ Ali, Sheikh, *Goa Wins Freedom- Reflections and Reminiscence*, (Panjim: Government Printing Press, 1986), 20-25.

¹⁶ Uday Bhembre, *Urba*, (Panjim: Rajhaus Vitaran, 1986), 8- 10.

the contribution of Uday Bhembre to Goa's political life and changes that were brought through his struggle for the state.

In the book, *In Black and White- Insider's Stories about Press in Goa* edited by Fredrick Noronha is a compilation of articles based on journalism in Goa covering over four decades of post-colonial Goa's newspaper scene.

The book, *Ajeeb Goa's Gajab politics Goa Elections: A Perspective*, by Sandesh Prabhudessai mentions about the political system in Goa during the post- Liberation period. The book deals with the political journey of Goa right from 12000 BCE till date including the 450 long Portuguese rule and Liberation from it in 1961.¹⁷

The book, *The First Press in India and Its Printers* by Rev. J.B. Primrose, is about the establishment of press in India, also giving details about the books that were printed in Goa. Besides printing books, the press in Goa seems to have used for printing religious pictures.¹⁸

The article titled, "The Formation of Local Spheres in a Multilingual Society: The Case of Goa, India" written by Kyoko Matsukawa which states how printing media began to develop in India and especially in Goa.¹⁹ It speaks of the history of Goan newspaper from nineteenth century to the present day and shows the existence of divided literary spheres of Portuguese, Marathi and Konkani. It speaks about the evolution of press from the colonial rule to the present day.

¹⁷ Sandesh Sardessai, *Ajeeb Goa's Gajab Politics: Goa Elections: a Perspective*. (Panaji: Broadway Publication, 2022), 29-30.

¹⁸ Primrose, J. B. *The First Press in India and Its Printers*. (United Kingdom: Bibliographical Society, 1940), 200.

¹⁹ Kyoko Matsukawa, "The Formation of Local Spheres in a Multilingual Society: The Case of Goa, India", *Journal of the Japanesse Association for South Asian Studies*, 5- 7.

The article entitled, "Konkani and Goan Identity in Post-colonial Goa, India" written by Kyoko Matsukawa particularly mentions about the language problem in Goa before liberation and also during the time of post-Liberation. The article makes a bold statement saying the Konkani language is the symbol of Goan identity.²⁰

The article entitled, "Is there one Goan identity, Several or None?" written by Teotonio de Souza makes mention of Portuguese culture in Goa and how it influenced the Goan Population. It states language is an important component of Goan Identity.²¹

1.5 Methodology

The research has adopted mixed method approach involving both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This allows the researcher to gather a more comprehensive understanding of research questions by combining the strength of both quantitative which includes numerical and statistical data and conducting mathematical analyses to make predictions and run experiments while qualitative data which provides detailed descriptive data understanding human experiences and values. Instruments for qualitative research include open ended surveys, interviews and observations and focus group discussions.

²⁰ Kyoko Matsukawa, "Konkani and Goan Identity in Post-colonial Goa, India", *Journal of the Japanesse Association for South Asian Studies*, 5-12.

²¹ Teotonio de Souza, "Is there one Goan identity, Several or None?", *Lusotopie*, 487- 495.

1.5.1 Quantitative methods

Within social sciences, the quantitative approach has many recognized advantages. It enables the reactions of many people to a limited set of questions, to be measured. These questions often have pre-determined answer categories and the results are often broad and be explained in a concise manner. The quantitative approach used in the work was a sample survey method, through a Google form. This was conducted to know if the people are aware of the newspaper *Rashtramat* and its prominent column *Bramhastra*.

1.5.2 Qualitative methods

In qualitative research, methods are often more flexible and subjective. A survey was conducted wherein open ended questions were asked to people visiting the Central Library. The goal was to collect responses through questionnaire, to know information related to the *Rashtramat* the daily of the post liberation period and the type of impact it had on the people in saving Goa ~~from~~ against the merger.

The researcher conducted interviews of the prominent figure of the *Rashtramat* newspaper who had contributed towards making it as a platform of thunderbolt of opinions. Apart from this the researcher interviewed domain experts. The contributors of the daily, Govind Shirodkar and a journalist, Prabhakar Dhage was interviewed and their experience while writing for the daily was considered. The interview of the Advocate, writer and freedom fighter Uday Bhembre was

conducted. He gave his valuable insights and his view point that helped in researcher in knowing their perspective.

Various institutions have been a source of information for the ~~C~~ompletion of the study ~~Which~~ includes the institutions such as Krishnadas Shama State Central Library, Panjim and Goa University library. Central library holds the collection of the *Rashtramat* newspaper from the year May, 1967 till the end of its publication that is till 2004. The newspapers at the library are well preserved and maintained well.

1.6 Chapterisation

The ~~Proposed~~ dissertation is broadly divided into five chapters mentioned below:

Chapter 1- The first chapter presents an introduction to the study and the purpose of the study. It provides the scope and the relevance of the research, the research objectives, research methodology, the source consulted and the literature review of books and articles pertaining to the study.

Chapter 2- History of Marathi press in Goa.

The second chapter is focused on the emergence of the Marathi press in Goa and its development. It is important to know how the Marathi press reached out to the people of Goa and what role it played especially during the post-liberation period in Goa.

Chapter 3- *Rashtramat*: Its establishment, contributors and various themes.

The chapter mainly speaks about the role played by the newspaper, *Rashtramat* by giving voice to public opinion on crucial political issues. This chapter also emphasizes the role and contribution of editors and principal contributors such as Chandrakant Keni, Ravindra Kelekar, and Uday Bhembre and many more.

Chapter 4 – The role of *Rashtramat* in moulding public opinion.

The chapter speaks about the role of the Marathi newspaper, *Rashtramat*, which was created to influence masses in order to counter the propaganda in favour of Goa's merger with Maharashtra during the time of Opinion Poll in the political history of Goa.

Chapter 5- *Bramhastra*

This chapter highlights the column "*Bramhastra*", from the *Rashtramat* newspaper which was written by ~~adv.~~ ^A Uday Bhembre. The column played a great role in influencing the Goans through its writing in supporting the anti-merger camp during the time of Opinion Poll.

Chapter 6 serves as a Conclusion, summarizing and drawing together the key findings and insights presented through the proceedings chapters.

1.7 Scope of research

The newspaper had a beneficial effect on the society. It assists people in being more aware and serve as a medium of disseminating information about the various issues. The researcher focuses on the role of newspaper in the post-liberation period in Goa in influencing public opinion on the political issues faced during that time. The study attempts to present how Goan identity was reintroduced to its people through the writings of the Marathi newspaper, *Rashtramat* which was in the support of anti-merger during the time of Opinion Poll. The Study aims at showcasing how prominent Goan writers moulded public opinion through their words. The newspaper served as an important platform for voices and perspectives. The newspaper was successful in its goal when the people of Goa voted against the merger and won the opinion Poll of 1967, Konkani was declared as an Official language of Goa and attained Statehood.

1.8 Relevance of the Study

The study has its own limitations, it is restricted to the time period that the newspaper was published as its not in circulation today, yet the researcher through the analysis of the newspaper points out to the involvement of the newspaper in creating awareness among the people of Goa on the various issues faced by them in the post liberation era. The researcher endeavors to contribute her insights on the subjects explored in the study, aiming to assist fellow students and scholars in understanding the significance of Marathi newspaper, particularly the daily *Rashtramat* in preserving Goan identity.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF THE MARATHI PRESS IN GOA

The press plays a significant role in democratic societies by shaping and reflecting public opinion. It influences various aspects of life and has a crucial responsibility to provide information, guidance, news interpretation, and provide entertainment that serves the public. That is the reason why the press is often referred to as the fourth estate and holds a commanding position as a medium of mass communication. Newspapers have been the lifeblood of both the Indian and the Goan freedom struggle. Marathi journalism has contributed to the growth of Marathi literature and art. The history of Marathi Journalism has contributed to the freedom struggle in Goa. It served as a medium for spreading nationalist ideas since liberation. It also played a key role in mobilizing people towards freedom. Marathi journalism has been the cause of various social reform movements in Maharashtra and has also raised political and social awareness in Goa.

2.1 The First Phase of Marathi Press in Goa.

In Goa, the vernacular press took a longer time to develop as compared to the Portuguese press. The primary explanation given to this is that the Marathi newspapers from Maharashtra particularly those from the places like Pune and Bombay were successful in meeting the needs of the Goan readers. The newspaper named *Kesari* was well received in Goa.¹ However, there were some weeklies and monthlies in the Marathi language that were being published in the state. The first Marathi periodical that was published in Goa was thought to be a monthly, *Deshasudharanechhu* in the year 1872. However, the issue of *Keralakokila* in the year 1870 mentions about a monthly published from Panjim called *Anandlahri*.² Therefore the first ever

¹ Rekha Mishra, "History of Printing Press in Goa," (PhD diss, Goa University, 2003), 154.

² Mishra, "History of Printing Press," 154.

Footnotes should not be continuous throughout the dissertation. Every new chapter should start with a footnote 1.

Marathi periodical that was published in Goa was known as *Anandlahri*, whose sole motto was to spread knowledge through its writings.

In the year 1872, after the discontinuation of the first Marathi periodical in Goa, the second publication of a monthly called *Deshasudharanecchu* began. The meaning of the title of the newspaper was a will to improve and develop the nation. The newspaper was published by a Portuguese citizen, Tomas Mourao Garcez Palha who was also known as a Baron of Cumbharjua.³ He had a keen interest towards Hindu religion and wanted Goan Hindus to be knowledgeable along with the Christians of Goa. To fulfill his objective, he established the Marathi printing press. The literature that was published from this printing press was mostly about Marathi saints and their ideologies. However, soon after the publication of three of its issues *Deshasudharanecchu* was stopped. The main reason ^{for} ~~to~~ its discontinuation was ^{due} ~~to~~ poor response from the readers of Goa.

In the year 1877, it reappeared in a form of a weekly and its editor was Atmaram Narayan Sukhthankar of Sanquelim. The weekly was further divided into two sections, Portuguese and Marathi. The Portuguese section of the weekly was edited by Tomas Mourao Garcez Palha while Yeshwant Phondoba Naik wrote the Marathi section of the weekly. These stalwarts were like a founding pillar for the foundation of Marathi periodical press during this time in Goa. They tried to bring in social reform with the help of language, literature, education and especially through newspapers and their writings.

