

Tiatr as Goa's Distinctive Cultural Identity: Challenges and Sustenance of Tiatr in the Contemporary Era

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I hereby declare that the data presented in this dissertation report entitled, “Tiatr as Goa’s Distinctive Cultural Identity: Challenges and Sustenance of Tiatr in the Contemporary Era” is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Discipline of English at the Shenoí Goembab School of Languages and Literature, Goa University under the Supervision of Dr. Anjali Chaubey and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will be not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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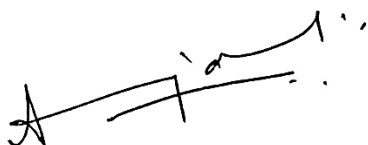
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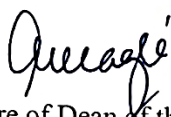
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Abstract

The dissertation titled ‘Tiatr as Goa’s Distinctive Cultural Identity: Challenges and Sustenance of Tiatr in the Contemporary Era’ talks about how Tiatr – a one-of-a-kind Goan theatre, is connected to the state’s cultural identity. This study was taken up to find out the challenges that the tiatr industry faces in the contemporary era, and also to get an understanding of how this traditional form of dramatical art has been able to survive in the face of innovative changes. By looking into the historical background of tiatr, the role it plays in moulding the identity of Goa, and the impact of the audience’s changing preferences on tiatr due to the rise of social media platforms, this research seeks to throw light on how and why tiatr has been able to change and survive over the years, and how it depicts different cultures. Through a detailed analysis, particularly with the conduction of a few interviews, this study aims to understand how society, politics, economy, and advancements in technology impact the art form. It wishes to help preserve and promote the important traditions of tiatr in the present times.

Keywords: Tiatr, Challenges, Goa, Contemporary, Sustenance, Tradition.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes a brief look at tiatr as Goa's distinctive cultural identity. Through an analysis of the historical background, it will try to situate the historicity of tiatr as a theatrical practice in Goa, the influence of the Portuguese colonization on the development of tiatr, the early forms of tiatr, and the emergence of contemporary tiatr and its themes. Under the characteristics and elements of tiatr, three things will be looked at i.e. the structure of a traditional tiatr performance; the use of music, satire, and comedy to convey messages; and the role of language and local dialects in tiatr. Lastly, the impact of tiatr on the audience will be briefly mentioned. Other things included are the scope and limitations of the research, research questions, relevance of the research, aims and objectives, literature review, formulation of the hypothesis, and methodology.

1.1. Tiatr – Goa's Cultural Identity

So, what is tiatr? It is a live form of theatre that actually originated in the state of Goa. It holds a special place in the preservation of the rich cultural identity of the state (Sequeira, Sequeira, Gama, et al., *Tiatrs and Their Uniqueness*). Although it began a very long time ago, precisely two centuries ago, tiatr has transitioned into a much-loved form of art that replicates the essence of Goan culture.

Although this art form is the Goan form of theatre, in reality, it is much more than that. It celebrates the dance and music of Goa. Tiatr skilfully blends a variety of musical styles, from traditional folk songs to contemporary tune, creating a seamless and cohesive tapestry of sounds. In addition to this, the audience is left captivated with the rhythmic dance sequences;

they enhance the visual spectacle. This adds an extra layer of enjoyment during the stage performances.

When tiatr is concerned, it is equally important for it to stay rooted to its culture and traditions because these things are what make it a cherished form of cultural art. This can be accomplished through the safeguarding of the Konkani language, storytelling techniques, music, etc. – which are all unique in tiatr in their own way. This will ensure that the importance of culture is not only experienced, but is also appreciated by the future generations.

It is evident that tiatr is a powerful platform through which is closely associated with the cultural identity of Goa. It has not only been a source of entertainment throughout its rich history, but it has also functioned as a reflection of Goan society. It has been important in promoting Goan literature, language, dance, music, etc. At the same time, it has also brought awareness to various issues going on in society.

1.2. Historical Background

1.2.1. Historical Origins of Tiatr and its Cultural Roots

Goa is always seen as a state that has an amalgamation of both the elements – eastern and western (Cardozo, “History of Tiatr”). This is primarily due to the influence of the colonizers i.e. the Portuguese – who ruled over our beloved state for a period of 450 years. It was in December 1961 that this rule finally came to an end. Famously known as ‘the Rome of the East’, the Portuguese tried their best to give this impression of Goa to the entire world. And so did our very own Goans; they too tried to portray Goa as a state that is very different from the other Indian states. The credit for this should go to the Portuguese, as in, if it was not for their rule in Goa, our state would not have had a blend of two different cultures.

The Konkani culture considered the rule of the Portuguese in Goa as a setback, particularly to the creativity of Goan art, to the mindset of the Goans, and to the customs and traditions present in Goan society. Not only did our songs and dances suffer, but our plays also suffered drastically. In other words, the culture of Goa was repressed and was not permitted to thrive.

The following section looks at the historical aspect of tiatr and how it has evolved over the years.

It might come as a surprise to learn that Goan tiatr actually began in the city of Bombay. This was almost 132 years ago i.e. in 1892. It all began with a 27-year-old man named Constancio Lucasinho Caridade Ribeiro (or Lucasinho Ribeiro, as he was famously known as) – who hailed from Sokolvaddo, Assagao (Claro, “Father Figure” 51). He was born on 02 January 1863 to Vincente Rosario Ribeiro and Aurora de Souza. Although Sr. Ribeiro was originally from Socorro, he became a *ghorzanvoim* (son-in-law) of Sokolvaddo after marriage and hence, settled there.

Jr. Ribeiro can be considered as the trailblazer of tiatr as he; along with Pai Tiatrist i.e. Joao Agostinho Fernandes and many others performed the first tiatr on 17 April 1892; on the event of Easter Sunday (Cardozo, “History of Tiatr”). Since Ribeiro wrote and directed *Italian Bhurgo* – which is the first tiatr, he is regarded as the inventor of this unique form of drama.

Lucasinho wrote and directed many tiatrs after his first one. For instance, he translated some of the world classics such as *Carlos Magno (Charlemagne)*, etc. and presented them as tiatrs. Later, Sebastiao Gabriel D’souza – who was well-known as ‘Karachiwala’, translated and performed some of the Shakespearean plays, such as *Hamlet*, *Merchant of Venice*, etc. as tiatrs. In this same manner, Lazarus D’souza modified and produced *Romeo and Juliet*. All this points out to the fact that modern European theatre has – to a great extent – influenced the birth and development of tiatr; the latter is a blend of modern music and prose of that period.

Apart from this, Joao Agostinho Fernandes also presented the tiatr machi (stage) with a high standard and brilliance. In addition, he also got his tiatr manuscripts published in a book format over a century ago. This Saashtikar was rightly labelled as ‘Pai Tiatrist’ i.e. Father of Tiatr.

There seems to be no kind of documentation at all that provides a clear picture of the staging of the first drama in 1892. However, there is a letter that was written by Joao Agostinho Fernandes in 1943, on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of tiatr, and was released in the same year on 28 November, in the issue of *Ave Maria*. Fernandes, in the letter, described how Lucasinho Ribeiro obtained a job in the Italian Opera Company and how he penned the first drama i.e. *Italian Bhurgo*. There is also a mention of a Caetano – who helped Rebeiro in organizing his first drama in 1892. Fernandes’s letter also discussed how envy started to appear and how various dramatic troupes were created, thereby causing a lack of unity among the other tiatrists during that time. In the last paragraph of his letter, Fernandes expresses his gratitude to the late Mr. Lucasinho Rebeiro, acknowledging him as his guide and teacher. He attributes the credit for his success on the tiatr stage to Mr. Ribeiro and emphasizes that it is due to Mr. Ribeiro’s influence that he continues to present tiatrs of good values to the audience. This letter has been the only source that gives information about the staging of the first drama and the innovation of the tiatr. And the information here is real because the letter was penned by a man who was directly associated with staging the first drama in 1892.

So, what was the reason for such a dramatic form to come into existence? According to facts, before the coming of tiatr, it was Zaagor and Khell – two forms of folk plays which provided entertainment to the people of Goa for a long time. As a matter of fact, Goans felt so entertained with Zaagors and Khells, that they decided to take them to the other parts of India whenever they migrated for employment.

Ribeiro, from a very young age, began to show interest in cultural activities; he used to organize small cultural shows of Konkani skits and songs by transforming his house's balcony into a make-do stage. He used to use bedsheets as curtains. He was also a talented singer; he loved singing English and Konkani songs. Among the few youngsters in Assagao, it was he who was proficient in reading and writing in English. He used to provide private English lessons while he was jobless. So, like many of the Goans, he too decided to travel to Bombay in search of job opportunities.

During this time, Italian troupes were travelling to major cities such as Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Delhi, etc. to perform Italian Operas. They used to bring with them a certain number of artists so that they could bring the cost of transport, accommodation, etc. down. When they were in India, most of the backstage artists were our Indians. So, Lucasinho Ribeiro – who had a liking for drama, observed this and tried to see if he too could get employed in one of these Italian troupes. His efforts did not go in vain; he was employed as a backstage artist. At this point of time, *Italian Boy* was being staged by the troupe. After they left the nation to travel elsewhere, Ribeiro purchased the clothing used in the drama with the intention of staging a similar production in Konkani. Consequently, using a similar narrative of *Italian Boy*, he penned a Teatro in Konkani and gave it the name of *Italian Bhurgo*.

This particular tiatr had various scenes and hence, different stage sets were needed. So, to save time, Ribeiro came up with the idea – which he successfully executed in the first attempt itself, to lower the curtains and present songs and dances right in front of them. He felt this was necessary not only because it would help keep the audience entertained, but also because it would give time for the stage setters to do the needful behind the curtain.

The musical ensemble of this tiatr featured non-rustic instruments such as the trumpet, violin, banjo and a drum to accompany the non-traditions songs. The musicians had received an education in music, giving them the ability to read and write *solfege* (musical notations). It

is to be noted that none of these songs and dances had any relation to the theme of the tiatr *Italian Bhurgo*.

There has always been a debate regarding the evolution of tiatr – whether it has any connection with the folk plays of Khell or Zaagor. The truth is, it definitely does and the pages of history testify to this. In addition to this, the format of tiatr emerged during a time of significant influence of modern European theatre on Indian theatre. The universal change had already been experienced by the Bengali theatre in Calcutta and the Marathi theatre in Bombay. Thus, in this manner, a new form of dramatic art called ‘Teatro’ was introduced on 17 April 1892.

1.2.2. Influence of Portuguese Colonization on the Development of Tiatr

The influence of our colonizers i.e. the Portuguese just cannot be understated. The tiatr performances, particularly the much earlier ones, were greatly influenced (and still continue to some extent in the present) by Portuguese operettas and various other western or European theatrical traditions. This led to a fusion or the blending of styles, thus, giving birth to a form of entertainment – which is not only unique, but also resonates with the audience of Goa.

With four hundred years of its conquest in Goa, the language of Portugal left an ineradicable mark on the culture of Goa (Claro, “The Genesis of Tiatr” 75-76). Due to such an influence, Konkani was mainly written not in the Devanagari script, but in the Roman script (this is how it came to be known as Romi Konkani). Even the first drama group – which was established by Lucasinho Rebeiro, was christened as ‘The Portuguese Dramatic Company’. This was followed by the ‘Dom Carlos Dramatic Club’, the ‘Dom Manuel Braganza Dramatic Company’, the ‘Dona Amelia Dramatic Company’, the ‘Bombay-Portuguese Association’ and ‘The Portuguese Heroes Company’.

It was in the year 1892 that the Portuguese word ‘teatro’ was written as ‘theatro’ (in the same language). Due to this influence, it was later written in Romi Konkani as ‘theatr’. This very word has been derived from either of the two languages i.e. Portuguese and Latin. ‘Theatro’ is the Portuguese word and ‘Iheatrum’ is the original Latin word. As a matter of fact, ‘teatro’ is particularly a place where a drama performance is carried out. This word also applies to dramatic literature or art, like in the case of ‘*Teatro de Gil Vincente*’. But when the language of Konkani is concerned, the connotation of the word ‘teatro’ is entirely different.

Once, Joao Agostinho Fernandes, in one of his articles wrote that before the arrival of Konkani tiatr, there were zaagors that used to take place in Bombay. There were other tiatrs that were staged by Goans, but they too were in the Portuguese or English manner. Fernandes was one of the trailblazers of the first tiatr and what he stated above, was undoubtedly true.

During this time, when the first tiatr i.e. *Italian Burgo* was staged in 1892, there was a three-act Portuguese comedy play called *Dautor a Forca de Paau* that was performed in Bombay by a privileged class of Goans. A writer from Goa, by the name of J.S. Diogenes Noronha, had it translated from *Malgro Lui* – a French play by Moliere. Although Lucasinho Ribeiro’s drama was a product that was originally inspired and born from Italian operas, the other works were pure. If inferences are drawn, it can be observed that when Fernandes used the word ‘theatr’, he meant ‘drama’. Over time, ‘theatro’ came to be written as ‘teatro’ in Portuguese. In our mother tongue i.e. Konkani, there existed three transformations of this word, namely – ‘theatr’, ‘teatr’ and ‘tiatr’; the former gradually changed to the latter. Till date, a majority of the people spell this form of theatre in English as well as in Konkani as ‘tiatr’.

Till the time of Goa’s Liberation in 1961, by order of the government of Portugal, it was deemed necessary to have the leaflets of Konkani tiatr translated into Portuguese.

The first time a present-day kind-of a Goan drama was acted out was on 17 April 1892, which happened to fall on an Easter Sunday (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise...*

Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre 1). The stage performance of *Italian Bhurgo* was staged at the New Alfred Theatre in Bombay – which is now in the location of the Police Commissioner's Head Office.

Soon after this, Goans began to perform their plays in and around the city of Bombay (Claro, "The Genesis of Tiatr" 76). These included Amar Hind Mandal, Balwalla Theatre, Cama Hall, Damodar Hall, Gaiety Theatre, Globe Theatre, Kamgar Sadan, Rang Mandir, Royal Opera House, Sahar, Church Hall, Sir C.J. Hall, Skating Ring, St. Michael Hall, St. Peter's Hall, Sunderbai Hall, Victoria G. Theatre, and Wellington Hall. However, there was one particular hall which the tiatrists regarded as a testing ground for them – Princess Theatre, Bhangwadi; it was the most well-known hall.

Some of the halls mentioned above have either been demolished, or shut down today. For this reason, other venues such as Baidas Hall, Birla Matushri Sabhagar, Dinanath Mangeshkar Hall, Gadkari Hall, Javerbhai Hall, Patkar Hall, Rang Bhavan, Ravindra Natya Mandir, and Zaverbhacin Hall at Ghatkopar are where Goan tiatrs are held.

The plays of the Bombaykar artists were thought to be the best. So, their works became very famous. From Bombay, either one or two groups used to travel to Goa annually in the months of April to May, and November to December. In the beginning, they staged their shows in Goa's main six centres i.e. Curchorem, Panaji, Ponda, Mapusa, Margao and Vasco.

To be specific, plays were held in Borda at Clube de Harmonia Hall; in Comba at Cine Rex, Damodar Vidhya Bhavan, Cine Olympia, and Brahmaji Samaji Hall; in Curchorem at Cine Prashant; in Mapusa at Bhairao Hall; in Panaji at Cine Teatro Nacional, and Cine Eden; in Ponda at Cine Aaisaa; and in Vasco at Cine Vasco.

Since the plays of these artists were considered to be too good at that time, the organizers of these tiatrs found it difficult to accommodate the huge crowds. So, they held them in temporary pandals – which could accommodate a crowd of more than two thousand people.

Although the organizers heaved a sigh of relief to this problem, many of the spectators, particularly those in the few last rows, felt unsatisfied as they were unable to observe the performers' facial expressions on stage and could hear only their voices amplified through the loudspeakers.

The makeshift pandals were put up at either Rua de Ourem, or on the other side of Patto, in Panaji, within the present Municipal Garden, and subsequently at the Rajendra Prasad Stadium in Margao, and Braganza Mathov and Narvenkar Mandap in the Mapusa fields. Tiatrs were also staged in mandaps – which were located behind the Civil Registry Office at Ponda, located near the Primary School at Curchorem.

1.2.3. Early Forms of Tiatr

When it comes to drama – may it be in any language, state or country, four categories come into the picture, namely – historical, social, political, and religious (according to India Netzone). But the question that surfaces is whether there has been an adequate amount of tiatrs that have been staged in all of these categories.

