

*«In Mozambique,
we didn't have apartheid».*

**Identity constructions
on inter-ethnic relations during the
«Third Portuguese Empire»**

Susana Pereira Bastos

Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, UNL, Lisboa

«Em Moçambique não tivemos apartheid». Construções identitárias e relações inter-étnicas durante o «Terceiro Império Português»

Partindo de um corpus de memórias produzidas por Hindus de origem indiana que viveram em Moçambique nas últimas décadas da administração colonial portuguesa, nomeadamente àcerca das relações que estabeleciam com o Estado colonial e com os colonos portugueses em geral, com a população africana e com outros grupos de origem indiana, o artigo procura contribuir para uma área de pesquisa escassamente trabalhada, o estudo das produções identitárias sobre as relações inter-raciais e inter-étnicas em Moçambique durante o período colonial. A análise das construções imaginadas dos Hindus de origem indiana revela que as suas experiências identitárias actuais interagem com as memórias coloniais e que as suas reinterpretações do passado colonial continuam a constituir uma importante fonte de argumentos no manejo pós-colonial das dinâmicas de poder em que se encontram envolvidos.

«In Mozambique, we didn't have apartheid». Identity constructions on inter-ethnic relations during the «Third Portuguese Empire»

Based on a series of memories of Hindu Indians who lived in Mozambique in the last decades of the Portuguese colonial administration, regarding the relations they established with a triple «other» – the colonial State and the Portuguese, the indigenous population and other groups of Indians –, the present article is an attempt to contribute to an area that has received virtually no attention, that of the study of identity productions relating to inter-ethnic and inter-racial relations in Mozambique in the colonial period. The analysis of the imagined constructions of Hindu Indians reveals that present identity experiences interact with the colonial memory and that interpretations of the past are a strong source of imaginary material for the postcolonial construction of power dynamics.

1. Introduction

Present historical investigation reveals that the Indian presence during the establishment and consolidation of the Portuguese colonial system in Mozambique is among the least-studied domains in the social and economic history of Mozambique (Pereira Leite, 2001, p. 15). Moreover, with the exception of Zamparoni's (2000) work, the analysis of the interactions among the various diasporic groups of Indian origin that had settled in Mozambique (Hindus, Sunni Muslims, Khoja-Ismaïlis and Goanese), and between these groups, the Colonial State and the white settlers, and the native population, has not been the subject of any systematic investigation on the part of historians and / or anthropologists. The difficulties of accessibility and use of available written sources may partially justify this want. However, another valid hypothesis is that this (ethnographic and theoretical) «invisibility» is related to variables that are internal to the subject of study itself, in particular to the elaboration, on the part of the various diasporic groups present in Mozambique, of cultural strategies of invisibilization (Cohen, 1971; 1981), not unlike those repeatedly observed in many trading middleman minorities.

First introduced by Howard Becker in the 1940s, used since the 1960s in multiple research projects on economic development, trading minorities, and inter-ethnic tensions in Africa and Asia (Shibutani & Kwan, 1965; Blalock, 1967; Schermerhorn, 1970; etc.) and recently theorized within the framework of wider approaches to trading diasporas (Bonacich, 1973; Cohen, 1971; 1981), the concept of middleman minority offers a framework of hypotheses that applies to the analysis of interactions between middleman ethnic groups, elites, and the remaining local populations. Among these, we would like to single out the following:

i)- the position of «foreigner» usually attributed to the middleman ethnic minority, by both the elites in charge and the majority of the population, through the recourse to ethnic markers (religion, race, language, previous social status, etc.);

ii)- the economically advantageous use of the «foreigner» status on the part of the middleman minority, since ethnic difference permits a devaluation of the demands for reciprocity with members of different ethnic groups, and therefore allows a greater objectivity to be applied in economic decisions and transactions;

iii)- the paradoxical nature of the «foreigner», an opportunist who is not to be trusted, but at the same time someone who extends credit, treats illnesses, and acts as a confidante (of microfamiliar secrets, rivalries, and local conflicts, etc.);

iv)- the ambivalent relationships which the elites in power usually establish with ethnic middleman minorities, granting them protection when they may have political, economic and social advantages to offer in exchange (as concessionaires, tax col-

* «Third Portuguese Empire» in the title is a reference to the Portuguese modern African Empire which lasted from the second half of the 19th century to 1974 (see CLARENCE-SMITH, 1985).

lectors, moneylenders, etc.), while using them as scapegoats in times of crisis, exacerbation of nationalism, etc.

Despite the fact that the fieldwork we have been carrying out with Hindu Indians who lived in Mozambique during the last decades of Portuguese colonial administration does validate a number of the aforementioned hypotheses, it also leads to a reconsideration of the position of the «foreigner» disaffected and strictly opportunistic. While Hindus did take advantage of the natives» ignorance regarding commercial transactions, a significant percentage of the memories we recorded does emphasize, rather, an almost obsessive preoccupation, on the part of the common Hindu, with the observance of certain minimal requirements of reciprocity towards the «other», as testified by many examples of Hindus who were the confidantes, friends, moneylenders, keepers of savings and even accomplices (in certain «forbidden matters») of the native population.

A rejection of mercantile objectivity and opportunism, transgressive of the basic rules of reciprocity, also structures the most emotional memories on the interaction of Hindus with colonial elites and with the «white» settlers. Hindus were discriminated, and felt, with more intensity than the other groups of Indians in Mozambique, the ambivalence of governmental elites towards their presence. Despite this, many Hindus identify themselves with a relationship pattern that is attributed to a segment of the Portuguese population, within which the processes of familiarization of the «other» (client, employee, employer, neighbour, etc.) and interpersonal relations based on good faith and mutual confidence are greatly valued.

The Hindu sensitivity to the needs for reciprocity to the «other» was inspired by a series of typically Hindu propositions regarding the porous and influent nature of the relationship self/other, and amplified by the intersubjective processes which were established in the bush and/or in urban settings, between Hindus and natives, and between the former and certain segments of the «white» population. As we will see, it is also constructed as an identity gain in the comparison with other Indians, of Muslim religion, living in the colony.

