

OBJECTS, SCENTS AND TASTES FROM A DISTANT HOME: GOAN LIFE EXPERIENCES IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Objects, Scents and Tastes from a Distant Home: Goan Life Experiences in Africa

This paper reviews part of the outcome of a research project based on the life narratives of a group of Goan Brahmin families with a common past: a long life experience in colonial Mozambique, followed by a forced exodus to Portugal after its independence. The families' life experiences were explored via the discussion of their past homes, their material culture and domestic consumption practices, which proved to be a positive contribution to revealing significant features of their position in the former colonial system.

KEY WORDS: materiality, home, migration, colonialism, Goa

IZVLEČEK

Predmeti, vonjave in okusi daljnega doma: gojevske življenjske izkušnje v Afriki

Članek prinaša del rezultatov raziskovalnega projekta, ki je temeljil na življenjskih zgodbah skupine brahminskih družin iz Goe. Družine imajo podobno preteklost: dolgoročno življenjsko izkušnjo v kolonialnem Mozambiku, ki ji je sledila prisilna množična selitev na Portugalsko po razglasitvi neodvisnosti. Življenjske izkušnje družin so bile preučevane skozi pogovore o njihovih domovih, materialni kulturi in potrošniškimi praksami v zvezi z domom, kar je pripomoglo k razumevanju pomembnih značilnosti njihovega položaja v bivšem kolonialnem sistemu.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: materialnost, dom, migracija, kolonializem, Goa

This paper reviews part of the outcome of a PhD research project based on the life narratives of a group of Goan Brahmin families converted to Catholicism with a common past: a long, intergenerational life experience in colonial Mozambique, followed by a forced exodus to Portugal during the country's independence process. The characterization of their "African experience", a particularly significant period in the families' transcontinental trajectories, will be explored through the discussion of their past mate-

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rial culture and domestic consumption practices. Focused particularly on the objects and consumption practices that travelled with the families from Goa and on the new ones introduced in Mozambique, this option proved to be a positive and expressive contribution to characterise and reveal some of the most significant features of the families' migration experiences and positioning strategies in the former African colony as well as of their relations with Goa.

Material culture and consumption practices are a particularly visible research field within contemporary social sciences. Though not necessarily focused on past colonial contexts, there is a relatively large amount of recent ethnographic research consistently stressing the importance of things and their consumption in contemporary (trans)national and (trans)continental mobilities (Howes, Morley, 2000; Marcoux, 2001; Basu, 2008; Miller, 2008). According to these contributions, material culture and consumption practices should be addressed as a meaningful and expressive site for understanding existing social relations with others and with things, therefore validating the idea that people actively and strategically use objects to produce meaning, as well as to mark their social actions, positions and belongings. These theoretical assumptions were inspired by the foundational work of a group of authors who affirmed the existence of a significant relation between cultural contexts and consumption practices (Douglas & Isherwood 1979; Appadurai 1986; Miller 1987), exposed the relevance of consumption in identity (re)construction processes by equating them as specific materializations of those same processes (Bourdieu 1979; Appadurai 1986; Miller 1987) and acknowledged consumption as a set of practices that, beyond the acquisition of products and services, comprises processes of utilisation, reutilization and domestication of things according to the different contexts they enter (Appadurai 1986; Kopytoff 1986; Warde 1996; Miller 1987, 1998).

Though material culture and consumption clearly transcend the domestic realm, its significance to the study of contemporary materiality has also been particularly emphasized in recent works (Silverstone & Hirsch 1994; Gullestad 1995; Mackay 1997; Warde 1996; Miller 2001), especially in the ones focused in migratory settings and groups. According to these contributions, material culture and consumption practices "at home" emerge both as significant to the perception of the appropriations made of the world (Miller 2001) and, often, as (materialized) representations of that same world within the private domain of the house. Moreover, the home is also central to the depiction of the complex processes of evaluation and reordering that all migrations involve since it is, to a certain degree, less constrained by the new social context than the public sphere (Rapport & Dawson 1998).

