

UDC 233

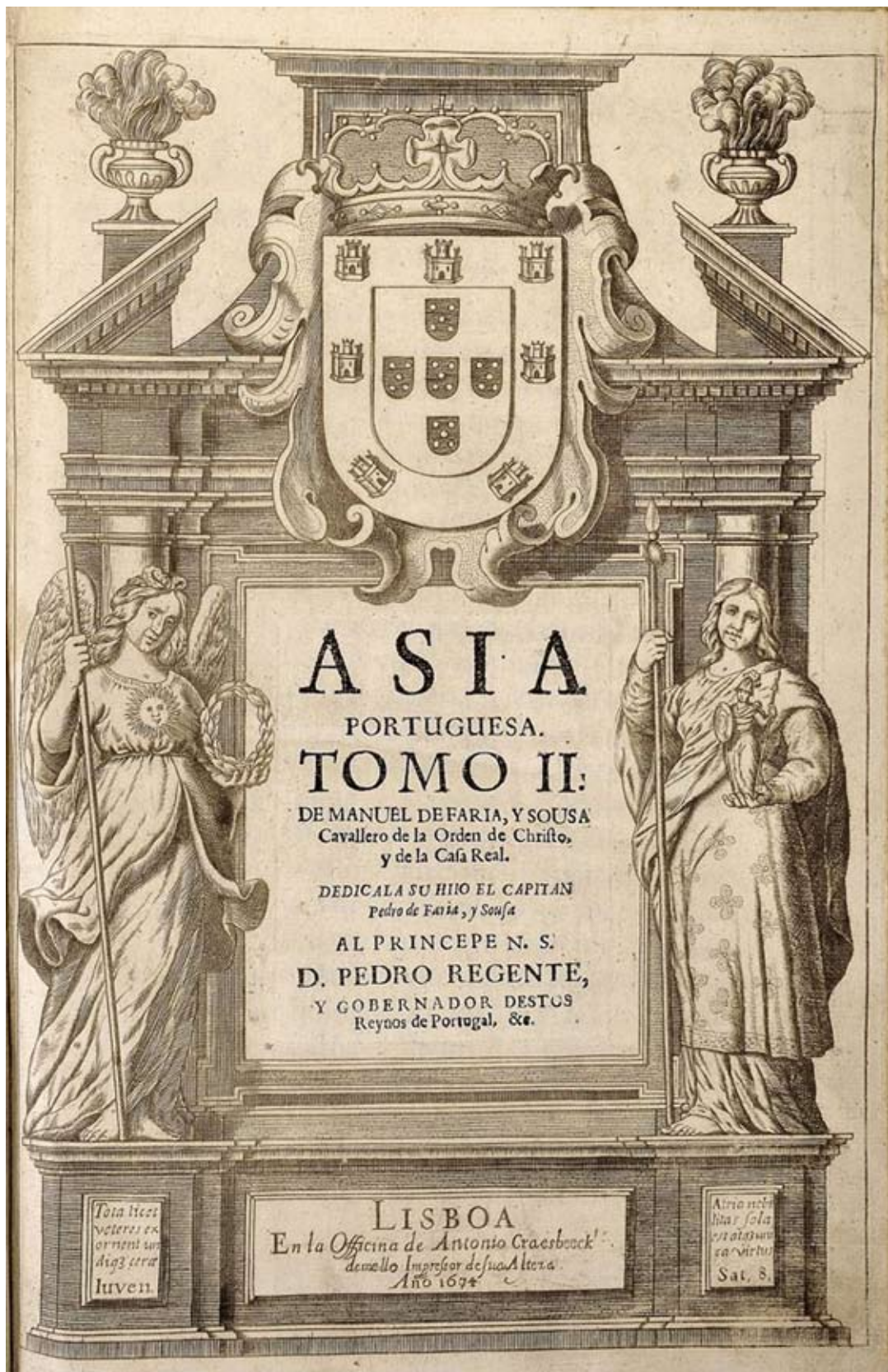
**MANUEL DE FARIA E SOUSA'S FIRST EUROPEAN SYSTEMATIC EXPOSITION OF "HINDUISM" IN THE SECOND VOLUME OF *ASIA PORTUGUESA* (1640–1674)**

*Ivo Carneiro de Sousa*

PhD (Portuguese Culture), Professor  
Centre for Portuguese Studies  
Macao Polytechnic University (MPU)  
R. de Luís Gonzaga Gomes, Macao SAR, China  
[ivocarneiro@mpu.edu.mo](mailto:ivocarneiro@mpu.edu.mo)

Originally planned but not completed in time for the journal's special issue in homage to Pavlo Ritter, this paper seeks to rescue the lengthy textual representation of "Hinduism" in Spanish, completed in 1640 by the Portuguese intellectual Manuel de Faria e Sousa, which was only published in 1674 by Lisbon presses. This study covers the main themes of Faria e Sousa's dissertation, from Hindu cosmogony and myths to the religious practices observed by Catholic missionaries, especially in the Malabar region. The research highlights the sources of Sousa's text and his literary effort to offer to a cult reader auditorium of Spanish a curious and very open systematic digest of the Hindu religion interpreted through Christian parallels and comparisons alongside some erudite mobilization of classic *topoi* that had been in circulation throughout the European cultural world since the Renaissance. Faria e Sousa explains in the introduction and other marginal notes that his dissertation on the "religion of India" was based on a manuscript written in Portuguese, without authorship, sent from Portugal to Madrid by an influential epochal writer, memorialist, and owner of an extensive library, Manuel Severim de Faria (1584–1655), powerful canon of the Évora dioceses. This Portuguese manuscript of 73 folios still exists in the Évora Public Library, entitled "Tratado dos deuses gentílicos de todo o oriente e dos ritos e cerimónias que usam os Malabares" (Treatise on the Gentile Gods of All the East and on the Rites and Ceremonies Used by the Malabarians), dated from 1618 and attributed to the Jesuit Manuel Barradas (c. 1570–1646), missionary in India and later in Ethiopia. This paper explains that this manuscript's primary source of Faria e Sousa dissertation was a copy of a selected abridged version of a polemic treatise of the Italian Jesuit missionary Giacomo Fenicio (1558–1632), later receiving the title of its first chapter: "Livro da Seita dos Índios Orientais" (East Indian Sect Book). It has circulated in Portuguese among the Jesuit missionaries in India to teach them how to criticize and denounce the "Brahmins' idolatry". The only remaining integral manuscript copy of Fenicio's large text belongs to the British Library (Ms. Sloane 1820) and was published in 1933 in Uppsala by Jarl Charpentier, unfortunately with numerous misreadings and gaps. Faria e Sousa's dissertation on "Hinduism" allows the readers to rescue the non-polemic and descriptive segments of Fenicio's largely unknown work, completing it and rebulbing its anonymous circulation among some Portuguese Jesuits and intellectuals up to reach the pages of *Asia Portuguesa*. Moreover, Faria e Sousa's text is much more than a simple copy and translation of the manuscript abridging Fenicio's treatise, adding text, comments, and remarks, thus producing an exciting digest of the religious cosmology, mythology, and practices that nowadays we commonly identify as "Hinduism".

**Keywords:** Manuel de Faria e Sousa; Giacomo Fenicio; Manuel Barradas; Hinduism; Malabar; Christian parallels; Classic "topoi"; burlesque; folklore; religious and cultural accommodation



Manuel de Faria e Sousa. *Asia Portuguesa*.  
Lisboa: António Craesbeck de Mello, 1674, T. II, fl.[R.]

It is difficult nowadays to present Manuel de Faria e Sousa (1590–1649), the Portuguese chronicler, Baroque poet, essayist, polygraph, art collector, and knight of the Order of Christ from ancient noble family origins, as a referential 17<sup>th</sup>-century author. The fact that he was a militant supporter of the Iberian Union (1580–1640) and wrote in Castilian did not contribute to his popularity in Portugal nor among the countless enemies of the Spanish empire led by England; his popularity suffered even more from the fact that he did not honor the Restoration Revolution, nor did he ever return to Portuguese soil, instead remaining faithful to Philip IV until his death in Madrid. Moreover, in prose comments, correspondence, and Gongoric style poetry exercises, Sousa firmly rejected the accession of D. João IV to the Portuguese royal throne, achieved through the well-known political, diplomatic and military support of Britain and the Netherlands, thus ending the sixty-year period of dual monarchy in which the kingdom of Portugal was ruled by three successive Spanish kings, Philip II, Philip III, and Philip IV. Worse still, his monumental 1639 judicious Spanish edition of the greatest work of Portuguese poetry, *Os Lusíadas*, by Luís Camões, did not at all improve his posterior fame. Despite its 626 two-column pages in two volumes being the most accurately commented edition ever of this epic masterpiece, this magistral work became the target of harsh criticism since it presents the 16<sup>th</sup>-century *vate* as the “greatest poet of Spain,” integrating Camões’s grand poem into the imperial ideas of global *Hispanidad* cultivated by Philip IV, to whom the work was dedicated [Sousa 1639]. The Portuguese romantic intelligentsia of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and, above all, the political movement that would lead to the establishment of the Republic in 1910 raised Camões into a monumental symbol of resistance and national identity, and subsequently made Faria e Sousa into at best a forgotten figure or at worst a deeply ostracized example of a 17<sup>th</sup>-century Portuguese writer who shamefully surrendered to Spain’s oppressive rule over Portugal.