Historical tiatrs – as compared to other categories, are trifling. In the late 1890s, Joao Agostinho Fernandes wrote a tiatr called *Revolta de Sattari*. The script of this tiatr is unavailable. But as far as the history of Goa is concerned, this play is based on the 1852 revolt, which was led by the freedom fighter Deepaji Rane (Mendes).

The Ranes, who originally hailed from Rajaputana and were in the service of the Bhonsle king of Sawantwadi, played an important role in the revolts against the Portuguese in Sattari (Hall). In fact, the 1852 revolt was one of the four major revolts led by the family. Some historians critically argue that these revolts were primarily driven by personal reasons such as to reduce taxes, or to get revenge for insulting the women in their village, or their very right in

using the wood from the forests there, rather than patriotism or the liberation of the state (Mendes). Despite this, they are still deemed worthy of mention for the brave fight that they put up against the Portuguese (Hall). Overall, this play explores the struggles and conflicts between different social groups and the impact of outside influences on Goan society.

For all one knows, there might be one or more tiatrs in this particular category (according to India Netzone). The cause for not having a sufficient amount of historical tiatrs is that most of the tiatr writers were Catholics and had their education pursued in either of the two languages – Portuguese or English. Owing to this, they – to a great extent, were unable to connect with the history of our nation. This being the case, there is a scarcity of tiatrs that are based on historical events.

Since the revolution of tiatr, a majority of the original scripts tackled with social issues such as dowry problems, domestic violence, unity and disunity within the family, the wickedness of the caste system, alcoholism, AIDS, etc. Over the years, social problems such as alcohol abuse, the youth having no regards for the elderly, aged parents either being thrown out of their homes or being put into old aged homes by their own children, the negligibility of education, protection of our environment, etc. have also been focussed upon through the tiatrs. Some of the tiatrists who have been known for bringing out these themes in their tiatrs are Aristides Dias, C. Alvares, Joao Agostinho Fernandes, M. Boyer, Minguel Rod, Prem Kumar, Rennie Colaco, Saib Rocha, etc.

It was only after the Liberation of Goa that a fairly good amount of political tiatrs were produced. Among these were two notable tiatrs – *Salazar* and *Nationalist* – which were produced by Nelson Afonso. It was the staging of these specific tiatrs in the different parts of the state of Goa that took the tiatr audience by surprise because Afonso was among the very few who dared to expose the political scenario of Goa at that point of time.

Generally, religious tiatrs were (and continue to be) staged during the season of Lent. Only one famed tiatrist – J.P. Souzalino seemed to have managed to direct this kind of tiatrs with excellence. Some of his very well-known religious tiatrs are *Bhagevonth Josechi Khorvont* (Blessed Joseph’s saw), *Panch Mister Horkache* (five mysteries rosary), and *Sath Dukhi* (seven sorrows).

After Souzalino passed away, it was noted that some directors had attempted to present Lenten plays, but they were unable to make any impact on the audience. Well, if looked at it today, this view does not seem to align with the views of many of the tiatr spectators. If not all, then at least on a personal level, the impact can definitely be felt, especially among those who are religiously conservative or extremely devout.

For example, in one of the shows, Candida, the host of the Prudent Media show called ‘Candid with Candida’, asked John Miranda, a well-known director, producer, fashion enthusiast and – most importantly, a tiatrist how he felt by playing the role of Jesus Christ, to which he replied that he felt “very blessed” (J. Miranda 6:07).

For many individuals, religious plays have definitely had an impact on their lives. For example, Mrs. Eva Sequeira, a devout Goan recalls how once, at Pilar Seminary, she attended a Passion play – also known as a Lenten play, which was based on the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (E. Sequeira, *Impact of Religious Tiatrs on the Audience*). The fact that Christ not only forgave, but also died for the people’s sins, made her learn to forgive and let go of those who have hurt her, no matter to what extent. She concluded saying that we humans are born in this world not to hate, but to forgive and move on with a positive mindset.

On this note, it can be said that every play has some or the other kind of impact – either on the society, or an individual. But stating that plays, particularly the religious ones were unsuccessful in impacting lives, is definitely incorrect and does not sound good at all.

1.2.4. Emergence of Contemporary Tiatr and its Themes

It is important to understand the meaning of the term ‘contemporary’ before answering this question. It basically refers to someone or something being in the same era as the other person (according to Collins Online Dictionary).

Over the course of its evolution, the realm of tiatr has undergone significant transformations and developments, showcasing a noteworthy progression. During the early stages of drama, the predominant themes were focussed around morality and religion. The former meant that social issues were addressed, and the latter meant that stories from the Bible (also known as parables) were depicted. Initially, tiatrs maintained a consistent form, but over time, they began incorporating new topics such as satire, political issues, romance, etc. into their plotlines. It is this evolution of tiatr that has allowed it to remain relevant and connect with different age groups across different generations.

After the government of India officially took control of Goa in the year 1961, the tiatr activity got a boost and spread to different places (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 147). For many of the tiatrists, especially the younger ones, this was seen as an opportunity.

In the following paragraph are the names of some tiatrists who, as per to their age, began to carry out their work right after the state attained its liberation. This does not mean that these artists are to be listed solely in this particular phase i.e. 1892 to the 1970s, as many of them are still living and are very much active (not necessarily on the stage, but in other areas of life). They can be included in the contemporary era.

Among these tiatrists are Albert Cabral, Alfred Fernandes, Alvito Araujo, Brazinho Soares, Caitan Pereira, Cezar D'mello, Irene Cardozo, Michael Gracias, Premanand Sangodkar, Rosy Alvares, Sharon Mazarello, Sylvester Vaz, Tomazinho Cardozo, William de

Curtorim, Wilson Mazarello, etc. who have all not only made a name for themselves, but also left an enduring mark during this period.

The period after the liberation of Goa also saw the gush of khell tiatrs. These tiatrs later took the form of non-stop tiatrs. Under this kind of tiatr, some of the eminent tiatrists are Antonio Piedade Moraes, Ben Evangelisto, C. D'silva, Christo (who was known as comedian 64), Christopher Leitao, comedian Agostinho, comedian Dominic, Felipe Almeida, Humberto Fernandes, Jack Ferry, Jenny, John D'silva, Jose Rod, Lawry Travasso, Ligorio Fernandes, (late) Mario Menezes, Miguel Jacob Carmo Luis Fernandes (aka Prince Jacob), Menino de Bandar, Pascoal Fernandes, Patrick Dourado, Premanand Lotlikar, Rosario Fernandes (who goes by the stage name of Roseferns), Socorro Fernandes, Vitorin Pereira, etc.

1.3. Characteristics and Elements of Tiatr

1.3.1. Structure of a Traditional Tiatr Performance

If one takes a look at the structure of a traditional tiatr performance, he or she will get to see a good storyline, catchy songs with music pleasing to the ears, and comedy related to the play – and all these form the basis of the tiatr (Cardozo, “History of Tiatr”). The other additional aspects that are all a part and parcel of good direction are things such as stage sets, lighting effects, background music, acting, etc. If all these items, when brought together are well-balanced, then the performance of the tiatr is very likely to be excellent.

If any reader happens to get hold of the script of any particular tiatr, he or she – while reading – might stumble upon a word called ‘Canto’ (pronounced as *kaanth*) – which appears in between the poddes and they are nothing but songs which in Konkani are called ‘kantaram’

(sometimes also spelt with a 'c'). Generally, there are two to three kantarams in between every two poddes. So, this means that there are at least twelve to fifteen Kantars in the tiatr.

What makes tiatr very unique is actually that the storyline of the drama is based on just one theme. In the case of *caantar*, each of it is about a completely different thing (but not always). So, through the story of the tiatr, one specific subject is presented whereas twelve to fourteen kantarams in the tiatr address those many different subjects. This aspect of tiatr is what makes it a unique form of dramatic art – when compared to other forms.

When specifically talking about scripts, first things first – the storyline of the play, drama or tiatr is known as the script. At least half of the overall success of a tiatr goes to the quality of a story. When tiatr came into existence, the standard of tiatr during the first twenty to thirty years was elevated with each new tiatr production. The reason for this lies in the fact that a majority of the writers and directors of that period came from well-educated backgrounds.

Much like modern Bengali and Marathi theatre, many changes took place on the tiatr machi (Konkani stage). The influence of the English language was so much, that the history of modern theatre was seen in Marathi as well as Bengali shows. In this same manner, tiatr has also been influenced by English drama to quite an extent. It is for this reason that one is able to find scores of English plays translated into Konkani plays.

With the arrival of a number of intelligent script writers in the beginning of the mid-twentieth century, scripts of a high standard were produced. Some of the scripts that are still considered to be excellent for being of high standard are *Amchea Xetachi Pavnni* and *Dhormacho Bavtto* by Alexinho de Candolim; *Divorce* by Aristedes Dias; *Ghorabeachea Sukh* by Remmie Colaco; *Ghorabo* by Nelson Afonso; *Ghorchem Kestany*, *Koddu Sonvsar*, *Somestancho Rinnkari* and *Tarvoti Irmao* by Minguel Rod; *Ghor Dukhi*, *Gany Sukhi*, *Ekuch Rosto* and *Sonvsar Sudortolo*, etc. by M. Boyer; *Hem Asa Tem* by J.P. Souzalino; *Mhoji*

Vonnim, *Kennam Udetolo To Dis*, *Goemcho Mog* and etc. by C. Alvares; *Portuguese Kolvant* by John Claro; *Vavraddi* and *Dukh* by Prem Kumar; etc.

It was unfortunate to see a widespread trend emerging, where there were many individuals who began to write plays with no depth at all in them. Later, the element of laughter was added in the plays in order to keep the audience entertained. The problem was that the comic scenes and dialogues were not related to the play in any manner. Furthermore, instead of coming up with their own creativity, the writers began to enact jokes that used to appear on the magazines. Some even began to employ vulgarity in their dialogues, causing Goan theatre to slip into a very low standard.

When talking about the acts and scenes, during the time of tiatrists such as Joao Agostinho Fernandes and many of his other compeers, the tiatrs – which are, till date, considered to be as the earliest ones, were made up of *ank* i.e. acts and *dekhav* i.e. scenes (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 50-52). It can also be said that the structure during this period, was not that rigid in nature.

Plays, in general, comprised of two acts. An interval was added in between these two. For example, Pai Tiatr's *The Bell of Cavel* and *Kunbi Jakki*, have two and four acts respectively. The former has a total of eight scenes while the latter has fifteen parts in all. As another example, *Vauraddi* by Prem Kumar has four acts with seventeen scenes in total. But having four acts in a tiatr did not mean that four was the maximum number; a play could have an extension of four acts with a number of scenes. Most of the tiatrs had seven *porddes* or scenes. This was one of the common rules of tiatr. Over the last five decades, this rule has somewhat become mandatory, but when trying to make adjustments, four to seven scenes are also seen as acceptable.

Pai Tiatr i.e. Joao Agostinho Fernandes stood as an example for many out there; as far as scripts are concerned, he used to safeguard them, get his plays published and also the

musical notations that were associated with them. Along with the music, he also published a collection of songs. Some of his works such as *Faust 1* and *Faust 2* were published by Sebastiao Gabriel D'souza. Even *Cantarache Chear Album* and *Comik Canataranche Album* were printed by him. Their footsteps were not followed by many.

Only few individuals such as Cezar D'Mello, the late Fr. Freddy J. Da Costa, the late Fr. Planton Faria, Tomazinho Cardozo, etc. have published a relatively good amount of their tiatrs from the 1975s i.e., the last quarter of the twentieth century. But till date, one of the greatest issues that any academician faces while working on 'Tiatr' is inadequate documentation.

According to some eminent senior tiatrists, in many cases, either the director or the composer narrated the tiatrs to the actors, who would then – if the need arises – generate extra dialogues while they practiced. Tiatr being a theatre that is open to experiments, the liberty to freely incorporate innovation along with some adjustments here and there, allowed the more creative tiatrists to make a lot of good contributions towards the tiatrs. But the dexterity was lost if there was no transcription of the text. The researcher, in most cases, was notified about the loss of important scripts. Pests such as termites and silverfish, and no proper storage conditions were two main reasons that were held accountable.

With the colonization of the British in Bombay and the Portuguese in Goa, the script of the play had to be sent for approval to the Censor Board. Nothing was lenient; so much so, that even the performances in both the locations were supervised by those representing the Censor Board. Handbills in Goa were made compulsory to include a Portuguese translation of whatever was being mentioned in the text and once they were approved, a remark was put.

1.3.2. Use of Music, Satire, and Comedy to Convey Messages

Hans C. Andersen was right when he said that it was music that spoke when words failed. Music is an element that the Goan culture cannot do without; it is something that cannot be left out (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 51). A distinct characteristic of tiatr is that it always incorporates songs and sideshows – either between or sometimes even during the scenes.

In plays, songs are very much an important aspect. Not only do they help in the narration of the plot, but they also aid in keeping it in a continuously-running mode. They have been featured in a number of theatres – not just in Greek and Shakespeareans theatres, but also in Indian and American ones. These songs in featured in tiatrs are commonly known as *cants* or *cantos*. They are derived from the Portuguese word ‘cantar’ – which means ‘to sing’.

As mentioned previously, Kantaram i.e. the songs in any tiatr are sung in between the *Poddes* (Cardozo, “History of Tiatr”). Although they are not that important to the play due to the fact being that they are not always related to the play, they are as significant as the other aspects for the overall success of the tiatr. These *kantars* – apart from the other elements of tiatr, carry some amount of responsibility for the overall success of the tiatr. This is stated so because many a times, the audience – when asked to provide feedback of the tiatr that they watched, complain that although the play was good or excellent, the songs of the play were not up to their liking; or just that they were uninteresting.

The songs brought about in the tiatr must also be diverse i.e. they should not just be in the form of solos and duets, but also as trios, quartets, etc. (these are what the package of *kantaram* essentially consist of). But nowadays, this does not seem to be the case; the package of *Kantaram* consists mainly of solos. Duets are done a bit rarely nowadays, and the same could be said in the case of trios. Such cases are usually seen in commercial tiatrs. However,

in tiatr competitions, like those held at Kala Academy, it is always lovely to see solos, duets, trios and very rarely a group of five singers on stage.

The production of a song involves the composition of lyrics, setting the music to these lyrics, and singing the songs. It is observed that in the case of other languages, there are lyricists who compose only the lyrics, musicians who set only the music to these lyrics, and those having a melodious voice to sing these songs. It is rare to spot an artist who will take on all these three responsibilities i.e. of composing the lyrics, setting it to the music and singing. But it is a totally different thing when the tiatr stage comes into the picture. Here, the musician arranges only the accompanying music. It is this attitude of the artists that has subdued the development of Kantar.

A song's lyrics not only convey meaning and help erupt a lava of strong emotions, but they also enrich literature. The same can be said in the case of Konkani language. Although numerous songs have been composed by our singers, the question is how many of these can be considered as highly-standardized lyrics? Very few – that is the answer. Today, due to quality, quantity has increased – which does not seem to be a good sign. If one takes the opportunity to analyse the songs that were composed by tiatrists such as C. Alvares, Kid Boxer, Alexinho de Candolim and many others, he or she will surely feel content in the lyrical value that these songs hold. In other words, compositions like these will continue to exist for future generations.

Music has the power to make a song attractive. It adds flavour to the lyrics. It is not an easy task to set the music – which means that many of the singers, who compose the lyrics, do not actually know music. That is why they end up copying the tunes from other languages. No doubt that this might bring them applause from the audience, but this does not mean that they have made sincere efforts to raise the level of Konkani songs.

For quite some time, it was only Chris Perry who had been acclaimed for being the only musician to take Konkani songs to the highest degree. His music was not only original, but also

pleasing to the ears. His music blended so well with the lyrics, that the song actually had a Goan touch. Frank Fernand was another musician who gave superb music to Konkani songs in the Konkani films *Amchem Noxib* and *Nirmonn*. Even another musician named M. Alphonso contributed a lot for the growth of Konkani songs. Alex and Fidelis too made their respective contributions by providing good music in tiatrs.

For any song to be a total success, the singer is equally important. He or she should possess a voice that is both - cantabile and melodious, as well as the ability to modulate their voice as and when necessary. Facial expressions need to be shown while on stage and this needs to be done in such a manner, that the songs become pithy and meaningful to the audience. The only male singer who was able to create a furore in Konkani songs was Alfred Rose. Lorna Cordeiro, till date, is considered to be the only female singer to capture the hearts of Konkani *kantaranchem mogi* (lovers). Other well-known singers who have made a name in this field are C. Alvares, Kid Boxer, Dioginho D'Mello, Young Menezes, Souza Guiao, M. Boyer, etc., including female singers such as Mohana, Cecelia, etc.