Concerning this particular research project, the selection of the domestic space as the main site of inquiry has a double explanatory function. First, it acknowledges the home as a key consumption site by taking it as a privileged context for the expression of consumption practices and objects "transported" from the context of origin (Harbottle 1996; Morley 2000), the manifestation of sentiments of loss resulting from migration (Morley 2000; Marcoux 2001) and the management of past memories and relations (Miller 2008; Marcoux 2001). Second, it establishes the conditions necessary to locate the research at the level of "everyday practices" (Longhurst & Savage 1996; Mackay 1997). As the term

suggests, selecting “everyday” routines as the main site of discussion corresponds to a decision that privileges “regular” and “day to day” activities, as opposed to the “exceptional” and “unique” episodes of people’s lives. Furthermore, it allows us to direct our focus to the modalities used by the subjects to, in a critical and active way, interact, transform and appropriate the “things” in their homes, hence providing a useful frame for the stabilisation and integration of their everyday projects (Mackay 1997), the expression of their aspirations, projects and ideals (Clarke 2001) and the materialisation of the relations and memories of their past life experiences (Garvey 2001; Marcoux 2001).

The paper is organised in three sections. The first provides a brief descriptive summary of Goan colonial society and of the Goan elites’ migration movements towards Mozambique. The second is focused on the discourses about the families’ African homes, domestic routines and daily experiences. The last part highlights the most significant trends of the families’ domestic materiality and discusses its relevance as cultural tools and resources to the groups’ integration and positioning strategies within the colonial social structure.

THE COLONISATION OF GOA AND ITS IMPACTS ON MIGRATION

The Goan migration is best characterised as a long and complex process involving different motives, destinations and social groups. The first migrations occurred in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and resulted directly from the Portuguese colonial policies, especially the implementation of a forced and massive conversion to Catholicism that affected a significant part of the population.

These early movements included Hindus who mainly sought refuge and protection from the Portuguese religious intolerance in the neighbouring Indian territories, but were also escaping from the heavy tax system implemented in the colony. During the same period, there are also records of a small but interesting movement of migrants towards Portugal and its colonial territories in Africa and Brazil, by converted Catholic Goans.

The migration of the Goan elites who had converted to Catholicism became especially intense during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Since most were grounded in economic problems, these movements were strongly encouraged by the Portuguese authorities in Goa. The two main destinations were India (Bombay, Karachi and Calcutta) and Mozambique (Gracias 2000: 425). In the latter case, migration coincided with the beginning of the effective occupation of the African Portuguese territories, which needed human resources to expand their administrative structures (Thomaz 1998: 283; Sardo 2004: 101).

Even though there is a scarcity of historical literature regarding the long and intense Goan presence in Mozambique, it was possible to identify some particular aspects that, due to their relevance, were used as guidelines in the research. The first affirms the fact that the Goans, and especially the elite, who had converted to Catholicism, appeared to occupy a unique position in the colonial social structure, quite different from the positions

taken by other non-European social communities. The second aspect relates directly to the first, and gives notice of the fact that this particular position seemed to be understood by the other communities as resulting from the group's 'privileged relationship' with the colonial authorities (Bastos 2002: 62-63), caused by the 'cultural proximity' between them and the Portuguese. The third aspect acknowledges the fact that, despite the particularities mentioned, the dominant colonial group nevertheless perceived the Catholic Goans as 'other' (Bastos 2002; Zamparoni 2000). To better understand these features, as well as their importance to the depiction of the families' African life experience, we should start with a brief overview of some of the most relevant aspects of the Portuguese colonization of Goa.

When the Portuguese arrived in Goa they were confronted with a deeply organised social structure. Although a non-permanent Portuguese population governed the political, financial and military spheres, as a way of consolidating their colonial presence they had to adjust to a certain extent to the indigenous social organisation and seek cooperation with the local groups who controlled the internal relationships of power. For that reason, the Portuguese authorities looked for the support of local elites who, in turn, were also interested in maintaining their privileged positions. The collaboration between the two groups established the basis for a relational process that, although fixed by the first, was controlled by the two parts (Sardo 2004).