The memories that we will analyse¹ are to be interpreted as narratives of identity. That is, as productions that are organized on the basis of (selective and repeatedly changeable) combinations of events of the distant and recent past, and even of the present (Pina Cabral, 2002), whose aim is the protection of the self-image of those who produce them within their identity groups, and, simultaneously, the positive construction of their identity groups within the context of (international national, local, interethnic, etc.) relations in the past and/or in the present. In other words,

¹ This analysis is the result of a multi-situed ethnography carried in Maputo, London and Lisbon in the nineties. In Lisbon and Maputo we have selected around 40 informants, born before 1960, belonging to different castes and socio-economical status. On the other hand, in London, we have sought a sample of interviewees which was representative of the Portuguese Hindu population. Therefore, we carried out 20 interviews with Hindus born after 1960, belonging mainly to castes from Diu, whom have migrated to London either directly from Mozambique or from Portugal.

these narratives do not merely alter the perception of past experiences; they also attempt, based on a reconstruction of the past, to reinterpret present identity dynamics and geometries in which their producers take part. This is the reason why we attempted to widen the relational context of interpretation of the memories we analysed, extending it, where possible, to the present.

2. «*Kanji did not show himself, but left signs...*»: ambivalent representations of hybridity.

Contemporary historical research demonstrates how, since the late seventeenth century, trade in the North of Mozambique was mainly carried out by traders from Diu². Following the creation of the Company of Banyans of Diu in 1686, they had made the Ilha de Moçambique their base. We also know that, beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century, a significant part of the Hindu population active in commerce moved to the South of Mozambique, in particular to the provinces of Inhanbane and Lourenço Marques. The migration of Hindus of various castes from Diu to these same regions also increased substantially, in particular after the implementation of the Liberal regime in Portugal in 1820 (Pereira Leite, 2001).

Additionally, in the late nineteenth century, the changes in the economies of the neighbouring British and Boer territories and the implementation of legislation restricting Indian settlement in Natal, especially in the Transvaal, while Portuguese policies considered the presence of Indians indispensable to the economic development of Mozambique, influenced the arrival of groups of British Indians (Pereira Leite, 2001), in particular of Gujarati Hindus, the majority of which originated from Porbandar, Rajkot and Surat.

The main strategies for the professional insertion in the Mozambican context for this group lay in trade, both the *cantineiro* trade between the interior regions and urban centres³ and – especially for those who arrived in the 1930s – investment in traditional commerce, while the castes of Diu masons mostly became employed in the construction industry⁴. However, a small number of families took advantage of the economic boom of the 1960s to expand their activities to the industrial sector. At the same time, a number of subgroups invested in the secondary and university education of the youngest generations, thus laying the foundations for a diversification of professional opportunities.

² Diu, in the Gulf of Cambay, adjacent to the Saurashtra Peninsula, was a Portuguese possession for 450 years. Following the Operation Vijay in December 1961, it was considered a Separate Union Territory.

³ The business of the *cantineiro* included the acquisition and transport of various types of produce («peanuts, cashews, cotton, corn», etc.) harvested by the natives to the towns. *Cantineiros* also sold *capulanas* – the traditional cloth – and other textiles, basic foodstuffs, the «colonial wine» and other basic goods («kerosene, pots and pans, hammers, nails, knives, etc.») provided by merchants in the cities.

⁴ Despite the frequency of professional mobility from masons to traders, there was a important class stratification within the Hindu Community.

Whether they opted for new migratory projects after the decolonization process, or they remained in Mozambique, the identity narratives that centre upon interethnic relations during the colonial period always refer to a first phase of insertion, when sexual relationships between Hindu Gujarati men and local women (adhering to traditional religions or Islam) were very frequent, and resulted in the birth of descendants who were known as «*mistos*» [mixed] or «*mestiços*» [half-breeds]. However, only exceptionally the offspring of these relationships were integrated in the Hindu religion. Even in those cases in which the relationship was maintained, these children usually were integrated in the mother's family and mostly grew up as Muslims. As is often stressed by our informants, the situation of those who grow up «between two influences, that of the father and that of the mother», or those who end up «being neither one thing nor the other» is usually repulsive to the average Hindu.

However, to this conceptualization of «*mestiçagem*» [mixing of races] as a non-defined production is opposed another that, on the contrary, values the potentiating hybridism (Ashcroft, 1998) of the first Hindus that settled on Mozambican territory. In fact, according to the following narrative (which is presented as historical), the first Hindus to land in Delagoa Bay are symbolically seen as «children», transformed from the point of view of identity by the crossing of the *kali pani* (the Indian Ocean). After they stand for an indifferentiating *communitas* (Turner, 1969), they are reborn with new communicational powers, that is, as the owners of a double identity and linguistic conscience (ambiguous, contradictory, ironic, etc.) which is put to the service of the natives (who are imprisoned by intermediaries who in turn sold them to the French, Portuguese or other foreigners as slave labourers to be exported to Brazil or other overseas colonies) and of Gujarati Indians (who enrich themselves with the gold they seized from the natives).

«This happened long before the Portuguese reached Delagoa Bay. (...) Kanji lived in Gujarat, in the times of a great plague (...). He escaped to sea, and boarded a small sailboat. He was so tired that he lost his senses. When he came to, he was very thirsty and drank sea water. You must never drink sea water, those who drink it do not know who they are anymore, they become confused and lose their memory. Meanwhile, a boat of baneanos [banyans] from Diu who were sailing to Mozambique found the small boat. The crew saved the boy and left him in Delagoa Bay. Kanji began living in the bush. In those times, there only was Downtown, all the rest of Lourenço Marques [now Maputo] was bush. Kanji lived as the Africans did, spoke their language, helped them. In those times, there were men who hunted Africans to sell them as slaves. He saved them, by leaving signs that only they could understand. He also helped the Indians who went into the bush to look for ivory and gold to send back to India. Kanji did not show himself, but he left signs ...» (Brahman, businessman, Maputo).

Despite being projected into a remote past, the transforming power of Kanji's linguistic bivocality (Bakhtin, 1968) emerges as a significant symbolic-identitarian

resource within the complex puzzle of intersubjectivities that is currently experienced in Mozambique. In a context where «Indians» are generally represented as hyperendogamic in marriage, death and culture in general (Serra, 2000) – «they don't marry blacks», «they have their own cemeteries», and «they don't teach their language» – the valorisation of a primordial hero, hybrid but creative, seems to reveal that certain segments of the Hindu population partially question closure, «purity», even hierarchisation itself, of cultures. It is indeed significant that this construction of the past happens at the same time as the proliferation (among the youngest Maputo Hindus) of identity statements such as «now, all of us, we are more or less mulattoes» (without necessarily also being *mestiços*).