Among the varied and prolific production of Faria e Sousa, which includes dozens of printed and manuscript works, the volume entitled *Asia Portuguesa (Portuguese Asia)*, part of a much larger universal manuscript left unfinished in the year of his death, stands out precisely for its posthumous edition published by the Portuguese presses, which also included several volumes on the history of Portugal in Europe and Africa. This referential chronicle of the Portuguese presence in Asia was already finished in 1640 but would be much later published in Lisbon by his son, Captain Pedro de Faria e Sousa, in three volumes, from 1666 to 1675 [Sousa 1666–1675]. A careful dedication in the first printed volume to the Portuguese king Afonso VI (the heir of the founder of the new *Bragança* dynasty, who would later be accused of insanity and replaced by the regency of his brother Pedro II to whom the second and third volumes are consecrated) attempts to rehabilitate Manuel de Faria e Sousa’s patriotism, presented by his son in exaggerated rhetoric as “the greatest *Atlante* of Portuguese glory in this field of studies”, serving his motherland by strenuously writing monuments of history superior to those of “Herodotus, Thucydides, Plutarch, Flavius Joseph, Livy, Sallust, Quintus Curtius, Cornelius Tacitus, Marcus Justinus, Lucius Florus, Velleius Paterculus, Maffeo Vegio, João de Barros, Francesco Guicciardini, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, and Antonio de Fuenmayor” [Sousa 1666, I, 9–10].

This more than generous idea that the elder Faria e Sousa was a singular great historian that surpassed the foremost Classical and modern Iberian chroniclers, including Barros and Mendoza, is not confirmed in the opening two folios of *Asia Portuguesa*’s first volume gathering the normative Inquisition and royal courts authorizations. The Inquisition Council permission dated from 1655 is signed by Fr. Agostinho de Cordes, a Lisbon demanding “visitor” specialized in surveying foreigners, is displayed in a short text that practically omits Sousa authorship and name, preferring to praise his volume as a competent copy and summary of João de Barros’ *Decades* (4 vols, 1552–1615) which offers readers an opportunely abbreviated version of the famous humanist title already difficult

to fully access in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. Truly, Sousa's first volume is an annotated summary of Barros's four books, followed by some original appendices, guiding readers from the first Portuguese "discoverer" since 1412 promoted by Henry the Navigator to the 1538 government of the so-called "Portuguese State of India" under Governor Nuno da Cunha [Sousa 1666, I, 367]. The chronicle chapters on the Portuguese presence in Asia in the second volume of *Asia Portuguesa* are also not original since Manuel de Faria e Sousa summarized and arranged the available four out of the nine decades written by Diogo de Couto, published in Lisbon between 1602 and 1616 as a continuation of João de Barros's history [Couto 1602–1616]. In contrast, the third volume is primarily a new and unedited chronicle of the Asian enclaves under Portuguese official control from 1581 to the Restoration Revolution in 1640 that wrongly shifted, according to Sousa, the political destiny of Portugal towards a regrettable "stepmother" option under a "foreign prince" enemy of the "great" emperor Philip IV the "Most August Heart of the World, who may God keep for the terror of the infidels and the glory of Christendom" [Sousa 1675, III, (VII)]. The research of this last volume immediately acknowledges an energetic historical effort to integrate the Portuguese oriental empire into the dual monarchy system, praising the Spanish efforts to defend the Portuguese settlements in the Moluccas, Malacca, and Macao against Dutch competition. This final volume of *Asia Portuguesa* is also the only text presently known explaining the Dutch defeat during the VOC attempt to conquer Macao on June 24, 1622 as a victory supported by Spanish military aid sent from Manila led by João (or Juan) Soares Vivas, another Portuguese supporter of the Iberian unification that was exiled to Madrid and later became a vital informer to Manuel de Faria e Sousa of "oriental matters" [Sousa 1675, III, 364–365].

Regardless of the assumed summary of Barros and Couto *Decades* in the two first volumes of *Asia Portuguesa*, other than the original historical data utilized to write the third volume, the book is much more attractive due to its recurrent lengthy intellectual dissertations and comments on diverse political, cultural, and religious Asian subjects despite their adoption of a systematic Catholic moralist perspective dominant in the Spanish Baroque cultural context. In fact, Manuel de Faria e Sousa's largest and most entertaining of these dissertations is his overall narrative presentation of the religions of "Asiatic Nations" ("Naciones Asiaticas") in the fourth part of the second volume of *Asia Portuguesa*, printed in Lisbon in 1674. It comprises twenty chapters from pages 651 to 883 with the following thematic distribution: an exposition on Hindu religion (chapters 1–6, pp. 655–716); an excursus on the Monophysite Christianity of the Abyssinians (chapters 7–9, pp. 717–749); an outline of Buddhism in Japan (chapters 10–11, pp. 750–771); the civilization, geography, society, statehood, and religions of China (chapters 12–18, pp. 772–849); and, finally, two chapters on the Syrian-Malabar Church of southern India and the pretense apostolate of St. Thomas in Asia (chapters 19–20, pp. 850–883).

Although the *Asia Portuguesa* concept of history from content to form assumedly follows the lessons of João de Barros *Decades* that introduced to 16<sup>th</sup>-century Portuguese intellectual culture the humanist historiography built up by Leonardo Bruni as an *imitatio* and actualization of Tito Livius' *Ab urbe condita* [Andrade 1980; Boxer 1981], Manuel de Faria e Sousa allows his prose to "interrupt military and political acts" in order to present "the climates, lands, peoples, and customs of Asia" through "morality lectures" guided by Catholic teachings and Classic erudite topical parallels [Sousa 1674, II, 652–653]. The result is a textual discourse influenced by strongly visual Spanish Baroque literature, full of descriptive images, generating a narrative format far from the documented rigor of João de Barros's humanist historiography, teaching how to merge political and military events with imagined speeches of the main historical protagonists. In consequence, Sousa's dissertations on the religions of India, China, and Japan are highly visual narratives in which these "gentilic faiths" are based on "several images that represented a Deity; and they came to become Deities of the Images themselves" [Sousa 1674, II, 653].

Therefore, it is the images, the representations of the oriental religions, that mobilize Manuel de Faria e Sousa to produce vivid and quite open panoramic descriptions of "Hinduism", Buddhism, and Shintoism.

### ***"Hinduism" Mythology and Deities***

Although republished only once in Portuguese in 1945, it is important to mention that Faria e Sousa's work was translated and published in English, in three volumes, in 1695, albeit mobilizing residual public attention. The English translator, a little-known Captain John Stevens, explains in the presentation of the books that he "reduced this work to a much lesser compass" by eliminating all the "ornaments" from the Spanish original and "abbreviating" the extensive chronicle by removing lists of colonial authorities and many of their administrative acts since, in his perspective, they had no "intellectual value" [Sousa 1695, I, 9–10]. In contrast, the translation left the chapters in the second volume on Asian religions practically unchanged, translating with remarkable fidelity the records on "Hindu religion" [Sousa 1695, II, 375–411], thus offering us an epochal English version that we must continue to follow, respect and use as a historical document, regardless its peculiar, sometimes difficult translation of the Spanish original. Nonetheless, Sousa's six-chapter dissertation on the Hindu Religion was not only the most significant of this period, but it is, without any doubt, the most complete exposition of the theme written and then printed in Europe before the scholars and intellectuals of the 18<sup>th</sup> century began to study Indian cultures and religions with the by then well-known tools of enlightened Orientalism, not to mention numerous colonialist ambitions [Sweetman 2003]. Manuel de Faria's narrative includes a panoramic exposition of Hindu theology and mythology, a summary of the Rāmāyana, short excerpts from the Mahābhārata, and a vivid description of customs, rites, ceremonies, and other religious practices in southern India. Printed in Lisbon from the primal Spanish manuscript in 1674 and translated into English in 1695, the excursus on Hindu Religion unfortunately became an almost forgotten text despite not having any remote textual parallel in this critical period of European cultural history.

Since the category of "Hinduism" is a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Western notional coinage within a larger debate on the nature and definition of religions [Sweetman 2003, 31–52], it is pertinent to mention that Manuel de Faria e Sousa's dissertation is more extensively titled as "Dioses, Ritos y Ceremonias de Naciones Asiaticas y en particular de los Indios y dellos Malabares" (*Gods, Rites and Ceremonies of Asian Nations and in particular of the Indians and of them the Malabarians*). Although the exposition refers to what nowadays we identify as "Hinduism," it is important to understand that the text naturally ignores the term but still presents at the outset the Hindu "creed" ("creencia" [Sousa 1674, II, 655]) as a "proper religion" ("propria Religion" [Sousa 1674, II, 657]). The text must be revisited as a curious intellectual dissertation on the Hindu religion informed by Southern Indian religious and cultural practices. Its historical relevance does not come mainly from its originality (to be later discussed) but much more from its narrative representations along with an assumed Spanish Baroque style full of vibrant adjectives, images, folkloric remarks, and frequent witty comments. This colorful prose attempts to explain with remarkable openness the evident popular characteristics of "Hinduism", thus mobilizing a fascinatingly imagistic effort merged with singular comparative anecdotes to highlight a vivid idea of a far-off, exotic, and yet alluring "other" religion. This writing style, different from the dominant historiographical structure of *Asia Portuguesa*, is explained in the lines opening the chapter entitled, "Of the Gods, superstitions and Opinions of the Asiatic, particularly the Indians and among them the Malabarians":

"Here then, it will not be amiss to give the curious the satisfaction of some further information touching the *Indians, Ethiopians, Chinese, and Japanese*, but still, with my usual brevity, dividing among them this fourth part of this second volume. Asia is divided into several empires, so many very different sorts of people inhabit it, and very opposite customs

distinguish each. Yet those that are of one belief agree in the essential part, though they differ in form. It is so in *India*, as well as any other considerable portion of the world, and therefore the *Malabar*, one of the Nations thereof, may inform us of the Religion and government of all the rest” [Sousa 1674, II, 653].