However, in the last quarter of the 19th century, Goa witnessed the publication of several Marathi weeklies and monthlies. In the year 1882, *Goa Mitra* was started by Subray Lakshman Nayak. It tried to project the difficulties that were faced by the Hindus in the society. Another

³ Mishra, "History of Printing Press," 155.

bilingual monthly, *Journal das Novas Conquistas* (Journal of the New Conquest) was published from Pednem. It started its publication on April 9, 1882. It was edited by Govind Bhaskar Parsekar. In the year 1885, *Aryabhandhu*, a weekly was started from Mapusa. Its Portuguese section was written by F.J. da Gama Botelho and Ismail Gracias. Under the editorship of Shripad Vencatesha Wagle *Goa Panch* was published from Mapusa in 1885. From Margao, a monthly, *Shrikhand*, was published in 1888. Another monthly from Panjim was *Nyayachakshu* published in 1889.

Gomantak, a monthly by Venkatesh Yeshwant Singbal, and *Suvichar* by Bhimjirao Deshpande was started in Panjim in the year 1890. A monthly on the subject of health was launched in the year 1888 from Keri under the editorship of Dada Vaidya. A periodical, *Goa Panch* was started by Ramnand Ajrekar along with the assistance of Kakasaheb Danait, Shambararao Sardessai, Krishnaji Sakhalkar and Shriram Amonkar.⁴ Its members were therefore termed as *Panchamandali*. This periodical survived till 1899. The periodical made a valuable contribution for promoting social reforms. Dada Vaidya, was involved in social work for almost fifty years of his life. He published *Pathyabodh*, which was considered to be his first work. The journalistic writing career of Dada Vaidya began in 1882 wherein he contributed his writings towards *Jornal das Novas Conquistas*. He made sure to bring in the change in the society through its writings and took efforts at all round development of Goa.⁵

2.2 The Second Phase of Marathi Press in Goa.

The prohibition on the press in the year 1895, had a similar impact on both the Marathi and Portuguese press. Soon after the ban was lifted, the second stage of the Marathi press started from

⁴ Mishra, "History of Printing," 156.

⁵ Mishra, "History of Printing," 156.

1898 to 1910, with the release of two periodicals namely, *Kalikadarshan* in the year 1898 and another one named, *Sudarshan* in 1900. Dada Vaidya came up with a monthly periodical in the year 1901. It was named as *Haldikumkum*. It is said to be launched in the name of his wife, Saraswatibai. This monthly focused on the issues that were faced by the women in the society.

Prachi Prabha, a bilingual weekly which was published from Ponda was another magazine published by Dada Vaidya in the year 1909. It focused on the issues dealing with Goan culture, its traditions and heritage especially targetting to Christian readers of Goa. Dr. Vaidya's assistants included Sitaram Kerkar, Bhaskarrao Sardessai, Gopalkrishna Gude and Shambarao Sardessai. These people wrote Portuguese articles in the periodical. The circulation of this periodical was until 1914. In the year 1915, Dada Vaidya brought out a weekly called *Vidyaprassar*. Writers like D. V. Apte, Shri Haribhava Phatak, Ramchandra Kamat, B.B. Sawardekar, A.K. Priolkar gave their contribution through *Prachi Prabha* and *Vidyaprassar*.

Satsang, a monthly periodical was started by Karande Shastri from Cumbharjua. The contribution of Dada Vaidya towards Marathi press in Goa has been compared to that of Maharshi Ranade's work, and similarly, the work of Karande Shastri, has been seen similar to that of Chiplunkar of Maharashtra. ⁴ The writings of this periodical had a powerful impact on the society. ^{They} ~~Thus~~ dealt with several issues, like for example, a ban on liquor, social reforms, national progress and development, and awaken the people with the sense of patriotism etc.

⁴ Mishra, "History of Printing," 156.

2.3 The Third Phase of the Marathi Press in Goa.


The establishment of the republic in Portugal in the year 1910 brought in the liberal ideas during this phase towards the press. The viceroy, Joaquim Jose Machado invalidated the laws that previously had restricted the free functioning of the press. This phase lasted for almost 15 years from 1910 to 1926 and marked the establishment of various periodicals in Goa before the liberation. The press bloomed in a new political environmental of freedom as now it could function without any censorship and without any harsh laws.

In the year 1911, Dr. Purushottam Vaman Shirgaonkar started a periodical called *Prabhat*. He was the leader of the Goan youth and trained for social and political work. This periodical aimed at arousing political awakening in the Hindu society. Dattaram Borkar, G.P. Hegde Dessai and Shambarao Sardessai were the writers of this periodical. However the periodical was discontinued due to the difference in opinions which gradually led to a split in the group. The periodical continued to publish until 1916. Later it was revived in 1930 by Janardhan Asnodkar.

In the year 1912, Adv. Govind Pundalik Hegde Dessai started a publication of the bilingual newspaper called *Bharat* from Panjim. Hegde Dessai was a nationalist who upheld the arrow of Tilak Agarkar's idea of journalism. He was of the opinion that journalism is a better field than the battlefield. His writings reflected a strong feeling of patriotism.


Hegde Dessai would have been able to live in luxury but he turned his back on a comfortable life and decided to work in the field of journalism. Through his weekly, his patriotism towards his land was clearly seen. His writing style was bold and exposed the Portuguese administration in Goa. By doing this, his aim was to awaken the Hindus in the Goan society. *Bharat*

✠ Paresh Prabhu, *Gomantakiy Marathi Patrakaritecha Itihas* (Panjim: Goa Marathi Akademi, 2020), 230.

proved to be the long lasting Marathi periodical in Goa. The periodical was bilingual, with Portuguese and Marathi section. It also had section in Konkani thus sometimes making it as trilingual. Hegde Dessai, himself was incharge of writing the Portuguese and Marathi sections. His writings were so strong and bold that the government was wary of him. The weekly, *Bharat* lasted for almost 35 years with many hurdles in between. Almost 30 cases were registered against the editor as he was expose the Government's administration. Dharmanand Kosambi was one of such writer, who started his career in the field of writings through this periodical. 

The periodical survived for a longer time as it believed that public service is God's service and there is no other religion than this. Its 36 years long career of is a saga of glorious history of Goan journalism. '*Bharatkar*' raised his voice against unjust happenings and tyranny.

Further, two periodicals that were published included V.K. Priolkar's *Swayamsevak* and Dada Vaidya's *Vidyaprassar* in the year 1915. It was shut down after one year and started again as a monthly in 1920 only to be converted into a weekly in the year 1930. The Marathi section was written by Priolkar while Bhaskarrao managed to handle the Portuguese section of the periodical. The periodical became well known and stretched beyond the borders of Goa just like the periodical, *Satsang*. The period 1921-1930 saw the arrival of several Marathi periodicals which were as follows: *Pragati*, *Gayak Mitra*, *Gadgadat*, *Napitodaya*, *Nabhikodaya*, *Vaishya* and others. Ramchandra Manguesherao Deshpande in 1917 started *Swadesh* which ran only for a year and soon stopped. Another monthly, *Navajeevan* which was started in the year 1920 ran only for two years. The year 1928 witnessed the birth of another long lasting Marathi periodical in Goa which was named *Bharatmitra*. This periodical started its publication from the small village of Rivona. The reason for lasting it for a longer period of time was due to its features of writings. It was a

 Prabhu, *Gomantakiy Marathi Patrakaritecha*, 230.

readable, informative and almost non-controversial. It was small sized between around 15- 20 pages.

The Hindu, a weekly that began in the year 1924 was edited by Purushottam Sukerkar. His periodical was ultra-nationalistic. Even though it survived only for 7 years, it was successful in creating a strong influence on Government. The major contributors of this periodical were Subrao R. Samant, Mr. Bhai Desai, Gajanan Savordekar and others. Through their writings they demanded for the liberation of Goa and also its merger in the state of Maharashtra.⁹ The periodical also commented not just on local but also national issues. Unfortunately the periodical had to stop its publication due to lack of funds. With the closure of the *Hindu*, the Marathi weekly no new weeklies came up until liberation of Goa.

After 1930, one of the most significant periodical that was published was named *Subodh*. With the coming of this periodical, it brought a new standard for the Marathi periodicals. It was earlier titled as *Subodhmala*, but later changed to *Subodh*. Notable writers of the Maharashtra were the contributors of this periodical.¹⁰ The periodical lasted only for 4 years but it played a crucial role in providing a platform to many writers to showcase their work. Jaiwantrao Sardessai, Lakshmanrao Sardessai were two such writers who wrote prominently towards *Subodh*. Just like any other Marathi periodical of Goa, even *Subodh* was shut down due to lack of funds.

Yugantar and *Prabhat*, ~~these~~ were two bimonthly published by Sakharam Pissurlekar and Janardhan Asnodkar, respectively. The articles written by Pissurlekar in *Yugantar* periodical were quite interesting. In the coming years, a monthly *Brahman*, *Aryavigyan*, *Kala* were published in Goa. Some of the publishers of these periodicals also adopted various means to increase the

⁹ Mishra, "History of Printing," 159.

¹⁰ Paresh, *Gomantakiy Marathi*, 275.

circulation of its readers by making use of eye catching coloured front pages, clear white paper so that the text was clearly visible and neat interior design. Writers like Shambarao Sardessai and Krishnarao Keni were among the young contributors of these magazines.

The period from the year 1910 to 1935 was indeed golden for Goan journalism, both in terms of quality and quantity of the periodicals. Soon after when the Salazar imposed strict censorship on the press, everything that was typed underwent checking. It was reflected on the restriction not only the press but also on the thoughts and opinion of people. This atmosphere of rigid control and strict censorship led to discontinuation of many Marathi periodicals in Goa. Not just this but it made difficult to even publish a new one. The governor had an authority to accept or reject the proposal of starting a new periodical. A deposit of almost rupees 8000 had to be paid without which one could not start the publication. This money remained with the government as long as the periodicals were published but the money had to be given back once it stopped its publication.³¹

2.4 The fourth Phase of the Marathi Press in Goa.

From the period of 1935 to 1961, could be considered as a fourth phase of Marathi journalism in Goa. Except for the Portuguese periodical *A Voz da India*, no other periodical was introduced.³² This phase did not gave a boost to Marathi press in Goa. The enthusiasm of people to start newspapers also vanished. Only two Marathi periodicals out of several managed to maintain its standard and continued its publication despite various hurdles. It was successful in maintaining its publication till 1949. These two Marathi periodicals were *Bharatmitra*, a monthly, and a weekly, *Bharat*.