The implementation of a '*Portuguese way of life*' in Goa began in the sixteenth century with the opening of local Catholic seminaries and schools largely frequented by the local elites from the Brahmin and Chardó castes² who had converted to Catholicism, followed by the prohibition of Konkani, the Goan local language (Sardo 2004: 93-94). This strategy, aimed at first at the formation of local civil servants, allowed some members of the local elites to achieve prestigious social positions in medicine, law and teaching. Additionally, other measures were taken to reinforce contact between the two communities. Many members of the Goan Catholic elite changed their original family names for Portuguese ones (usually the family name of their christening parents) and Portuguese elements were integrated into Goan music, poetry, food and dress codes (the sari went out of use) as ways of stating their embracement of a '*western lifestyle*' (Thomaz 1998: 272).

These "proximity" policies resulted in a complex cultural matrix formed by a plurality of social categories that, by the middle of the nineteenth century, stabilised in three social groups: the '*Goeses*' (individuals of Goan origin, regardless their religion) the '*Descendentes*' (individuals of Portuguese descent who were born in Goa) and the '*Portugueses*' (individuals who were born in Portugal and tended to return to Portugal after some period of time in Goa). In addition, within the '*Goeses*' group, both among Hindus and Catholic converts, the caste system of stratification was maintained.

² According to Sardo (2004: 82) the term caste was introduced in Goa by the Portuguese as a synonym of *jati* and not *varna*. *Jati* designates social groups based on kinship, marriage and food practices. *Varna* corresponds to four key social tasks (services, royalty, commerce and religion). Since it matches the meaning the families attributed to it, the use of this particular concept during the paper corresponds to this definition.

THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE: MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

As stated above, the major migration fluxes to Mozambique took place during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Although the majority of migrants were Catholic converted Goans from various castes, these movements also included Hindus and ‘*Descendentes*’. The social diversity of these migration movements played an important part in the strategies developed by the Goan Catholic elite in the new context and is crucial to understand why it is not possible to think of the ‘*Goans from Mozambique*’ as a unified homogenous community. Briefly, it is possible to say that the position occupied by the Catholic Brahmins in colonial Mozambique was marked by two original features: first, their professional and educational skills were, from the colonial power point of view, a surplus value due to the lack of qualified people in the territory; secondly, their familiarity with the Portuguese culture allowed the group to develop a particular relationship with the Portuguese colonial elite, especially when compared with the positions occupied by all other non-European groups, including other South-Asian ones.

The fact that these migrants were Catholic, spoke the official colonial language, adopted Portuguese family names, and were familiar with and incorporated many Portuguese cultural habits clearly influenced their evaluation by the colonial power, therefore establishing the conditions for a different relational process between the two. Nevertheless, and even though this brief outline suggests the existence of objective conditions towards a successful ‘integration’ in Mozambique, there are other accounts that portray a different picture. To observe them more accurately it is necessary to turn to the families’ discourses about ‘*their lives in Africa*’.

The first and more dominant idea that stands out of all the families’ general statements is that the Catholic Brahmins in Mozambique lived a life very similar to the Portuguese:

We lived in a very good neighbourhood and had a very nice relationship with our [Portuguese] neighbours. Our lifestyles were almost the same. You know, we Goans had a western upbringing [...]. We are educated people, with a certain poise.

The similarities with the ‘*Portuguese way of life*’ are confirmed by all families as a way of illustrating that they were not submitted, like the other non-European migrant groups, to a social policy of exclusion³ by the colonial authorities. However, the idea of

³ Although a formal policy of “space segregation” did not exist in Mozambique, the various ethnic communities occupied specific and visible marked territorial spaces in the colonial cities and towns. According to Henriques, the urban organization policy followed by the colonial authorities established “*white zones*” (Henriques 1999: 262) that were off limits to the African population and to the majority of the other non-European inhabitants. As a result of this informal policy the African population was pushed to the peripheries and the other communities (Chinese and Indian were the largest ones) submitted to a “*racial hierarchy that resulted in a physical and spatial separation of bodies*” (Zamparoni 1999: 193).