As far as satire is concerned, it is a traditional form of comedy and is basically used to either mock, exaggerate, or criticize someone in particular, or an institution for their carelessness or something that seems stupid on their part (according to Oxford Reference). Satire can be laced with humour, or even seriousness, but the message that is conveyed through this aspect, should usually be done in an indirect and harmless manner so as to avoid controversy or hurting the sentiments of the audience (E. Sequeira, *Use of Satire and Comedy in Tiatrs*). In the case of tiatr, many tiatrists expose the hypocrisy of people and the government through their *cantaram* – which are sung either during the opening of the tiatr, or in between the *poddes*. Some even try to be sarcastic through their stage performances; usually, by mimicking politicians or other people of importance. While many take this in a light-hearted manner, few feel offended.

Comedy is usually used in tiatrs so that the audience continues to feel entertained even if the entire tiatr has a sad or gloomy plotline. Jokes can be either direct or through mimicry – in which people of importance are imitated in a funny manner. Sometimes, the comedy is not linked at all to the play, but the audience does not mind this. Also, an important thing to be noted is that in tiatrs – or anywhere for that matter – whatever message has to be conveyed, should not be given directly, as in, it should not sound too preachy, to the extent that the audience begins to take it lightly and then ignore it. But if this can be done through the use of comedy, then people will laugh, enjoy and side-by-side, also pay attention to what is being dictated. This applies not just to tiatrs, but in all areas; no one likes lectures. For instance, many parishioners, especially the youth feel bored listening to the priest's sermon. But they tend to pick a little interest when the priest narrates an engaging story or exemplifies something or someone.

1.3.3. Role of Language and Local Dialects in Tiatr

Tiatr predominantly has its roots in its mother tongue i.e. the Konkani language. This form of art is very well-known for its mixture of *cantaram*, *naach* (dance), and also for bringing our social commentary. But it is to be noted that besides Konkani, there also exist various other local dialects (Sequeira and Sequeira, *Konkani Dialects and Tiatr*). These play an important role in shaping tiatr's language aspect.

Due to Konkani being written in five different scripts i.e. Devanagari, Romi, Kannada, Arabic and Malayalam, various dialects come into view such as Saashti (of Salcete taluka), Bardez, Pednekari (of Pernem taluka), Canara, Malvani (of Maharashtra), Manglorean, Malayali, etc. (according to Wikipedia).

Although it is the mother tongue that dominates Hindi and English in the Goan theatre, the same cannot be said for its dialects; there is no compulsion of following just one single dialect in all the plays (Sequeira and Sequeira, *Konkani Dialects and Tiatr*). This blend makes the shows interesting and enjoyable, sometimes even leaving a cheesy smile on the faces of the audience. This also helps reach a greater number of people, as far as dialects are concerned. And not only this; it shows how Goa has become a comfortable place for people from different linguistic backgrounds – who all seem to live together.

Language has always been one of the powerful ways to connect with people and their hearts, as in, on an emotional level. Whether it is the usual Bardez Konkani, or the commonly-used Saashti Konkani, the audience does not care; they attend tiatrs and full get engaged with the story. However, this also means that when it is their dialect that is being used before them on the stage, they feel more connected and enjoy the performance even more.

One of the ways local dialects of Goa can be promoted is speaking about them in school, colleges, and other educational institutions. However, at least in Goa, this seems to be easier said than practiced as the Goa Board has made it mandatory to follow only Devanagri Konkani. This is a setback for dialects such as Romi Konkani – which is mostly spoken amongst the Catholic population. In many of the schools and colleges, since Goa is a state that is predominantly Catholic, the students (and sometimes, even the teachers) usually speak in their dialects i.e. the *Christanvs* (native Christians of Goa) converse in Romi Konkani, whereas the *Konknem* (native Hindus of Goa) speak normal Konkani – which is a mix of both, Devanagri and Marathi.

If such local dialects cannot be directly introduced directly through the school curriculum, then they should at least be made aware by conducting workshops, or organizing competitions. This will not only help promote and make the students aware, but it will also

build a sense of pride for the uniqueness of their state. Coming up with such initiatives during village festivals, etc. will also help.

Nowadays, a lot of changes have been taking place. This can apply even to the verbal aspect of Goa. In earlier days, during the 400-year rule of the Portuguese in Goa, it was only Konkani, and a bit of Portuguese and English that were spoken. Today, with the development in technology and the rise of globalization, English has paved its way onto the Konkani stage. Although not used entirely in the dialogues (or else it will turn the tiatr into a Hollywood play), English is used in one or two lines, perhaps to depict the influence of westernization, or just for humour. However, it can be inferred that bringing in a bit of English, apart from Konkani, definitely makes the youth present there feel relatable.

With this, it can be said that local language and dialects are important in tiatr – which is rooted in the culture of Goa. While there are things such as globalization, modifications, technological advancements, etc. that can deteriorate the significance of Konkani, learning to embrace them to bring out a positive change is crucial. This is what can help in the continuity of tiatr, and also bring in people, especially the younger generation.

1.4. Impact of Tiatr on the Audience

Does the Goan theatre have any kind of impact on the minds of the viewers i.e. the tiatr audience? Well, the people's enthusiasm to watch tiatrs serves as enough proof; most of the times, auditoriums as well as open-air venues are found to be houseful (according to the Tiatr Academy of Goa). This then leads the tiatrists and their productions to organize more shows so that their audience will not be disappointed. When a majority of the tiatrs are usually built upon themes that revolve around social and political issues, an impact is definitely made – that too, a direct one, in the hearts of the audience. It is either the message of the drama or the

cantarams in it that impress and move the audience. But sadly, this is only temporary; there isn't really any impact on the audience today as tiatr is viewed only as a form of entertainment and nothing else. But this wasn't so in the past. For example, during the Opinion Poll and also during the time when Konkani was striving to be made as Goa's official language, it was through tiatrs and their cantarams that the emotional feelings of the Goans were evoked.

Newspapers could also be cited as an example. Merely talking about an issue in the newspapers may not be that effective; the message might not reach everyone due to the lack of readership (Sequeira and Sequeira, *Visual Impact of Tiatrs*). There are many people who are capable of reading, but sadly, do not engage with print media on a regular basis. In typical Indian households, the newspapers, after being read, are used for different things such as wrapping up things (especially during the time of Christmas), extracting the excess oil from eatables, etc. In the case of theatre, whatever is performed on stage, usually tends to linger in the minds of viewers, sometimes for a lifetime, due to its visual nature. Such an impact cannot entirely be made by newspapers for sure. In simple terms, it is like even when just being idle, the images of whatever was watched during the tiatr – or any show for that matter, appear right before our eyes.

One last example is of mass. It can be firmly said that during mass, everyone does not feel inspired with the priest's *sermao* i.e. sermon. But it definitely impacts at least some. However, if the issue is exemplified – perhaps with a realistic incident, then there are high chances of the matter getting soaked into the minds of the people at a much quicker rate. In the same manner, some of those who watch tiatrs, might be impacted with what that particular tiatr is depicting and conveying. This is how changes can be and are brought in society.

1.5. Scope of the Research

This research looks into the historical background of tiatr, which talks about how the art form has had its history rooted in two folk art forms i.e. Zaagor and Khell. While many historians and critics seem to debate on this matter, this research can help in making things clear.

It will also help to identify the challenges that are faced by the tiatr industry in the contemporary era, particularly issues such as the lack of documentation due to tiatr scripts not being published, and the government not supporting and recognizing the efforts of the tiatrists. Additionally, through this research, tiatrists can come together and work towards these issues.

In addition to this, the research will help in preserving culture, especially by contributing to the language of Konkani, thereby encouraging the younger generation – which seems to be drifting away with modern changes, to take up acting and theatre. The youth can also learn, through the art form of tiatr, to play different instruments, as this is part of the tradition in tiatr. They can also turn out to be good educators in this field, thereby making students let go of their stage fears and get their oratory skills polished.

As far as the impact is concerned, through this research, tiatr can help in bringing about change in the mindsets of the people, particularly by addressing social and political matters such as corruption, environmental crisis, protection of identity, joblessness, etc. This is applicable just not to the state of Goa, but other places too, thereby inspiring the people with ideas.

1.6. Limitations of the Research

Firstly, reputed sites had very few research papers on the topic of tiatr. There was one book related to tiatr through a historical lens. However, the text being in Devanagari script was

a problem for the researcher, and hence, had to be discarded from being added to the list of literary materials.

Secondly, obtaining the DVDs of tiatrs was a bit of a challenge. Copying them was not allowed by the tiatrists, unless and until signed letters were brought. In addition to this, the CDs were unavailable in the market. Other problems pertaining to this were that some parts of the DVDs were not viewable due to scratches and hence, had to be watched online on YouTube as CD drives are hardly used anymore, and also, some freely-available tiatrs on this online platform had unclear/inaudible dialogues, making it difficult to understand the content. Although there were OTT sites that showed tiatrs, they were unreliable and not well-optimized.

The main setback was the researcher's struggle to understand Konkani, both in Devanagari and Romi. During two of the offline interviews, the tiatrists spoke quite a lot in the language, making it hard to understand what was being said. Furthermore, most of the literary materials that were provided to the researcher during these interviews, were in Roman Konkani. They were difficult to read and understand for the same reason, slightly hindering the comprehension research. Hence, help was needed while translating difficult words and sentences from Devanagari Konkani and Roman Konkani from people well-versed in Konkani.

Lastly, contacting famous tiatrists and obtaining their contact details was not easy. However, with the help of the researcher's friends, the task seemed achievable. Many declined to being interviewed due to their busy schedules. Additionally, the geographical distance between the researcher (North Goa) and most of the tiatrists (South Goa) was very long, making traveling for the interviews time-consuming and difficult.

1.7. Research Questions

- How has tiatr evolved in the contemporary era?
- What are the challenges that tiatr faces in sustaining its cultural identity?
- How does tiatr contribute to social, political, and cultural commentary, particularly on women's issues, and how can it be used as a tool for women's empowerment?

1.8. Relevance of the Research

The research is very much relatable to the Goan society as it brings out the importance of preserving and promoting tiatr for future generations.

It also provides some strategies to address certain problems, especially those related to women, thereby throwing light on the need for promoting gender equality through this art form of tiatr.

1.9. Aims and Objectives

- a. To provide a comprehensive overview of the historical background and evolution of tiatr
- b. To analyse the themes and narratives in tiatr that address women's issues and contribute to social, political, and cultural commentary
- c. To identify the challenges faced by tiatr in the contemporary era, particularly in sustaining its cultural identity and attracting younger audiences and performers

- d. To explore strategies for sustaining tiatr and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through art
- e. To analyse tiatrs that have tackled contemporary challenges and addressed women's issues, and their impact on the cultural identity of Goa and the wider society

1.10. Literature Review

Pramod Kale's *Essentialist and Epochalist Elements in Goan Popular Culture: A Case Study of Tiatr* (1986) talks about tiatr – which is a one-of-a-kind theatre in the state of Goa. It is mostly attended by the Christians coming from middle class and those working in certain groups (2054). It looks into the importance of culture in tiatr, thereby laying focus on how it combines indigenous or native elements with this belief that there has been a wide modification of the culture of Europe (2055). Mention has also been made of the historical background of Goa and how it has had connections with the Konkani theatre, particularly the history behind the two art forms i.e. Zaagors and Khells (2062). This is mainly seen through the stage actors, spectators, message, layout, sequences, storyline, and the various topics of tiatr (Kale 2059). Kale firmly stated that there was one particular thing that came out of Portuguese rule for Goans, at least for the native Christians, and that is, the willingful acceptance and embracing of colonial rule – which was considered as something good, while the Hindu Goans and the other people of India did not agree with this (2062). In other words, this paper talks about the Konkani theatre, especially from a cultural point of view, and the role it plays in molding the culture of Goa (2054). Overall, it helps in understanding the uniqueness of the state and its people through tiatr.

Dr. Andre Rafael Fernandes' *When the Curtains Rise: Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* (2010) is a thesis-cum-book that does a detailed analysis of the Konkani

theatre, or tiatr, in Goa. It looks into the sometimes-overlooked history and other aspects too (1,8-12,50-52,136-137,141-144,147). Besides this, mention has also been made of some of the challenges which this type of theatre faces in recent times. These include competition from other entertainment mediums, rise of tickets, etc. It actually begins by looking into the origins of tiatr, with Lucasinho Ribeiro having being the pioneer, while in Goa, Joao Agostinho Fernandes becoming the father of tiatr. Through the perusal of two folk art forms, Zaagors and Khells, this book talks about how tiatr has evolved over the years, and how they both declined due certain factors. In addition to all this, the book also talks about the different thematic categories of tiatr i.e. religious, social, historical and political. An entire chapter has been written on Pai Tiatrist i.e. Joao Agostinho Fernandes, with his major works being discussed. Also, many professional tiatrists who made a name for themselves, have been spoken of in a detailed manner. In conclusion, this book has proven to be very helpful, especially for those who are trying to do research in this particular area i.e. tiatr. Fernandes, through this work of his, urges the government, tiatrists and the people to come together and work towards preserving this art form for future generations.

Rowena Robinson's *Tiatr and the Male Gaze* (2016) firstly talks about modernity, and how the people of Goa are looked at for getting carried away with western thoughts and things, thereby letting go of their culture – which is mainly in their language Konkani. She then runs through the history of tiatr, how it mocks certain people and things, etc. In relation to this, the censoring aspect is mentioned, as scripts of the plays needed to be sent for approval during the Portuguese rule in Goa. During this time, the Church was not allowed to be a part of the art form in any manner, especially the priests. Even at the time of acting, no one was allowed to dress in priestly clothing. However, the scenario has changed, with priests being the most supportive, as far as tiatr is concerned. Regarding the tiatrists, Robinson observes that most of them have connections to bring in actors and do other things. Also, most of them are not

professional; they hold a job elsewhere and side-by-side, also do tiatrs because of the skills and talents that they have. A separate person is hired to look into other things, such as stage setting, sound and lighting system, etc. As far as women in tiatr are concerned, Robinson makes an important observation of how they are looked at – if they try to seem dominant in any way, then they are not considered to be acceptable by the society. And that is how they are made to take on the roles of a submissive wife and a dutiful mother. In other words, these lines point to a problematic thought held by the society i.e. a woman should always remain traditional, both, in thoughts and action; she should not change or become modern. This is, in a way, talking about gender inequality, and this concept is applied to the Goan society. She then talks about these women being either i.e. bad and good. In tiatrs, if the female character is bad, she is made to mend things in order to become good. In other words, she has to know what mistakes she committed so that she does not repeat them in the future. These women have also been looked at from another angle – one remains pure to her husband, even if he dies, and the other who loaf around, thus having an extramarital affair. In both cases, it seems like the women are the cause for ruining the lives of other men. In conclusion, this paper looks at tradition and how the society tends to give it the human quality of gender. While women working and earning is seen as a problem, the same cannot be said in the case of men. Society needs to change the way it thinks, especially when it come to women. Tiatrs try to convey this message by bringing out strong and independent female characters to fight against such restrictions.