³¹ Mishra, "History of Printing," 157.

³² Mishra, "History of Printing," 160.

As we have seen the Marathi periodicals had a very short life and were soon closed down due to lack of funds. Almost every periodical was brought by an individual or family, sometimes by social reformers or social workers. The debates over the caste issues were fought through the medium of newspapers.

Various reasons were explained for ~~to~~ the short lifespan of these early days of periodicals. Firstly, due to the low literary rate people could not read the periodicals that were published. Those who could read and write had lack of buying power. This led to limited people to buy the periodicals. The second reason was the revenue that was generated from the advertisements printed in those periodicals was inadequate as compared to English or Portuguese periodical advertisements. The entire revenue had to be generated from the publisher's personal resources. Thirdly, as all these periodicals were started by an individual or a particular political party, they could publish only till they were financial sound. In some cases if the individual died, there was no one to continue the periodical which was started by him.¹³ The Marathi journalism in Goa before its liberation showed the enthusiasm of people and their leadership quality to stand against the Portuguese rule. It was these Marathi newspapers that inspired the masses of Goa to achieve liberation. Through its writings, it showed the light to all those who were in the darkness of slavery. It inspired people to stand against the Portuguese rule in Goa. Although the average period of Marathi periodicals published in Goa was short but gave a bloom to flourish in the upcoming years.

In the pre-liberation phase, the Marathi journalism ignited the light for Goa's liberation movement. The Marathi journalism showed people the path towards the liberation of Goa, which

¹³ Mishra, "History of Printing Press," 159.

was stuck under the yoke of foreign rule. It was successful in awakening people of Goa and increased their hope towards freedom.

2.5 The fifth phase of the Marathi Press in Goa.

The post- Liberation period of Goa from the 1961 onwards saw the rise of newspapers especially in English while some were in the language Marathi. In the state of Goa, where Konkani is the mother tongue, ~~no newspaper in the Konkani language were published during this period.~~ Konkani has so far never been successful language of the newspaper reader's or publisher's choice.¹⁴ The Konkani language newspaper, *Sunaprant*, a daily operated from 1987 to 2015. ~~If~~ one goes by circulation of the newspaper, even today there are few Konkani newspaper readers as compared to Marathi. In 1960s, there were two newspapers, *The Navhind Times* in English and *Gomantak* in Marathi. Due to an arrival of *Tarun Bharat*, a Marathi newspaper from Belgaum which set up its base in Margao and also in Panjim, gave a tough fight to Marathi newspaper, *Gomantak* from Goa as being an outsider it managed to cover the local news and issues that took place in Goa.

Following the liberation of Goa in the year 1961, there were two opposing factions within the Goan society regarding its political future. One group was in favour of Goa to remain a separate state to preserve its own unique identity, while the other group was in the support of integrating Goa into the state of Maharashtra. The debate over statehood and Goan identity was reflected in the thoughts and opinions of the people of Goa. The press in Goa was also divided and played a crucial role in the contest of identity.

¹⁴ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 131.

Newspapers such as *Gomantak* and *Gomantvani* of the post- Liberation period, the two Marathi dailies tried their best to discredit the forces of anti-merger camp in Goa. They highlighted that the merger would help ensuring the prosperity of the Goan economy. The newspapers, from Maharashtra were on the side of the merger. The dailies, *Gomantak* and *Gomantvani*, emerged only in support of merger.¹⁵

→ Soon after the liberation of Goa, *Pradeep* ceased to exist. In the year 1962, the house of Chowgule set up a daily in Marathi, *Gomantak*. The editor of the newspaper was B.D. Satoskar. The newspaper *Gomantak* has been a strong supporter of the merger camp.¹⁶ The newspapers editorials, articles and features fearlessly claimed Marathi as the mother tongue of Goans. In the year 1962, through its writings, this newspaper demanded that the Marathi should be made as a official language of Goa and also government gazette should make a use of Marathi language for its publication. The Marathi daily, *Gomantak*, acted as a vehicle of expression of those who demanded merger.

→ *Gomantak* made bold statements against those who claimed Konkani as the mother tongue of Goans by calling them as hypocrites. It always ridiculed the Christian elite who had dismissed Konkani as a language of Goa servants during the Portuguese rule but now adored it as the language of Goans.¹⁷ It called Konkani language issue as a method used by anti-merger force to preserve its unique identity. One of the writers of *Gomantak* claimed that Goa was a part of Maharashtra as it has some common culture to that of Maharashtra. He strongly claimed that the language Konkani was a *boli* of the Marathi language.

¹⁵ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 131.

¹⁶ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 135.

¹⁷ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 136.

In the general election of December 1963, the daily was in ~~the~~ complete support of merger camp. It campaigned for the cause of the *Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party*. The daily emphasized that those who had earlier opposed the liberation in the year 1961 are now opposing Goa's merger with Maharashtra. They further claimed that the true meaning of the slogan "Goa for Goans" was "independent Catholic Nation." Shri Laxmikant Bhembre charged the anti-merger forces by saying that the Konkani wadis were using language as a tool for their selfish motive. A special column "*Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay*" which was written by Jayvantrao Sardessai was regularly published and played a role to convince the people of Goa that the merger into the state of Maharashtra was of benefit to the Goans. Very vigorous and powerful editorials were reserved for these two issues. Goa's merger in Maharashtra was to make Marathi as the mother tongue of Goa and considering Konkani as its dialect.

Before and during the time of Opinion Poll of Goa the office of *Gomantak* was the centre of coordination of the activities against the anti-merger camp. In January 1965, the paper reported the activities of anti-merger groups and shouted the slogans, such as "*Azad Gomantak Zindabad*", *Ek Don Tin Chaar, Ami Sagle Goenkar*." ¹⁸ *Gomantak* was the greatest foe of the United Goans Party. It was absolutely forthright in asserting that U.G.P's demand for a separate state for Goa was "anti-national" demand. ⁴⁰⁻¹⁹

In January 1964, a businessman Shri Kashinath Damodar Naik started the publication of a Marathi daily, *Gomantvani* from Margao. Its editor was Shri Ram Pradhan. Its only objective was "*Marathi Bhasha ani Maharahastrat Vilinikaran*". This was prominently printed on the front page. Besides being a businessman, Shri Kashinath Damodar Naik was one of the leading intellectuals

¹⁸ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 138.

⁴⁰ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 140.

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a reference.

of Goa. He wrote knowledgeable articles in the paper in the Marathi language. According to him, it was an indisputable fact that Marathi was the language of Goa for many centuries and Konkani was only the "*boli*" or dialect of Marathi. *Gomantvani* was a staunch supporter of the merger movement and played a similar role just like *Gomantak*. The U.G.P., remarked *Gomantvani*, was acting like an ostrich burying its head in sand. If its narrow outlook succeeds, it would convert Goans into birds that are scared of flying because their wings are clipped.

→ According to *Gomantvani*, the merger would not curtail but boost Goa's economic development. It was brought to the notice of the Goans that when Bombay was merged into Maharashtra, the enemies of Maharashtra propagated that non-Maharashtrians would suffer but what happened was exactly the opposite. Non-Mahashtrians continued to prosper. It was the conviction of *Gomantvani* that Goa's merger in Maharashtra was the best remedy to cure the serious problem which was nourishing the forces of separation of Goa from the Motherland. *Gomantvani* garnered its resources to help the supporters of the merger during the Opinion Poll. Both these newspaper dailies were in the support of merger. ²⁰

Thus there was no platform to express the opinion of opposition to the merger camp. To counter this propoganda, the Konkani ~~W~~adis of Goa started a daily, *Rashtramat*. In the year, July 1963 Chandrakant Keni, a Konkani writer accepted the task starting a daily in Goa in the support of anti-merger. Along with him Konkani supporters like Ravindra Kelekar, Bakibab Borkar, Shripad Gharse, Laximanrao Sardessai, Nagesh Karmali, Manoharraai Sardessai, Vasant Kare gave their immense contribution. At the initial period, Shri Vasant Kare was the editor of the

²⁰ ⁴¹ Fredrick Noronha, "The Post- 1961 Press in Goa, Its Politics and Processes", Saligao: Fredrick Noronha, 6-10.

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Rashtramat.⁴² But within a year he left *Rashtramat* and Chandrakant Keni took over the editorship of the newspaper.

During the Opinion Poll of 16th January 1967 the office of *Rashtramat* was one the main theatre of action. During this time all the Goans got the opportunity to participate in the democracy in real terms. All Goans could assert the right on local resources. Its editor, publisher and writer of *Bramhastra* were fully and intensively involved in the campaign for the retention of Goa by preserving its unique identity. The *Rashtramat* newspaper emphasized economic and social prosperity of Goans. It propagated that Goa would be destroyed if it merges into Maharashtra.

It cannot be forgotten that those who insisted that the Konkani language must come into literary circulation as the language of Goa, cannot forget that the Konkani language needed the companionship of the Marathi language for its flourishing.

In the year 1970, the first issue of *Navprabha*, another Marathi daily was published in Goa. Its editor was Dwarkanath Bhagwant. The newspaper at the initial stage was the supporter of merger movement but remained neutral and moderate in its later phase. The publication of this daily still continues and looking at the design of *Navprabha*, it is clear that it has been made keeping in mind all the readers such as literature, art, sports, children and youth.

The Marathi press in Goa, created awareness through its writing in the Goan society and many new writers got an opportunity to put forward their views and opinions on various issues that were faced by them. By reading those papers, the Goan masses got aware of the issues that were taking place in the region. This shows the importance of the press in the society as it educates and provides knowledge to its readers.

⁴² Prabhu, *Gomantakiy Marathi*, 254.

CHAPTER 3: RASHTRAMAT: ITS ESTABLISHMENT, CONTRIBUTORS AND VARIOUS THEMES.

Soon after the liberation of Goa on 19 December, 1961 there were indeed two factions within Goan society regarding its political future. One group advocated for Goa to remain a separate state for preserving its own identity, while the other supported its integration into the neighboring state of the Maharashtra. This debate over the statehood and Goan identity reflected the complex historical and cultural dynamics of the region. The *Rashtramat* newspaper emerged from the struggle and debates surrounding Goa's political future.

Founded in the year 1963, *Rashtramat* newspaper played a significant role in shaping public opinion and providing a platform for the discourse of issues related to Goa's identity, making Konkani as a official language of Goa and its statehood. This chapter is about the establishment of the *Rashtramat* newspaper and its contribution in the Opinion Poll of Goa in moulding public opinion, making Konkani as a official language of Goa and issues pertaining to statehood.