The coexistence of two linguistic consciences and identity economies that Kanji symbolizes acquires visibility (despite the arrival of the «Hindu ladies» – depositaries of group identity and limits) in other narratives on the Hindu experience in Mozambican territory «in the time of the Portuguese».

3. Reinterpreting the Indian/African relation

3.1 Advantages and dangers of inter-ethnic arrogance

The characterization of inter-racial relations in colonial Mozambique includes statements on the part of Hindus that «*the black man* [unlike the «mulatto», whose position and social status depend on many variables, in particular their level of education and «assimilation»] *was discriminated by all social strata. Then came the Indians, who occupied the central stratum, whether they were Hindu, Mohammedans or Khojas [Ismailis]. But there was no equality between them and the whites*»⁵.

Without denying that «*Indians also discriminated blacks*» many Hindu informants stress that «*Hindus treated them differently, in comparison, they were less arrogant*»⁶. Moreover, they usually construct this «lesser arrogance» as a «marketing» strategy, in order to obtain commercial advantages given the ever-increasing competition, and/or as a reaction to the situation of insecurity in which they lived, in particular after they were selected as scapegoats for the humiliation suffered by the elites of the government headed by Salazar when the Portuguese Indian territories were lost.

«*Black clients asked to take everything off the shelves, and ended up buying nothing. And the Indian shopkeeper was more patient, took everything out, put everything back, because he wanted to win clients. Many also gave credit and even bartered things. The white shopkeeper, Portuguese, had no patience. That is why the majority of blacks preferred to buy in Indian shops. Also, some white insulted, called names, scolded and beat his black employees. Indians rarely did that. And you know why? Because they were afraid of being expelled*» (judicial consultant, of *fudamiá* caste, Maputo).

⁵ Businessman, *lohana* caste, Lisbon. This memory is shared by the majority of our informants.

⁶ Economist, *vanja* caste, Maputo.

«The treatment also varied according to the social status and educational qualifications of the black man. For example, if he was a régulo or a nduma⁷ the Hindu treated him differently, gave him a marketing treatment, because Hindus always placed their commercial interests first. (...). Since some tribal chiefs and régulos influenced the natives under their jurisdiction, they could direct them towards the cantina of a certain Indian and drive them away from the cantina of another shopkeeper» (businessman, of surti caste, Maputo).

However, other narratives reveal that the main reason why many Hindus avoided disqualifying and/or humiliating excesses in their relation to the Africans are linked to the fact that the two shared a set of ontological postulates. In fact, and despite the reduction of «African religion» to ancestor worship, possession and magic, recorded memories also insist upon the fact that these «beliefs» also played an important role in the daily lives of Hindus who lived in Mozambique.

«My father's father when he arrived in the late 19th century had those Brahman attitudes, (...), for example, going through purification rituals after any black touched him. My father, however, dropped that. He did no purification, no separation. (...). Beneath that tree there, that was where they carried out their mhambas [ancestor rituals], and here, beneath this pipero [sacred fig tree] was where mother poured milk and water for our ancestors» (businessman, of brahman caste, Maputo).

This does not mean, however, that the relations between Hindus and Africans were limited to the co-habitation, apparently non-conflictual (or non-hierarchical), of representations and practices, based on the mutual recognition of the importance of ancestor cults. As the last informant remarked:

«Towards the end of the day, the peasants warned us that the house where we would be living was full of spirits. It seems that in that area, in the past, there had lived an African who had killed a woman, and her spirit would not leave alone those who decided to live there. That is why the place was abandoned. For years my mother carried out hawans [Hindu rituals] to stop it, and she succeeded».

However the Africans may have used the ancestor cult as a strategy of symbolic resistance against the Indians who came to live in the *sertão* [wilderness], the quotation above does confirm that communication was enhanced, and since the very first encounter, by the fact that the two interlocutors shared the same ontological postulates: that a relation of continuity and communication exists between the living and the dead, and that those who pass away (in particular when they suffer a *bad* death) turn into powerful agents who may cause discontentments and various misfortunes to the living, independently of their race and religion.

In numerous other occasions, the interaction was initiated by the Hindus. Seeking a solution to personal crises, «many Indians went to a healer», «asked him to see, in shells, in little bones», «to know why something bad happened to them. He begins trembling too, mov-

⁷ Since 1896, the Portuguese divided the region in a number of districts and localities. They appointed Portuguese regional and local administrators, and selected a number of Africans as régulos and ndumas (often selected without any reference to the traditional chiefs of the area).

ing this and that way, it is no longer him, it is someone else speaking. It is like the *mataji*»⁸. Projective recognition allows the establishment of a performative and structural identification (Bateson, 1936) between the African healer or diviner, and the Hindu *mataji*; moreover, the specifically Hindu conceptualization of the instability of identity of beings and of the permeability of their limits (Assayag & Tarabout, 1999), according to which any being may influence and be influenced by another being (of the same and/or a different category) makes it possible, as certain Hindu statements affirm, that the native healer may pronounce «the name of the *pitrus* [Hindu ancestors], saying that they are dissatisfied with something or other», or that «a black spirit» could «enter the body of an Indian to cause suffering».

That is, by admitting the possibility that Indian/Hindus may be possessed by Muslim, Catholic and even African spirits and/or deities, and at the same time the possibility that Hindu spirits and/or deities may manifest themselves in «whites» and «blacks», Hindu narratives do not merely reject the existence of a relation of discontinuity between past and present, between the space that is perceived by the senses and that which cannot be perceived, but they also insist in stating that the human alterity is a mere illusion (*maia*). According to the words of a Hindu man whose family came from Diu, but who was born and grew up in Beira (Mozambique), and is currently a businessman in London: «You see an Indian, a black man, a Briton, going by your window, and you notice nothing, but it could be a spirit, you think it's a person, but it isn't. They can take various forms».

However, any interpretation of these interactions merely based on the hypothesis of structural similarity of ontological postulates runs the risk of blurring the different points of view, motivations and identity strategies that Hindus and African social actors deploy in specific situations.

According to quite a number of Hindu informants, the power of interference in the processes of evil influence attributed to the Africans is mainly due to the fact that they are «nearer» to «impure», «unsatisfied» and/or evil spirits, independently of the race, religion and ethnic group they belonged to while living. In this sense, the power of the African diviner/healer/witch may be seen as the equivalent of the power of untouchables, to whom Portuguese-speaking Hindus also attribute similar magical powers as well as varied abilities in the field of exorcism. The recourse to African magic and performances of possession is still represented as the incorporation of an inferior level (in comparison to the referential Hindu traditions), but necessary and effective (in times of crisis). Structural correspondences do not therefore result in the elimination of inter-ethnic hierarchies. It does however seem to keep the relation «us»/«them» into a binary, irreversibly determined opposition.