It is evident from the presentation that the “religion of India” is a central subject, especially informed through the generously available knowledge of the Malabar cultural region. In 1640, when Sousa finished the manuscript of *Asia Portuguesa*, there was more than a century of Catholic missionary campaigns in Southern India progressively dominated by Jesuits after the first efforts made by Dominicans and Franciscans from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century to circa 1540 that converted, as it is well known, countless Paravars living on the coast near Tuticorin [Vink 2002]. The superior organization of the Jesuits and their global militancy brought to Europe famous collections of letters, reports, and other missionary documents in which different aspects of “Hinduism” were often exposed to denounce their “idolatry” [Sweetman 2019, 6–8]. Bearing in mind this unique missionary context, the dissertation organized by Faria e Sousa opens with an introduction to the general theology of “Hinduism” that endeavors, not without some confusion, to highlight the complex principle of “everlasting” reincarnation through the cosmological myth of the primeval egg:

“As to the frame of the world, they believe it had a beginning, and will have an end; but then begin again, and in that manner will be everlasting; that all things after having increased, diminish; that in the beginning as one thousand animals were produced one thousand died, but now for one thousand created one thousand and one die; that the reason why more die is, because the heat of the Sun increases; that in the end, a violent wind shall dissolve all things; that nothing shall then remain but the deity *Ixoreta*, as in the first *Chaos*; that he shall be reduced to the bigness of an Egg, and this to the quantity of a dew drop, scarce discernable; that after it has sounded like a cricket, it shall increase by the same measure it diminished, and shall produce within itself the five Elements, (for they reckon the Heaven the fifth) that their increasing shall burst the Egg in the middle; that there shall appear in it seven shells put together like an onion; that the Egg being divided into two unequal parts, the biggest will be the Heavens, and the lesser the Earth; that the Gods were and shall be so formed again” [Sousa 1674, II, 656].

Despite the familiar images such as the onion “shells” or the cricket “sound”, this text was not easy to understand among the Iberian minority of Catholic 17<sup>th</sup>-century elitist readers of Spanish books targeted by Sousa, including those engaged in Iberian colonial trade or settled in Asian enclaves. Consequently, the dissertation stresses a more comprehensive singular deity perspective that is progressively cored on Shiva’s superpowers, metamorphosis, diverse shapes, and avatars. In this sense, the “Hinduism” described in *Asia Portuguesa* is the South Indian one, the chief deity of which is Shiva, written “Ixora” or “Givem”, to whom Sousa’s prose assigns the primeval divinity principle, the *Īśvaratā* always translated as “Ixoreta” that becomes another name for the god. Thus, in continuation, the text explains that “the Egg being open, the Deity will be placed in the upper part; on the Earth will appear a Mountain of Silver, on the top of which will be seen the instruments of generation (which they call the true *Ixoreta* or Deity, the true God and *Causa Causarum*) because all things in the world proceed from the union of the instruments of Generation; therefore they particularly adore the noblest, that it is the Male, and place its image in their pagodas, and on their ways. This they reign to have three realms, from which proceed the three Gods, *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Givem*, or *Ixora*” [Sousa 1674, II, 657].

Although the dissertation accurately presents the Hinduist *trimurti* system as three different forms or powers of a cosmic mythological primary and trifunctional divinity, it is Shiva that becomes the foundational and axiological deity. Among other curiosities,

Sousa writes an extensive textual course with undisguised excitement to present Shiva lingam not as a mere aniconic image but as a true megalithic phallus, a representation that would surely surprise 17<sup>th</sup>-century Catholic readers, namely in the context of the Counter-Reformation repression of even remotely sexual imagery [Blunt 1985, 107–128]. In a simplification, Sousa's text suggests that all of Earth's seven landscapes were brought from the lingam superpowers of impregnation, stressing accordingly that "*Ixora*, with this instrument of generation, which was of a prodigious bigness, plowed up the Earth for the space of seven hundred thousand *loxenas*, each of these when greatest, is four leagues, and when least a league and a half; from the furrows sprung seven seas and seven lands, the ridges were the mountains, the furrows, the vales, and waters" [Sousa 1674, II, 658].

The textual developments include, as expected, a purposely exotic pictorial representation of the three Hindu central Gods following the lessons of the Baroque visual literature to be depicted as "brothers". Despite the triple distribution of the strangest attributes and objects, the text opens with Shiva's panoramic sketch to emphasize his priority and the deity's astonishing length. Shiva is not presented in Sousa's prose as the "destructive" deity, as is commonly done, but as having the "care" to "finish all things", while Brahma is the habitual "creator" and Vishnu "governs":

"The God *Givem*, or *Ixora*, is of the color of milk; besides the usual two, he has one eye in the forehead, which, being of fire, consumes all things; his body of such a length, that *Brama*, though he endeavored it, could never find the beginning or end of it. The other brother, *Vishnu*, who is the God of the Transmutations, converted himself into a hog and turned up the Earth with his snout but could never find his feet. He is so thick that the snake that girts the world cannot encompass one of his arms; he has sixteen hands, all employed with deer, chairs, a guitar, a bell, a bason, a trident, a rope, a hook, an ax, fire, a drum, beads, a staff, a wheel, a snake; on his forehead, a horned moon; his apparel skins of beasts, laid down with snakes; he has two wives, the Goddess of the Water, and *Chati*, who has already dyed one and twenty times; and because every time she dies, he puts one of her bones upon his neck, he now wears one and twenty bones there. Having shared his body with his wife and hers with him, he is half man, half woman; he cares to finish all things, *Brahma* to Create, and *Vishnu* to govern them" [Sousa 1674, II, 660].

After describing briefly, and with several mistakes, the intricate intersections between the three Gods, their diverse wives, countless descendants, and avatars, Faria e Sousa exposes rightly to his future readers that "Hinduism" was not only a centuries-old popular faith, shaping the Indian civilization and its system of values, but was also an institutional and political religion. The text believes that the Religion stands through a dominant support of a sacerdotal body, the "Bramenes", sometimes referred to in the text as Brahmins and in other passages as Brahmans or Brahmanas in a clergy sense. However, Sousa's dissertation is not aware of the intellectual functions of this "sacerdotal" group, namely as scholars and teachers, ignoring its thaumaturgic, exorcists, and divinatory powers to present them simply as a "ceremonial" religious "sect" with peculiar contradictory dietary habits and strange fears: "The *Bramenes*, who are the masters of their ceremonies, abstain from fish, flesh, eggs, and wine, of other things they eat and drink without measure; they celebrate the anniversaries of their dead with great banquets; they are so much afraid of the moon on the fourth day after the full, that they shun seeing even the reflection of her in the water" [Sousa 1674, II, 663].

In continuation, the text recognizes the Brahmans' socially superior situation of Brahmins as the most privileged position at the top of a selective social pyramid that is not immediately presented by Manuel de Faria e Sousa, being customarily identified as a "caste" hierarchy, the precise word used in the text. It is necessary to wait for the third chapter, "New Transformations", to frequent the social stratification resulting from the Vedic texts that were intended to be of sacred inspiration, accorded to the textual representation coming directly from Brahma's mythical body:

“Among the *Malabarians* are four sorts of noble people, *Bramene*, *Exastri*, *Baesti*, and *Chudra*. The first, they say, proceeds from Brahma’s face; the second (being Kings called *Coilas*) from his arms; the third (caste that they understand that has already become extinct) from his thighs; the fourth from the feet, called *Nayres*. The *Bramenes* have the name because they descended from the face and are much honored by the Kings who are not *Bramenes* and may sit down before them” [Sousa 1674, II, 682–683].

The recognition of the four *savarna* normative “castes” seems evident in which the term “Bramene”, as we have seen, generally means the Brahmins; “Exastri” corresponds to the Kshatriyas; “Baesti” to the Vaishyas, and “Chudra” to the Shudras. The transliteration in Spanish was made by purely phonetic approximations, since the textual information does not frequent the social vocabulary intrinsic to the *varna* model, is unaware of the functionality dictated by the *dharma* and lacks any reference, especially after the Islamic invasions of India, to the social groups marginalized by the system, the *dalits* or untouchables, which were one of the main bases on which Catholic missions achieved significant conversions through different strategies of mercy and charity.

### **“Metamorphoses” Through *Rāmāyana*, *Mahābhārata*, and Other Colorful Digests**

If the initial chapter on the foundational mythology of “Hinduism”, its triad of deities and their extensive colorful offspring mixes exaggeratedly exotic textually arranged curiosity with odd anthro-zoomorphisms, multiplying arms, legs, heads, eyes, and trunks, the second and third chapters, entitled “Metamorphoses”, offer to readers a general, sometimes critical and anecdotic, summary of the fantastic adventures of the *Rāmāyana* alongside several moral commentaries, plus brief excerpts from the *Mahābhārata* mainly summing up parts of the supplementary *Harivamsha* to display a genealogy of Vishnu and his avatar Krishna (677–684). In the opening remarks of the second chapter, which are devoted to a challenging comprehensive summary of the voluminous *Rāmāyana*, Sousa begins by trying to present with some simplicity Rama among the ten avatars of Vishnu who, in his prose, transformed himself into a “shark, turtle, pig, half man and half lion” [Sousa 1674, II, 666]. The text rapidly acknowledges the marriage of Rama with Sita, always written *Sida*, forced into exile with her husband and brother-in-law Lakshmana to the Dandaka Forest. During this banishment, Sita falls victim to the carnal desires of the devil-king Ravana, who kidnaps her to the kingdom of Lanka (presented in the text simply as “Ceylon”), resulting in a well-known epic war with Rama and his strange allies. After several clashes and fantastic episodes, Rama defeats Ravana. Sita is rescued but must prove her chastity by undergoing a trial by fire. Next, the text summarizes Rama and Sita’s return to Ajodhya, where they are crowned king and queen. Amid rumors again questioning the queen’s purity while she was Ravana’s captive, Rama abandons a pregnant Sita in the forest, where she gives birth to twin boys, Lava and Kusha. After her sons grow up and unite with their father, Sita returns to her mother, the goddess Bhūmi (written Pumi), the Earth’s womb [Sousa 1674, II, 676].