3.1 Establishment of the *Rashtramat* newspaper in Goa and its contributors.

The post- liberation period of Goa had an urge to communicate and keep its opinion in order to decide its future which was reflected in a sudden spurt of the newspaper that started to emerge in Goa. The political scenario of Goa was such that the Goa's unique identity had become a highly contentious issue. There were two groups formed in Goa, one was a pro merger which wanted Goa to be merged into the State of Maharashtra while the other was the anti-merger who fought for keeping Goa's unique identity. The anti- merger force realized that Goa's unique identity could be saved only through the language wherein they advocated the Konkani as a unique

language and it's not a dialect of the language Marathi. An important feature of their agenda was the preservation of Goan cultural heritage.¹

A merger would lead to a significant loss of Goan culture thus losing its unique identity. People were also alarmed that a merger would completely vanish the Konkani language which was the language of communication of Goans. The language issue on Konkani- Marathi in Goa was gathering momentum. In the newly independent Goa, newspapers had a tremendous impact on the Goan society. The press in Goa was also divided. It played a key role in the Contest of identity. Newspapers such as *Gomantak* and *Gomantvani* of Post- liberation, the two Marathi dailies left no stone unturned to discredit the forces of anti-merger camp. Also, the newspaper from Maharashtra was on the side of the merger.

Thus there was no platform to express the opinion of opposition to the merger camp. To counter this propaganda, the Konkani wadis of Goa started a daily, *Rashtramrat*. In July 1963, Chandrakant Keni, a Konkani writer, accepted the task of starting a daily in Goa in support of anti-merger. Along with him, supporters of the Konkani language and anti-merger like Ravindra Kelekar, Bakibab Borkar, Shripad Gharse, Laximanrao Sardessai, Nagesh Karmali, Manoharrao Sardessai, Uday Bhembre and Vasant Kare gave their immense contributions. In the initial period, Shri Vasant Kare was the editor of the *Rashtramrat*. But within a year he left and Chandrakant Keni took over the editorship of the newspaper.² It was decided that those who were in favour of anti-merger, would contribute a hundred rupees each and thus, the total capital of twenty thousand rupees was raised. Although, at that time no one had an idea that any newspaper would not even

¹ Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 166.

² Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 170-72.

survive for a month in twenty thousand. It was tough to start a daily, the konkani wadis had no experience and knowledge in this field.

In those times, Chandrakant Keni was entrusted with some responsibilities in Delhi which was also crucial. While traveling to Delhi, Chandrakant Keni decided to stop and seek help from Krishna Karwar, who was associated with the Konkani movement. He resided at Mumbai, Maharashtra. Krishna Karwar had an affinity with people in the field of journalism. He was delighted to hear the adventurous plan of starting a daily, in support of anti-merger by Chandrakant Keni. Through Krishna Karwar, Chandrakant Keni got to know Vishnu Mahadev Phanse who was also known by Anna Phanse. Anna Phanse was an editor of *Maratha* daily of Maharashtra. Chandrakant Keni was hesitant in the beginning to meet Phanse as he knew how emotional the common Marathi man was on the issue of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. In such circumstances how wise it would be to seek the help of a Marathi man to start an anti-merger newspaper wherein they would criticize Marathi.

It was decided to hold a meeting at the restaurant called "Vrindavan" in Nanachowk at 6:00 p.m. According to Chandrakant Keni, Anna Phanse had an immense impact on him at the first sight. Anna Phanse gave Chandrakant Keni a confidence to start a daily by giving him an advice by saying if he wants to run a daily, he should make it clear in the first issue itself that, Goa shouldn't be merged into the State of Maharashtra and maintain its separate identity.³ This has also been mentioned in the article written by Ravindra Kelekar which explains that Anna Phanse's stance was that the paper would only work if Goa strongly opposed the merger of Goa with Maharashtra and stood firmly in the support of the Konkani language and made it as a state

³ ⁴⁵ Chandrakant Keni, *Prerak Utsahi Udar Aanandi Anna Phanse* (Goa: Kulaghar Prakashan, 1977), 51.

language. This was the first aim set of the newspaper *Rashtramat*.⁴⁴ It was fortunate enough that Anna Phanse even accepted to work along with Chandrakant Keni to start a daily in Goa. Along with him, Jagan Phadnavis and Prafulla Kumar also joined *Rashtramat*. It was decided to print the newspaper in the old Portuguese printing press where, *A Vida*, a Portuguese language newspaper was printed. There was no devanagari script type writer in this old Portuguese printing press.

In the year July 1963, Anna Phanse arrived in Goa with compositors, editorial assistants and other required materials that were essential to start a newspaper. The Konkaniwadis spent days and nights and went through many hurdles to launch the daily. The lack of experienced staff, a lack of proper resources, and obstacles would arise one after another but Anna Phanse never gave up, rather encouraged others and created a conducive working environment.

In the same year, the *Rashtramat* daily got an office in Margao and its sample issue was launched on 15th August 1963. The *Rashtramat*, a Marathi daily of the anti-merger protagonists of Goa, started regularly from 1st September 1963. For a few months, Anna Phanse stayed in Margao. After that, he returned to Mumbai but would regular visit⁴⁵ the office of *Rashtramat* to make it more efficient. Goa became a second home to Anna Phanse at that time. He gave the right direction to *Rashtramat*'s policy and necessary advice to all those who worked tirelessly towards the daily. Anna Phanse was an integral part of *Rashtramat* for almost thirty years of long association. He was like a founding pillar of the *Rashtramat* newspaper in Goa. According to Uday Bhembre, the Masthead of the Newspaper *Rashtramat* was created by Bala Saheb Thackeray, who played an important role in the *Samyukt Maharashtra Samiti*. At that time, if any newspaper had to be published, its Masthead was prepared by Thackeray.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁴ Keni, *Prerak Utsahi Udar*, 15.

⁴⁷ Sushant Cuncollikar, "Masthead Balasheb Thackerayncha" *Rashtramat*, 25 November, 2017.

Some economic groups of Goa opposed the merger with the neighboring state while some supported the merger. The foremost among them were the mine owners. Mine-owners such as Shri V.D. Chowgule, Chief Minister Dayanand Bandodkar, Shri M.S. Talaulikar, and Shri N. Narvekar supported Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Mine owners such as Shri V.S. Dempo, Shri V.M. Salgaocar, and the leader of the opposition, Dr. Jack De Sequeira opposed Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Mine owners such as Shri G.N. Agarwal, Shri Shantilal Gosalia, and Damodar Mangalji were either neutral or helped both supporters and opponents of the merger.

The House of Salgaoncars with interests in industries and mines opposed to merger and were staunch supporters of the movement for the promotion of the Konkani language. Its chairman Shri V.M. Salgaocar proved to be the most reliable and the most generous patron for the opponents of the merger. Generally, the businessmen are cautious and do not give their opinions liberally and patronage in acute political disputes. Surprisingly, Shri V.M. Salgaocar was the only industrialist in Goa who openly and passionately supported the movement. ⁶ He encouraged the development and the growth of the Konkani language which was ridiculed as a dialect. The champions of the Konkani had talent, energy, and time but lacked financial resources without which no movement could make any progress. The pro-merger forces were financially sound. They were financed by both the private industrialists and by the government of Maharashtra and Goa. They had the backing of influential Marathi press in and outside Goa. The pro-Konkani lobby found its only saviour in Goa's financial support of Shri V.M. Salgaoncar at the right time. Shri V.M. Salgaocar had no interest in narrow and shallow politics. He did not support the Konkani language movement just to antagonize the champions of Marathi. He backed the Konkani language agitation because he regarded that in the prevailing circumstances in Goa, only Konkani could unite the Hindus and

⁶ Keni, *Prerak Utsahi Udar*, 10.

Christians. His generous financial support to the Konkani movement in post liberation phase was in the interests of prosperity, stability, and unity in Goan population. Initially, the financial assistance to the daily was provided by five financiers, namely, Vasudev Salgoancar, Ram Salgoancar, Gurudas Timblo, Pandurang Timblo, and Modu Timblo. But gradually the financiers became less and after that, the ownership of the daily *Rashtramat* came to Vasudev Salgoancar. He fulfilled his responsibility till 1985. Later the finance was managed by his son Anil Salgoancar. Under the financial assistance of Anil Salgoancar, the daily ran till 1st September 2004.

The most effective and popular part of the *Rashtramat* newspaper was the column called *Bramhastra*. It was written by Shri Uday Bhembre under the pen name *Parshuram*. *Bramhastra* was read with curiosity by both, the supporters and opponents of the merger in Goa. It also provoked debates on every aspect of the controversy. Perhaps no column in any daily, weekly or monthly published in Goa was as exciting and effective as *Bramhastra*. The language used in the column was a thunderbolt of opinions, it attacked the Bandodkar ministry. That the M.G.P. rule in Goa under the leadership of Chief Minister, Dayanand Bandodkar was pursuing not only the destruction of Goa but also its own destruction as the merger would gradually end the rule of M.G.P. ७७

The front page of a sample issue of *Rashtramat* newspaper read as:- The sample issue of the *Rashtramat* newspaper was launched on 15th August 1963. It mentions, that India truly became fully independent country when Goa was liberated from the rule of the Portuguese in the year 1961. Thus, Goa is fifteen years behind in terms of national progress. While the real question that arises

७७ Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 168.

before Goans in the post- liberation period is about the development of Goa. Whether it should be a part of Maharashtra or maintain its unique identity. 8

It was of the strong opinion that Goa's future should be decided by Goans. Raising the issue of the Konkani language, the issue highlights the uniqueness of Konkani and it is not a dialect of Marathi language. It stated, due to linguistic differences places like Gujarat is having a language of Gujarati, Punjab have its language as Punjabi and Maharashtra having Marathi as it's official language thus they have their distinct identity living in one country. Similarly, even Goa should have one. It urged people to demand the separate state so that it would develop in a better way. Considering Goa as a land with no politically stable status, Maharashtra was trying to drag it into its own land.

Lastly, it stated people living on the land of Parshuram are brave and capable of taking proper decisions of its own destiny. They are aware of their identity but due to some influence of Maharashtra and its political leaders Goans are confused of its true identity.

3.1 The Role of the *Rashtramat* newspaper during the time of Opinion Poll, Making Konkani as official language and Statehood of Goa.