Hindu village organization relegates untouchability to a peripheric space – or, *à la limite*, to the world of the forest (Malamoud, 1989) – to be protected from it, but also

⁸ *Mataji* is one of the most frequent denominations used to describe a person who is possessed by a Hindu goddess.

to use it to propitiate and (creatively) absorb it in times of crisis; in much the same way, Hindu migrants in Mozambique maintained a similar relation to the *sertão* and its inhabitants: not too near, nor too rejected or humiliated.

«You couldn't treat the blacks badly, because they could bewitch and kill you. (...). Many years ago, my niece's husband ran a black man over near Namaacha. The black man only told him, "You will see...". That same day, my nephew fell very, very ill» (female owner of grocers», of *lohana* caste, Maputo).

«More than forty years ago, there was an Indian here in Inhambane who had a shop. One day, a black client lost his wallet in the shop, and the owner did not want to give him back his money. The black man only said "You will see...": shortly afterwards, the daughter of that Indian died, she was only 13 or 14» (trader, of *vanja* caste, Inhambane).

«It is always envy. I am still suffering, even now, because of the blacks» envy. You cannot cause another's envy» (construction worker, of *fudamiá* caste, London).

Actualized in the Gujarati repertoire of reference, the explanation of inexplicable suffering as magical aggression resulting from actions set in motion by the sufferers themselves (and, in particular, as the result of situations of inequality in which they hurt the dignity of others), may be said to be maximized during their life experience in Mozambique.

3.2 Materializing respect for the «other»: the construction of the Salamanga *mandir*

Amplified by situational factors, this symbolic organizer turns into a central element of Hinduism as reconstructed in Mozambique, so much so that it was reworked in each and every recorded oral version on the establishment, in 1908, of the Salamanga sanctuary, in the South of Mozambique.

«This happened in the 1890s. My nana [mother's father] had a salt business, he exploited salt-works various kilometres away from Salamanga. He also owned a cantina, where he sold all kind s of things. (...). He was a rich man and, because of this, became very proud. One day, as he was coming back from the river, he met an old man, with dark skin and a white cloth. But he was very proud in his manner of speech. And that man told him: "I am a special person. You don't know that". Instead of respecting him, my nana asked for proof. Immediately, Mahatma Bapa shook a tree, and gold fell from it. Nana was not impressed. And said: "This is nothing. I have more gold than that". When they reached the cantina, my nanima was giving out water and sugar to people. Mahatma Bapa took the bowl from her and gave to everyone. That water never ran out. There always was more. It was then that my nana knelt down before him and said: "I am no longer going to be proud. I don't want any more money. I want to help others". So Mahatma Bapa gave him two magic words. One to help pregnant ladies who cannot give birth; the other one, to take away snake poison. But he also told him: "You cannot keep this to yourself, you must give to others". (...). Before he left, Mahatma Bapa told my nana: "I want to sit here"» (housewife, of *fudamiá* caste, Lisbon).

By insisting on respect for the «foreigner», the recorded oral versions of the foundation of the main *mandir* in Mozambique question impermeable power relations and, in particular, those that are based on skin colour and economic power; at the same time, they condemn the closure and impermeability of the Hindu «we». These narratives, however, are not to be taken as a mere mechanism of control and strengthening of basic requirements of reciprocity on the inter-ethnic plane. They also include constructive objectives, in particular when they underscore that a (non-arrogant) opening to the «other» may be the very accumulative source of power (in this instance, the power to interfere in certain irregularities between life and death).

Moreover, the fact that Mahatma Bapa is usually described as a «dark-skinned» foreigner (or, in other versions, taken for a black client by an enriched Indian *cantineiro*) allow us to posit the hypothesis that, to the Hindu eye, the relation with the African may still be interpreted as an «exam» of Hindu gods to their devotees. It is easy to understand why in so many Hindu identity productions, as a specialist of processes of influence (good as well as evil), as the disguise of a god, and /or as the very source of the material richness of Hindus, the native peasant (not only those who were «involved in the provincial administration») deserves, at least ideally, «a [asymmetrical but] *special treatment*».

3.3. In default of colonial authority: the emergence of Mozambicanism and other complicities between Indians and Africans

The strategy implemented by the colonial Portuguese to «civilize» the «indigenous population» was based upon the repression of their socio-political and cultural traditions, forced conversion to Christianity, the implementation of Catholic missionary education, as well as a policy of assimilation, aimed at the creation of a class of non-indigenous people («assimilated» to the Portuguese, preferentially Catholic but, more importantly, non-believers in the ancestral spirits and skeptical towards any form of «healing» and «witchcraft»).

The destruction of traditional power structures, by creating the figures of the *régulo* and the *nduma*, and by repressing rituals of worship of ancestral spirits, as well as by stripping of authority of religious leaders (diviners, healers, mediums, etc., but also leaders of independent churches) and of all those who were locally invested of terrible powers (witches, for example), was carried out by the Portuguese regime. It thus attempted not merely to eliminate the power of traditional political authorities, but also to repress the exercise of symbolic power mobilized by certain local leaders, thus questioning the very source of legitimation of both powers: ancestral spirits, who had a central role in the daily lives of the natives. A task that the colonial authorities soon recognized as vain, and which led them to accept native performances of worship, appeasement and search for protection of and from ancestral spirits, as long as these did not appear as threats or strategies of resistance to the colonial regime (which required the payment of prescribed taxes, and implemented a system of

forced labour and work migration to South Africa, etc.). The authorities therefore slackened the repression of genealogical cults but continued to punish by law (see the Penal Code of 1964) the practice of «healing» and «witchcraft»; thus, they clearly indicated that the rival sources of power which could threaten colonization were possession and witchcraft (Honwana, 1996).

According to the sources used by Young (1978), towards the end of the nineteenth century, any native who (openly) carried out rituals for his ancestors could be threatened by his armed *patrão* [master]. Therefore, it is not surprising that the first Hindus who came to live in Mozambique also hid from the local authorities their ceremonies of worship of *pitrus*, traditionally carried out outdoors, beneath sacred trees (exactly like those of the natives).