This summarized version of Faria e Sousa is primarily concentrated on two strong pictorial and extravagant characters: the supervillain Ravana (written Ravena), the mythical multi-headed demon and king of the island of Lanka, plus, as a leading burlesque actor, the monkey god and hero Hanuman (in the text Hanimam), faithful devotee of Rama, leading the most fantastic army of monkeys to become the “foundation of ape worship by Indians” [Sousa 1674, II, 664]. Indeed, these popular and very scenic parts of the *Rāmāyana* resound dramatic attainments in Faria e Sousa’s original Baroque Spanish writing. The word used is naturally “mono”, which is both expressive and polysemic. Other than the ordinary “monkey” signification, several meanings evolved around the categorization of a clown, toy, or naughty, chaffy, or stupid and lazy persons. The term had also been used in both Portugal and Spain since the late Middle Ages to refer to



mummers and jugglers' plays that became common in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century in principal Iberian towns building up forms of popular theater and entertainment [Sousa 2002, 179–181]. The Spanish writing of *Asia Portuguesa*, far-fetched and full of vibrant adjectives, transforms these scenes of monkey gods and heroes, armies and adventures into an actual circus show in line with the Baroque plastic excesses which were one of the sources of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century cult adoption of the term “malabarista” [Malabarian] in Spanish and Portuguese as a synonym for a juggler [Sousa 1674, II, 714–715].

In this sense, it is worthy to underscore that these scenes, images, and fabulous characters are significantly close to the *tolpavakoothu*, the traditional shadow theatre from Kerala with its Rāmāyana only repertory, focusing primarily on Sita portrayed as a prisoner of Ravana and her subsequent dramatic quest for proving her innocence and purity [Seltmann 1986; Venu 1990]. 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Portuguese sources, mainly written by vigilant Jesuit missionaries, account performances linked to temple rituals made in the Tamil language in Kerala cities and villages around Kochi (Cochin), Kollam, Kottayam, Palghat, Pollachi, and Thrissur. Some of these Catholic missionaries' reports and letters reflect very critically on these performances inquiring about Sita's provocative moral experience and voluptuous values to criticize these popular plays of her adventures as ritual idolatries [Županov 1998, 6–20], appraisals that, although much more complacent, are also found in some textual remarks and comments, as we will see later, in which Faria e Sousa jokes about and paternalizes women behavior.

Despite the abridged account of the epic tales of the Rāmāyana and the strong scenic resonance of heroes and villains, gods and devils, Sousa, clearly seeking to always place himself in the position of an educated Catholic upright intellectual, ends up abruptly interrupting the adventurous narrative of Sita's abduction, imprisonment and liberation with a warning to the potential reader that “the manner of looking for, finding, and recovering her is so tedious, preposterous, and foolish, as well as the foregoing part that it doesn't worth the strictest curiosity to read it” [Sousa 1674, II, 676]. As an immediate consequence, the third chapter is even shorter, becoming a modest summary of Vishnu genealogy as Krishna taken from selected parts of the *Harivamsha* within the Mahābhārata epic context. After identifying, not without some confusion, the main characters, namely the birth of Karna and his subsequent adventures, Sousa closes the dissertation again with a general succinct and dichotomic summary: “two things stand out from this period: one the story of the rich stingy; another that the belief of the Malabarians knew good and bad works; the reward of one and the punishment of the other; crime and purgatory; Hell and Paradise” [Sousa 1674, II, 682].

The fourth chapter of this dissertation, devoted to pagodas, is more interesting in historical and ethnographic terms. It is quickly perceived that the text mainly visits briefly eight pagodas in the region of Kerala, offering an inventory in which the temple of “Rettora” becomes the main religious territorial shrine: “the most famous Pagodas are, that of Rettora built by Cheram Perimal living at Cranganur who placed in it the statue of a man ten cubits in length, lying on a snake with five heads in the sea of Milk. The temple was covered with plates of Massy Gold, but because they were subject to be stolen, he put them into the treasure of the Pagoda, and instead of them placed others of copper” [Sousa 1674, II, 686]. This presentation is certainly a rare description of the temple of Tiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum) with its astonishing epochal wealth and Anantasayana form, displaying a gigantic Vishnu reclining on the thousand-headed snake Ananta. The available historical documentation relates that a local king, Cheraman Perumal, repaired the temple that was already largely ruined in the 19<sup>th</sup> century despite centuries of Travancore kings' patronage [Menon 2013, 33]. Sousa's textual memoir suggests a temple with an architectural pattern, from walls to tower structures, similar to the Dravidian architecture of Tamil Nadu: an imposing gopura or entrance gateway supporting impressive ascending stores ending in a vaulted roof.

This short repository of these Southern India pagodas allows Faria e Sousa, an art collector, skilled draftsman, and respected music lover, to discover Hindu arts and architecture with an open critical appreciation and suggestive comparative skills. Rather than focus on the idolatry that so impressed his contemporaries' Catholic missionaries, this chapter of *Asia Portuguesa* prefers to elegantly extol sculptures, images, decorations, and sacred buildings and evaluate the profound symbolism and beauty of Hindu art that is finely compared to Western Medieval religious aesthetics, including two major Portuguese monuments:

“Discover yourself in these sculptures no less knowledge of the divine than of the profane. If there is beauty, there is civilization. If there are fables of giants and Parsifals, there are truths of paradise and punished first parents. If there are gentile gods, there are true angels. That these buildings could be of holy worship does not contradict me for what there is in them of unholy and monstrous figures, of men or beasts. The ancient churches of Europe are full of this, where there are works of similar shapes, not only on the columns and architraves of the walls, but on the altarpieces themselves: there you can see the heads of bulls, sheep, horses, other animals, and yet they are holy: satyrs, mermaids, centaurs, serpents, human faces with ferocious bodies, and on the contrary, birds, worms, and a thousand misshapen varieties, which concern art and not belief, nor ours is spoiled or less pure. It is not for this reason that churches are minted smoothly today, because it is also done in the same way in houses; looking at the economy of our time, which in fact there is no coin today to mint what you see in the Monastery of Batalha or Belém in Portugal. What do I say to this?” [Sousa 1674, II, 693].

The following chapters, five and six, arrive at the Malabar cultural and religious region to account “Of the Officers, Rites, Ceremonies, Burials, and other things”. Besides some exciting incursions on the themes of domestic devotions, illnesses full of sorcerers, venial sins, weddings, rituals, fasting, or pilgrimages, it is the female widows' burial sacrifice that most attracts Sousa's surprised prose. The text accordingly relates with commotion that on the coast of Coromandel, in Goa, and Gujarat, the “women burn themselves with their husbands, unless they have a sucking child. If any refuse, the relatives hold it as an affront to them and force her. Three hundred burnt themselves with the *Naique* of *Madura*. The manner of it is as follows: the woman is carried on men's shoulders to the pagoda in her best attire and anointed with sandal; after praying to the Idol, she dances all the way to the place where her husband was burnt, and casts herself into the fire; the relatives stand round with forks to keep her in, and make noise with several instruments so that her cries may not be heard and move compassion” [Sousa 1674, II, 713]. This is practically the only theme in Faria e Sousa's entire dissertation that moves away from the continuous openness, at least textually, in relation to the otherness of “Hinduism” to a more critical and severe commentary: “Truly mysterious are some of these inventions that seem ridiculous. Indeed, some of these pious, zealous, and political customs are ridiculous because they are vain, horrible because they are bestial, and lamentable because they are mistaken” [Sousa 1674, II, 713–714].

**Manuel de Faria e Sousa's Sources:  
Giacomo Fenicio “East Indian Sect Book”**

Like the first two chronicling parts of *Asia Portuguesa* that follow João de Barros and Diogo do Couto published decades, the dissertation on “Hinduism” is not entirely original either. Sousa explains in the introduction to this section that he had generously received from an important Portuguese epochal intellectual, writer, memorialist, and owner of an impressive library, Manuel Severim de Faria (1584–1655), canon of the Évora dioceses, several copies of unedited manuscripts on the history of Portugal and its overseas expansion, including a book on the Malabarians: “a copy of several other Relations, which with zealous liberality *Chantre* Manuel Severim sent to me, including the book of the Malabar” [Sousa 1666, I, 33]. This simple note refers specifically to a Portuguese

manuscript of 73 folios that still exists in the Évora Public Library, later entitled “Tratado dos deuses gentílicos de todo o oriente e dos ritos e cerimónias que usam os Malabares” (*Treatise on the Gentile Gods of All the East and on the Rites and Ceremonies Used by the Malabarians*), dated from 1618 and attributed to the Jesuit Manuel Barradas (c. 1570–1646) [Barata 1897, 8, Cod. 29]. Former secretary of the vice-provincial in India, Barradas was transferred to the Ethiopian Jesuit mission in 1623, having previously, at the end of 1618, sent a copy of this manuscript to his friend Manuel Severim de Faria [Pennec 2020, 13]. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became another precious volume of the extensive collection of old manuscripts held in the “Manizola Library” gathered by José Bernardo de Barahona Fragoso Cordovil da Gama Lobo, the wealthy second viscount of Esperança, who also acquired several volumes from the former Severim de Faria library [Barata 1897].