Dr. Juao Costa's *Tiatr: A New Form of Entrepreneurship in Goa – Problems and Prospects* (2018) basically talks about how one can earn through tiatr, whether in a direct or indirect manner (35). For example, the director can have a salary of somewhere between a lakh to half a lakh. And this is not only in Goa, but in other places too, especially where Goans have settled such as the Middle East, United Kingdom, Canada, etc.; they perform this form of art and make money. This is to say that tiatr can create jobs for all sorts of individuals such as

electricians, artists, designers, carpenters, stage managers, etc. If tiatr is brought out as a good platform, then people can make their livelihood. They can also create a second source of income. So, both the ways are possible in tiatr. Another way of making business is by making CDs and DVDs online. In addition, singers, and artists charge money as per their performances. For example, one singer charges not less than two thousand or even more than that, depending on their fame and experience; they accordingly increase their charges. In this manner, tiatr gives a lot opportunities and scope, especially in Goa. Mention has also been made of how some tourists come to watch this Goan tradition (37). Through this paper, Costa is trying to stress that the Government's role should be to preserve the history of tiatr by documenting it in a proper manner (36). This can be done through literature, etc. on tiatr. A subject in Government and private schools can also be introduced just based on tiatr. This can be made as an optional subject where students can have the choice to learn drama or tiatr. Even tiatr festivals similar to the IFFI can be introduced in order to keep the tradition alive. Government can also introduce some schemes related to tiatr, just like they do for other kind of businesses. This can help people who wish to start a business in tiatr production (37). However, at the moment, the Government has not provided enough backup in keeping this tradition of Goa alive; there are some things introduced to help in this matter, but they are not up to the mark (35). Secondly, tiatr is not a fully well-optimized organization; there is no proper way to track or find out what exactly is going on (37). Another thing is that many people do not find tiatr as an appealing form of job; it is not the go-to industry for them. This might be because the importance of tiatr is not being well-spread out amongst the people; it is not being marketed well and seems to be greatly missing. For example, in movies, there are trailers. And nowadays, they are even translated into other languages (35). However, this is not the case with tiatr. If the tiatr happens to have a good story, it can help producers to do a remake of it. But this is not being done. For this reason, there is a fear of tiatr dying out in the coming future i.e. if

promotion in a proper manner is not done (37). Hence, the tiatrists should have tiatrs continued, irrespective of the government supporting the industry or not. An additional problem is that there is no proper scripting done of tiatrs. For example, the script of the play is given to the performers. However, something else gets spoken on the stage, clearly depicting that there is no proper pattern being followed, as far as the staging goes. In conclusion, it can be said that tiatr is not being shown very openly; it is being portrayed very secretly – which is not needed at all. And far as issues such as copyright issues, no proper income, etc. are concerned, the tiatrists should not be focussing on these aspects too much. Instead, they should just go and put the things out to promote tiatr in the market. In this manner, the audience needs to be targeted. Social media can be of great help in this matter; one needs to invest well on advertisements too. This is to say that modern marketing tools and ways need to be used to fire up the publicity and demand of tiatr. If attention is paid to these, then it is guaranteed that tiatr will have a proper structure to go about in the future.

Dr. Andre Rafael Fernandes' *Tiatr* (2019) is very much related to his book on tiatr. However, in this paper, Fernandes tries to sum up everything. Firstly, he talks about the Konkani theatre in Goa and the challenges that it faces due to the lack of documentation (198). Much of the important matter related to this art form has been destroyed mainly for two reasons i.e. printed matter was often was not stored in proper conditions, and secondly due to pests such as mites, silverfish, etc. Also, the issue of censorship has been spoken of. During the Portuguese rule in Goa, every printed material was strictly taken into consideration; everything had to be submitted much prior to the staging of the drama. This paper also makes a mention of the three thematic categories of tiatr i.e. political, social, and religious. Most of the plays in the last hundred years were on social themes. These included issues within the family, particularly siblings fighting with each over property. Even problems taking place in the society were looked at, such as discrimination due to class and caste, dowry, etc. When it comes to

religious tiatrs, the focus is often put on the lives of different saints, stories from the Bible, as well as miraculous events. As far as political tiatrs are concerned, they try to expose the real things going on in society, such as corruption within the government, how common people are made to suffer due to those in power, etc. In conclusion, these themes make people to think for themselves, and they also bring out the culture and the problems that the society faces.

Joaquim Correia's *About World Theater Day: The tradition in Goa and its Similarities with Macau and Portugal* (2023) talks about tiatr as a form of theatre in the once-Portuguese-ruled Goa. As per him, the Portuguese see it very much related to their kind of theatre. Naatak is the non-Christian version of drama in the state. When language is concerned, there are many words in Konkani that have their origins in Portuguese. Coming to the historical aspect, tiatr is thought to have originated in Goa. However, it got its inspiration from Bombay, when Lucasinho Ribeiro i.e. the pioneer in the art form, adapted a drama, calling it *Italian Bhurgo*. Pai Tiatrist i.e. Joao Agostinho Fernandes' wife, Regina had a connection to Macau as she was born there. She became the first woman on the tiatr machi after acting in her husband's drama in 1904. In conclusion, tiatr is the Portuguese word for theatre. And with this, it can be said that many of the songs and tiatrs were written in Konkani. However, to help readers who were unfamiliar with this language, translations were made available in Portuguese.

1.11. Formulation of Hypothesis

Tiatr has evolved from a traditional folk theatre to a contemporary art form, incorporating contemporary themes and social issues while maintaining its cultural significance.

1.12. Methodology

To collect data for the research, qualitative methods were employed.

The researcher mainly relied on Dr. Andre Rafael Fernandes' book on tiatr, and two anthologies¹, titled "Tiatr Machi (An anthology of articles on tiatr) PART - 1" (2017), and "Tiatr Machi (An anthology of articles on tiatr) PART - 2" (2018). Both these were helpful in gaining insights into the history and evolution of tiatr.

As far as the literature review is concerned, there was not much available as 'tiatr' is a topic that is hardly worked on. However, it was carried out by reading some research papers, looking up the internet for some articles related to tiatr, and perusing through Dr. Andre R. Fernandes' book – which proved to be a valuable resource.

To learn about how the themes in tiatr were in earlier times and how they have changed over the years, discussions among peers, friends and family were held. Also, to understand what are some of the challenges in the contemporary Goan society, tiatrs were watched. This was done by watching them on YouTube, and also getting some tiatrs scripts read. To add to the experience, one tiatr was watched live in a theatre.

Recognizing the scarcity of information on the challenges of tiatr and with the third (core) chapter of the dissertation being titled, 'Challenges and Sustenance of Tiatr in the Contemporary Era', a decision was made to supplement the research by conducting a series of interviews. This was also done in order to deepen the researcher's understanding of the challenges that are faced by the tiatr industry and the strategies that could be implemented for its sustenance in the contemporary era.

¹ Acquired from the Krishnadas Shama State Central Library, Panaji - Goa; compiled by Dr. Carlos M. Fernandes, Prashant R. Phadte, and Vinda S. Gadekar.

The interviews conducted had a blend of two modes – online and offline. A questionnaire that was prepared, was geared towards the challenges faced by the tiatr industry. For the online interviews, the questionnaire was shared in a word document format in which the respondents typed their responses. As far as the offline interviews are concerned, proof of them exist in the form of audio recordings, transcriptions and photographs taken along with the tiatrists.

During the interviews, the researcher was supplied by the tiatrists with literary materials such as books and a flyer, some of which were found to be helpful and hence, were made use in the dissertation. Newspapers were also referred to some extent.

While all the interview transcriptions are included in the appendix, their paraphrased versions, and the detailed analysis of all the four offline interviews together have been added to the third chapter of the dissertation, making it entirely interview-based.

CHAPTER TWO: EVOLUTION OF TIATR IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

This chapter takes a look into the role that women have played in tiatr, the reason for their late entrance on the stage, the women who broke social barriers to encourage other female artists, and the negative connotation of the word ‘nati’. Secondly, the chapter will also look at how tiatr has evolved from being a traditional folk theatre to a contemporary art form through ‘Bhogaval’, Zaagor, and Khell. The emergence of professional tiatrists will look at four generations of artists in the Konkani theatre. Lastly, it will briefly look at the themes that were common in earlier times, and those that are focussed in the contemporary times.

2.1. Women and Tiatr

Just like on any other stage – be it our own nation or a foreign one, women jumped onto the stage of drama much later because of social restrictions (Cardozo, “Women on Tiatr Stage” 26-27). In other words, if a female had to act on stage, she was looked down upon and was also considered to be someone with cheap character or low morals. And in order to let women act on stage, it took centuries; in developed countries too.

If one peruses through the history of various theatres around the world, he or she would stumble upon the name of Isabella Andreini. She was someone who dared to step onto the stage. No, it was not on the tiatr machier, but actually for a dramatic troupe called *Commedia Dell’Arte*. This took place somewhere around 1582 in France. Considered to be one of the finest actresses at that point of time, Isabella got the opportunity to act only because of her husband, Francisco Andreini – who was her co-actor in the same play.

In India, it is somewhere in 1789 that women began acting. To be precise, it was when an English woman named Mrs. Bristow built her own theatre in Kolkata. Madame

Dhermaivilla, Mrs. Deacle, etc. were all British women who stepped onto the stage at that time. Binodine Dasi was the first Indian woman to act; she paved the way for the other women to step onto the drama stage.

Regina Fernandes is a name that has not been unheard of. Gaining inspiration from Isabella Andreini, Fernandes decided to pave her own way onto the Konkani stage in the year 1904 by first appearing in the tiatr *Bhattkara*. The very fact that she was the wife of Joao Agostinho Fernandes i.e the one who penned the same drama, might have also possibly been another reason for her bagging this opportunity of acting on stage. In other words, by acting in this particular tiatr, the name of Regina Fernandes got inscribed into the pages of history, particularly that of Goa; at the age of twenty-three, she became the Goan theatre's first woman (Antao 8). But she did not have much time on this earth; she passed away at twenty-eight. Her demise was a great loss to many coming from the world of tiatr, especially female artists – who looked up at her as their role model, especially because Fernandes was a game-changer; she boldly fought against the social taboos of her time by stepping onto the stage. Regina was preceded by various other female artists such as Cecilia Machado, Carlota, Ermedlinda, Philomena, Mohana, etc. (Cardozo, “Women on Tiatr Stage” 27).

In the beginning of tiatr, there weren't any women acting on stage; even if they had to, then it would seem weird during those days. So, male performers used to dress as women. They used to take on the roles of a mother, wife, etc. But most of the times, men playing women's roles would often be seen as mockery. The males who seemed to excel in this area were Joaquim Caetano Coutinho, Rennie Colaco, Vincent de Saligao, Andrew and Rennie Colaco. The former was popularly known as Miss Julie.

In Goa, the 'nati' was highly sought after due to the scarcity of these female performers (Khedekar 36), and the reason for the same has been explained in the following paragraph. During that time, when the music was highly popular, these 'natis' were expected to sing; they

grabbed this opportunity as the stage provided a great scope for those interested in showcasing their musical abilities.

In “A Study of the Lives of Women Actors in *Naatak* (Konkani Drama) in Goa” (2017), Steffi Maria Cardoz discusses the negative connotation attached to the word ‘nati’ – which has been derived from ‘naatak’ itself – and how it leads to the weaking of women in the industry (Cardoz 2-3). While ‘nat’ means a male actor, ‘nati’ refers to a female actress. But for reasons unknown, the latter has sadly been alluded to prostitution. Due to the presence of this social stigma, parents were (and still are) compelled to refrain their daughters from joining the Konkani theatrical stage; they feared that it would affect their family name and status as well as their daughter’s marital life. This caused a significant gap in the number of ‘natis’, leading men to take on female roles. Another reason could be that the society at that time, did not wish to see women excel, especially in the field of acting.

In fact, today, there are more women than men acting. In all honesty, if it is a female acting, then the performance she brings on stage will definitely be beautiful because it is anytime better than a male doing the same. In addition to this, females usually have a voice that is natural and pleasant. In order for the tiatr industry to flourish, women have, and will always render their support. Today, many from the newer generation are coming forward. As a matter of fact, there are many tiatrists, including female tiatrists who have made a living just by working in tiatrs – or in the acting industry for that matter.

It is very evident that society – despite the level of education – has always had a tendency to be narrow-minded, unkind and resistant to change, especially when it comes to women’s rights and opportunities. However, it is crucial to recognize and celebrate the progress that’s made and continue to strive for a more inclusive and equitable world.

2.2. Transition from Traditional Folk Theatre to a Contemporary Art Form

Drama runs in the blood of the people of Goa (Khedekar 35-36). Most of them – whether from villages or cities, have got their faces painted with grease at least once in their lifetime. In other words, Goans love theatre so much, that they are ever-ready to lend a helping hand in the production of the drama – even if it means not being able to participate it.

It is an annual thing to stage a drama and the entire village feels accountable for it. The group that's performing gets all the help from those are passionate about the theatre – which every village seems to have. Since these plays were put up by amateur groups during the yearly temple festival, they can be considered to be part of the Festival Theatre. The reasons for this might vary, but the golden era of this Festival Theatre was during the period of 1955 to 1975. In a survey that was conducted during this time, it was found that around almost three thousand Marathi plays were annually staged in Goa, and also that this took place in six or seven months after the monsoons. Due to this reason, the plays were held in an outdoor temple courtyard.

Since all these performances were a tribute to the temple deity, the villagers were very eager to come out with a play every year. This was because they were of the belief that everything takes place by the will of God and that they should abide by these wishes. This belief has been strengthened by the *Puranas* and the writings of many saints.

But the folk art was a representation of religious ceremonies. For instance, the middle class tried to please the Gods and Goddesses, and also tried to seek name and fame as an artist. No doubt that there do exist individuals who do not want any kind of fame and attention, but as an actor, it is always tempting. In addition to this, plays at the temples and festivals were able to draw huge crowds, making them more appealing. It is this aspect that makes the folk theatre different – here, the plays were performed either to please the Gods, or to ward off the *devchaars* (evil spirits) from causing harm to the village. The villagers considered plays, music

and dances as protective acts. But at times, when they were unable to perform them, they resorted to performing symbolic acts. In Goa, this is referred to as ‘Bhogaval’.

Derived from the Konkani word ‘jaagar’, Zaagor (‘Jaagor’ is another spelling variation) in English means staying awake or holding a night vigil (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa’s Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 8-12). It is known as ‘zaagronn’ in the official language of Goa, Konkani. This tradition requires people to stay awake the entire night, from ten until the dawn, to honour and worship the local God, saint, or spirit – who, according to legend, wakes up to protect the village for the whole year. It is like a small payment for a year’s worth of protection!

This dramatic folk art is also associated with caste, as members belong to groups from particular working classes such as *maale* i.e. those who cut hair, those who baked bread, *escolachim bhurgim* i.e. school students, *bhagin kaam karpi* i.e. those working in the gardens, *dhobi* i.e. those who washed clothes, and other lower or backward classes, including the Untouchables, which is seen in the play. During the performances, individuals often express criticism or respond to it through acting.

There are two main categories of zaagor among the Hindus: Gawda and Perni. Zaagors were usually performed during village festivals or church feasts, sponsored by the local community. They were primarily performed in the Bardez and Salcete regions (although they were more famous in North Goa), particularly in places like Calangute, Candolim, Siolim, and Chandor. The art form includes elements of vulgarity, with direct or indirect references to extramarital affairs within the village.

While this ceremony was once widely celebrated, it is now less popular among Christians, as it is primarily viewed as a Hindu tradition. The zaagor is thought to be an ancient form of the Konkani theatre, known as tiatr, and was mainly performed through the tribal

community of the Gaudas. Goa is home to various other folk acts too, such as Fugdi, Goff, Lavni, Dhalo, etc.

Zaagors became an integral part of the cultural life of Goans who had migrated to Bombay. They would gather in small rooms called ‘kuds’ or ‘coods’ in the village clubs to celebrate their Goan identity. However, not all members of the Goan community welcomed this ceremony, as it faced criticism for its vulgar themes, leading many educated persons to refrain from attending.

The Perni Jaagor – which is performed with the masks on, is a very fascinating example (Khedekar 36). The entertainers used to receive numerous invitations to perform at various locations and, in return, were presented with oil, rice, and a decent amount of cash as a token of appreciation. This was the only form of drama where women exclusively portrayed female roles. Due to this, the women coming from such families did not enter into matrimony and instead, became Devdasis or *Devllins* (Cardoz VI).

In *Entrenched Fissures: Caste and Social Differences among the Devadasis* (2021), K.A. Geetha discusses the Devdasi system in India. It was a religiously-passed system where women were married to God and had to perform temple duties, including offering venereal services to their patrons (Geetha 87, 90-91). In other words, this was a kind-of prostitution, but a sacred one. The Devdasis belonged to castes that were lower than those in the hierarchy. Their social positions were further delineated due to segregations within the community itself. These Devdasis were trained in fine arts; classical dance and music were performed by those from the non-Brahmin communities, while folk dances during the temple festivals were performed by the Dalit Devadasis. While the Portuguese called them *bayadere/bailaderia* (those who performed ballet), the Devdasis in Goa were generally known as *Kalavantis* or *Kolvontham* i.e. prostitutes (Cardoz VI).

The Gomantak Maratha Samaj (previously known as Gomantak Kalavantin Samaj) began a movement for the resistance and liberation of the Devdasis in Goa (Khedekar 36). Although banned, there are some parts of India, including Goa that still continue to practice the Devdasi system (Geetha 91). Nonetheless, the women from these households gradually began to marry, and the need for performing on stage – both, financially and socially, significantly decreased (Khedekar 36). In this manner, the Jaagor ceased to exist. Earlier, there were some families from Vaghurme in Savoi Verem (Ponda), Mayem (Bicholim) and Molcornem (Sanguem) that performed the Perni Jaagor, but of late, this tradition has totally been erased from the state.