«(...) back then, old people told us that they did it very early in the morning, not to attract attention. It seems that they were afraid» (trader, of *lohana* caste, Lisbon).

More often, other memories insist on the invisibilisation of possession events that in the colonial times involved men and women; the secrecy maintained by their forefathers around anything that may be linked to «witchcraft» is especially highlighted. The following statement, by hinting towards the supposed friendship of a Hindu (of *fudamiá* caste) interested in *jadu* (witchcraft) and a well-known *tinyanga* from Salamanga⁹ seems to indicate at least that relationships of complicity between individual Hindus and Africans did exist, and were organized around certain «subjects»:

«My grandfather was very interested in all that. But, back then, in the time of the Portuguese, all those who were caught performing *jadu* were jailed. They sent them to the *Ilha de Moçambique*, as punishment. He had an African friend, a good healer, there in Salamanga, he was taken there. You could not talk, as I am doing now, of these subjects» (worker in a food factory, London).

We don't have available information on the role of specialists in African traditional performances during the decade of struggle for independence led by Frelimo against the Portuguese colonial regime (1964 to 1974); any investigation on possible symbolic resistance strategies deployed prior to 1961, in Diu and Daman, by the Hindu population against the Portuguese colonizers, has been made. However, the relationship of complicity that sometimes existed between Hindus and Africans (generally outside the main urban centres) around possession and witchcraft certainly deserves further attention.

In fact, and despite general Hindu statements according to which «in the colonial times, the great majority of Indians complied with the regime» because «their only interest was their business», so much so that there is no «memory of any Hindu being arrested by PIDE [International Police for the Defense of the State]» rather, the opposite is mentioned, that is, a number of Hindus who «passed on information» and «of one or two who

⁹ It is very likely that the reference is to a well-known *tinyanga* from Salamanga, called Shingoma, who was deported to the *Ilha de Moçambique* in 1917, for the distribution of *Murini*, a magic potion for protection against witchcraft; the same crime led to the detention, deportation and condemnation to forced labour of many Mozambican natives during the first decades of the 20th century.

were actually recruited by PIDE»¹⁰), there is proof that the political stance of Hindus was, possibly, more heterogeneous (and, more importantly, more ambivalent) than a number of statements may indicate.

As a merchant (of *khania* caste) who lives in Maputo spontaneously stated, «once, before '61, Mahatma Bapa also appeared in Diu. (...) The Portuguese soldiers tried to catch him. (...) But, suddenly, he started walking towards the sea and (...) disappeared». According to this last narrative, a Hindu god-man is conceived as owning an excessive symbolic power that enables him to paralyse (and humiliate) the colonial military power. However, Mahatma Bapa is not constructed as an active agent against colonialism: «He did not want to sit in Diu» adds the same interviewee, without any further explanation.

On an interpretative level, the identity stance underlying this Hindu construction of Portuguese colonialism is neither one of *compliance* nor that of counter-colonial (symbolic) resistance. The narrative gain seems rather to reside in the statement that the Portuguese colonization of the genealogical space of origin (Diu) was not imposed by military power, but allowed by the *diveshas* themselves, who possessed such symbolic powers as to be able to prevail over their own colonizers.

This hypothesis is strengthened by a different interpretation of the history of Portuguese colonialism in India, as given by a construction contractor (of *fudamiá* caste) living in Lisbon:

«In the time of the Portuguese, there were some soldiers who entered the Kankai Mata Mandir [in Diu] and removed the eyes of the Devi. When people went there and found that the eyes were missing and all that mess, they asked a lady in whom Mataji descended, who had pierced the eyes of the Devi. And she said: "The Portuguese soldiers did it". She also said the Mataji was very furious with the Portuguese and that in a short time the independence of Goa, Daman and Diu would come about. And behold it did, eight or nine months later».

The hypothesis that performances of possession were used as a practice of resistance and counter-hegemony (Comaroff, 1985; Kapferer, 1991; Assayag, 1999; etc.) in Portuguese India is yet to be proved; however, this last narrative demonstrates that possession may be recurred to as a prime narrative resource in the construction of a reinterpretation of colonial history (and of the independence of Diu itself). If the narrative is seen as a condensed representation of the relations between Hindus / *diveshas* (from Diu) and the Portuguese colonizers, the strictly a-political character of *diveshas*, both before and after 1961, may be questioned.

Converging with this last hypothesis, a number of memories refer the existence of Hindu *cantineiros* that extended credit to Mozambican peasants and miners (and to whom these entrusted their scarce savings), who were treated as *régulos* without having the qualification, instead of cooperating in tax collection, who had an «ethics» contrary to the «bad reputation» («that they cheated the blacks anytime they could»), who

¹⁰ See interview with one of the few Hindus who were active members of Frelimo before 1974.

had «a lot of Mozambicanism», due to which they were under constant surveillance by the PIDE.

4. Beyond common «Indianness»: «Muslim witchcraft no one can remove»

The first aspect to emerge from Hindu narratives on the other «Indians» who were also living in the colony (Carvalho, 1999; Pereira Leite, 2001) is the immediate subdivision of the category «Muslim». «Indian Muslims» (whose origins are in India) are distinguished from «African Muslims» (that is, the native Islamized population of the North littoral area of Mozambique); moreover, among «Indian Muslims», the descendants of Indian parents are differentiated from the *mestiços*, that is, the descendants of mixed-race relationships, and the blacks converted by the Indians. An important distinction is also made within «Indian Muslims» between Sunnis and Khojas (Ismailis).

The «big difference» between «Indian Muslims» and «African Muslims» resides, according to Hindus, in the fact that the ancestors of the first were Hindus but were converted. The persistence of some kind of Indianness (supposedly Hindu, by the equation of India and Hinduism) made them less violent and more tolerant people from the religious point of view.

Despite this, even the «Sunnis» of Indian origin are seen as «very radical», since they «do not accept that their believers may leave Islam, and when that happens they become very discriminating. On the other hand, they accept the people who are not born from Muslim parents and convert. They really have that habit of converting people. And the African always got advantages from being Islamic» (businessman, of *Khania* caste, Maputo).

In contrast, Indian Ismaili Muslims (Khojas) are represented as those who most preserve the supposed Hindu Indianness, as indicated by moderation and openness towards the other, as well as by their own religious practices:

«They were and still are most like us. They celebrate *divali* and *id*. And why? Because they were Hindus once» (housewife, of *fudamiá* caste, Lisbon).