Author of a voluminous chronicle of the Jesuit missions in Ethiopia, including significant dissertations on Tigray and Aden [ARSI 1634], written during his imprisonment in that later city-harbor by the Ottomans in 1633, Barradas never wrote any work remotely related to Indian religions nor any memoir of his thirty years missionary experience in west India centered in Goa. The manuscript still cataloged under his name is a selection of some parts of a major treatise on the Hindu Religion completed around 1609–1612 by the Italian Jesuit missionary in South India, Giacomo Fenicio (1558–1632), born in Capua circa 1558, who arrived at the oriental missions in 1600 and died in Cochin in 1632. Composed or translated in Portuguese to become later known as “Livro da Seita dos Índios Orientais” (*East Indian Sect Book*), several copies and abridged versions of this treatise spread among Jesuit missionaries in India to teach them how to identify and denounce the “Brahmins’ idolatry”. The only remaining integral manuscript copy of Fenicio’s dissertation lay in the British Library [British Library, Ms. Sloane 1820, Livro]. It was published in 1933 in Uppsala by Jarl Charpentier, offering a highlighting introduction but proposing a transcription with numerous misreadings and incomprehensible gaps [Fenicio 1933].

Despite its mainly apologetic goal, that of teaching the missionaries to dispute with the Brahmins and to refute their doctrines, Fenicio’s treatise was written a few years after two other Jesuit Italian missionaries, Alessandro Leni and Roberto de Nobili, started adopting Hindu codes of dressing and other ways of life, paving the way for the well-known debate on the “Malabar rites” [Dharampal-Frick 2018, 122–142]. Built on his ascetic experience in the Hindu way in Madurai starting in 1606, Nobili exposed a systematic accommodation missionary strategy in a Latin “Apology” and in several dissertations written in Tamil, still largely unpublished, defending an inculturation of “Hindu” social practices and rituals presented as symbolic and acceptable for the Catholic evangelization efforts [Sanfilippo & Prezzolini 2008; Schouten 2018, 183–198]. A tremendous uproar ensued, and several other Jesuits, mainly Portuguese, denounced Hindu cultural practices’ “superstitious” nature as irreconcilable with Christianity, arguments posed in several counter reports and expositions as in Diogo Gonçalves’ “História do Malavar” (*Malavar History*), dating from 1615 [Gonçalves 1955], followed in 1616 by Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso’s very critical “Sumario das serimonias e modo de proceder dos bramanes destas partes da India” (*Summary of the ceremonies and manner of proceeding of the Brahmins of these parts of India*) [Trancoso 1973]. Although displaying similitudes and conceptual connections to the much more “famous” debate on the “Chinese Rites”, which were ultimately condemned in 1704 and 1742 by several papal decisions, the Malabar controversy reached a happy end: after sixteen years of vicissitudes, including the contradicting positions of several Jesuit superiors, the Inquisition of Goa, and later that of Lisbon, and finally the Holy See in 1623 gave a favorable opinion of the accommodation missionary strategy for the evangelization of India granting in the papal officials’ text that Hindu cultural and social habits were merely external practices and rituals without any implications of religious faith [Dahmen 1931, 186–189]. Although it is not

absolutely clear if Fenicio's manuscript was an intrinsic part of this controversy, the general debate on the "Malabar Rites" did not dispense a progressive in-depth knowledge of the myths and philosophy to which they were intimately linked. The tense discussions among the Jesuit missionaries and their superiors thus contributed decisively to a better understanding of the Hindu Religion.

However, Manuel de Faria e Sousa's use of a manuscript copy of a selected abridged version of Giacomo Fenicio's "East Indian Sect Book" does not have any indication of authorship. The textual references in *Asia Portuguesa* only serve to clarify the friendly gift of Manuel Severim de Faria, and the name of the Jesuit Manuel Barradas is completely omitted, as well as that of Giacomo Fenicio. Moreover, Sousa's notes use the term translation ("traducción" in Spanish) and present to his readers this primary source of his dissertation on Hindu Religion with the following meaningful details: "translation of the book that the Malabarians of India consider as us the Holy Bible; it deals with its gods and rites; it is a book very similar to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and worthy of admiration" [Sousa 1666, I, 33]. Although the word translation doubly refers to the translation from an unknown arcane Indian source, and Sousa's "traducción," the textual version published in *Asia Portuguesa* is not a mere copy or a simplified Spanish version of the manuscript written in Portuguese that he received from Manuel Severim de Faria. The text does not modestly transcribe to Spanish the abbreviated version of Fenicio's treatise since Faria e Sousa introduces several original comments and remarks, plus novel narrative and rhetorical strategies aiming to mobilize a comprehensive and even amusing reading of a subject meant to impress epochal elitist readers by its exaggerated alterity and exoticism, a growing fashion in historiographical accounts of European overseas circulation leading to modern travel literature.

Investigating in more detail the pertinent links between the text by Manuel de Faria e Sousa, the abridged manuscript version sent by Manuel Barradas to Manuel Severim de Faria, and the treatise by Giacomo Fenicio, it is relevant to ascertain an evident process of selection and transformation of the original source in order to adapt it to a 17<sup>th</sup>-century Iberian cult audience. Fenicio's manuscript treatise is divided into eight books, the first is assigned the previously missing general title "Livro primeiro da seita dos Indios Orientais" (*First book of the East Indian Sects*). This opening book is divided into eleven chapters, from the "Creation of the World" to the "Age of Yugas" [Fenicio 1933, 1–36]. The second book comprises twenty-four chapters, mainly accounting for Shiva's genealogy, descendants, and avatars [Fenicio 1933, 37–103]. Books three to six and their 56 chapters are sequential since, after the initial sections on Vishnu avatars Rama and Krishna, the text offers a successive digest of the Rāmāyana and a summary of the Mahābhārata [Fenicio 1933, 104–259]. The incomplete book seven has only four chapters on Brahma and his peculiar descendent Ayappan, who is only worshiped in South India [Fenicio 1933, 260–271], lacking the seven chapters corresponding to the final Rāmāyana's episodes that are missing in the British Library manuscript. Finally, book eight includes thirteen chapters on temple rituals, religious ceremonies, and traditional cultural practices in the Malabar region under the general title of "The cult of the false deities amongst the Hindus" [Fenicio 1933, 272–340]. This controversial perspective is recurrent since the descriptive main textual narrative is often interrupted by long dissertations, sometimes whole chapters, refuting Brahmins' myths and creeds: chapter two of the first book, entitled "in which the above is rejected", immediately criticizes Hindu cosmogony [Fenicio 1933, 4]; chapter nine of book II refutes the idea that God commits sins [Fenicio 1933, 58]; the eighteenth and last chapter of book VI contains a critical refutation of the doctrine of transmigration [Fenicio 1933, 252–259]. Fenicio's work also includes thirty-two longer and shorter quotes of poetical works in Tamil transcribed in the Latin alphabet but extremely difficult to understand, coming from a poet mentioned as Paccanar or Pacunar, who was very critical of Brahmin supremacy but is unfortunately misidentified [Fenicio 1933, 36–37].

The manuscript sent by the Jesuit Manuel Barradas to his friend Manuel Severim de Faria has roughly one-third the length of the original source organized by Fenicio, offering only five books. The first, entitled “Da Seita dos Índios Orientais e principalmente dos Malavares” (*On the East Indian Sect and mainly the Malabarians*), abridges the eleven chapters of Fenicio’s manuscript first book to eight. The twenty chapters of the second book of the original are compacted into fifteen. Then Fenicio’s books III to VI are compressed into a single third book, abridging the Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata stories. Nonetheless, Barradas’ manuscript accounts for Sita’s final story up to her return to Mother Earth’s womb, which was missing in the manuscript of book seven in the British Library. Then books IV and V of the Barradas volume follow chapter by chapter books VII and VIII of Fenicio’s work. The manuscript sent by Manuel Barradas to Manuel Severim de Faria excluded all theological and controversial chapters and dissertations, also eliminating the transliterated Tamil poems. Finally, certainly indicating a direct personal intervention of Manuel Barradas from his experience in the Malabar region and Goa, the Jesuit added to the end of his version the dissertation on the eight Kerala temples published in Faria e Sousa’s *Asia Portuguesa*, which would have been difficult for Fenicio to access since his missionary work was concentrated in Cochin and Calicut.

Manuel de Faria e Sousa follows, in fact, as we have already suggested, a copy of the manuscript sent by Barradas to the canon of Évora, Manuel Severim de Faria, but Sousa made another new arrangement to it: the first chapter corresponds to books I and II from Barradas’ manuscript; chapter two follows Barradas’ book III up to the end of the Rāmāyana digest; chapter three corresponds to the second part of Barradas’ book III and book IV; chapters four to six match Barradas’ book V. Other than translating his source to Spanish, Sousa opted for a more vibrant, colorful writing style with many adjectives and plenty of remarks and comments, while also making some small additions to the original text. For example, in chapter three, Faria e Sousa opens paragraph six with a sudden interruption of the brief Mahābhārata summary to explain the meaning of *betel* by recounting the rare visit of an “ambassador” of the Deccan kingdom to Lisbon who surprised the Portuguese court by constantly chewing the nut mixed with “cypress apples”, which he explained was healthier than consuming the traditional areca [Sousa 1674, II, 680–681]. In chapter four, paragraph eight, the text adds the date of 1608 to briefly recount the Jesuit founding in that year of a hermitage with a large cross near the pagoda of cape Comorin, believed to be a former ancient Christian temple from St. Thomas’s supposed early evangelization of India [Sousa 1674, II, 687]. These two intertexts plus several small and large intertextual comments do not exist in Fenicio’s treatise, or the Barradas selected copy, nor naturally, the introduction and conclusion of Faria e Sousa’s general dissertation on the “religions of Asia”. At the end of this itinerary of copies and transactions, the version from *Asia Portuguesa* had selectively modernized Giacomo Fenicio’s original text through Manuel Barradas intermediation in order to offer in Spanish a learned, polite, and exotic dissertation on the main themes and characteristics of “Hinduism” visited from South Indian sources and practices.