During the Opinion Poll of 16th January 1967 the office of *Rashtramat* was one the main theatre of action. Due to Opinion Poll, Goans got an opportunity to participate in the democracy in real terms. The editor, publisher and writer of *Bramhastra* in *Rashtramat* were fully and intensively involved in the campaign for the retention of Goan identity. *Rashtramat* emphasized economic and

8 8 Keni, *Prerak Utsahi Udar*, 11.

social prosperity of the Goans. It propagated that both would be destroyed if Goa merges into the state of Maharashtra.

During the time of Opinion Poll, the tone of *Rashtramat* newspaper was attacking but, later it was urging. Uday Bhembre mentions, when the team of *Rashtramat* called for a meeting to aware people about the merger of Goa, the large number of people were genuinely confused, mostly illiterate who were gathered at Usgao at 11 P.M. The Konkani protagonists of the *Rashtramat* attempted to impress upon the people that if Goa remains a separate political entity than it can benefit Goans, politically, administratively and economically. They also tried to sway the minds of the Marathi supporters by capitalising on Shri. Bandodkar's popularity. Their appeal to them was, even if Marathi is the language of Goa, they would still gain if there is no merger, as Bandodkar would still remain as their Chief minister. The people of Goa had to choose between merger and non merger in the opinion poll of 16 January 1967. The decision had to taken by Goans for their better future. ⁹

In September 1963, the house of Salgaocar provided financial aid to the *Rashtramat*, which worked tirelessly to preserve Goan identity during the period of the Opinion Poll of 1967. The Marathi daily remained unique in the history of Goa's independent identity as it had established itself as an effective tool for inculcating visionary ideas among the masses. During the Opinion Poll campaign, Shri V.M. Salgaoncar who was the publisher of the *Rashtramat* daily personally assumed the leadership of his group. Under his guidance and close supervision a task force a plan of action was prepared. A special office was set up at Margao to monitor the Opinion Poll campaign. Shri Chandrakant Keni was in charge of gauging public opinion.

9 ⁹ Harivansha Nagvekar, "*Rashtramat: Govyala Swabhimani Milvun Denara Vrutpatra*," *Rashtramat*, 25 November, 2017. ²⁰¹⁷ 2017.

They organized meetings in villages and rallies in the towns. The services of a cartoonist, Mario Miranda, and an advertiser Sylvia D'cunha were hired to make propaganda colorful and impressive. Salgaocar liberally financed the publicity material of the anti-merger campaign. Posters and pamphlets were printed in Bombay and distributed throughout Goa. There was no dearth of laborers and volunteers who were paid by Salgaoncar. The opponents of the merger became very fond of the slogan "*Nako Amhala Shrikhand Puri, Aamchi Xitt Codi Bari*". The Head office of Salgaoncars at Vasco-da-Gama was in constant touch with their workers in all parts of Goa and between Goa and Bombay. Shri V.M. Salgaocar personally attended the street meetings and public gatherings during this time.

Finally, in Goa's Opinion Poll 55.48% of the people voted for two leaves to remain Goa a union territory. With this, Goa had just passed its first identity related political milestone. The purpose of the opinion poll was to decide the political status of Goa. The outcome of the Opinion Poll showed that the *Rashtramrat*'s strategy to persuade the Hindus to prefer the status of Union territory was largely successful.⁵²⁻¹⁸

The language- dialect debate continued in Goa. The daily, *Rashtramrat*, gave its heart and soul to get official status to the Konkani language in Goa. They stated, the verdict of opinion poll was not final as Goa was still a union territory. To get ~~the~~ legitimacy to this issue, ~~the Konkani~~ ^{and} protagonists ~~and~~ in an attempt to finally put this matter to rest, the konkani wadis decided to take the language dialect issue by approaching the Sahitya Akademi.

¹⁰ 42 Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 8.

The ultimate aim of all those who worked for the *Rashtramat* newspaper was to make Konkani as the official language of Goa.⁵³ The majority of Hindus in Goa supported Marathi language and the merger of Goa into Maharashtra while the Christian community of Goa along with a sizeable section of Hindu community backed Konkani language. The small Muslim community in Goa too supported the cause of Konkani and Separate statehood for Goa. The language agitation for Konkani was the biggest agitation witnessed in the history of Goa. The Konkani wadis and the supporters of the *Rashtramat* daily worked tirelessly in the agitation.

The Konkani language became a foundation of *Rashtramat* to prove Goa's unique Identity. The journalists of the daily would also be involved in giving public speech. They would give slogans like "Amche Goem Aamka Zai", "Goem Konachem Goem Karanchem", "Aamka naka Shrikhand Puri Aamchi Xitt Choddich Bari"⁵⁴ The newspaper *Rashtramat* strongly highlighted the misconception that Konkani was a language on its own, with its grammar and vocabulary. It demanded the inclusion of Konkani in the VIIth schedule of the Indian Constitution and make Konkani as a official language of Goa.⁵⁵

→ The Opinion Poll brought down the curtain on the issue of merger. The recognition of Konkani as the official language was achieved on 4th February 1987 after a long struggle of the Konkani wadis in Goa and the subsequent ^{by use} grant of Statehood on 30th May 1987 ~~was given to Goa.~~ These two issues brought the logical conclusion on Goa's long quest for a separate political

¹¹ ⁵³ Keni, *Prerak Utsahi Udar*, 11.

¹² ⁵⁴ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 145.

¹³ ⁵⁵ Keni, *Prerak Utsahi Udar*, 13.

identity. The newspaper *Rashtramat*, apart from dealing with political issues also wrote on various subjects. It tried to highlight the lack of employment opportunities, water issues, and social issues in Goa. Like any other newspaper, it covered all the local issues faced in the Goan society.

3.2 The reason to write the daily in the Marathi language.

The role of the *Rashtramat* was to oppose the merger of Goa with Maharashtra. All the supporters of the anti-merger newspaper *Rashtramat* were pro-Konkani supporters. They stood for their language and wanted to preserve it and showcase its uniqueness to prove it's not a dialect of Marathi. Although the medium of language in which *Rashtramat* was typed was Marathi. Ravindra Kelekar, a Jnanpith Award holder, states the reason. According to him in those days people were not familiar with reading the Konkani language. All the literary works were produced in Marathi. In Goa, a large section of Hindus were in support of merging Goa with Maharashtra. The only way to change the opinion of people on this matter was to convince the issue and its importance in the same language that this section read. The journalist of *Rashtramat* made use of powerful and attacking words of Marathi to keep their opinions about the merger issue. The entire paper was written in Marathi but its main motto was to aware people of Goa and make Konkani as a official language of Goa.

3.3 Various other columns of the *Rashtramat* newspaper.

The newspaper *Rashtramat* came up with numerous columns and which were written by various writers of Goa. They expressed their views and opinions on social and political issues of the newly liberated territory. Column such as *lokmat* which was a daily column spoke about the

social issues. It was written by various writers such as Mahabaleshwar Borkar, Gopal Borkar, Laxmikant Khope, Janardhan Panshikar, Anand Prabhu, Dattakumar Kargaokar, Shaba dessai, Shrikant Bhembre and Laxmikant Velip. Another column named *Nanyachi Dusri Baj* by Janardhan Ghore, column *Jagyachya Pathivar*, *Jantar Mantar*, *Sukhacha Shodh*, *Vadmay Vinod Vidnyan*, *Aandhar*, *Shantivanachya Parisarat* were such Marathi column which provided articles on various issues covering every aspect. Along with it a Konkani columns, Pimpal Pedar and Himalayat were written by Ravindra Kelekar and Chandrakant Keni. This two columns also with the column *Bramhastra* were well known in Goa.

3.4 *Diwali Ankh* of *Rashtramat* newspaper.

The *Rashtramat* newspaper managed to launch eight *Diwali Ankh*. The first *Diwali Ankh* was released on 1971 which was of rupees two. Its publisher was B.D. Satoskar. All the remaining *Diwali Ankh* came up in the year 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978 and Chandrakant Keni was its publisher. Its price kept increasing by one or half a rupee each year.

3.5 Is the treasure of the newspaper *Rashtramat* hidden in this century old building?

In Borda in the Margao city of Goa, a one storied building has not been opened even once in the last twenty years. The building holds a great significant historical connection, particularly with the *Rashtramat* newspaper. One cannot imagine the condition of the interior of this hundred year old structure. The Marathi daily, *Rashtramat*, which began in the year 1963 had celebrated its Silver Jubilee in the year 1988 in the same building, within a year *Rashtramat* moved its editing

and administration division to the Gonsalia building which is also in Margao. For a year after that, the old office of *Rashtramat* was opened occasionally to carry essential required documents. The building was damaged due to a branch of the nearby mango tree that had fallen on it. It was during this time, minor repairs were made in the interior of the building and also a shuttle was installed in the place of its old entrance door. As it was shifted to Gonsalia building, present Salgoancars chambers, it was managed by industrialist of Goa, Anil Salgoancar. No other person had a legal authority to enter it. Thus the building remained closed after that. ⁵⁶ 14

All the files from the beginning of the *Rashtramat* were housed in this building. The files contain the comprehensive details of the contribution by *Rashtramat* daily towards Goa's Opinion Poll of 1967, but unfortunately those copies of *Rashtramat* are not available anywhere in Goa. According to Sitaram Tengse, who was one of the major contributor of the daily. One file for each month was maintained and arranged systematically on the rack. Those files had every detail of the early years of the *Rashtramat* newspaper. Even on the first floor of the same building, every detail of the Opinion Poll and the contribution of the *Rashtramat* newspaper was filed and preserved. These initial copies of *Rashtramat* would have been a guide to estimate the overall social and political condition of that time in Goa. In the year 2017, the structure was seen leaking during the heavy rainfall and the building was badly affected. According to Advocate Uday Bhembre, a pioneer of the daily says, it is almost impossible revive the remaining documents as it got damaged due to termites. Tengse, the last editor of the *Rashtramat* says, even the Curator of the central library approached him to ask for the initial copies of *Rashtramat* but unfortunately it was impossible to get it. This building even holds the numerous books and magazines published by

14 ⁵⁶ Atul Pandit, "Junya Imartitil Dadlayat Rashtramatcha Khajina" *Rashtramat*, 25 November, 2017.

Kulaghar prakashan of Chandrakant Keni. After the relocation of the office, no much efforts were taken to restore the treasure that was left behind.


 Some documents and all the copies of the daily from May 1967 to September 2004 were stored in the basement space of the Salgoancar chambers. Today the Central Library of Goa, situated at Panjim holds these copies of *Rashtramat* and has preserved it in the good condition.