However, this supposed «common Indianness» does not seem to have helped the interaction between the various categories of Indians. In fact, for the majority of interviewees, «in the colonial times, there were no partnerships between Muslims and Hindus, only after independence, and still in a limited number, because the Muslim tends to cheat his partner, he pockets everything and swindles the other»¹¹. On the other hand, even though with great caution, «commercial relations, between buyers and seller, among shopowners,

¹¹ Businessman, *lohana* caste, Maputo.

warehouse operators, or importers, that did always exist»¹². Only a limited number of statements does however indicate that these interactions developed into friendships, sociability and commensality in the North of the country, unlike what happened in the South where «there was a great separation between Hindus and Muslims»¹³.

However, other «Indians» occupy an important function as terms of identity comparison. The economic gain attributed to the *khoja*, for instance, repeatedly appears in Hindu memories. It is justified by referring to «the advantages that they always got and keep getting from belonging to a large network which enables them to obtain the right information on where and in what to invest, where to live and when to leave» and whereby «they also obtain funds earmarked for their business ventures»¹⁴. And it is also linked to the fact that «they were the Indians who upheld the most relations with the colonial State», receiving in return a «preferential treatment», since «the colonial Government thought that they could contribute to upkeep good political relations in Portugal, because they had many communities, in Kenya, in Uganda, in Tanganika, who had enough influence with their governments»¹⁵. The Khojas are also seen as those who suffered less from the decolonization process, as those who fared best in the new receiving societies (United Kingdom, Canada, Portugal, etc.), and as those who, having recently returned to Mozambique, obtained the most profitable investments (in particular in the hotel and tourism sectors).

It is therefore not surprising that their continued success favours identity envy. In fact, through statements such as «they always were apatrids, chameleons, they change their nationality when it suits them»¹⁶, some Hindus manage to turn the transnationalism of the Ismaili community into an identity defect. Similarly, the adhesion on the part of the Khojas to a «more Western» lifestyle or the preferential treatment they were given by the portuguese colonial administration, may be depreciate by Hindu memories. Mobilized by a number of informants, certain episodes (real or imagined) from the recent past make a questioning of the «superiority» (civilizational) of the Khoja possible and, simultaneously, allows the criticism of the colonial complicity towards the same community.

«They had a human sacrifice for the foundation of their church. It seems they bought two children. I don't know how they could do it. I don't understand how the Portuguese authorities allowed that» (contractor, of *fudamiá* caste, Maputo).

On the other hand, monopolizing the identity productions that focus upon the inexplicable sufferings of the past, statements such as «you cannot take lightly a Muslim [Sunni] spell, if someone is sent a *lm* [spell] no-one can get it out», «only a stronger spell, made by a Muslim» (carried out «in the place where the *lm* was launched») are still heightened by postcolonial life experiences and imaginaries.

¹² Businessman of construction industry, *khania* caste, Lisbon.

¹³ Industrial, *vanja* caste, Maputo.

¹⁴ Merchant, *lohana* caste, Lisbon.

¹⁵ Engineer, *vanja* caste, Maputo.

¹⁶ Businessman, *vanja* caste, Nampula and Maputo.

In fact, the hyper-visibility of the processes of corruption that have involved the new Mozambican elites is accompanied by a proliferation of interpretations that equate the (corrupt) acquisition of economic power (on the part of Islamized groups, of Pakistani origin, who have recently settled in Mozambique) to the power of the spell, thus intensifying (in those who feel cheated) the belief in magic cursing: «*Muslims rule Mozambique. They bewitch people with words and lead us to think that it is good business. (...). But what goes around, comes around*»¹⁷.

Rapidly spread through networks of family and caste, similar statements are repeated in Portugal or in Britain, that is, in the preferential migratory destinations of those who left Mozambique after decolonization. As «*a changing set of notions reflecting and reinterpreting new identity circumstances*», witchcraft may not be seen «*as a more or less fixed, traditional residue*» (Geschiere, 1997: 222).

In parallel, the impact of broader configurations is also crucial for the understanding of the specificities of witchcraft fantasies of Portuguese-speaking Hindus. For instance, even the attacks of September 11 and the subsequent world conflict confirm, to Hindus, the (indestructible) power of Islamic witchcraft. As related by an educated female interlocutor in Lisbon:

«*Maybe you didn't understand this, but when bin Laden spoke in his language, he said that the Americans may have much power, money, weapons, bombs, everything, but he had something the Americans did not have. He has the power of witchcraft (...), the power to turn invisible. Why do you think no one has found him yet?*».

The auto-attribution to the Hindu «we» of certain relational qualities seems to pass through the negation of those same attributes to other categories of «Indians». On the one hand, transnational mobility is evoked to justify the lack of consideration on the part of the Khoja for the basic requirements of reciprocity. On the other, the evocation of Sunni community organization, described as «very discriminating» in relation to those that opt to maintain their religious difference, justifies the maximization of a stance of opportunistic lack of consideration of reciprocity towards the «different» among the Sunnis. Lastly, even the principal common denominator between Sunnis and Hindus permits the differentiation between the two identity categories. Associated to Sunnis, the evocation of witchcraft is a culturally codified synonym of economic opportunism towards the «different»; while associated to Hindus, the same evocation signifies the respect for minimal exigencies of reciprocity and a counter-ethnicizing management of the relation to the «other».

¹⁷ Trader, *fudamiá* caste, Maputo.

5. «Racist Portuguese» and «whites with a golden heart»: a Hindu interpretation of Portuguese colonialism

«The domination of the white stratum was a given»¹⁸ constitutes another constant statement of Hindu-Gujarati memories of inter-ethnic relations in Mozambique during the colonial period.

However the majority of interviewees does not deny that Hindus made much of «Portuguese culture» their own, the (post-colonial) interpretation of that incorporation does exhibit variations and graduations.

In fact, according to a number of narratives, the Hindu stance towards «Portuguese culture» in the colonial distant past is constructed as a sort of cultural resistance, whereby linguistic integration and the exterior conversion to certain cultural standards identified as *Portuguese*, allowed the defence and/or renewal, within the microfamiliar and domestic domains, of differential – and typically Hindu – religious and cultural resources. Other identity constructions however rejected with conviction the thesis of mimicry (Bhabha, 1994). This is the case especially in the narratives produced by many of those who still represent themselves as *Hindus* and, at the same time, as *Portuguese* (regardless of whether they currently reside in Africa, India or Europe).