### ***“Hinduism” Explained by Christian and Classic Connections***

The result is that Faria e Sousa’s text displays an assumed openness towards what we identify as “Hinduism”, very different from the controversial and critical perspectives of the Italian Jesuit treatise on which it is based, which mainly intended to refute the “Indian religion” as a dangerous idolatry. On the contrary, the version published in *Asia Portuguesa* intends more to suggest a reading process connecting “Hinduism” and Christian doctrines through strategic remarks and comments mainly hinting at some of their similar “stories” or *topoi*. Faria e Sousa attempts through this commentarial process to highlight the symbolic meaning of some critical Hindu arcane mythological tales and reveal pristine clues of Christian universal revelation. Although most Hindu myths were admittedly

unclear to him, Sousa constantly searches for a comprehensive understanding through systematic, sometimes original approximations under a Christian reading “light”. Thus, when recounting how Shiva remedied Dakṣa Prāchetasa, who was beheaded by Virabhadra, by placing a goat’s head on his neck, Faria e Sousa comments with final rhetoric admiration: “How many lights of beautiful doctrine are emerging amidst this philosophical darkness!” [Sousa 1674, II, 714]. In other cases, a simple parenthetical strategic remark can immediately change the textual economy to insinuate a parallel, for example, with the biblical accounts of the creation of woman. The following remark on this theme immediately invites the readers to appreciate with an open curiosity another colorful creational paradigm of the superpowers of Shiva’s gigantic *Linga*, possibly the source of the traditional *Chatī* ceremonial of new-born babies still widely practiced in Indian social cultures today:

“Then from *Ixora* back came the woman called *Chatī* (this has some resemblance with *Eve*’s being made of *Adam*’s rib) and was separated from him by virtue of some words, and they resolved to have copulation. The length of the generating instrument (called *Linga*) wherewith *Ixora* had plowed the ground hindered; he cut it into eighteen pieces, whereof were made the weapons they use as the spear, sword, bow, and buckler. Then *Ixora*, with his finger opened the way of generation in *Chatī*, which shed much Blood; he received it in his hands and throwing it up into the air, suddenly of it were produced the sun, moon, stars, roses, flowers, sweet-herbs, and snakes, which they use in their ceremonies, both being then fit for copulation, and by them, the world was peopled, the beasts and devils produced, and heaven filled with spirits, which they say are thirty-three million” [Sousa 1674, II, 377–378].

In other textual moments, Sousa adds a simple final reflection to legitimate the approximation of Malabar beliefs and Christian dogmas on Heaven and Hell. The pertinent excerpt opens with the tortuous story of the rare Southern India deity Dharmapuram (written Darmaputrem), “one of the hundred brothers”, dealing with the moral obligation of giving alms to emphasize the dichotomy of reward and punishment offered by the sacred opposition between Heaven and Hell:

“*Darmaputrem*, one of the hundred Brothers, descended into Hell, where he saw one encompassed with great treasures and perishing with hunger. He asked the reason, and the other answered that it was because he had not given alms while he lived in the world; but that once he showed a poor man the house where the rice was kept that was given for charity, pointing at it with his finger. Then *Darmaputrem* told him to put that finger with which he had pointed into his mouth, and by doing it, he thought he tasted all the dainties in the world. *Darmaputrem* and others returning into the world gave great alms, whereby after death, they purchased Paradise. This proves the *Malabars* believed in Heaven and Hell and on Reward and Punishment for good and bad works” [Sousa 1674, II, 681–682].

Summarizing the Rama’s final slaying of Ravana, allowing him to victorious return after fourteen years to the throne of Ajodhya, Sousa finds a parallel with king’s David biblical account: “David seems to be walking around here when, in favor of the Church, he slew the Philistine and was received by similar festivities” [Sousa 1674, II, 676]. Next in this digest of the Mahābhārata, Faria e Sousa also recalls the magic birth of Karna from the ear of the young Kuntī who, to protect his son born out of wedlock, was convinced to put him on boards that she threw into a river, an episode immediately interpreted as “a remembrance of the first fortune of Moses” [Sousa 1674, II, 679]. There are also wholly original comments, as when he suggests, with colorful imagination and invention, that the Brahmins descended from fishermen since the Brahmanical cord, which would originally be the thread of a fishing net, clearly evokes the parallel with the Apostles:

“The *Bramenes* are the masters of the *Indian* Religion and proceed from fishermen because the *Malabar* churches were delivered to Fishermen upon condition that they should

always wear some mark of their first state and trade. This is the cause they wear on their necks some threads of their nets. This is the origin of those threads they wear, never before mentioned by another writer. A thousand reflections offer me to discover the truths of our religion in what seem like phantoms or chimeras at first sight. I cannot contain myself without declaring that true and divine religion came up out of the water with Noah and out of the water and nets with Christ and his apostles" [Sousa 1674, II, 668].

Faria e Sousa's dissertation goes further, purposefully suggesting from the description of the general widespread practice of recurrent purification baths' that the Hindu religion recognized the Biblical decalogue, however not applying the "doctrine". Adding a personal commentary conveying his own cult understanding of the idea of nobility and the contrasting meanings of "sin", the text explains that "the baths that they use are less to cleanse the flesh than the soul. They know the ten divine precepts, but they do not consider themselves sinful by them. The greater sin for those who presume to be noble is to be touched by those that are not, even though they are rare in arms, letters, and virtues" [Sousa 1674, II, 697].

Finally, one can also find, in a rare textual development, almost suggesting a regional ethnography, an interesting comparison through the mirror pattern of the ritual ceremonies of fasting and abstinences a traditional invitation for the faithful to turn around in the main Hindu temples several times. Recalling certainly its native origins in the Northwest of Portugal, Faria e Sousa interrupts the narrative to offer the readers what he designates, following the epochal erudition, "local antiquities", a remembrance of the ancient medieval procession of St. Peter in Caldas da Taipa, near the city of Guimarães, which is still today an important festivity in the region. The memory serves once again to try to bring closer, at least from a perspective of "popular" or "naïve" culture, those Hindu ritual ceremonies to the ancient Christian traditional cults of the rural regions of North Portugal or any other Catholic geography, suggesting the same mutual cultural "admiration":

"I will not fail to communicate here an antiquity of the Portuguese devotion regarding the turns the fasting people give in their pagodas. In many of the regions of Portugal, it is customary that the Christians surround their churches and hermitages on certain days with processions: and each one for himself when devotion stimulates them. Those processions are called clamors. With these, several parishes go one day to a hermitage of St. Peter, which is on the top of a hill in the region of Douro and Minho, between the towns of Guimarães and Amarante at the same distance, on the right path. Entering all in the hermitage, they pray, go out, and sing litanies, they give eighteen dilated turns to the narrowest temple. The ordinary is to do only three. If referred to the Malabarians, they will admire it, as you admire them" [Sousa 1674, II, 705].

Where Faria e Sousa fails to discern Christian meanings, he tries to identify parallels with Greco-Roman mythology, well known as literary *topoi* or rhetoric images that had been commonplace since the Renaissance, a cultural and literary process explained in the famous Ernst Robert Curtius' essay, originally published in German, in 1948 and then applied to the most diverse fields of European literature, arts, and discourse from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century that mobilized extensive collections of Classic topics as a cult repository of universal wisdom [Curtius 2013, 70–71, 79–105]. The text explains, for example, that the crude Linga cult, as a stylization of the virile member of Shiva, also existed in "the most cultured Rome that decorated it in their ceremonies" [Sousa 1674, II, 657]. These Roman similitudes are also evoked to understand the Hindu temples' peculiar architecture. Describing, among others, the "Pagoda of the Monkeys" in Kerala, Sousa explains that "the Pagoda dedicated to the Monkey is so great, that only the cloister in which they shut up the cattle designed for sacrifices, has 700 columns of marble nothing inferior to those of the Roman *Pantheon*" [Sousa 1674, II, 694]. The first Rāmāyana lines immediately suggest to Faria e Sousa's erudition the fables of Phaeton [Sousa 1674, II, 670]. Then, the

fantastic clash between Rama and Ravana, in which every time the first was able to cut off one of the heads of the second, many more grew to replace it, is compared to the fight between Hercules and the hydra of Lerna [Sousa 1674, II, 674]. In the opening chapter of the short Mahābhārata digest, our writer warns readers that the “Malabarian Ovids” don’t need to envy the Latins since their tales are even more fantastic [Sousa 1674, II, 677]. Therefore, Hindu mythology is also compared to Aesop’s Fables, that “teach the biggest scams” [Sousa 1674, II, 714]. There is even a comparative reference to the use of classical mythology in Camões’ “Os Lusíadas”, of which Manuel de Faria e Sousa was, after all, the main epochal editor and commentator: “who doubts that the only Poet knew all of this when he made Thetis apologize to the giant Adamastor” [Sousa 1674, II, 688].

### **“Hinduism” as a Field for Eurocentric Folklore and Burlesque**

Manuel de Faria e Sousa’s exposition on “Indian religion” also adds to the original Fenicio source, intermediated by Manuel Barradas’s abridged version, several pleasant perspectives mobilizing both popular folkloric and burlesque situations, normally achieved by adding again a final comment, which in these cases pretend to be entertaining and moralist. In the textual summary of the intricate Hindu foundational cosmology, albeit full of confusions, Sousa tries to end the presentation with a gracious remark that helps to close with humor a sinuous presentation challenging to apprehend:

“The Heaven is fixed upon the Earth, not the Earth, the center of it. The Sun and Moon move like the fish in the water, by day from East to West, by night, they run about the Northward, not under the Earth, but along the edge of the horizon; they doubt whether the Earth is supported upon a bulls-horns, or upon the snake called *Ananta*; their Paradise is in some mountain. The snake *Bassagui* fighting with the wind, would not let it pass, but *Ixora* commanding her to give it way, allows the wind to flow more impetuous for having been detained, tore up a mountain, which falling into the sea formed the Island of *Ceylon*. Other Islands are encompassed by the seas they call of sugar, milk, butter, and sweet water. Happy are the sailors that could find such pleasant seas” [Sousa 1674, II, 658–659].