However, in *Reviving dying tales* (2018), Pradnya Gaonkar Rane throws special focus on this dying art form of Perni Jaagor. He talks about the efforts put in by students from a school in Mashem to bring back this Jaagor – which is performed during temple festivals by the Perni community (Rane). The students did the work that was assigned to them and put together bits and pieces of the stories told by their old relatives to create a play with songs and music. Mention has also been made about how very little is known about this folk art form, and that there is no written script – which becomes a huge problem for those trying to do a study in this area, as they have to depend on orally-passed down information for this matter. Also, the masks and clothing used in this art form are all made of wet smashed paper.

In India, women did not take part in plays until the early 1900s. Female roles were mainly performed by the men (Khedekar 36). For instance, Narayan Shripad Rajhans – a prominent singer and actor who was well-known as Bal Gandharva, had a significant impact on the Marathi stage (according to Wikipedia). Men who were good-looking and slim enough always seemed to bag female roles everywhere (Khedekar 36).

Over time, women from the Devdasi community also began to take up acting and later made it as their profession; they began to charge a fixed amount for every performance, and were ready to work with any group that required an actress.

Similar to these plays – which were performed in Hindu temples, Khell Tiatr from the Christian community also came to be well-known. Khell – which is very commonly called as Fell, was famous in the South of Goa (Cardozo, “History of Tiatr”). As far as the spelling is concerned, this form of art is often spelt as ‘khell’, ‘fhell’, or ‘phell’. A brief explanation can be provided for this. The usual Konkani dialect is according to the Devanagiri script, meaning that the first word mentioned here is pronounced as ‘kh-aeil’. Whereas the second and third words are pronounced as ‘f-aeil’ in certain parts of Goa, with a ‘f’ or ‘ph’. Khells were basically an improved form of the Zaagor (Jorge 363). In the beginning, they came to be performed on the ground. It was then taken up on the stage. During the *igorjechem fest* (feast of the church) and *copelachem fest* (feast of the chapel), tiatrists and local singers used to perform before the enthusiastic parishioners (Khedekar 36). This form of drama typically involved family drama, social events, and fantasies, and were presented in a highly-emotional and sensational manner. Songs were part and parcel of the story. Approximately two hundred performances of tiatr were said to occur annually. As far as gender is concerned, men too performed female roles in tiatr. Due to the positive response it gained in the Christian society, it continued to remain active, like the Marathi theatre – which interested a very few number of Christians since they had done their schooling in Marathi. And as for the Hindus, they were not usually present for these tiatrs.

However, with the passing of time, the quality of these two dramatic forms declined (Cardozo, “History of Tiatr”). The blame for this could be put on the elements of vulgarity – which were incorporated in order to create humour through fun and cheap performances for the audience. Many people did not appreciate this reduction in quality in the staging of Zaagor and Khell; those who were well-educated, no more patronized these forms of entertainment. In

other words, it was not only the educated Goans, but everyone in general who wished to have a better and qualitative form of entertainment. That is when tiatr was conceived.

2.3. Emergence of Professional Tiatrists

During the period between the 1930s to the 1970s, there were a number of tiatrists who shot to fame (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 136-137). This can be considered as the first generation. Some of the well-known ones were Aleixinho de Candolim, A.M.B. Rose, A.R. Souza Ferrao, Dioginho D'mello, Ernesto Rebelo, Freddy Barboza, Jack Aquila, John Battlu, J.P. Souzalino, John F. Costa Bir, Kid Boxer, Master Vaz, Minguel Rod, Rogaciano D'souza, Saib Rocha, Sebastiao (aka *Champion*) Alvares, S.T. Miranda, Vincent de Saligao, Young Menezes, etc.

When 1950s neared, the second generation of artists came on stage. These include C. Alvares, John Claro Fernandes, M. Boyer, Prem Kumar, Remmie Colaco, etc. The founders expected these tiatrists to maintain the high standards – which the latter were instrumental in doing. Female artists such as Ermelinda Rocha and Carlota D'souza were later followed by Antoneta Mendes, Betty Fernandes, Carmen Rose, Cecelia Machado, Filomena Braz, Jessie Dias, Miss Mohana, Ophelia Cabral, Shalini, etc.

The third generation involves Prince Jacob, Humberto Fernandes, Tomazinho Cardozo, Francis de Tuem, Cezar D'mello, John D'silva, comedian Sally, Mario Menezes, Peter-Roshan Fernandes, Selvy Correia, Antonette de Maina, Rosy Alvares, Olga Vaz, etc. (E. Sequeira and A. Sequeira, *Famous Tiatrists Today*). The fourth generation includes tiatrists such as Rioma Menezes, Brian Fernandes, Myron Correia, Benzer Fernandes, Kevin D'mello, Semica, Maverick Alvares, Aleka Cardozo, Joesan Afons, Joylita Silveira, Jennifer Fernando, etc.

All the tiatrists of the first two generations except Joao Agostinho Fernandes, who are referred in two of the volumes of *Tiatrancho Jhelo*, set about their work during this phase (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 137). Their works have been briefly spoken of below.

Souza Ferraos: The Souza Ferrao brothers, Augusto Remedios and Antonio Francisco were well-known Konkani stage performers (Gomes 53-55). They were born in Ambora, Raia, to Joaquim Mariano Souza and Maria Cecilia Ferrao. The brothers formed their own theater group called the Jolly Bros Dramatic Club. Francisco was more business-oriented and opened two companies – Gasa Souza Ferrao and Sofar Sons Engineering, in Curchorem. Remedios, on the other hand, showcased his acting skills in various roles, proving himself to be a versatile performer.

Basilio Furtado first brought Remedios to the stage by casting him as ‘Princess Diana’ in his tiatr, *Naadponn Aamigachem*. Remedios’ big stage debut was actually in a drama called *Geraldine* by Joao Agostinho Fernandes – who gave him important lead roles in almost all of his tiatrs. For example, Remedios performed the role of Deudita’s father in Fernandes’ tiatr, *Cavelchi Sundori* and also in *Kunbi Jakki*. Due to his excellent acting skills, Antonio earned an important place in Konkani theatre, acting in many of the films produced during his lifetime. He was an accomplished dancer and had several gramophone records to his name.

Remedios composed numerous plays, including *Alma Vhetat Sorgar*, *Empregad Redde*, *Ghatkepon*, *Goui Put* (stupid son), *Kazari Okol*, *Mhojea Bliava*, *Santan Baudi*, *Paichen Farikponi*, *Patchpaishachi Kazar Hokol*, *Visvasghat*, and *Zotkaxi*. His last performance was in M. Boyer’s *Sonvsar Sudhorlo*, after which he died in 1978. On the tiatr machi, Francisco and Remedios Souza Ferrao were regarded as the stars’ moon and sun.

Kid Boxer: Kid Boxer was the stage name of Caetano Manuel Pereira (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 141-

142). The reason he attained the nickname ‘Boxer’ was due to his mischievousness as a little kid. He was born on 17 February 1917 in the Goan village of Siolim. He was part of the Kid-Young-Rod — a famous trio. Young Menezes was the second member of this group. He was such a fast singer, that the Gen Z today would have called him the ‘Eminem of the twentieth century’. The reason for such a statement is that Boxer, once sang a 500-words song which he himself composed. The mind-blowing thing here is that he did this in one go; he did not stop singing to catch his breath at all. With the joining of Miguel Rod – a great Konkani artist, a perfect triangle was formed.

In tiatrs, these three were a formidable presence in singing, as Boxer was highly adept at creating songs that were both – filled with proverbs as well satirical in nature. He was also skilled at quickly responding with witty remarks during debates against Aleixinho de Candolim. Although *Ostori* was his first tiatr, Kid Boxer’s *Kidachem Sopon* gained a lot of popularity among all of his works. Other works by this tiatrist were: *Adeus vo Nimnni Bhatt*, *Amchim Natalam*, *Ankvar ani Kazari*, *Bankruttan Bankrutt*, *Bhoinn*, *Editor Ponch de Bombaim*, *Fuddar*, *Goa*, *Mhozo Oprad*, *Militar*, *Zata tem Boreak*, and *Zulum*. In another of his tiatrs, *Somzonnent Chuk Zali* takes a look at the human psyche. It also scans through the tendency of prejudgement – which is often the cause of horrible misunderstandings. Through this play, Boxer exhibits his artistic ability to mix together seriousness with humour, without being overly dramatic.

C. Alvares: C. Alvares was quite famous in the tiatr industry. He was born in the eight month, on first, in 1924. When he was only seven, he ascended the stage. When his father Caetano had staged a tiatr, junior Alvares sang a comic song in it. The lyrics for the same were composed by his paternal cousin Sebastiao, who was famously known as Champion. It was this same cousin who introduced Alvares – who somehow reached Bombay to make a livelihood – to his play in the year 1942. Sebastiao had penned down five songs – all of which

were sung solely by C. Alvares. His singing was applauded by the audience not just that day, but throughout his life. This made him compose his own lyrics for his songs – right from solos to sextets.

This went on till he completed composing all the twenty-five side shows along with the cantos for *Atam Zanvuim Tuzo Hanv*, his maiden play – which was first performed live in 1944. At this time, Alvares was hardly twenty years old. In his sixty years of career, Alvares had composed a total of 104 tiatrs and was already working on the next one. It was a bit of an astonishment learning that he could – in just a day’s time – write a full-length drama. On 27 February 1999, Alvares saw the final curtain coming down on his life.

He performed tiatrs that went on to become successful. Some of them were: *Ankvar vo Kazari*, *Atancheo Suno*, *Xezari Combo*, *Bailanchi Rit*, *Bail de Tarvoti*, *Bicari Nosai*, *Conn Guneaukari*, *Conn To Maali?*, *Cortub Avoichem*, *Dr. Simon*, *Ghorcarn Maim*, *Goencho Mog*, *Jurament*, *Kednam Udetolo To Dis*, *Manvoddechem Sutt*, *Mosteponn*, *Patki Nhoi Ghatki*, etc. Other than Goa, C. Alvares also performed in Bombay and other places such as East Africa, England and the Middle East. A number of his tiatrs were based on social themes; he tried to focus on social values. He also emphasized on the significance of mothers in various aspects of life; they were portrayed in various roles, such as encouragers, caregivers and disciplinarians – all this was loved and supported by his audience.

J.P. Souzalino: Souzalino was an Aldonkar, born in the village of Calvim on 22 March 1904 as Jose Pascoal Fernandes (Claro, “A Director with Forte” 130-131). From a very young age, he was very much interested in theatre and used to be every ready in organizing children’s plays. As the senior-most tiatrist during his time, he penned more than forty plays. He was a versatile actor, director and tiatrist. He was also a song writer and a good singer. During his youth, he used to sing songs that were both – decent as well as comic in nature. He used to give

solo and duo performances, dressed up as a girl. It was because his songs were of good subjects that made the people love his song tracks a lot.

There were times that he used to take on the role of a prince, and sometimes that of a king. He even acted as a hero and elsewhere, as an old man. Directors preferred to lend him feminine roles mainly because he had a beautiful (or handsome, so to say) face. And not only this; he – while performing in female roles, used to speak in a soft voice. Even his movements were very brisk and delicate. He used to prove to be better than the actual females! He was considered to be one of the best Konkani dramatists and also one of the finest set-designers during his time. However, he tried to improvise on his own stagecraft by attending Gujarati, Parsi, Marathi, and other plays. Some of his notable tiatrs are *Aum to Mapxenkar*, *Conde de Monte Cruz*, *Dadlo Vhodd vo Ostor*, *Deko Xett Uska Aurot*, *Dream of Lisbon*, *Filomenachem Sopon*, *Hem Asa Tem* (which was staged twenty-seven times in the same theatre), *Khotti Songot*, *Oxench Kelear Sudhrot Goem*, *Paichi Chuk vo Mainchi*, *Sezarnik ho go Dodlacho*, *Tiklem Cheddum*, *Xeutteak Polloun Justis*, etc. Souzalino sadly left for his heavenly abode on 18 July 1970.

Remmie Colaco: Remedios Januario Colaco, who would later take on the stage name of Rimmie Colaco, was born on 19 September 1925 in Sanvordem (A. R. Fernandes, *When the Curtains Rise... Understanding Goa's Vibrant Konkani Theatre* 143-144). He learnt *solfege* and then at his parish school, he began playing the violin. At the age of fifteen, he decided to pursue his further studies in Bombay. In other words, he was only a pupil, studying at a school in Vadala. During this time, he gave his first performance on the Konkani stage. He sang opening songs, which were usually in Konkani, but had them translated into English. Once, he performed a song in Jolly Boys' *Sotachem Zoit*. It was here that Colaco received immense praise, especially by professional playwrights such as Dioginho D'mello, Kid Boxer, Souza Ferrao and many others.

Till date, his songs are heard and enjoyed, especially by the older generation. Believe it or not, Colaco sang in more than thousand plays and when it came to his own songs, he sung over six hundred. One of his all-time classic Konkani songs is *Ankvar Mariechem Dukh* (meaning, sorrows of the Virgin Mary). His singing skills took him to places outside Goa, such as Bombay, Gujarat, and Karnataka. He also travelled to international destinations like Africa, specifically to Dar-es-Salam, Mombassa, Moshi, Nairobi, Nakuru and Tanga. Additionally, he also visited the Persian Gulf and staged shows in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Dubai, Kuwait, Muscat and Qatar.

Colaco staged his first tiatr on 15 April 1955, at Princess Theatre. It was called *Satvo Sacrament* and appreciated by the audience a lot. Some of his other famous plays are *Atam Konn Sukhi*, *Atancho Teomp* (this particular tiatr focussed on the issue of drugs and how the youth were getting affected by it as adults), *Bhauponnanchi Kaido*, *Chouto Mandament*, *Don Kallzam*, *Ghorachem Sukh*, *Mhuzo Kunhead*, *Ostorecho Mog*, *Sukh Tarvotteachem*, and *Zolmancho Gaum*. This notable tiatrist passed away on 22 March 2012.

Francis de Tuem: Francis Fernandes, more famously known as Francis de Tuem, originates from Tuem, Pernem (as cited in the interview transcript). Singing in local tiatrs has been part of his childhood experiences. His village celebrated two festivals annually, leading to holding two tiatrs each year, involving his entire family, including his father, a brother who became a Selesian priest, and a sister teaching at a school in Tuem. De Tuem found village tiatrs fascinating and was particularly drawn to the songs of renowned artists like Marcelin de Betim, Souza Boy, Trio Kings, William de Curtorim, and M. Boyer. His involvement in conducting programs at his school in Tuem led to him composing his own songs, with encouragement from a priest. Upon impressing an Italian sponsor with one of his compositions, he was invited to perform in Matunga, Bombay.

As his talent gained recognition, neighbouring villages invited him to perform in their local tiatrs. Ruzarin de Calvim noticed him and offered him opportunities in competitions. This led to invitations from various regions such as Bardez, Pernem, and Aldona. Eventually, Selferns Fernandes from Guirim, Sangolda discovered him and recruited him in 1998. At the same time, Francis de Tuem held jobs as a senior technician for Black End Dagger and Compton Greaves before joining ITI as an electrician instructor. However, he faced challenges when singing politically charged songs, resulting in harassment and even arrest. Despite these difficulties, he remained committed to tiatr and eventually focused solely on it; he persevered due to the support and acceptance he received from the audience. *Guneav Konnacho?* was the first tiatr that Francis penned. It was performed 84 times across Goa. This was followed by *Nivar Amkam*, *Reporter*, *Question Mark*, *Savdhaan Goa*, *Konnak Patiepachem?*, *Serkar 420*, and *Social Worke*. He recently came out with his ninth tiatr titled, *Ger'rak Nhoi, Vor'rak Melo*.

Prince Jacob: It was on 16 July 1960 (Tavares 13) that Miguel J.C.L. Fernandes was born (as cited in the interview transcript). He is famously referred as Prince Jacob since he was crowned the 'Comedy Prince of Goa' in 1982 by the late Fr. Antonio Pereira, a Jesuit priest. The former is from Fatorda, Margao and studied at Our Lady of Rosary for primary school and Holy Spirit Institute in Margao. After completing a course in machinist-cum-fitter at Don Bosco, Panjim, he started teaching there. Later, he had to choose between teaching and acting, and he chose acting.