Fig. 3.1

First Copy of the Available Rashtramat Daily

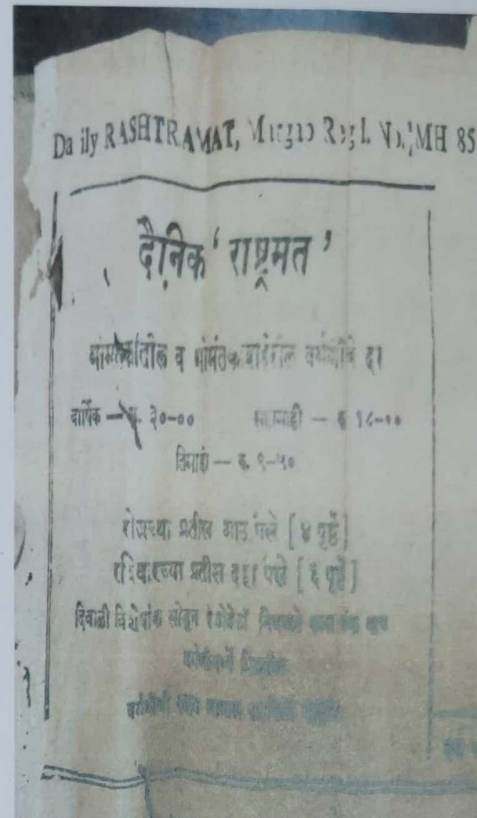


Fig. 3.2

Masthead of the Rashtramat Daily

CHAPTER 4: BRAMHAstra


The most effective and popular part of *Rashtramat* newspaper was the Column *Bramhastra*. *Bramhastra* is a creation of masterpiece of that era. It was written by Shri Uday Bhembre under the pen name Parshuram. Uday Laxmikant Bhembre, a Konkani writer was born at Margao on 27 December 1939. He came from the family of freedom fighters. His father, was a part of 18 June movement in Goa and was arrested and deported to Portugal. He remained in Portugal for sixteen long years and was repatriated only in 1962 after the liberation of Goa. Uday Bhembre was just seven year's old at the time of his father's deportation to Portugal. ¹

Uday Bhembre's family shifted to Zambauli and he had his early schooling there. He studied till class three in the Marathi medium and class four in Portuguese. Since there was no much scope for Portuguese education in the future of Goa, his family decided to send him to English school and he completed his SSC from the school in Vasco.

After the completion of SSC, he came to Mumbai for his higher education and joined Siddharth College. Although arts stream was his natural inclination, he had to join science to honour the wishes of his parents. There he met several Goan students and actively participated in the activities of Konkani association of the college and inter-collegiate Konkani one act play competition held annually in Mumbai. The association also published an annual issue called *Vidya*, Bhembre edited one of the issues. In all these endeavours he received active support from the people like Anna Mhambro, Laxmikant Takaulikar, and Shrikant Borkar.

¹ Meena Kakodkar, "Chandrakantbab Aani Hay" *Rashtramat*, 25 November, 2017.

He joined All India Radio, Mumbai as a staff artist in the Konkani section and helped produce programs such as talks, radio plays and read news specially in the language Konkani.

According to Uday Bhembre, he mentions about his journey with the *Rashtramat*. He says, when he was doing his BSc in Bombay he would be with the activist of Konkani movement. He got in contact with Shri Chandrakant Keni as he would come to meet Anna Phanse. It was then that Uday Bhembre was informed about the launching of the *Rashtramat* to foil the attempt of the M.G.P. to merge Goa with Maharashtra. Uday Bhembre felt that he could play a useful part in the newspaper by giving his contribution to the daily. Shri Chandrakant Keni showed willingness to offer him the assistant editor's post in the Marathi daily, *Rashtramat*. Uday Bhembre was given the task of writing the column *Bramhastra*. The column which had to be full of pinions and suggestions.

Bramhastra was read by both, the supporters and opponents of the merger. The *Bramhastra* is the eternal thoughts of such visionary sons of Goa. Much of the success in avoiding a possible merger in the Opinion Poll goes into the writings of *Bramhastra*. *Bramhastra* was a daily column of the *Rashtramat* from its beginning. The logo of *Bramhastra* was a figure of mythical lord Parshuram with a bow and arrow. The logo was changed thrice and the reason to it is not specified. The logo was changed to just a bow and arrow in the later period and finally, till the end of the publication of *Rashtramat*, it was only an arrow pointing out towards a target.

The column *Bramhastra* consisted the comments on the happenings, the moves, and decisions of leaders of the Government of Goa in the period between the Liberation and the Opinion Poll. It is credited with a major part of the opinion formation in favor of the anti-merger and is known for its scathing attack on the idea of merger. *Bramhastra* in a mythical context belonged to Lord Parshurama, who is credited with the settlement of GSBs in Konkan and Goa.

Many believe that it was the writing and oratory of Uday Bhembre during the Opinion Poll campaign that converted a large number of youth and wage earners against the merger. The role of the GSB of Goa is to be viewed in the scheme of power contestations concerning Konkani. In the search for their political identity, they worked to empower themselves through language, which was to be the basis of state formation in independent India. ²₅₀

The answers to those most important questions that absorbed the minds of the people of Goa after Liberation related to their political status were given by *Bramhastra*. There were two currents, one strongly favoring Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Others strongly favoring Statehood for Goa. Both sides worked hard to achieve their respective goals. Both sides used history, religion, language and culture to build up their cases. The column *Bramhastra* used very powerful language to mould public opinion on the side of anti-merger. The following are the main three issues that were covered by *Bramhastra*.

4.1 Opinion Poll- The first milestone of *Bramhastra*.

January 16, 1967, is a historical day in the annals of Goan history. It is on this day that the people of Goa cast their valuable votes to decide the future status of Goa. In the first-ever general elections held in 1963, a party that vowed to get the territory of Goa, in the neighboring State of Maharashtra came to power in the Union territory of Goa, Daman, and Diu. It was an alarm bell to those who held the view that Goa should remain a separate entity.

²₅₀ Uday Bhembre, "Govyavar Shejachya Rajyanchi Satta" *Rashtramata*, 25 January 1969.

It was on account of the consistent efforts of the forces of Congress led by the late Purushottam Kakodkar and the forces of the United Goans party led by Jack de Sequeira, to retain Goa's identity. The Goa, Daman & Diu Opinion Poll Act, 1966, section 3 provided that an opinion poll shall be taken for ascertaining, the wishes of the electorate of Goa as to whether Goa should merge into the state of Maharashtra or should remain a union territory. The Opinion Poll was used as a method to enable the people of the territory to decide their political future. Each voter was given the right to participate in the momentous decision. The Opinion Poll of Goa contended that "Goa's personality was a synthesis of Eastern and Western cultures. Prime Minister Nehru had promised the preservation of this "cultural individuality in the political unity of India". It demanded voting rights for all Goans regardless of their place of residence anywhere in India and other countries.³

During this phase in the political history of Goa, the newspaper *Rashtramat* worked day and night to preserve the Goan identity by opposing the merger. Through the column *Bramhastra*, the writer tried to put in the thoughts to oppose the merger as it was the sole motto of the column. *Bramhastra* was fully and intensively involved in the campaign for the retention of the status of the Union Territory of Goa. *Bramhastra* forcefully condemned the pro-merger conference held in Bombay in January 1965. It refused to accept that the thirty-five Goans who participated in it were the representatives of the Goans settled in Bombay. According to 'Parshuram', those thirty-five were the representatives of the "Hindutva" and not Goa.⁴ *Bramhastra* charged that the organizers of that conference refused permission to many Goans who were opposed to the merger. Only those

³ Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 180.

⁴ Uday Bhembre, "Nivadnukacha Marg Pasant Nahi," *Rashtramat*, 14 October 1969.

⁵ Menino, *Mass Communication*, 120.

Goans who subscribed to the doctrine that Goa was an integral part of Maharashtra and Marathi was the language of Goa were admitted.

'Parshuram' mercilessly and ruthlessly condemned Chief Minister Bhandarkar for his sins of commission and omission. He argued that as chief minister, it was Bhandarkar's sacred duty to attend every session of the legislative assembly. But Bhandarkar, who lacked courage to face the assembly, pointed out 'Parshuram'. Bhandarkar pretended that he had no time but he had plenty of time to visit different places in Maharashtra to attend the functions and address the meetings during the time of Opinion Poll. He dismissed chief minister Bhandarkar as "his master's voice". 'Parshuram' alleged that Bhandarkar dances on the commands of "his masters from Maharashtra". In August 1965 'Parshuram' condemned the policy of the M.G.P. government to bring the "Deputationists" from Maharashtra when the local people were freely available.⁵

According to him, it was the deliberate move of M.G.P. to destroy the local talent and it would in the long run ruin Goa. He opposed the policy of running administration with the help of "deputationists" who were out of touch with the realities or problems of Goa. In 1966, 'Parshuram' fully endorsed the decision of the Government to hold the Opinion Poll. 'Parshuram' was at his best during the campaign for the Opinion Poll.⁶² The thrust of his writings was to convince the people of Goa that there was not even a one percent of benefit to Goa if it merged into Maharashtra. According to him, if the Goans decide to merge in Maharashtra it would be the highest act of folly. It would be nothing short of "Burning of Goa by the Goans."⁶³

⁵ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 140.

⁶² Jyoti Kulkarni, "Chandrakant Keni: Visheshank Ankh", *Rashtramat*, 2017. ?

⁷ Rodrigues, "Goa's Opinion Poll", 143..

The focus of *Bramhastra* was making Goa self-reliant. It constantly chanted this mantra of standing on its own feet with courage in its land and for its development. In that period, *Bramhastra* achieved the expected success in breaking the partisan idea of ~~M~~erger and eliminating the regionalism that had come over Goa.

→ The objective of M.G.P. was Goa's merger into Maharashtra. The objective was rationalized advancing geographical, historical, cultural, linguistic, and economic reasons. Article 2 of the constitution of the party proclaimed that Goa was historically, geographically, culturally, and economically part and parcel of Maharashtra.⁸⁴ Bandodkar geared himself to meet the challenge by organizing public meetings, morchas, street plays, and door-to-door canvassing. Bandodkar personally addressed public meetings and pin-pointed that the propaganda that the merger would harm the interests of the Catholic community in Goa was false as stated by the column, "*Bramhastra*," and it was false propaganda because thousands of Catholics were living in Bombay alone. The supporters of the merger justified the integration of Goa's merger into Maharashtra to improve economic growth, improve agriculture, and also bring economic prosperity to all, ~~to~~ which anti merger groups through *Bramhastra* opposed strongly.⁸⁵

→ The result of the Opinion Poll was officially announced on 19 January 1967. The M.G.P. failed to win its objective of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. It is believed that it was the writings of *Bramhastra* that avoided merger and the Goan identity was preserved by its own people.