The Hindu core triad of divinities is also a subject for several burlesque comments on their labyrinthic descendants, countless marriages and alliances, incredible adventures, and amazing metamorphoses. Describing how Vishnu cut off the head of a certain mythical snake and from there, a man with five hundred heads and a thousand hands sprouted, Sousa adds a final witty remark: “he must have been the father of all the big-headed and annoying beggars” [Sousa 1674, II, 661]. Next, when Vishnu turned into his avatar Krishna, Sousa’s account remarks that he “married 16.108 women and lying with them all in one day got many sons. This is counted as the greatest action of this god and difficult to match since today one barely supports a wife and her mother” [Sousa 1674, II, 683]. Brahma doesn’t escape from these burlesque definitive comments with an opportune moral lesson since Sousa explains that in the “Age of *Brahma*, all men had monkey faces, and in the next, they will have horse faces. The contrary is seen among us; for outwardly we appear men, and inwardly we are brutes” [Sousa 1674, II, 684].

The Rāmāyana adventures also presented new opportunities for moral and burlesque comments, namely on women’s “matters”, which can be simple parenthetical remarks. Recounting Hanuman’s quest for Sita in Ceylon, the text states that “converted into a cat, he entered the palace and the room where Ravana slept, but not finding Sita, he discovered her by the scent of roses (proof that nothing detects women as much as their delicious adornments) that she had on her head” [Sousa 1674, II, 671]. In continuation, after arresting Hanuman, the demonic Ravana ordered to set him on fire. Still, he managed to escape to the sea not without having put fire to all the cities and lands of Ceylon, except for the one where Sita was. Soon Ravana concluded that the presence of Rama’s wife “was to be the cause of the Ceylon destruction (as if mortals could be lost without women)” [Sousa 1674, II, 672]. Later, after killing the archrival Ravana, Sousa writes that “having



Rama bring his wife Sita and seeing her so beautiful, he told her that she had offended him by allowing herself to be humiliated by his enemy during his absence (an example of addiction to too much beauty)" [Sousa 1674, II, 675]. Sita immediately proved her innocence by witnessing her resistance to all of Rama's advances, with Faria e Sousa concluding from this episode that "women who have husbands not even in the shadow of other men should approach because the scruple cannot be put in the shadows" [Sousa 1674, II, 675]. As Rama's adventures come to an end with the recollection of Sita in the bowels of goddess Bhūmi, the text of this second chapter can then morally conclude "that it is neither proper for the quietness nor honor of a man to cohabit with his wife after he has risen so many suspicions" [Sousa 1674, II, 676].

Despite these comments on the verge of undisguised misogyny, in this field of humorous and moralist opportunities, nothing can be compared to the burlesque textual attention that Manuel de Faria e Sousa addresses to the Hindu sacralization of the cow with its collection of traditional tabu sanctions. The dissertation explains to potential readers in an assumedly vulgar but visual language that the Hindu faithful "as soon as they see a cow piss, they run and catch it in their hands, drink part, and sprinkle themselves with the rest, and believe themselves most pure; besides the law that forbids killing a cow, this is so great a sin that it requires many alms and other good acts to expiate it" [Sousa 1674, II, 701]. In addition to urine, cow dung is also a fundamental relic that Sousa finds as an actual sign to decide on the most suitable site for the construction of a pagoda: "what precedes the erection of a pagoda to ensure the right place consists of sowing beans on the site where it is going to be built. When they are already flowering, they put a gray cow to graze. When, after being satisfied, the belly is relieved, they believe it to be the consecrated place, so they immediately raise a pillar and place the idol on top of it" [Sousa 1674, II, 685]. Furthermore, the text clarifies that "cow dung ash is the most creditable thing to purify oneself, pulverizing the face, shoulders, and chest. Yogis (their religious) the more dung they have, the more saints they consider themselves" [Sousa 1674, II, 700]. Finally, Faria e Sousa also highlights the profound sacred symbolic meaning of the cow's holy body: "the reason why this animal is so esteemed is because on its horns it bears Ashokasundari and Manasa, daughters of Shiva; in the eyes, the Sun and the Moon; in the ears the two women of Brahma; Shiva on the nose; Vishnu in the tongue; Devas on the teeth; in the fur the Rishis; in the feet the four laws; in the milk Amrita; and in the urine the absolution of sins" [Sousa 1674, II, 701].

In contrast, Sousa clarifies that the "oxen are not so esteemed", although a lot of Indian princes "imagine themselves descended from a bull because, losing all the men and remaining only with the women, one joined a bull from which a boy was born who was the restorer of the virile sex". This mythical legend immediately mobilizes one of Faria e Sousa's most scathing comments, warning that "from some of these repairmen that entered the houses of men who don't repair came the origin of those hunting trophies that they say leave them in the forehead" [Sousa 1674, II, 701]. It is not necessary to recall how widespread the burlesque theme of the cuckold in the Iberian baroque literature and theatre was, proposing through these common "hunting" metaphors one of the leading comic and folkloric types, such as Faria e Sousa's famous close admirer's, Francisco de Quevedo, very daring, extremely popular, and prudently anonymously play published around 1640 as "El siglo del cuerno: gracias y desgracias del ojo del culo y otros trabajos festivos" (*The Century of the Horn: Graces and Misfortunes of the Asshole and Other Festive Works*) [Quevedo 1912]. It is not finally indispensable to continue expanding this collection of comments, notes, or parentheses to verify how much Manuel de Faria e Sousa's original intervention and personal prose have selectively transformed the controversial goal of his original source into a curious, open, and almost amusing visit to the main mythological foundations, sacred roots, leading rituals and aesthetic aspects of "Hinduism".

### *The Discovery of Asian Religions against Traditional Ethnocentrism*

Since it is almost normative to close, even if provisionally, a research paper with a conclusion, although transient and open, one can only suggest the urgency of the complete, careful, and critical edition of Manuel de Faria e Sousa's dissertation on "Hinduism". However rigorous, it is not simply enough since the lengthy chapter on "Indian religion" intersects intensely with those other two in which *Asia Portuguesa* visits Buddhism in China and Japan. Merging the lessons of these three chapters at the end of the complete dissertation on the "Religions of the Asiatic Nations", Sousa can but only stress a paradox. Despite its disconcerting mythology and idolatries, opened to the most amusing remarks and surprises, India turns up closer than it seems to the Christian faith, and our diligent writer suggests that perhaps it is predestined to embrace it shortly since they merely forgot with time "the true light" of which they were the "first owners and possessors" [Sousa 1674, II, 716]. In contrast, China and Japan, where Buddhist monasticism seemed to prefigure a Christian dawning, are described to be much further from Christianity and very difficult to evangelize. According to Faria e Sousa's prose, a "diabolical hoax", half a millennium older than Christianity, presented to Japan and China an alternative to the counterfeit of the Christian faith, which was precisely Buddhism [Sousa 1674, II, 763–764].

Nonetheless, during the process of collecting materials for this lengthy religious excursus, Sousa found in India, China, and Japan that old Asian writing "hide the most beautiful doctrine" [Sousa 1674, II, 714], countering the "hard truth for the presumptuous" who think "that in none of the provinces of the world there is, nor has there yet been, science except in Europe" [Sousa 1674, II, 715]. This assumed anti-ethnocentric conclusion recognizes that Asia "is not only the teacher and mother of the greatest science, which is the true Religion, but of all human sciences, from which Greece took them, Italy from both, and ours from all" [Sousa 1674, II, 715]. Prefiguring almost three centuries in advance of our present criticism of a Eurocentric exclusivist panorama of world history, Manuel de Faria e Sousa rightly invites readers and thinkers with this intelligent conclusive appeal to "See, then, how wrong those are here who call Asia barbaric with a full mouth, how wrong those who consider their scriptures to be in vain, and even more so if they are very ancient as *this*" [Sousa 1674, II, 715]. And *this* itself is Manuel de Faria e Sousa's text on the "Religion of India".

### REFERENCES

#### *Manuscript sources:*

*Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu* (ARSI), Roma, Ms. Goa 54: Barradas M. Tratado primeiro. Do estado da Santa Fé romana em Ethiopia quando se lançou o pregão contra ella; Tratado segundo. Do reino de Tygrê e seus mandos em Ethiopia; Tratado terceiro. Da cidade e fortaleza de Adem (1634), 204 f.

*Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu* (ARSI), Roma, Ms. Goa 59: Trancoso G. F. Sumario das serimonias e modo de proceder dos brâmanes destas partes da India conforme suas lleis e doutrinas dos seus doutores, ff. 142 (Trancoso Gonçalo Fernandes. Tratado do Pe. Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso sobre o Hinduísmo (Maduré, 1616) (1973), José Wicki (ed.), Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, Lisboa).

*Biblioteca Pública de Évora* (BPE) – Tratado dos deuses gentílicos de todo o oriente e dos ritos e cerimónias que usam os Malabares, [atr. to Manuel Barradas], [1618], ff. 73, [1 br.]

*British Library*, Ms. Sloane 1820 – LIVRO primeiro "Da seita dos Indios Orientais e principalmente dos Malavares" [ff. 1–36]; Livros II–VII "Da ley dos Indios" [ff. 37–271]; Livro VIII "Do culto dos falsos deoses dos Indios orientais" [ff. 272–340] (Fenicio G. (1933), *The Livro da Seita dos Indios Orientais*, Jarl Charpentier (ed.), Almqvist & Wiksells, Uppsala).