During his school days, he was an excellent orator and won many elocution competitions. His teacher, Fatima Rebello, used to take him and his classmate, Ashley, to these competitions. They always won first and second prizes, respectively, which helped him overcome his fear of the stage. Fr. Luis Orland and Sir Menin Furtado were also very supportive of him during school events. Once, when he was hesitant to perform on Parents' Day, Fr. Orland threatened to cancel the event if he did not perform. The late Jacinto Vaz, who was his

mentor, encouraged him and even acted with him in one of his tiatrs. Whenever Jacob performed comedy in plays, Vaz used to come and watch and encourage him by saying that he would become a great comedian in the future.

His tiatr *Padri* has achieved a milestone of 350 shows, a feat unmatched in the history of tiatr, and the film adaptation of the same has been viewed by thousands and lakhs. In this manner, Prince Jacob has maintained a 36-year career in which his performances continue to captivate audiences. Recently, he came out with his 74th production titled, *Amchea Ghorant*.

Tomazinho Cardozo: Born on 14 April 1946 in Ecoxim, Pomburpa to Assessao aka Assis and Simonia aka Aninha (W. Menezes 7), Tomazinho Cardozo faced challenges early in life due to his father's passing when he was just a month old (as cited in the interview transcript). His family encountered difficulties, leading his uncle from Mozambique to bring them to Goa when he was four years old. Despite financial struggles, his mother, brother, and uncle managed to support him through his education. His brother had to leave school at 10 to work and later established a bakery called 'Simonia Stores'. Tomazinho completed his secondary education, pursued a B.Sc. from Dhempe College, Miramar, and began teaching at St. Theresa's High School, Candolim. He married Irene, also a teacher, and they decided to pursue M.A. together. Tomazinho served as headmaster, while Irene became headmistress, and he also held the position of Sarpanch of Candolim for twenty-two years. In 1995, he was elected as the Speaker of the Goa Legislative Assembly.

In 1957, he was invited to perform a comedic solo. He felt discouraged after the renowned tiatrist Prem Kumar heard him sing. But with the encouragement of Alex Mistri, a musician and note-writer, Cardozo went ahead and sang. He earned praises from both, Prem Kumar and the audience. With this, he pushed himself on to the tiatr stage. Tiatr was initially a pastime rather than a profession for him. His group, 'Kala Mogi, Candolim' consists primarily

of educators and students. Their primary focus is to enhance the quality of tiatr, particularly within the prestigious ‘A Group’ productions organized by the Tiatr Academy.

Cezar D’mello: Cezar D’mello began acting at the age of nine in the tiatr performances held at village festivals in Batim (as cited in the interview transcript). He gradually transitioned to writing Biblical plays that were showcased at the Panjim Church. Over time, he actively engaged in participating in tiatr and cultural activities, particularly from 1974 onwards. Additionally, he directed a tiatr at the Kala Academy tiatr festival in 1976. From 1990 onwards, he continued to stage numerous tiatrs for Kala Academy competitions, achieving notable success with multiple first, second, and third prizes over the years. He initially became involved in tiatr through a strong ensemble known as MIL-MEL-NEL, where they performed various genres such as politics, humour, and directed songs simultaneously. Additionally, he also participated in musical plays, presented musical shows, performed in one-act plays, and even produced films. He has completed forty years on the professional stage.

Some of his major milestones and achievements include being felicitated by Kala Mogi-Candolim at the hands of Remo Fernandes for celebrating 100 years of tiatr; by Kala Academy Goa at the hands of the then Hon’ble Dy. CM, Shri Ravi Naik for celebrating 25 years of tiatr festival; by Kuwait Konkani Kendra, Kuwait at the hands of the then Hon’ble Minister, Shri Luizinho Faleiro; and by Maestro Agnelo Dias Silver Jubilee celebration committee at the hands of the then Hon’ble Speaker, Shri Tomazinho Cardozo (D’mello 84–87, 89–99).

Besides these, he also bagged scores of prizes for his tiatrs. *Konn Kirmidor* (1976-77) won two first prizes; *Kitem! Tum Mhozo?* (1978-79) won three prizes; *Konn Zai?* (1979-80) won four prizes; *Kirmidoracho Rosto* (1980-81) won five prizes; *Konnuch Noko* (1981-82) won two second prizes; *Kal ani Aiz* (1982-83) won six first prizes; *Kalliz Ostorechem* (1983-84) won seven prizes; *Kaide Konnak* (1984-85) won four prizes; *Kednanch Goddchenam* (1985-86) won six prizes; *Kalliz Naslolo* (1986-87) won five prizes; *Kallo Fator* (1987-88)

won four prizes; and *Kolakar* (1988-89) won two third prizes. He recently received an award for his valuable contribution to tiatr in January 2017; he was awarded the Best Lyrics prize for the song *Election* in 2017, in the competition organized by the Election Commission; he was awarded the consolation prize for poetry writing competition, organized by Dalgado Konkani Academy; he received the State Cultural Award 2018-19 from the Government of Goa in the field of Literature on 26 January 2020; he received the Rashtriya Gaurav Award on 9 April 2021 at New Delhi; he was awarded the Global Achiever Award in the field of Art in 2021 at Mumbai; etc.

Mario Menezes: The late Mario Piedade Menezes was a tiatrist of the Konkani theatre. He was often called as the ‘Tragedy King’ due to his expertise in portraying tragic characters (Pires). His unique and captivating style of doing dialogues on stage could not be matched. He had penned and directed various plays, as well as had acted in thousands of shows (D’Cruz, “A Delightful Time for the Tragedy King of Tiatr” 503). He was married to Epiphania and had two children, Riosha and Rioma. The news of his sudden passing due to a massive cardiac arrest on 25 June 2022 was a shock to the entire tiatr industry as well as to the people of Goa (Mergulhao, “The King of Tragedy Takes His Final Bow”). His legacy is being carried forward by his children.

Rioma Menezes: Well-known as the ‘Wonder Girl of the Konkani Stage’, Rioma Menezes began her tiatr career at the tender age of seven within her father, Mario’s troupe, performing in his tiatr called *Hevui Chukik Bhogsonnem Nam?* (as cited in the interview transcript). After she performed *Kontrad Saasnacho* in 2007, a Konkani song that was taught to her by her mother, Epiphania, Rioma was well-received by everyone. She has since acted and sang in more than twenty of her father’s tiatrs and contributed vocals to numerous audio and video cassette recordings for esteemed figures such as Francis de Tuem, Xavier Gomes, S. Caitan, Lawry Travasso, and Fr. Domnic Alvares.

Additionally, she gained recognition through participation in high school and college events involving singing competitions and skits. Her performances span not only throughout Goa, but also extend into neighboring regions like Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat, as well as international venues such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Kingdom. For her efforts, Menezes has been awarded prestigious titles like the Gulab Award, and Dr. Jack Sequeira accolades. She also received an accolade on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of tiatr. Besides these, she has been felicitated by the BrainBox Institute. She has also been honored in Dubai and Kuwait for her singing and acting abilities. Although she has not yet pursued tiatr as a full-time profession, she continues to engage in it out of her passion for singing and her talent.

Jennifer Fernando: Jennifer Fernando's grandparents were involved in tiatr, particularly her esteemed grandfather who possessed natural artistic abilities as a painter, actor, singer, and composer (as cited in the interview transcript). Initially, he contributed through portrait drawings for tiatr advertisements before expanding into acting, singing, and composing roles himself. Her mother followed suit, having dedicated approximately 35 years to the field following the development of her own acting and vocal skills. Inspired by witnessing her mother's performances, Jennifer herself took up acting and singing. She got involved in tiatr when the renowned Mario Menezes recognized her potential and provided her with an opportunity to showcase her talent. With the support of her family, she has been thriving on the Konkani stage. Although she does not have a desire to pursue a career in this field, she never wants to completely leave it. Her mother has always been her source of inspiration. Fernando has been bestowed with various awards and tokens of appreciation due to her skills.

Joesan Afons: Chandor-based Joesan Afons hails from a family deeply involved in tiatr and the Konkani language (as cited in the interview transcript). His father, Salvador Afons, is an esteemed tiatr and khell tiatr director, while his mother is a renowned actress and vocalist.

Joesan completed his higher secondary at Fr. Basilios', Majorda. Additionally, he is a trained bartender and currently working professionally as a photographer and videographer through his company, Filmcraft Studio. As a child, he would witness his father performing tiatr and khel, observing the admiration they garnered from audiences. This inspiration led him to take the stage himself at just three years old when he performed the Konkani song *Borem Vo Vaitt*, composed by his father. His performance earned encores and awards, alleviating initial nerves and fostering confidence. From then on, he continued pursuing a career in tiatr without hesitation. Joesan introduced programmed background music for khell, which was a significant innovation in Carnival Khell Tiatr. He also won the Zomnivoile Khell Competition in 2023 organized by Tiatr Academy of Goa, and had received awards, including Best Director, Best Actor, Best Kantos, Best Opening Song, and Best Background Music at the same competition. Additionally, he was recently felicitated as the Youngest Writer Director on the Konkani Professional Stage in the tiatr industry.

Kevin D'mello: Kevin D'mello's family is deeply involved in tiatr, particularly through his father, Cezar, who wrote numerous successful tiatrs beginning with the letter 'K.' (as cited in the interview transcript). This choice led to their fame within the community, and consequently, Kevin's sibling, Karen and cousins also received names starting with the same letter. As a child, Kevin participated in singing competitions at school where he would perform his father's compositions while dressed in traditional costumes. He continued to excel in these competitions for three consecutive years due to his father's lyrics and his own performances. These achievements paved the way for him to pursue roles in Konkani films, and his tiatr background continues to influence his work today. Whenever performing, whether in tiatrs, naataks, or other theater genres such as English plays, Kevin draws upon his experiences from his family's involvement in tiatr.

His initial involvement in tiatr began through performing and singing kantaram in his father, Cezar's musical shows. In his first tiatr at Kala Academy, Kevin played the lead role in *Vont Laagim, Kaaliz Pois*. Subsequently, he participated in numerous musical shows and acted alongside renowned tiatrists like Prince Jacob and John D'silva in films. Kevin has acted in thirteen Konkani films, including *Just a Minute, Benddkar, MMS, O Maria*, and *Zanvoim Number 1*. D'mello won prizes for cantar competitions, where the lyrics were composed by his father. His biggest achievement was bagging a role in Rajendra Talak's movie *O Maria*, which was selected for the International Film Festival of India (IFFI). Although Talak was unaware of Kevin's background in tiatr, the latter was able to perform well with the help of his father and another tiatrlist, Sharon Mazarello, who assisted him with the dialogues.

Maverick Alvares: Maverick Tomston Alvares is the grand-nephew of C. Alvares and the nephew of Rosy Alvares. He has been on stage since his kindergarten school days, actively participating in activities such as singing, etc. (as cited in the interview transcript). He continued this involvement through his primary and secondary school years. His journey into tiatr began when he had the opportunity to act and sing in a tiatr organized by St. Anthony's, Monte de Guirim for a competition held by the Kala Academy at the age of ten. Winning first place for three consecutive years fueled his passion for tiatr.

Subsequently, during college, he participated in the All-Goa Tiatr Competition organized by the Tiatr Academy of Goa, where his team secured the first place for two years. At the age of eighteen, he was introduced to the professional stage by his favorite director, the late Mario Menezes, for his tiatr *Thank You*, which marked the beginning of his journey with various other directors. Alvares has received several awards, including the All-Goa Inter-College tiatr competition. He also won the title of Best Comedian during the years 2021-2022 and again in 2022–2023. Additionally, he earned recognition as Best Actor on merit for the

period 2023-2024. Furthermore, Alvares has been awarded various honors for his skills in singing and acting from both, Kala Academy and Tiatr Academy of Goa.

Joylita Silverira: Joylita Silveira resides in the village of St. Estevam (as cited in the interview transcript). She is the granddaughter of Casmiro Afonso, who was a well-known tiatrist. She is currently pursuing her second year Bachelor's degree in Education while also expressing an affinity for tiatrs, music, literature, and writing. She was discovered at the age of seventeen during a tiatr performance in her village by Milagres de Chandor. He then introduced her to his tiatr, *Go to Hell*, where other directors recognized her acting and singing abilities and invited her to perform on stage. She was inspired to continue acting and singing in tiatrs due to the praise she received for her work and dedication, as well as the unwavering support of her parents and sister. In 2023, Silveira received the best female lead award for Tiatr Academy's 'A group' Tiatr Competition.

Aleka Cardozo: Aleka Cardozo began performing at the tender age of three (as cited in the interview transcript). Her grandfather, who was famously known as 'Godop Caitan', did not write down scripts or lyrics; instead, he memorized them and passed them along orally. Subsequently, Aleka's father took up directing tiatrs, thus continuing their familial involvement in this cultural tradition of tiatr. She began by performing songs and acting in one-act plays during gatherings within her community. From these initial experiences, she progressed to participating in khell tiatrs before fully immersing herself in traditional tiatr productions. She has continued her work in tiatr ever since. She won several prizes, including first and second prizes for fancy dress competitions. She also won the All-Goa Monologue Competition twice. She was the voice of Ravindra Bhawan, and was the first runner up in the C. Alvarez Duet Competition organized by TAG.

2.4. Incorporation of Contemporary Themes and Social Issues

In its early days, traditional themes such as mythological tales, historical events, love stories, etc. were given focus by tiatr (Sequeira, Sequeira, Lopes FMCK, et al., *Themes of Tiatr: Then and Now*). People found such themes entertaining and they also stood as a means of conserving cultural heritage. Tiatr performances showcased vibrant attire, dynamic melodies, and compelling narratives. All this enchanted viewers with their charm. As society made progress, so did the themes in Goan theatre. Tiatrists and performers began to address contemporary issues such as political unrest, environmental concerns, corruption, gender inequality, etc. So, by imbibing these stories into their performances, tiatrists resonated with the people on a deeper level. In this way, the former used to bring to light the problems and realities of life in the contemporary era. In other words, tiatr plays an important role in tackling social issues that are either often considered to be taboo, or are not given enough attention by mainstream media. When topics such as domestic violence, religious or communal disharmony, caste discrimination, etc. are openly discussed, tiatr in-a-way challenges the norms of society. This encourages dialogue amongst the people. It also helps to bring about awareness so that the idea of a more inclusive and progressive society is generated.

Goan theatre is very capable of breaking stigmas and pushing boundaries. It bravely confronts themes or subjects that are often considered to be controversial or sensitive. Tiatrists often shed light on these issues, maybe by directly addressing them in their plays, or usually voicing them out cleverly through satire, humour, and skilful narration of the story. In this way, they are able to break away barriers and also challenge notions that are preconceived. This leaves the audience feeling both, enlightened and entertained, creating a lasting impression. One of the features that define tiatr is its ability to come in direct terms with societal realities. So, whether it calls attention to the moral conflicts that arise in contemporary society, the

impact of globalization, or the struggles of marginalized communities, Goan theatre presents itself as a place for discussion and reflection. It plays a significant role in bringing about social change and encouraging action by lending a voice to the voiceless.

It is the popularity and reach that make tiatr a powerful medium to raise awareness about issues related to society. So, when such messages are conveyed through this combination of entertainment and social commentary, it is found that the audience is more receptive and interested. All thanks to the tiatrists because they are the ones who have this ability to initiate conversations, question the status quo, and encourage communities to strive towards a better change. One thing just cannot be underestimated. And that is, the impact that tiatr has in bringing about social change. It has the potential to change certain point of views, break through long-held beliefs, and rouse action. All of these things can take place through tiatr's engaging performances. This just goes to say that it has played a noteworthy role in influencing policymakers and shaping public opinion. When issues taking place in the society are addressed by tiatr in a direct and straightforward manner, it acts as a catalyst for progress. It also encourages the society to be more inclusive and compassionate.

The use of contemporary themes and social issues in tiatr has not just revolutionized the dramatic art form, but have also intensified its relevance in the society today. By making use of the power that storytelling, performance, and music has, tiatr can become a platform for social change, breaking social stigmas, and coming to terms with certain important issues. While looking towards the future, it is necessary to recognize the strength of tiatr in moulding people's opinion, encouraging meaningful conversation, and raising awareness on matters of social concern. This is to say that tiatr will undoubtedly continue to remain as an influential force, and that is, only with its continued dedication and innovation. It will reflect the ever-changing cultural landscape and inspire positive changes in the society.