On the other hand, the Colonial State stressed the «metamorphosis of the Indian»¹⁹ to prove how «Portuguese civilization» was «evermore gaining the upper hand»²⁰; however, it also denied the possibility of a pluri-referential – Hindu and Portuguese – identification, underscoring how the *exterior* adaptation of Hindus to Portuguese civilization had no correspondence in a process of cultural and/or religious assimilation; neither could the adaptation be seen as an effective indicator of their political subordination to the regime in power. Hindu mimicry was «also the signe of the inappropriate, of a difference» which needed surveillance (Bhabha, 1986: 86). In fact, in many colonial reports (never made public), Hindus are described as «impermeable to any identification»; the same sources also note the «tranquil serenity with which (...) they encourage and help their children to attend, in (...) secondary schools, classes of Christian morals and religion» since nothing seemed to affect their private practices and beliefs²¹. This accentuated cultural and religious impermeability was compounded by another typical trait of the Hindu character (also shared with other Indians): the non-exteriorization (and/or indefiniteness) of the way of feeling or thinking and, above all, a

¹⁸ Businessman, *lohana* caste, Lisbon. This kind of statement is shared by the majority of our informants.

¹⁹ Beginning by characterizing Indians as «sordid beings, astute, degenerate, greedy, mean, voracious, insatiable, languid, effeminate, loathsome», while recognizing their «pacifist, obedient, apolitical» conduct and, more than anything, their precious contribution to tax collection (Zamparoni, 2000: 192-200), the colonial imaginary of the late XIX and early XX centuries underwent a partial modification in the 1930s and 1940s.

²⁰ See the article «Indianos» [Indians] in the *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, of 2nd August, 1938.

²¹ See the document entitled «*Estudo sobre indianos*» [«Study on Indians»] (commissioned by the Ministry of Overseas Territories to the Government of the Province), Lourenço Marques, 28th August 1962, pag. 27 (Historical Archives of Mozambique).

notable ability to deceive and fool the colonizer on any ideological plane. This last characteristic stands out, for example, in a statement given by the General and Commanding Officer of the 4th Military Region of the colony, in the late 1950s:

«... they appear to accept the opinion of the [Portuguese] interlocutor, even though they have one that is very well structured and absolutely to the contrary. They do not become exalted and, if anyone should try to change their opinion, either they uphold their polite and smiling rejection, or appear to accept the new idea with no enthusiasm, leaving their interlocutor to doubt whether they really did adopt it with conviction or otherwise»²².

The same source did not hesitate in describing Indians globally as «debarred of any patriotic sentiment»²³.

The colonial administration however did not appear to be worried by these «facts». On the one hand, the respect for Portuguese institutions, «even (...) only in appearance», was not threatened, nor did it include any real possibility of opposition to the regime, since Indians were not «courageous», but also because their «persistence» and «spirit of sacrifice» were frequently oriented towards «commercialism» and the «eager desire to earn money». Having no interest by nature in political issues and avoiding «causing problems» (in order to maximize their commercial gains) only «when (...) properly stimulated and well-oriented» could they «nonetheless, become dangerous»²⁴.

On the other hand, the official discourse gained a greater identity advantage (on the national, international and diplomatic levels) by insisting on the thesis according to which the Hindu stance, in relation to the «work of aggrandizement» of that «corner of the Portuguese Colonial Empire» was one of «close cooperation». On the economic level, and despite the dissatisfaction towards the Indian presence on the part of certain groups of the colonial society, the Portuguese colonial administration recognized the importance of the economic activities of Indians with regards to the commercial development of the territory. On the geopolitical level, the implementation of measures for the repression of entry, movement, establishment and even economic activity of Indians (considered as British subjects) caused (or rekindled) unwanted diplomatic reactions on the part of the United Kingdom. Lastly, on the ideological level, the Indian presence could strengthen, internally and externally, the maxim of «tolerance» (not only «economic but also in the sphere of cultural and religious activities»)²⁵ that was supposed to be a peculiar characteristic of the Portuguese Empire.

Equally conscious of the advantages that could accrue from their definition as close collaborators of the regime, Hindus periodically gave the Portuguese State «proof», exhibited in the Portuguese and British press, of their gratitude and political subordination. Among the most highly recognized were the confirmation of racial and religious tolerance as a moving force of the Portuguese Colonial Empire, the

²² See the Report by the General and Commanding Officer of the 4th Military Region of the colony, in the document «*Estudo sobre Indianos*» [«Study on Indians»], 1938, p. 37-38.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²⁵ See the speech of the Governor General, on the occasion of the inaugural session of the Veda Mandir, *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, 2nd August 1938.

inclusion of Portuguese language instruction among the basic objectives of the main Hindu association in the colony (created in Lourenço Marques in 1933) and, more importantly, the numerous demonstrations of deference, admiration and homage to the Colonial Government (for instance, by placing portraits of the highest political figures of the time in the main hall of the *Veda Mandir*, inaugurated in the capital city of Mozambique in 1938).

Despite the fact that the leaders of Hindu associations preferred, in public, to make statements such as «*we Hindus see the Portuguese as the most welcoming of all the lords of the land*»²⁶, the majority of the Hindu population recognized that there was much discrimination of whites towards Indians. The pay gap between the salaries of specialized professionals, varied depending on race (Indian or white), the exclusion of small and medium entrepreneurs from the industrial sector on the grounds of skin colour (only partially reversed since the beginning of the 1970's), the many restrictions to the employment of Hindus in banks and the civil service (mitigated in the 1960's), the discrimination in access to education and academic evaluations, the racist practices during military service, the impossibility of renting or buying houses in certain urban spaces, etc., appear constantly in recorded memories.

Nevertheless, the majority of informants spontaneously declared that Mozambique wasn't apartheid, like South Africa was. The eldest still (nostalgically) recall the frequent commercial relations between Hindus and Portuguese, and especially those established on the basis of mutual trust. Competition between Hindus and Portuguese happened in particular between small and medium shopowners, in the cities, but also in towns, or between *cantinas*, in the interior, they tell us, but it did not have any equivalent at the level of importers and warehouse operators, since «*usually, the large importers and warehouse operators of foodstuffs were Portuguese, while those of textiles and ready-to-wear clothes were Indian*»²⁷. The operation of *cantinas* in the interior or in the outskirts of urban centres required not only the existence of links with co-ethnics who owned wholesale establishments in the coastal area but also, and very frequently, relations with Portuguese importers and warehouse operators: «*many Indian cantineiros bought their goods on credit from the Portuguese. They only paid after 30, 60 days. It was based on trust, because there was nothing in writing*»²⁸.