#### *Printed sources:*

Barros João de (1552), *Primeira Década da Ásia, dos feitos que os Portugueses fizeram no descobrimento dos mares e terras do Oriente*, Germão Galharde, Lisboa.

Barros João de (1553), *Segunda Década da Ásia etc.*, Germão Galharde, Lisboa.

Barros João de (1563), *Terceira Década da Ásia etc.*, João de Barreira, Lisboa.

Barros João de (1613), *Quarta Década da Ásia etc.*, ed. João Baptista Lavanha, Imprensa Real, Madrid.

Camões Luís de (1639), *Lusiada de Luis de Camões principe de los poetas de España comentada por Manuel de Faria i Sousa, Cavallero del Habito de Christo, i de la Casa Real*, 2 vols, Ivan Sanchez, Madrid.

Couto Diogo do (1602), *Decada Quarta* (Dos feitos que os portugueses fizeram na conquista e descobrimento das terras e mares do Oriente, em quanto governaram na India Lopo Vaz de Sampaio e parte de Nuno da Cunha), Pedro Craesbeeck, Lisboa.

Couto Diogo do (1612), *Decada Quinta* (Dos feitos... em quanto governaram na India Nuno da Cunha, Garcia de Noronha, Estevão da Gama e Martim Afonso de Sousa), Pedro Craesbeeck, Lisboa.

Couto Diogo do (1614), *Decada Sexta* (Dos feitos... em quanto governaram na India João de Castro, Garcia de Sá, Jorge Cabral e Afonso de Noronha), Pedro Craesbeeck, Lisboa.

Couto Diogo do (1616), *Decada Setima* (Dos feitos... em quanto governaram na India Pedro de Mascarenhas, Francisco Barreto, Constantino Conde de Redondo, Francisco Coutinho e João de Mendonça), Pedro Craesbeeck, Lisboa.

Quevedo y Villegas Francisco de (1912), *El siglo del cuerno. Gracias y disgracias del ojo del culo y otros trabajos festivos*, Imp. Feliu y Susanna, Barcelona.

Sousa Manuel de Faria e (1666), *Asia Portuguesa*, Vol. I, Henrique Valente de Oliveira, Lisboa.

Sousa Manuel de Faria e (1674), *Asia Portuguesa*, Vol. II, Antonio Craesbeck de Mello, Lisboa.

Sousa Manuel de Faria e (1675), *Asia Portuguesa*, Vol. III, Antonio Craesbeck de Mello, Lisboa.

Sousa Manuel de Faria e (1695), *The Portuguese Asia*, 3 vols, Translation by John Stevens, C. Brome, London.

Sousa Manuel de Faria e (1945), *Ásia Portuguesa*, 3 vols, Livraria Civilização, Porto.

#### *Bibliography:*

Andrade António Alberto Banha de (1980), *João de Barros, historiador do pensamento humanista português de Quinhentos*, Academia Portuguesa de História, Lisboa.

Barata A. F. (1897), *Catálogo dos Principais Manuscritos da Livraria do Visconde da Esperança*, Minerva Eborensis, Évora.

Blunt A. (1985), *Artistic Theory in Italy, 1450–1660*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Boxer Ch. R. (1981), *João de Barros, Portuguese Humanist and Historian of Asia*, Concept Publishing Company, Nova Delhi.

Curtius E. R. (2013), *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford.

Dahmen P. (1931), *Robert de Nobili l'Apôtre des Brahmes*, Spes, Paris.

Dharampal-Frick G. (2018), "Revisiting the Malabar Rites Controversy: A Paradigm of Ritual Dynamics in the Early Modern Catholic Missions of South India", in Županov I. G. & Fabre P. A. (eds), *The Rites Controversies in the Early Modern World*, Brill, Leiden and Boston, pp. 122–142. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004366299\\_007](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004366299_007)

Menon K. P. Padmanabha (2013), *History of Kerala*, Asian Educational Services, New Dehli.

Pennec H. (2020), "Camillo Beccari (1849–1928). A 'Holiness Specialist' and publisher of sources on Ethiopia in the Early Modern Period", in *Quaderni Storici*, pp. 497–525.

Sanfilippo M. & Prezzolini C. (2008), *Roberto de Nobili (1577–1656) missionário jesuíta poliziano*, Guerra Edizioni, Perugia.

Schouten J. P. (2018), "A Foreign Culture Baptised: Roberto de Nobili and the Jesuits", *Exchange*, Vol. 47, Issue 2, pp. 183–198. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/1572543X-12341477>

Seltmann F. (1986), *Schattenspiel in Kerala: Sakrales Theater in Süd- Indien*, Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GmbH, Stuttgart.

Sousa Ivo Carneiro de (2002), *A Rainha D. Leonor (1458–1525). Poder, Misericórdia, Religiosidade e Espiritualidade no Portugal do Renascimento*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, Lisboa.

Sweetman W. (2003), *Mapping Hinduism. "Hinduism" and the study of Indian religions, 1600–1776*, Verlag der Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle, Halle.

Sweetman W., "Reading Jesuit Readings of Hinduism", in *Jesuit Historiography Online*, Brill Reference Online, First published online: 2019. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-7723\\_jho\\_COM\\_217891](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-7723_jho_COM_217891)

Venu G. (1990), *Tholpavakoothu Shadow Puppets of Kerala*, Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi.

Vink M. P. M. (2002), "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: The Christian Paravas, a 'Client Community' in Seventeenth-Century Southeast India", *Itinerario*, Vol. XXVI, Issue 2, pp. 64–98. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0165115300009141>

Xavier A. B. & Županov I. G. (2015), *Catholic Orientalism: Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Županov I. G. (1998), "Lust, Marriage and Free Will; Jesuit Critique of Paganism in South India (17<sup>th</sup> century)", in *International Conference "The Doors of Asia; Multiple Heritage of Vasco da Gama"*, Paris, 7–9 January 1998.

I. K. de Souza

**Перший європейський систематичний опис індуїзму  
в другому томі "Португальської Азії"  
Мануела де Фаріа-і-Соузи (1640–1674)**

Ця стаття (запланована публікація якої в номері журналу, присвяченому ювілею Павла Ріттера, не відбулася через невчасне її завершення) є намаганням врятувати [від забуття] довгий іспаномовний опис індуїзму, завершений португальським інтелектуалом Мануелем де Фарією-і-Соузою в 1640 році, але оприлюднений у "Lisbon presses" лише в 1674-му. Наше дослідження охоплює головні теми праці Фаріа-і-Соузи: від індуїстської космогонії та міфів до релігійних практик, побачених католицькими місіонерами, особливо в регіоні Малабарі. Наголос у статті робиться на джерелах тексту Соузи та на його літературній спробі запропонувати іспаномовній читацькій аудиторії цікавий і дуже щирий систематичний дайджест індуїстської релігії, інтерпретованої із залученням християнських паралелей, а також з ерудованим порівнянням певних аспектів індуїзму з класичними топосами, що циркулювали в європейському культурному просторі від часів епохи Відродження.

У вступі та своїх примітках на полях Фаріа-і-Соуза пояснює, що в основу його праці "про релігію Індії" покладено анонімний рукопис (португальською мовою), надісланий з Португалії до Мадрида відомим свого часу автором, мемуаристом і власником великої бібліотеки Мануелем Северімом де Фарією (1584–1655), який був впливовим каноніком дієцезії Евори. Цей датований 1618 роком португальський рукопис обсягом 73 аркуші, що досі зберігається в Публічній бібліотеці Евори під назвою "Трактат про язичницьких богів усього Сходу та про обряди й церемонії малабарців" (*Tratado dos deuses gentílicos de todo o oriente e dos ritos e cerimónias que usam os Malabares*), приписують єзуїту Мануелові Баррадасу (бл. 1570–1646), що займався місіонерством в Індії, а згодом в Ефіопії. У статті пояснюється, що першоджерелом цього рукопису, на який покладался у своїй праці Фаріа-і-Соуза, була вибірково скорочена версія полемічного трактату італійського єзуїтського місіонера Джакомо Фенісіо (1558–1632). Із часом трактат стали називати (за назвою його першого розділу) "Книгою східноіндійської секти" (*Livro da Seita dos Índios Orientais*). Він поширювався португальською мовою серед єзуїтських місіонерів в Індії, щоб навчити їх критикувати та засуджувати "ідолопоклонство брагманів". Єдина цілісна рукописна копія великого тексту Фенісіо, що збереглася, належить Британській бібліотеці (Ms. Sloane 1820) і була опублікована 1933 року в Уппсалі Ярлом Шарпентье (на жаль, із численними хибами в прочитанні та прогалинами).

Праця Фаріа-і-Соузи про індуїзм доносить до читачів неполемічні й описові сегменти майже невідомого рукопису Фенісіо. Потрапивши на сторінки "Португальської Азії", ці відомості перестали анонімно поширюватися серед деяких португальських єзуїтів та інтелектуалів. Крім того, текст Фаріа-і-Соузи – це набагато більше, ніж просто копія та переклад рукопису, що є скороченням трактату Фенісіо. Автор дописує від себе коментарі й зауваження, створюючи в такий спосіб захопливий дайджест релігійної космології, міфології та практик, які ми сьогодні зазвичай називаємо індуїзмом.

**Ключові слова:** Мануел де Фаріа-і-Соуза; Джакомо Фенісіо; Мануел Баррадас; індуїзм; Малабар; християнські паралелі; класичний топос; бурлеск; фольклор; релігійні й культурні запозичення

Стаття надійшла до редакції 14.04.2023