‘belonging’ to the same social networks of the Portuguese is somehow absent from the discourses. In a very restrained manner, the Goan Catholic elite chooses to describe their experience in Mozambique without clearly mentioning that, although not directly affected by formal mechanisms of exclusion, there was a plurality of informal subordinating rules in the Portuguese colonies that affected their lives too. The sentence, “*We, the Goans, were neither ‘water nor wine.’*” proffered by one of the informants seems to summarise the ambiguity of their position in the social structure of the colony. If the proximity to the Portuguese elites in Goa was ‘*from the identity point of view, an evidence*’ (Sardo, 2004: 104) resulting in a difficulty in identifying and systematizing the ‘*uniqueness and unity of Goanidade*’ (Sardo, 2004: 109), how should we characterize their African experience from this particular point of view? And how does the analysis and discussion of the material culture and domestic consumption practices contribute to understanding its complexities and singularities?

DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION

The discourses gathered on the subject of material culture and domestic consumption practices in Mozambique produced an enormous amount of information that was systematized and gathered into three encompassing categories: interior decoration options (furniture and all decorative domestic objects), food preparation and consumption, and a limited set of specific artistic consumption options (literature, music, and fine arts). Such divisions served only methodological purposes since they worked as a means to organise an extremely varied set of data that needed to be classified in order to be analysed and must not be interpreted as a sign of the existence of specific results or particular features in any of them. Nevertheless, due to methodological contingencies, the option of maintaining this analytical division in the paper was taken.

INTERIOR DECORATION OPTIONS: FURNITURE AND DECORATIVE OBJECTS

The most relevant aspect of the families’ decorative options in Mozambique is perhaps the fact that it denotes the same kind of ambivalence and mimesis that can be found in the descriptions of their social position in the colonial social structure. At first, the families suggested the existence of a specific Catholic Brahmin “*habitus*” (Bourdieu, 1979) resulting from the intersection of two main cultural references: their strong linkage to the Portuguese “*ways of living*” and the maintenance of some of the most valuable and distinctive features of their Goan cultural heritage. Vaguely expressed when talking about the Mozambican colonial society, this attribute is made particularly clear in statements regarding the decoration styles and the origins of the objects present in their homes:

My parents' home looked like a European home. There were almost no influences from Goa [...]. We did not inherit any Goan objects.

My parents owned and used almost exclusively Goan objects, especially furniture. [...] This option for Goan furniture was not out of necessity, but because they treasured it. These objects had been in the family for many generations.

These examples illustrate the main positions expressed by the families. If in some of the homes Goan furniture and decorative objects were clearly dominant, in the majority of them the leading style was "European" and most of the objects were acquired in Mozambique. Regardless of the prevailing decorative trend, this fact entails two significant assumptions on the subject of the families' consumption practices. The first calls the attention to the fact that none of the families' homes were either exclusively decorated with objects from Goan or European styles, and the presence of objects of both origins and/or designs in the same domestic context established an original and significant trend that made perfect sense to all the families. The second translates the inexistence of a divergent evaluation of the two sets of objects. The fact that the families unanimously stated the existence of a resemblance between their homes and the homes of the Europeans to illustrate their particular position in the colonial social structure should not be necessarily interpreted as a sign of devaluation of their heritage. An explanation provided by one of the subjects for the apparent Goan "appetence" for objects of occidental design clearly reinforces this image:

In Mozambique there were some homes with lots of Goan furniture. But this was not very usual. You know why? When people migrated from Goa, the majority did not travel with their families. Young single men arrived first, and only when they could provide for a family, they asked their families to find them a Goan wife and send her to Mozambique. Usually these young men were the youngest sons of large families. They were not entitled to any of the families' patrimony. The big family house as well as all its valuable contents remained in Goa, usually for the oldest son to inherit. These young men arrived in Mozambique with a small suitcase.