CHAPTER THREE: CHALLENGES AND SUSTENANCE OF TIATR IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

3.1. Interviews

During the course of the dissertation, it was found that there was little information available on the challenges faced by the tiatr industry. For this reason, this particular chapter was titled accordingly and was made interview-based. Also, a decision was made to supplement the research by conducting a couple of interviews. This was done in order to deepen the researcher's understanding of the challenges and the strategies that could be implemented for the survival of tiatr in the contemporary era. The interviews were held in two modes i.e. offline and online. The following are the paraphrased and analyzed interviews of the tiatrists, Francis de Tuem, Prince Jacob, Tomazinho Cardozo, and Cezar D'mello – all of which were held in an offline mode. The online interviews were not taken into consideration due to unsatisfactory responses. However, the transcripts of all the interviews have been included in the appendix.

3.1.1. Interview with Francis de Tuem



Fig. 3.1: With the ‘Political King of Tiatr’, Francis de Tuem, (right).

In the interview with the tiatrist, Francis de Tuem, it was learnt that tiatr was facing many problems.

One of them was the lack of documentation. To this, de Tuem felt that there was not much of preservation done of the scripts due to the older generation not being much bothered to do so, and also that they did not know how to store them on CDs, computers, etc. (as cited in the interview transcript). It was also noted that many tiatrists do not take the initiative to get the scripts of their plays printed due to financial setbacks. Nowadays, due to pests and less space at home, many opt to upload their works on YouTube, etc. However, these can also prove to be dangerous due to virus attacks, leading to the destruction of important data.

Regarding tiatr facing competition, he replied saying that many prefer watching films instead of tiatrs due to the increased quality; tiatr productions struggle to invest in good quality

equipment, whereas film productions get sponsorships to help in this matter. De Tuem also spoke about how the people used to amuse themselves with radios, TVs, etc. in the olden days. However, today, people are going for OTT platforms like Netflix, YouTube, etc. and this has declined the popularity of tiatr. It is usually the older generation that prefers to watch tiatrs.

In relation to the youth being interested in tiatr, De Tuem observed that nowadays, the younger generation hardly speaks Konkani at home. This leads to them not understanding the language quite well. When this happens, they do not attend tiatrs. And while there are youth who do watch tiatrs, many of them are distracted on their devices in the theatre or at the venues. This clearly shows their disinterest in the art form. However, De Tuem suggested that encouraging children to participate in tiatrs from a young age, and also promoting tiatr through educational institutions and the Church will help in keeping tiatr alive, especially for the future generation.

To allude to the topic of tradition, De Tuem mentioned some things of the past, like curtains being painted with particular scenes and being reused every now and then, having comedy scenes after every *poddo*, etc. However, nowadays, there are many modern equipment such as projectors, flex, etc. While making use of such innovations, tiatrists try to stick to the tradition of tiatr; thus, maintaining a balance.

And he also mentioned about how COVID impacted tiatr; halls had to be shut down and the tiatrists suffered financially. So, they had no other option than to upload their tiatrs on YouTube. De Tuem himself has done so thrice. This was done not only to gain likes and followers, but to also keep tiatr alive and running. In this aspect, he said that he feels the government does not want tiatr to continue; tiatrists do not get the much-deserved support and recognition from the government.

Another problem somewhat related to this is censorship. Being a tiatrist who exposes the political issues in Goa, he and the other tiatrists as well have to face difficulties in this aspect; while the Goa government censors the political songs and scripts, the Gulf asks the tiatrists to submit their scripts for approval. However, this process is not compulsory in the United Kingdom.

Lastly, De Tuem spoke about women. Firstly, he mentioned the difficulties they face due to transport; before, many of them would sleep at the location of the tiatr itself. However, this has changed in recent times as better arrangements have been made. Secondly, female artists new to the industry often face financial issues w.r.t. buying make-up, costumes and jewellery. However, they receive help from colleagues in this matter.

The interview ended with De Tuem expressing his fear of tiatr losing its importance in the future if not encouraged through the youth.

3.1.2. Interview with Prince Jacob



Fig. 3.2: With the ‘Prince of Comedy’, Prince Jacob (left) and John D’silva (right).

In the interview with the tiatrist, Prince Jacob, it was learnt that tiatr was facing many problems.

He began by speaking about the documentation of tiatr, stating that it has recently begun, but not up to the mark (as cited in the interview transcript). Although books are published and stored in the libraries, there is hardly anyone reading them. This clearly shows that readers are uninterested. So, tiatrists avoid writing because there is no sale. However, the Tiatr Academy of Goa tries to financially help them in this matter.

Mention was also made of the issue posed by the closure of halls. For almost three years, tiatrs were not taking place, particularly the hall in Panaji (Kala Academy) due to renovation. So, the people’s interest to watch tiatrs died down to a certain extent. There was a similar situation in Ponda, where the hall was shut for five years. In Vasco, the AC is non-

functional for the past three years. With such a situation, tiatrists have nowhere to stage tiatrs, except in the church premises due to the support of the priests.

The main challenge, Prince Jacob feels, is the government not extending its support to the tiatr industry. He argues that through tiatrs and cantarams (songs), tiatrists expose politics, which the government does not want. In this manner, the art form gets suppressed. However, with the people's unending support, tiatr has been in continuity till date.

As far as the younger generation is concerned, Prince Jacob observed that tiatrs don't seem appealing to the youth; there is very less presence of them in theatres, perhaps due to the thought of it being old. However, tiatr has evolved in many ways; nowadays, plays are based on different themes and topics, adding diversity to the art form. In this matter, the tiatrists concluded stating that tiatr will continue to survive only if the children and the youth will attend tiatrs.

According to Prince Jacob, tiatrists have found that there has been a steady decrease in the number of Goans in the state. This is because most have migrated to places such as the United Kingdom, Gulf, etc. for better job opportunities. However, the Goans abroad try to keep the culture of tiatr alive by speaking in Konkani, staging tiatrs, commemorating Goa Day, etc. Alluding to this, the tiatr industry stands as a job-seeking industry; many well-known tiatrists have not only made a career out of it, but also their future.

When it came to the topic of promotion, it was noted that churches help in conducting tiatrs. This helps in the survival of the art form to some extent. Also, a suggestion was made by Prince Jacob, stating that schools should at least have a theatre subject introduced, thereby helping the students to overcome their stage fears, and polish their oratory skills.

As far as social media is concerned, platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, etc. have been used for wider reach and engagement of the audience. However, the stalwart warned of the excess use of such mediums.

In maintaining the traditional format of tiatr due to innovative changes nowadays, it was noted that earlier, there used to be solos, duos, duets, trios, and so on. However, this meant more expenditure; the greater number of songs, the greater number of singers. Hence, the tiatrists prefer singers from their own troupe. Secondly, wind instruments are used in tiatrs, with children also being made to learn them. Lastly, the tradition of using scenery-filled curtains on the stage has remained, depicting the undying traditions of tiatr.

Concerning women in tiatr, the tiatrhist highlighted the difficulties faced by them. Earlier, the female artists used to be dropped off till Margao and from there, they were on their own. However, this soon changed; the male tiatrists ensured their safety by reaching them right at their doorsteps at night. Nowadays, parents too permit their children, especially their daughters, as they are aware of the security that the tiatr industry provides. And as far as gender inequality goes, the stalwart did not feel it exists in the tiatr industry. However, favouritism exists in some of the groups.

The interview ended with Prince Jacob stressing about how tiatr will not survive if the government does not back up the tiatr industry, as far as financial support and recognition are concerned, thereby urging something to be done into this matter with immediate effect.

3.1.3. Interview with Tomazinho Cardozo



Fig. 3.3: With the talented duo - Tomazinho and Irene Cardozo.

In the interview with the tiatrist, Tomazinho Cardozo, it was learnt that tiatr was facing many problems.

Firstly, he spoke about the lack of documentation, stating that it was Pai Tiatrist i.e. Joao Agostinho Fernandes who actually took the effort to preserve tiatr (as cited in the interview transcript). Unlike the commercial tiatrists today, he not only staged his tiatrs, but also got their scripts printed and published, which can be accessed even today. This was done not for monetary gains, but for the love of the art form. However, there lies a problem even in the matter of getting the scripts published; Cardozo recalled how some families of tiatrists, such as C. Alvares', who were reluctant to submit (for reasons unknown) the scripts to the Tiatr Academy of Goa, even after being offered the deserving amount.

The number of youths, the tiatrist feels, is gradually declining in theatres. One of the main reasons for this is they do not find tiatrs interesting; they feel it is something old and outdated. Cardozo felt that encouragement is not enough; tiatrists should try to bring out tiatrs with topics that actually interest the youngsters, or else, there would be no meaning in theatres running houseful, and the youth not showing up with their presence.

Social media platforms such as YouTube, etc. easily grab the attention of the younger generation. As for tiatr lovers, they seem to be unfazed with electronic media such as T.V.s, smartphones, etc.; for them, being in front of the tiatr stage is what really matters the most. It is due to the love of such an audience, that tiatr has been in continuity.

As far as collaborations are concerned, the tiatr stalwart feels that the tiatrists of today haven't really been putting in much of hard work. He is particularly concerned of the commercial artists, unlike himself, who need to be cautious while trying to adapt tiatr to the changing preferences of the audience; this, Cardozo thinks is a huge hassle, as far as tiatr is concerned; it could lead to problems in the future.

In relation to this, the Church has been applauded for lending support to the tiatrists, especially during the season of Lent and Easter, thereby helping in the promotion of tiatr on a religious level. On an educational level, Cardozo states that nowadays, there are a number of Catholic colleges that have taken the initiative of introducing tiatr, maybe not directly through the syllabus, but by the way of organizing tiatr competitions. This has encouraged students to participate, and showcase their hidden talents.

Cardozo mentioned that the Tiatr Academy of Goa, especially during his tenure as the president in the year 2011, has also done a lot in terms of preserving and promoting tiatr. Initiatives such as releasing books, biographies, and tiatr scripts, honouring the tiatrists who

have greatly contributed to the field, including those who have completed hundred years (but are no longer living), releasing stamps, etc. have been undertaken.

It was Cardozo's wife, Irene who responded to the question relating to women's challenges. She felt that overall w.r.t. social status and security, they do not actually face any problems in the tiatr industry. However, if the tiatrist is a female and, out of compulsion, has to balance her career along with her marital life, then it can prove to be a challenge. As far as gender inequality is concerned, Mrs. Cardozo firmly stated that everyone is treated equally, especially in terms of salary and roles on the stage.

Lastly, regarding technology, Cardozo briefly spoke about how tiatrists such as Belson Afons, Prem Kumar, J.P. Souzalino, etc. brought many changes to the Konkani stage. Later, Kala Academy followed suit. However, irrespective of these modern changes, tiatr has managed to maintain its tradition, especially by continuing to bring out tiatrs that are based on social themes such as the dowry and caste system, etc.

The interview ended with Cardozo stating that tiatr has its own charm and will never die – even though the number of Konkani-speaking people has been declining mainly due to factors such as parents discouraging their children from speaking Konkani. The art form will survive only if Goans help in keeping Konkani alive by speaking and understanding the language, and churches in Goa conducting masses in the mother tongue of the state.

3.1.4. Interview with Cezar D'mello



Fig. 3.4: With the father-son duo of Tiatr - Cezar (left) and Kevin D'mello (right).

In the interview with the tiatrist, Cezar D'mello, it was learnt that tiatr was facing many problems.

One of them was the related to documentation. The veteran tiatrist felt that there are many well-known directors in the tiatr industry who stage immense numbers of plays (as cited in the interview transcript). However, they fail to turn all of their works into a printed format. There exist a few tiatrists, such as the late Joao Agostinho Fernandes and Cezar himself, who published their plays for future posterity. Even centres such as the Tiatr Academy of Goa, and the Dalgado Konkani Academy of Goa have taken steps to get things published.

Although globalization somewhat poses as a threat to tiatr, particularly due to online mediums such as the internet, social media, and OTT sites, D'mello assured that the art form of tiatr will not die off, as it is a one-of-a-kind theatre. It beautifully blends words through dialogues, voice through songs, and movement through acting. In addition to this, tiatr's visual aspects help in conveying meaning.

D'mello observed that the younger generation is more engrossed in activities such as sports, social media marketing, the film industry, etc. other than tiatr. However, in order to encourage the youth, some academies have taken the initiative to hold competitions in schools and colleges, thereby encouraging children and teenagers to join theatre. In this manner, tiatrists too have tried their hand in attracting the youth towards the art form.

When asked about how tiatr balances tradition with innovation, D'mello stated that although there have been technological advancements such as lighting effects; innovative techniques such as the three-dimensional stage and revolving stage; and other changes such as the bringing of scenes and sceneries, etc., the tiatr industry has managed to preserve the format of the art form through Kala Academy, and the Tiatr Academy of Goa, which annually organize tiatr competitions for the same reason.

The interview ended with Cezar D'mello being optimistic about the future of tiatr, reassuring its continuity, irrespective of external forces.

3.2. Analysis of the Interviews

The four interviews that were conducted in the offline mode, highlighted several challenges encountered by tiatrists and the tiatr industry. These include the lack of documentation; competition from other entertainment options, and the impact of digital platforms on the popularity of tiatr; attracting youth towards tiatr; maintaining balance between tradition and innovation; halls, censorship, and the role of the government; women's challenges, and gender biases; and lastly, collaboration of tiatrists and promotion of tiatr. The following provides a detailed analysis of the same.

3.2.1. Lack of Documentation

One of the first challenges to be addressed was related to the documentation of tiatr. It is not that it has not been there; documentation has recently started, but it has not been up to the mark. The reasons for this are numerous.

Firstly, there was not much of preservation done of the scripts due to the older generation not being much bothered to do so, and nor did they did not know how to get them stored on CDs, computers, etc. It was Pai Tiatríst i.e. Joao Agostinho Fernandes who actually put in a lot of effort to preserve tiatr. He not only staged his tiatrs, but also got their scripts printed and published, which can be accessed even today. This was done not for monetary gains, but for the love of the art form.

Many of the well-known commercial writers and directors today stage immense numbers of plays, but fail to turn all of their works into a printed format due to financial setbacks. There exist a few tiatrísts, such as the late Joao Agostinho Fernandes, Cezar D'mello, Prince Jacob, Tomazinho Cardozo, Vincy Quadros, Agnelo de Borim, Prem Kumar, etc., who have published their plays for future posterity.

Although books are published and stored in the libraries, there is hardly anyone reading them. This is a fact as the pages from some of the oldest and famous scripts have turned yellowish-brown, full of dust, with holes in them and are on the verge of getting torn; they seem to have been untouched for quite a long time. This clearly shows that readers are uninterested. So, tiatrísts avoid writing because there is no sale nowadays; it is a huge loss to them.

However, centres such as the Tiatr Academy of Goa, and the Dalgado Konkani Academy of Goa have taken steps to financially help the tiatrists in this matter. All that has to be done is the script needs to be submitted and the Academy gets it published for free of cost. However, there lies a problem even in the matter of getting the scripts published. Many families of the tiatrists are reluctant to submit (for reasons unknown) the scripts, even after being offered the deserving amount.

Nowadays, due to the problem of pests such as silverfish, beetles and cockroaches, and less space at home, many tiatrists opt to upload their works on YouTube, etc. However, this method can also prove to be dangerous due to malware attacks, leading to the destruction of important data.

3.2.2. Competition from Other Entertainment Options, and the Impact of Digital Platforms on the Popularity of Tiatr

During the olden times, electronic media such as mobiles, etc., hardly existed. So, the people used to entertain themselves with radios, black-and-white dish antenna televisions, cassettes, etc.

Today, people are going for over-the-top (OTT) platforms such as the internet, social media, Netflix, YouTube, etc. It can be said that globalization has become a threat to tiatr in this sense. These online mediums have easily grabbed the attention of the younger generation. and this has led to the decline in the popularity of tiatr.

Also, many of the people prefer watching Konkani films instead of tiatrs due to the increased quality. It so happens that tiatr productions struggle to invest in good quality

equipment, as at least a lakh is required. Whereas film productions easily get sponsorships to help in this matter, especially when they have popularity.

However, even with the rise of modern platforms, the older generation, particularly the tiatr lovers, seem to be unbothered; they still prefer to watch tiatrs, that too in theatres, not on their device screens. For them, being in front of the tiatr stage is what really matters the most. It is due to the love of such an audience, that tiatr has been in continuity.

3.2.3. Attracting Youth Towards Tiatr

The younger generation seems more engrossed in activities such as sports, social media marketing, the film industry, etc. other than tiatr. Also, nowadays, they hardly speak Konkani at home. This leads to them not understanding the language quite well. Native speakers have been declining mainly due to factors such as parents discouraging their children from speaking their mother tongue. In this case, one solution could be making the children, right from a young age, attend masses in Konkani.