During the military service, a number of interviewees actually assert that they «*met Portuguese who were not racists, even officers*»²⁹. From the official school system (primary and secondary), where many felt discriminated, others took away memories of «*whites with a golden heart*»³⁰, «*teachers who were important*»³¹ and even about the fact that «*Indian, Portuguese, black and mulatto boys played together*», which did not

²⁶ See the speech of Mr. Bhagwangi Kakoobhai, in «*Iniciativa da Comunidade Indiana*» [«*Initiative of the Indian Community*»], *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, 2nd August 1938.

²⁷ Businessman, *fudamiá* caste, Maputo.

²⁸ Judicial consultant, *fudamiá* caste, Maputo.

²⁹ Businessman of *surti* caste, Maputo.

³⁰ Trader, *mochi* caste, Maputo.

³¹ Doctor, *vanja* caste, Lisbon.

exist «*outside the school, where each of us limited oneself to one's race*»³². Similarly, the way in which some restrictions in the industrial sector were overcome is recalled through statements such as: «*I have encountered a Portuguese partner, and that's how I managed to set my first factory*»³³.

According to the opinion of a number of informants, only the hostile measures taken against Indians, that is, the detention of those who had a Hindustani passport in «*concentration camps*» and their subsequent «*expulsion, after all that trouble in Goa, Daman and Diu*» may be compared to what happened in the British colonies of East Africa and in South Africa. However, not even these facts are unanimously interpreted. By insisting upon the contrast between «*the racism of the Portuguese*» and the «*racism of the British*», many prefer to construct the «detention» and «expulsion» as a security measure, that is, as a preventive process in the face of the possibility of Indians becoming the victims of eventual aggressions on the part of a minority of white settlers³⁴. Some of those that were repatriated said to the Indian Press that «*individual Portuguese citizens could not forget the friendship that had developed over the years with the Indians. They knew that the Indians settlers were innocent. They helped them in every way – even in stealing – so that when they returned to India they would have some assets in the form of goods*»³⁵.

Thus, the memories of Hindus insist on splitting the representation of «Portuguese» colonizers in two large subcategories – those who used (as the British did in South Africa, but also in Uganda and Kenya) race as a frontier of univocal domination (Pina-Cabral, 2001), and discriminated Asian ethnic minorities (keeping them from gaining access to certain «items» of exclusive use to the «whites») and the Portuguese that established inter-personal relations (based on good faith and mutual confidence) with people of different races. Moreover, the same memories also seem to reveal that the Hindu rejection of an opportunism transgressive of the basic rules of reciprocity resulted, in part, from a process of identification with the relational pattern attributed by Hindus to certain segments of the Portuguese population, in particular, to the «*whites who didn't exploit differences in skin colour*»³⁶ as idioms of domination.

5. Post colonial identity managements of Portuguese and British colonialism

This last interpretation is perhaps sharpened in the identity narratives of those Hindus who left Portugal and Mozambique in the Nineties and settled in areas of

³² Engineer, *vaniya* caste, Lisbon.

³³ Industrial, *lohana* caste, Lisbon.

³⁴ This argument was used by the colonial administration to justify the detention of those Indians who had Hindustani documents. See, for instance, the Report of PIDE, 15th December 1961 (Historical Archives of Torre do Tombo, Lisbon).

³⁵ In the article «Repatriates refuse to pay customs duty», *Times of India*, 5th February 1963.

³⁶ Businessman, *patel* caste, London.

Greater London (such as Wembley, Alpertton, Harrow, Edgware, Southall, etc.) and in Leicester, where numerous other Gujarati Hindus from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania or directly from India have concentrated since the late 1960's and 1970's.

Justifying current and old negative evaluations about the Portuguese Hindus, namely their socio-economic and educational inferiority, the British-Indian Gujaratis evoke their identification with Portuguese colonizers perceived as under-developed and peripheral. On the other hand, reacting to these evaluations, the Portuguese Indians or *portuguesiá* (as they are known in London) emphasise the colonial «imperfections» of the British colonizers, that is, the type and intensity of their «racism» (contrasting it to that «of the Portuguese»), all the while interpreting the «hidden racism» which characterizes their treatment on the part of British-Indian Gujaratis as the result of the multigenerational ties of the latter to the British Colonial Empire.

«They say that they were linked for over a century to a world power, while we were linked to a peripheral and backward country. But the British do not have only good qualities. For example, in Mozambique there wasn't as much racism against Indians as in South Africa, Uganda, or Kenya. (...) Of course there was no comparison (...). But racism wasn't directly hostile. (...) They themselves did not only gain good qualities... Don't think that living here [in London] is easy. Deep down, I think they don't like us, just like the English. They don't show it openly. It's just another kind of hidden racism» (grocery shop owner, of *khania* caste, London).

This comparison of «colonizers» (and of the «colonized») is not a mere Portuguese rhetoric strategy that helps to face an unfavourable identity environment. Without denying their socio-economic superiority, many British Hindus share with the Portuguese Hindus the opinion that Portuguese colonizers and colonized, unlike the British, did not resort to race as a binary idiom in the construction of colonial sociabilities.

«Nobody's perfect. Maybe the Protestant Church was less repressive than the Catholic, but the Portuguese treated Indians and Blacks with more dignity, more humanity. They didn't exploit the differences in skin colour as much as the British did in Uganda or Kenya. In those territories, racial discrimination was very strong. There was no racial law, as in South Africa, but it was a given that Indians could only live in certain areas, where the Africans could not enter. And both Africans and Indians couldn't enter the white areas. Everybody knew. Racism in Mozambique was different. [...]. And you can't forget that there was a lot of racism between Indians and Africans, but also among Indians. [...]. I think that there was more cooperation between the various Hindu groups, in Mozambique» (businessman, of *patel* caste, London).

The identity assertion according to which the «less rich» (like their «backwards» and «peripheral» «colonizers») had, in compensation, relational identity qualities seems to have balanced the general hierarchisation created by the colonial phase of the expansion process of the global market between central and semi-peripheral colonizers and between their respective Hindu settlers. It is not surprising that in new

socio-historical circumstances, British and Portuguese colonialism continue to serve as a source of identity arguments in the management of post-colonial asymmetries between Hindu European minorities.

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