Besides these considerations, the subjects' discourses about home decoration present one more relevant aspect directly related to a different set of objects, described by the families as "*objects of African origin and design*". Its most relevant aspect views the presence of these sorts of objects as highly restrictive:

There were not many African objects in my parents' home. They were so ordinary that we did not look at them twice. They were not valued. Everybody had one or two things like dark wood lamps or boxes. It was also common to find objects made of ivory in our homes. My parents did not have any, but it was common.

Though this example doesn't prove the existence of an obvious devaluation of African

objects, the fact is that the latter formed a different category of things that, particularly when compared to the previous two, is obviously seen as inferior by most of the subjects. This position would partially be subjected to a re-evaluation process during the last years of their lives in Africa, especially with regard to the work of some Mozambican artists who had begun to be internationally recognized by then. Even so, it is important to say that there were never statements that mentioned the existence of a dominant decorative ‘African style’.

After this overall picture of the general decorative policies of the home, it is necessary to focus the attention in the families’ discourses about specific objects. Again, the first relevant feature indicates the existence of a dominant discourse very similar to the one employed when describing their home decoration preferences. Most families clearly mention their inclination for “classical objects” of European design. This wide-ranging formula is used to describe most of the objects bought in the colony, such as furniture, china, tapestries or decorative pieces. However, their discourses change considerably when describing their objects from Goa. The statements become more precise, different sets of objects are portrayed in specific manners and their biographies carefully explained. Of all the objects included in this category, the most frequently mentioned and valued ones are: Indo-Portuguese chairs, wood boxes and an array of objects directly related with the practice of Catholicism, such as images, sculptures and oratories.

Despite the apparent lack of interest in home furnishings and decoration that some of the subjects’ remarks on this matter tend to indicate, all of them managed to express the significance of at least one object that had the ability to objectify its family’s African life experience. Significantly, most of these objects are ones that also materialized and, therefore, established directly or indirectly their relations with Goa.

FOOD

Food is a central field to the examination of the families’ relations with their past and present domestic contexts. Contrasting with some of the vague statements gathered on the subject of decorative options, food preparation and consumption are intensely mentioned and described in detail by both male and female subjects, which in itself serves to indicate its significance.

Characterized as “*rich and varied*”, Goan cuisine occupied a privileged position both at ordinary daily family meals and on festive occasions and, though the data also includes some references to the preparation of “*Portuguese traditional meals*”, was clearly cherished when compared with ordinary Portuguese food. One of the most illustrative examples of this tendency resides in the fact that many of the Portuguese cooking traditions learned by the families were profoundly modified. These creative processes of appropriation resulted from the addition of new spices and specific ingredients like fruits and vegetables from Goa, and had the objective of “*adapting the Portuguese food to our taste*”. The second

especially relevant aspect regarding food is Goan traditions' privileged position at informal reunions and formal festive events, including the festivities of the Catholic calendar.

On festive occasions it was impossible not to prepare exclusively Goan food. We learned how to prepare it from our mothers, sisters and friends. And then we taught our African servants how to cook them so they could help us. We always had Goan traditional food. It was mandatory. And, you know, our gastronomic traditions are vast and very sophisticated!

We had curry every Sunday. It was a tradition. The other groups [European and African] cook curry on Sundays too. They copied us! It was also common to cook other typical Goan food like Sarapatel or Xacuti.

Even though all families are perfectly aware that the "Goan gastronomic patrimony" had been influenced by the long Portuguese presence in the territory, this fact is not, as in other matters, interpreted as a threat to its originality and uniqueness. The ambivalence of the statements regarding home decorative options is clearly replaced by direct references to "our" culture. This originality is not only patent in the designation – "*our cultural patrimony*", but also by mentioning that all the other groups shared the same opinion since they intensely imitated and appropriated the "tradition of Sunday curry", including the colonial elites. This claim tends to reinforce the idea that, when compared with other themes, this field of domestic consumption practices comprises original features, since the appropriation of "*Portuguese consumption practices*" is evidently less treasured than the reproduction of their "*original patrimony*".