⁸⁴ Uday Bhembre, "Govyache Vilinikaran na jalyas Maharashtra Upashi tar Marnar Nahi" *Rashtramat*, 1980. ⁸⁵ Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 191.

4.2 The Konkani Language Agitation and attaining Statehood of Goa through *Bramhastra*.

Language as a vehicle of culture acts as a powerful symbol of identity. The language of a region carries its identity which is complex and contested. The language movements are organized to create awareness among language speakers and members of a language community regarding the need and importance of promoting or projecting language loyalty. This awareness could be brought to society with the help of periodicals and publications. The daily *Rashtramat*, through the column *Bramhastra* encouraged the newly educated non-Brahmin sections of Goans to write in Konkani marks this phase of language movement in Goa.¹⁰ The Marathi language daily, during and after its role in the Opinion Poll, worked to gain the attention of people towards the Konkani. The major role in this case was played by *Bramhastra*. *Bramhastra* through its bold language tried to awaken the people and made them realize about their true identity as Goan through the Konkani language.

The language movement in Goa which began after Liberation brought back into focus the key role that language has played in articulating the public sphere right from its inception during Portuguese colonial rule. The Konkani language has played a defining role in determining the social, political, and also religious sphere of Goa. The Konkani movement began in earnest in the twentieth century.

The foundations of modern Konkani literature were to a large extent laid by Vaman Raghunath Varde Valaulikar alias Shennoi Goembab. At a time when Marathi was the dominant language of literature in Goa, Shennoi Goembab ventured to contribute prolifically to the development of Konkani. If ever there was one person who gave his intellect, time, energy, and resources and even sacrificed his life for the restoration of the Konkani language, he was Shri

¹⁰ Bhemre, *Bramhastra*, 150.

Vaman Varde Valaulikar famous as Shennoi Goembab.^{11 67} In 1950, Shri M.M. Shanbhag was one of the founding members of the Konkani Bhasha Mandal at Karwar in 1939. In the year 1940 *Konkani Bhasha Mandal* was set up in Bombay and in Goa in 1962. In the *Konkani Bhasha Mandal* of Goa concentrated on the growth and development of Konkani literature. It organized Konkani writer's conferences and *Sahitya Parishad* to convince the people that Konkani was the mother tongue of the Goans. It pinpointed that Konkani was as rich as any other language of India but the treasure of the Konkani language was destroyed by the Portuguese colonial rulers when they forcibly imposed their language on the Goans.

The *Bramhastra*,¹¹ left no stone unturned to destroy the misconception that Konkani was the dialect of Marathi. The first generation of language activists inspired by Goembab included Shri Ravindra Kelekar, Dr. Manohar Rai Sardessai and Shri Uday Bhembre. These Konkani stalwarts began their literary journey in the public sphere in Bombay. They had gone to Bombay either as students or young professionals. And it was in the contradictory environment of freedom and the hegemony of Marathi, that Goans discovered their Konkani identity and felt the need to spread this awareness. But after Liberation, the primary arena of the Konkani public sphere shifted to Goa. In post-colonial Goa, language has come to play a dominant role in defining Goa's political and cultural identity. At the time of Liberation, the language scenario was as follows: All Goans irrespective of caste or religion, spoke Konkani. The Hindus of Goa generally made use of Marathi for their written communication, while many upper caste^{12 68} of Catholics used Portuguese.

The lower caste Catholics used Konkani in Roman script for their written communication. In November 1966 K.B.M. demanded the inclusion of Konkani in the eighth schedule of the

^{11 67} Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 155.

^{12 68} Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 155.

constitution of India. Many members of K.B.M. played a leading role in the Opinion Poll campaign. Shri Uday Bhembre, Shri Chandrakant Keni, Shri Ravindra Kelekar, and Shri Shankar Bhandari worked very hard day and night to defeat the forces working on Goa's merger into Maharashtra.

Constitutionally and politically the question of merger or non-merger depended on the answer whether Konkani was or was not a language as independent as Marathi. According to Priolkar, philologically Konkani was not at all an independent language. It was only a dialect of Marathi. In 1956, the political map of India was redrawn on a linguistic basis under the state's reorganization Act. If Konkani was an independent language ^ethan it would automatically ^{be}entitled to have a state of its own. He said, that behind the love of Konkani was the sole purpose to prevent "Goa's merger into Maharashtra." Pundalik Naik and Damodar Mauzo began with Marathi writing and were brought into Konkani mainly through their association with the daily *Rashtramat*. Most of those who were active on the Konkani scene in Goa, in the last three decades of the twentieth century have started their literary apprenticeship through *Rashtramat*, especially its weekly Konkani supplement "*Somar*." Through the songs and plays the tiatrists urged the people to reject the merger into Maharashtra as it would destroy their language which was the heart of their identity. Their famous slogan was "*Aamche Goem Aamka Jai*."

Through witty lyrics, they highlighted the disadvantages the Goans would face if they voted for the "flower," the symbol of the merger. A *tiatr* told to the people that if the merger took place, Goans would be driven out of Goa and Maharashtrians would grab their land. Shri M. Boyer, a very popular tiatrlist, sang songs adoring "Goan identity." Shri Ulhas Buyao, a Hindu artist, sang *pawadas* in Konkani. His contribution to the cause of Konkani and the defeat of the supporters of a merger was as significant as that of the other prominent opponents of the merger. He moved

through the length and breadth of Goa praising "Goan identity." During the Opinion Poll, the meetings against the merger invariably ended with the songs sung by Shri Ullas and his party. The notable song was "*Uth re Maja Goykara.*"

In the post-liberation period of Goa, the choice of leader, name, and nature of the organization and the basic arguments for the agitation were provided by Ravindra Kelekar, who was at the forefront of the Konkani language movement in Goa from the day of liberation of the territory. The functioning and policy-making of the *Konkani Porjecho Avaz* was guided and monitored constantly by Uday Bhembre, who was identified with the *Bramhastra* of the Opinion Poll. At the intellectual level Pro-merger case was forcefully presented by A.K. Priolkar. Priolkar advanced evidence to justify the contention that Marathi was the "literary mother tongue" of the Goans. According to him, Marathi was the medium of education, written communication, and religion. The suppression of Marathi by the Portuguese compelled the Hindus to establish private schools for elementary education in Marathi. Priolkar mentioned that this common linguistic bond brought emotional integration between Goan Hindus and the people of Maharashtra inspite of their political separation during the Portuguese rule. Priolkar vehemently condemned the movement to replace Marathi with Konkani in Goa. According to him, Konkani is a dialect which was not even standardized.¹³

To which *Bramhastra* attacked such statements given by pro-merger. Its entire focus was on preserving the Goan identity through its writings. The identity of the Goans is the outcome of centuries of living together under an altogether different colonial master. "Personality of the Goan is largely molded by the Konkani language and it will not be too much to say that the rhythm of the Konkani language has so moulded the character and personality of the Goans and lent a peculiar

¹³ "Bhembre, *Bramhastra*, 100.

expression to their countenance". According to Manohar Malgonkar ~~who claimed that~~ the centuries of single alien rule and the evangelical fervor with which that power exercised its rule had given Goa a separate identity. Goan, both Christians and Hindus consider themselves as some kind of "special tribe". Within the assembly, U.G.P. took the stand that Konkani was an independent language and not a dialect of Marathi. Dr. Sequeira sharply disagreed with Bandodkar when the latter claimed that Marathi was the language of the people of Goa because of the wide circulation of Marathi newspapers and the establishment of Marathi schools.

Pl. give
reference.

Dr. Sequeira pointed out that merely because people read Marathi, it does not follow that they speak Marathi and that Marathi schools were established due to the patronage of government and private individuals. If the same patronage was extended to Konkani schools, the number of students would have been much bigger. U.G.P. charged that the government of Bandodkar was deliberately and purposefully denying funds which adversely affected the development of Konkani at every step.

The U.G.P. struggled very hard to conduct the business of the house only in Konkani. Its members pretended that they did not understand Marathi but refused to accept the pretension of the members of M.G.P. that they did not understand Konkani. The language issue paralyzed the business of the assembly. Hence, Chief Minister Bandodkar and the leader of the opposition Dr. Sequeira arrived at an understanding, that regardless of the opinions about the status of Konkani, the business of the house should be generally conducted in Konkani.

The supporters of the merger emphasized the existence of strong cultural bonds between Goa and Maharashtra. Shri Shridhar Telkar contended that over the centuries, Goa had been the cradle of Marathi language and literature. According to Telkar, culturally Goa was not only a part of Maharashtra but the soul of Maharashtra. Literature reflects the customs, traditions, and living

Pl. give
a
reference.

styles of the people. The supporters of the merger claimed that Marathi was the literary language of Goa and that Konkani was its "~~Boli~~". The Konkani protagonist through *Bramhastra* tried to sway the minds of people supporting Marathi by capitalising on Shri Bandodkar's popularity. They tried to convince people that even if Marathi was the language of Goa ~~than~~ Shri Bandodkar would not remain as their chief minister.

pl. goa
reference

The *Konkani Parishad* urged the *Sahitya Akademi* to recognize Konkani as an independent language. The Sahitya Akademi, to take a proper decision took ten long years. In 1974, the executive board decided that Konkani should be given Sahitya Akademi recognition. But, even this decision was not final as Maharashtra had asked the Sahitya Akademi to consider its decision because of which the decision was kept on hold for a year. ¹⁴

After a prolonged struggle, the *Sahitya Akademi* gave Konkani its first recognition. This opened the door for its development. Shri Uday Bhembre through *Bramhastra* mentioned that, unlike the common assumption, the ~~Opinion~~ Poll did not decide anything much for the language Konkani to be as of Goa's distinct language, but it only served as a platform for the same. After Sahitya Akademi's recognition, the language dialect issue was resolved from the viewpoint of *Bramhastra*. ~~The~~ Konkani was finally made the official language on 4th February 1987, and Goa was granted statehood on 30 May of the same year. With this achievement the third milestone was achieved by Goans.

Besides, *Bramhastra* many articles were also published by *Rashtramat* to create a climate against merger. These articles emphasized that those who opposed the merger of Goa into Maharashtra were not "anti-national".

¹⁴ Uday Bhembre, "Konkani hi Ek Swatantya Sahitya Bhasha" *Rashtramat*, 1975. ?

4.3 Miscellaneous

Apart from these issues, the *Brahmastra* also focused on various other issues that came up in the post-liberated period of Goa. Like any other newspaper even though its main aim was a separate status for Goa, it also covered all the social issues that took place. It made sure that it covers almost every aspect of the problem that was faced in Goa. It covered a wide variety of other fields which included business, sports, art, and science.

Bramhastra is still a ringing bell for those who are fighting their own identity, still are in doubt about their own strength, and careless about their self-esteem. It has proven that a writing could bring a major change in the society and thus justifies the statement, "The pen is Mightier than the sword."



Fig. 4.1 First Logo of the Column *Bramhastra*.

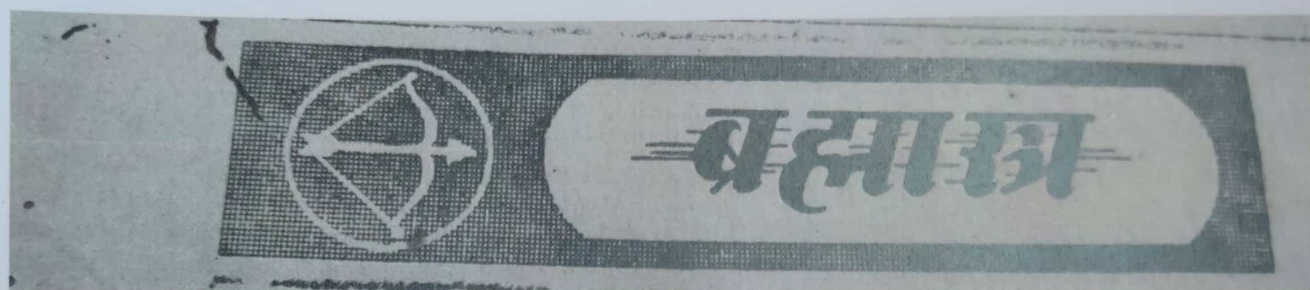


Fig.4.2 Second Logo of the Column *Bramhastra*.

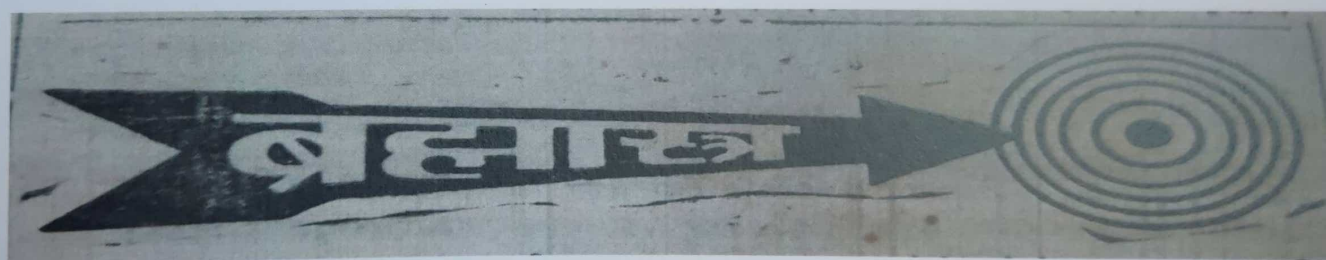


Fig. 4.3 Third Logo of the Column *Bramhastra*.

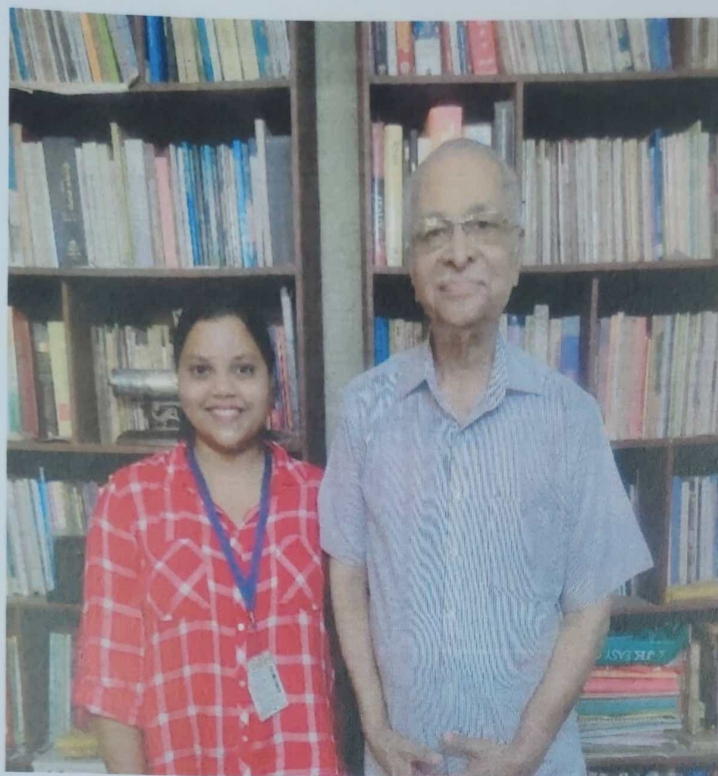


Fig. 4.3 Photo with the writer of the column *Bramhastra*.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Goa under the Portuguese rule got the honour of becoming the first country in Asia to have a printing Press. This press was kept in the college of St. Paul in Old Goa. It was used for printing a number of religious works to help in proselytization. The first work to come out of this press was a catechism *Doutrina Christa* by St. Francis Xavier printed in 1557. In the year 1754, Marques de Pombal, the prime minister of Portugal banned all kinds of printing activities in Portuguese India as a part of his plan to suppress the Jesuits.

In Goa a number of individuals started periodicals which in the beginning were printed at the government printing press. Periodicals were also published by private individuals and printed at the government press. The vernacular press developed more slowly as compared to the Portuguese press in Goa. The main reason cited is that the Marathi newspapers from Maharashtra especially from Pune and Bombay were able to satisfy the readers of Goa. *Kesari* was well received in Goa. Slowly and gradually many monthlies, weeklies and dailies started to emerge in Goa. Censorship and scrutiny of the press continued to terrify the people during the Portuguese administration. Having been curbed and curtailed by various regulations and laws enacted by the Portuguese government, the press was generally loyal but expressed the current socio-economic or political thoughts of the people.

In Goa the newspapers were not started to satisfy the curiosity of man to know about his fellow men. Periodicals were started more as a forum to ventilate the owner's views and the contribution, erudition and as a status symbol for the owner. The periodicals were in the most family owned. It was the vernacular periodicals which made use of the press as a platform to

influence readers in favour of social reform. The press through all this evolving phase in the history of Goa reflected the struggle and aspirations of the Goans.

A newspaper for its effective functioning, has to take a keen interest in the problems of its environment and the matters of public interest. The press in Goa as well as the Bombay based Goa press did write and show concern about education, economy and migration of Goans. Many writers and editors contributed their thoughts and analytical writings of the themes. The press in Goa expressed curiosity and interest in the political, social and economic developments taking place in Goa. A large number of Marathi newspapers were started in Goa but most of them had short lives. Finance was always an issue since most of the papers were financed by personal funds.

After Goa's liberation in the year 1961, the print culture in Goa, witnessed the growth of liberal ideas and opportunities for people to express their opinions on the various political issues. The newspapers provided a platform for people to share their views and suggestions. Especially referring to the Marathi journalism in Goa, which was ahead of its Konkani counterparts. Despite it being accused of creating a rift between the Hindu and Catholic masses over the issue of Goa's merger with Maharashtra, the Marathi press managed to maintain its standard. The Marathi media in Goa during the time of Opinion Poll bore the torch of social activism by backing up the "Bahujan Samaj" or the backward communities.

In comparison, the Konkani press failed to live up to the people's expectations. While on the other hand, the Marathi press was infused with a new vitality following the launching of several new publications at regular intervals. *Gomantak*, *Gomantvani*, *Rahtrammat*, *Tarun Bharat* and *Nayprabha*. These Marathi newspapers have been a product of Marathi journalism flourishing in

the Konkani-dominated State. At a glance of the circulation figures of these Marathi dailies in Goa speak about the real taste of Goan readers.

The newspaper *Rashtramat* worked tirelessly in the support of anti-merger camp. The first anti-merger Marathi daily in Goa set an aim to eradicate the idea of merger by giving various reality check to Goans during the time of Opinion Poll of 1963. It made sure that the Goa and its unique identity in terms of culture and language could be completely safeguarded with the help of Goans.

It opposed the idea of merger through its writings and created an awareness in the Goan society who were misguided by the M.G.P. government in Goa. The newspaper worked constantly in moulding the public opinion and its success was finally seen when the Goans voted against the merger in the Opinion Poll and made Konkani as a official language of Goa and also gained statehood in the year 1984. The *Rashtramat* was indeed successful and rigid on its goal till the end.

Only the last two paragraphs of "Conclusion" are about Rashtramat; there is no mention of the column, Bramhasutra, at all. You were asked to include your major findings in this chapter, about the role of Rashtramat in preserving Goan identity, in particular. This has not been done.

Elaborate corrections were made to the earlier draft and instructions were given for final submission. However, despite repeated requests to incorporate the corrections, avoid plagiarism, and adhere to the CMOS, errors persist!

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APPENDIX I

Interview with Uday Bhembre.

Questionnaire.

- 1) Place of Birth and early education.
- 2) How you entered into the field of journalism?
- 3) How you got in touch with Chandrakant Keni?
- 4) How you joined the Marathi daily *Rashtramat*?
- 5) Who encouraged you to write for the daily?
- 6) Do you think *Bramhastra* had an impact on the people of Goa?
- 7) How was the environment in Goa during the time of Opinion Poll of 1967?
- 8) Difficulties faced by you while writing a daily column, *Bramhastra*.
- 9) What was your contribution to Konkani Language Agitation?
- 10) Do you think *Rashtramat* daily was successful in its motive?

जनमत कौलाच्या विजयात
राष्ट्रमतचा वाटा सिंहाचा

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जुन्या इमारतींत दडलाय
सध्दमतचा खजिना?

याद महानायकच



श. राजवर्धन चौधरी
जयपुरी