The third relevant feature on the topic of food is related to the dominant representations about the eating habits of the other groups living in colony. Again, African food is negatively valued and the majority of the families do not reveal the slightest curiosity or knowledge about it. The only positive records obtained on this particular topic refer to the existence of a vast number of fruits like mango, papaya and passion-fruit that were described as very tasty and of very good quality.

The first time I ate Matapa (a stew made with pumpkin leaves) was only after the independence. Before that we would not try it. Our (African) servants, the ones that lived in our homes, ate corn flour. Usually they boiled the flour in water and then made small breads with it. Then they dipped them in the curry and ate them. Well, that was not proper curry, it was more like a fish soup but they called it their curry [...].

FINE ARTS, MUSIC AND LITERATURE

The families' descriptions of their artistic consumption practices in Africa reflect a general principle: a positive evaluation of the restricted occidental productions circulating in the colonial market, as well as of those brought from Goa. In both cases, most of

the authors are Portuguese or had a Portuguese background. All families mentioned the existence of a substantial library and music collection in their homes, given that both artistic expressions, and particularly Portuguese literature, were considered fundamental cultural fields in the education of the younger generations:

Our parents really insisted that we should read the most important texts of Portuguese literature. [...] Our upbringing was very “Portuguese”. We have a very classical background. My father loved poetry and all of us knew hundreds of poems.

Music consumption patterns are quite similar to the ones regarding literature except for one special feature. In addition to their interest in European classical music, all families confirm the existence of a very strong relation to Goan music. Like literature, music was also a significant subject in these families’ educational project, so all subjects attended music lessons. As a result of that, a significant number of Goan musical groups were formed. Besides playing in public, most families mentioned that their musical groups used to also play and sing at every formal and informal event held at their home. The music performed at parties was considered one of its key components and usually included European and Goan compositions. Again, and partially contradicting their statements about having a very “*Portuguese upbringing*”, the families picture their relation with their origins as a far more complex process than the general dominant discourse articulated when describing their daily lifestyle in the colony.

I have known Goan music since I was a child. My father was very musical and he used to play in a large band in Beira. Besides that, he formed a small music group that used to play Goan music. At every special party they played the *mandó* and everybody used to sing and dance. I grew up with that music.

One last significant topic regarding this matter concerns the African artistic production. Once more, the dominant discourse clearly illustrates the existence of a distanced relationship between these families and the African population, resulting in a profound lack of knowledge about the generality of their artistic productions. The only relevant observations made about the subject refer to small decorative sculptures and traditional paintings that African artists used to sell on the streets and that the families hardly considered art. Reinforcing their testimonies about their lack of contact and knowledge regarding African objects and food, the families once more affirm their preference and proximity to the dominant colonial logic, except for the specific Goan productions mentioned.

FINAL REMARKS

How did the analysis of the families’ discourses about their “African homes” con-

tributed to the understanding of their lives in colonial Mozambique? To summarise, there are three general topics that emerge from the aspects discussed.

The first points to the existence of a relative continuity between the modalities used by the families to describe their positions and integration strategies in Mozambican society and their daily domestic routines and consumption practices. The “proximity to the Portuguese” and the reproduction of a “Portuguese way of life” are two of the most significant aspects regarding the characterisation of their past African experiences. However, and despite the visibility of this juxtaposition, the analysis of the material culture and domestic consumption practices helped to understand that this dominant feature was complemented with the maintenance and positive use of a significantly diverse set of Goan items and consumption practices such as decorative objects, food and music.

The families’ connections to Goa gained expression and significance by means of a plurality of domestic practices that also constitute a relevant source for the understanding of the Catholic Brahmin position in Mozambican society. While calling our attention to the relevance of the more private and ordinary dimensions of everyday life routines in the study of migration processes (Harbottle 1996; Morley 2000; Petridou 2001), this particular feature provided a better understanding of the families’ relationship with their origins while reflecting the specificities that marked their Mozambican colonial experience. As in most contexts, the domestic spaces in question were less subjected than the public sphere to the Portuguese colonial formal and informal mechanisms of control and, perhaps for that reason, the families choose them to display their *goanidade* in a more open fashion.

The second relevant topic is closely related to the first and calls the attention to the formulas used in mentioning the appropriation of new domestic practices. Although most of the subjects made reference of their interest in the preservation of objects and maintenance of consumption practices directly associated with Goa, a valorisation of the “Portuguese patrimony” also prevails. Always relevant, the “Portuguese influences” became especially significant in matters like the location of the houses (neighbourhood), decorative options and literature consumption, and objectify the ambivalences present in the subjects’ identity discourses.

The fact that the families choose to start their testimonies by stressing that their homes could be easily taken for a Portuguese home is particularly significant. However, it becomes even more relevant if we compare it with the main statements gathered about the other groups living in the colony. As mentioned before, the families didn’t demonstrate any particular interest in African objects, food or art. This apparent lack of contact with African expressive productions can also be found regarding most of the other non-European groups, especially those that, like the Goans, came from the Indian sub-continent. Like the majority of the Europeans living in the colony, Catholic Brahmin families tended to establish a clear division between themselves and all others except the colonial elites. This was particularly significant concerning the other Indian migrants. The fear of being “*confused with an Indian*” was taken seriously and their domestic consumption practices

materialized it by avoiding any integration of non-Goan or non-European elements and by being particularly careful in the display of their links to their origins.

The family homes and domestic consumption practices played a significant part in the affirmation and confirmation of their dominant position in the colony. Closeness to the “Portuguese way of living” was reinforced via a strategic process of corroboration and naturalization of a Portuguese domesticity (Glover 2004) that, even though integrating relevant elements described by the subjects as “Goan practices”, translated and contributed to their main objective: the public display of a “proper Portuguese home” in Africa.

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POVZETEK

PREDMETI, VONJAVE IN OKUSI DALJNEGA DOMA: GOJEVSKE ŽIVLJENJSKE IZKUŠNJE V AFRIKI

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Članek predstavi del rezultatov raziskovalnega projekta, ki je bil usmerjen na življenjske zgodbe skupine gojevskih brahminskih družin, ki so se spreobrile v katolicizem, s skupno biografsko preteklostjo: inter-generacijsko življenjsko izkušnjo v Mozambiku med kolonialnim obdobjem, ki ji je sledila prisilna migracija na Portugalsko po razglasitvi mozambiške neodvisnosti. Teoretično je raziskava temeljila na pristopu, ki zagovarja integracijo in prispevanje raziskav materialne kulture in potrošniških praks k opisom in razpravam o migracijskih procesih. Če domnevamo, da vse migracije predstavljajo specifične vrste mobilnosti, ki jih zaznamujejo procesi deintegracije in ponovne integracije, in ki so raznoliki in mnogovrstni v njihovih manifestacijah, je glavni namen tega članka oceniti in razpravljati, kako so objekti in potrošniške prakse v zvezi z domom bili uporabljeni za produkcijo integracijskih strategij, družbenih položajev in življenjskih izkušenj družin v njihovem prejšnjem kontekstu pripadnosti, in torej ustvarjajo pomembna izrazna področja za priznavanje njihove posebnosti in podobnosti z drugimi migracijskimi procesi znotraj portugalskega kolonialnega okvirja.

Kljub temu, da se članek osredotoča zlasti na izkušnje afriškega kolonialnega življenja

družin, so bile potrošniške prakse znotraj doma analizirane s stališča trojnega posredovanja: njihovega sedanjega kulturnega konteksta integracije (Portugalska), njihovega deljenega skupnega kulturnega konteksta (kolonialni Mozambik) in njihovega preteklega kulturnega konteksta izvora (Goa). Tak pristop omogoča nastanek tako edinstvenosti kot podobnosti družinskih »afriških spominov« o njihovi skupni preteklosti z današnje perspektive.