Even if they do know and speak their mother tongue, tiatrs do not seem to interest to them. They feel it is something old and outdated. However, tiatr has evolved in many ways; nowadays, plays are based on different themes and topics, adding diversity to the art form. In this case, commercial artists need to be cautious while trying to adapt tiatr to the changing preferences of the audience; it is a huge hassle and could lead to problems in the future.

There is very less presence of the youth in theatres. Also, there has been a steady decrease in the number of Goans in the state. This is because most have migrated to places such as the United Kingdom, Gulf, etc. for better job opportunities. However, the Goans abroad try

to keep the culture of tiatr alive by speaking in Konkani, staging tiatrs, commemorating Goa Day, etc. Alluding to this, the tiatr industry stands as a job-seeking industry; many well-known tiatrists have not only made a career out of it, but also their future. They have minted money, built a roof over their heads, got married, had children and have also got them educated. Even the female tiatrists who have lost their husbands, have managed to survive by earning through tiatrs.

While there are youth who do watch tiatrs, most of them are distracted on their devices in the theatre or at the venues. This clearly shows their disinterest in the art form. Further proof of this can be seen at the location of the tiatrs too, where it is observed that among the two-hundred spectators, 96% are the middle-aged and old people; the youth seem to be missing.

A solution to this could be encouraging children to participate in tiatrs from a young age. Some academies have taken the initiative to hold competitions in schools and colleges, thereby encouraging children and teenagers to join theatre. It is firmly believed that the tiatr industry will continue to survive only if the children and the youth will attend tiatrs. This is because although the older generation seems to be more loyal towards the art form, they are dying out fast.

However, encouragement is not enough; tiatrists should try to bring out tiatrs with topics that actually interest the youngsters of today, or else, there would be no meaning in theatres running houseful, and the youth not showing up with their presence. If such a situation takes place, then it would only be a huge loss to the directors, as they invest at least a lakh to produce a drama.

3.2.4. Maintaining Balance Between Tradition and Innovation

Tiatr has evolved in many ways over the years. Earlier, a tiatr, while traditionally making use of the *podde* (curtains), would have individual scenes such as that of a garden, or famous locations in Goa painted on them. These would then be reused every now and then. However, with advancements in technology, projectors, flex, etc. are used nowadays. In such matters, tiatrists are mindful of their usage, as too much of it can turn the tiatr into a film.

Another traditional aspect of tiatr lies in its singing format. Right from the time tiatr began, there used to be solos, duos, duets, trios, and so on. However, this meant more expenditure; the greater number of songs, the greater number of singers, meaning, every singer had to be paid. Hence, nowadays, tiatrists prefer singers from their own troupe.

As far as the musical instruments are concerned, tiatr has always used wind instruments such as saxophone, flute, etc. and other instruments like the violin, keyboard, percussions, etc. for the stage performances and songs. This art form maintains tradition by making children too learn such instruments.

Also, to herald about any upcoming tiatrs, earlier, posters, newspapers, etc. were used to advertise the same. However, in recent times, social media platforms have made things faster and easier. An added benefit of this is that the printing of paper gets saved, thereby helping in the sustenance of ecology.

Tiatrists such as Belson Afons, Prem Kumar, J.P. Souzalino, etc. brought many changes to the Konkani stage such as the introduction of background music, etc. However, irrespective of these, tiatr has managed to maintain its tradition, especially by continuing to bring out tiatrs that are based on social themes such as the dowry and caste system, etc.

Although there have been technological advancements such as lighting effects; innovative techniques such as the three-dimensional stage and revolving stage; and other changes such as the bringing of scenes and sceneries, etc., the tiatr industry has managed to preserve the format of the art form through Kala Academy, and the Tiatr Academy of Goa, which annually organize tiatr competitions for the same reason.

3.2.5. Halls, Censorship, and the Role of the Government

After COVID impacted tiatr, halls had to be shut down and the tiatrists suffered financially. So, they had no other option than to upload their tiatrs on YouTube. This was done not only to earn through likes and followers, but to also keep tiatr alive and running.

Soon, after the pandemic situation subsided, there was another setback for the tiatrists. The hall at Panaji had to be closed down after the ceiling collapsed, soon after being renovated. For almost three years, tiatrs were not taking place. So, the people's interest to watch tiatrs died down to a certain extent. However, it was recently opened to the public.

There was a similar situation in Ponda, where the hall was shut for five years. In Vasco, the air conditioner is still non-functional for the past three years; nothing is being done to get these repaired and maintained. With such a situation, tiatrists have nowhere to stage tiatrs, except in the church premises due to the support of the priests.

Another problem that the tiatr industry faces is censorship. Tiatrists often expose through their tiatrs the political reality in Goa. For this, they have to face difficulties. While the Goa government censors only the political songs and scripts, the Gulf asks the tiatrists to submit

all their scripts for approval, whether they be social, political, religious, or historical in nature. However, this process is not compulsory in the United Kingdom.

In these two aspects i.e. halls and censorship, the tiatrists feel that the government does not want tiatr to continue. As artists, they are not receiving the much-deserved support and recognition from the government. This can be seen especially when political tiatrs are concerned, the government does not want their faulty system to be exposed. Perhaps this is why the tiatrists are feeling harassed.

It is in this manner that the art form of tiatrs gets suppressed. However, with the people's unending support, tiatr has been in continuity till date.

3.2.6. Women's Challenges, and Gender Biases

Women have largely contributed to the industry, although this was not the case earlier due to the social stigmas that existed around female actors. In the present day too, they do face some problems in tiatr.

First and foremost, it is due to transport facilities. Earlier, the female artists used to be dropped off up till Margao and from there, they were on their own. Also, many who did not have a vehicle of their own, or no one to pick them up, would often spend the night at the location of the tiatr itself. However, this has changed in recent times as better arrangements have been made; the male tiatrists ensured their safety by reaching them right at their doorsteps at night. Also, they drive themselves to their destinations, or have someone trustworthy to do the same. Nowadays, parents too permit their children, especially their daughters, as they are aware of the security that the tiatr industry provides.

Secondly, female artists who are new to the industry, often face financial issues such as buying make-up, costumes and jewellery. They might be earning ten thousand, but most of it gets spent for their daily expenses and also at home. However, they do receive help from colleagues in this matter.

And as far as gender inequality is concerned, it does not really exist in tiatr. Although there is a bit of favouritism in some of the groups, overall, everyone is treated equally, especially in terms of salary and roles on the stage.

There are no major problems as such that the women in the tiatr industry face today. However, if the tiatrists is a female and, out of compulsion, has to balance her career along with her marital life, then it can prove to be a slight challenge.

3.2.7. Collaboration of Tiatrists and Promotion of Tiatr

As far as the promotion of tiatr is concerned, many veteran artists i.e. of the older generation, are of the opinion that the tiatrists of today have not really been putting in much of hard work. However, this is not entirely true; tiatrists such as Francis de Tuem, Myron Correia, Agostinho Themulo, Prince Jacob, Lawry Travasso, and so many others are doing their best in attracting the youth towards the art form in multiple ways.

One of them is through social media platforms such as WhatsApp (through status and channels), Facebook, Instagram (through reels), etc. which have been used for wider reach and engagement of the audience.

Tiatrists also get their plays and songs (cantarams) uploaded on YouTube and on certain OTT sites, either at no cost at all, or for a charge of rupees two hundred or below. However, care has also to be taken in such matters; the excess use of such mediums can lead to

problems, such as those related to infringement and copyright issues, or negative comments from viewers.

Also, the Tiatr Academy of Goa has done a lot in terms of preserving and promoting tiatr. Initiatives such as releasing books, biographies, and tiatr scripts, honouring the tiatrists who have greatly contributed to the field, including those who have completed hundred years (but are no longer living), releasing stamps, etc. have been undertaken.

Furthermore, in relation to these, the Church has been appreciated for extending its support to the tiatrists, especially during the season of Lent and Easter. Not only do the priests make announcements during church services, but they also allow the tiatrists to use the church area in order to conduct tiatrs. In this manner, they help in the promotion of the art form on a religious level.

On an educational level, nowadays, there are a number of Catholic colleges that have taken the initiative of introducing tiatr, perhaps not directly through the curriculum, but through the organization of tiatr competitions. This has encouraged students to participate, and showcase their hidden talents.

A suggestion made by most of the tiatrists was that schools should at least have a theatre subject introduced – just like music, and physical education (P.E.), thereby helping the students to overcome their stage fears, and get their oratory skills polished.

Through these two mediums i.e. the Church and educational institutions, tiatr is being kept alive, especially for the future generations.

Overall, most of the tiatrists were positive about the future of tiatr, assuring that it will never fade out. This is because people have always supported the industry with their presence. They also like and share the work of the tiatrists on YouTube and other online platforms to

show their support. Lastly and most importantly, the tiatrists have urged the government to support them instead of harassing them.

CHAPTER FOUR: CASE STUDIES

This chapter firstly analyzes five tiatrs that have tackled or addressed contemporary challenges. These include Francis de Tuem's *Konnak Patiepachem*, Lawry Travasso's *Mogachim Fulam*, Mario Menezes' *Sangat Ami Bhurgim Konnachim*, Fr. Nevel Gracias' *Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum*, and Tomazinho Cardozo's *Mhonvall Vikh*. The chapter will also look at how tiatr is embracing change while retaining its core essence, the innovative approaches that have been taken by tiatrists to connect with wider audiences, and lastly, the impact of digital platforms on the accessibility and popularity of tiatr.

4.1. Analysis of Tiatrs that have Tackled Contemporary Challenges

4.1.1. Francis de Tuem's *Konnak Patiepachem?* (2018)

The title of this drama literally translates to whom to trust or depend on? So, going by the title, it can be inferred that this tiatr mainly focusses on the theme of trust. However, this is further divided into other sub-categories, such as politics, family relationships, social issues, and one's decision to follow religious life. All these are brought out through the play in different ways.

Firstly, let's delve into the trust issues that revolve around politics. In the play, Tony is one such character who constantly criticizes the government of Goa and its malfunctioning (de Tuem, "Konnak Patiepachem?" 8:13). It is no surprise that most of the politicians are hypocrites; they leave the people with false promises, especially when elections are around the corner. When it is all over, everything seems to be back to square one, crushing the people's hopes for a better future. Due to this, people have been losing their faith in the government.

Even when a new scheme is introduced, people seem to have already formed a negative judgement. Furthermore, corruption within the government is only increasing, with votes being manipulated, especially through electronic voting machines (EVMs), bribery, fraud, nepotism, politicians leaving their parties overnight for another, etc.

Another issue pertaining to the state government is also highlighted. Seby, Tony, and Dhunu point out about how the government is not functioning according to the needs of the people. They cite the Goa Medical College, Bambolim as an example. This institution has one of the state's best medical facilities. Recently, an IVF centre was opened there (Shetye), giving opportunity to those couples who desire to have children, but often face setback when finance is concerned. However, there are a large number of patients who still try to seek treatment elsewhere, such as in Mumbai, Delhi, etc., and many other top neighbouring states. This tiatr also makes a mention of the educational qualification of the politicians (de Tuem, "Konnak Patiepachem?" 11:25) and the initiative called 'Make in India' – which hardly works as people usually try to look for foreign brands such as Apple, Xiomi, Samsung, etc.

The problems faced by the citizens of Goa is also depicted. One of these include the mining industry. It has been quite a few years since it was shut down. There is news that in some places, mining has been resumed – although not in full swing. However, it is being carried out discreetly and illegally (according to The Indian Express). People have been revolting as they are left unemployed. But this poses a risk to the environment – which was the main reason for mining to be ceased in the state. In this manner, the trio discusses and indirectly asks the audience to ponder upon what they are stating.

The plot also revolves around the relationships between parents and their children. For example, Seby initially talks about how he came out of poverty (de Tuem, "Konnak Patiepachem?" 34:55). He then built a huge bungalow, got married and had two sons and a daughter. However, two of his children get pampered to a great extent, leading to their own

downfall. Franky gets into bad company; his so-called friends influence him into drinking and gambling. With repeated losses, he sells away everything that his father had and lands himself in prison.

Reena, Seby's daughter, also ruins her life by partying late night with strangers, sleeping with men, etc. It comes as a shock to the audience when they learn that she is sexually assaulted by her brother, Franky's friends. Seby cries over his children's actions. Most parents try to warn their children while making certain choices in life. However, in this case, Seby seems to have trusted Franky and Reena too much, not expecting them to land themselves in trouble, as well as him in the aged home. In a way, his trust has been betrayed. This raises questions about personal trust and faithfulness.

When Dhunu's son, Benzer, comes to take his father to America, the former collapses and is admitted to the ICU. Benzer takes this opportunity to discreetly take his father's signature on some documents and tries to kill him for money. The nun at the old age home records the incident on her phone, but decides to let Benzer go because Dhunu loved him very much. This brings out the trust between the father and his son.

The opening song of the tiatr by Benzer Fernandes talks about trust issues. He sings about things that seem attractive, but in reality, are either fake or useless. He then rhetorically questions who and what to trust as everything nowadays seems to be sold as photocopies. He provides various examples, right from pens to hair oils. He continues, stating how people are having trust issues these days. He provides reasons for this as fake gold being sold and thieves stealing even the idols of God. Also, people seem good from the outside, but aren't the same inside. Every line of the song i.e. the chorus ends with the title of the drama, as though the audience is asked to introspect themselves and at the same time, vibe to the *cantar*. The singer states that no one around us actually seems to be bothered or concerned about anyone. He

finally concludes by asking the audience to determine whom exactly to trust after watching the entire drama.

This play involves three elderly men, namely Dhunu, Seby and Tony, who have been placed by their children in an old age home called 'God is Great'. Many of the elderly people in such homes, often feel disappointed, betrayed, lonely and unloved by those dear to them, particularly their own children – whom they bestowed with everything, right from a toy to the most expensive smartphone, to a bike to a house. They even put up with all their tantrums, had sleepless nights when their children were ill, protected them from bullies, and the list of their sacrifices is endless, depicting the extent to which parents have gone to ensure the wellbeing of their children. In other words, these are the issues faced by many old people in today's world.

The tiatr also addresses the issue of parents not being supportive of their children deciding to join religious life. This is seen through the character of Seby. After he learns that his son, Lawry wished to be a priest, he throws him out, clearly expressing his disappointment. However, Seby is shocked to learn that the good Samaritan who was taking care of his financial needs at the old age home, was none other than Fr. Lawry himself – his own son. Seby never expected to get support from him after the way he behaved with Lawry. Parents should have trust over the decision of their children, especially if they want to have a religious vocation.

Most importantly, the play exposes the problem of drug addiction and other vices through the story of Seby and his children, Franky and Reena. It shows the negative consequences and impact it can have on people, especially the younger generation. For example, Seby's son, Franky, is shown to be addicted to drugs and gambling, leading him to lose a lot of his parents' money. Reena, on the other hand, is seen getting addicted to drugs and being part of risky behaviour, such as drinking, partying, and mingling with male strangers. The siblings' immoral and reckless behaviour leads them to face disastrous consequences, such

as Reena's sexual assault and Franky's arrest. Furthermore, Seby's wife, who had cancer, dies of a heart attack after learning about Reena's story i.e. of getting raped.

With the question, *konnak patiepachem*, the tiatr comes to an end. Overall, it talks about the problems relating to trust – be it in family, politics, society, or personal relationships. It stresses on the importance of trust and the consequences that can take place when it is lacking. In a way, this tiatr urges the audience to ask themselves whether what they are doing, is right or wrong.

4.1.2. Lawry Travasso's *Mogachim Fulam* (2017)

This tiatr explores various themes. They are as follows: love, marriage, childlessness or infertility, abortion and family dynamics (such as trust issues between couples, harassment by the in-laws) have been discussed in the drama. Also, other problems are given importance, such as childlessness, societal pressure, the role of women.

The first theme that needs to be spoken on is marriage. The curtains of the stage are thrown open to bright blinking lights and music playing in the background. Sam and Samantha – a couple, are seen dancing merrily (Travasso 1:52). They narrate their story through a song: They fell in love and got married. Four years have passed. Although they are facing ups and downs in their lives, they are still living happily, hoping that no outside enemy comes and interferes into their married life. The song ends with them saying that they are living their married life by facing sorrow and joy.

Misunderstanding between couples is one issue that is looked at in this tiatr. There are many situations exemplified where characters do not come in terms with their differences; they misunderstand each other. This leads arguments and tension. For example, Sam called his wife, Samantha as *vanzdem* i.e. infertile. Although he says this out of frustration, he does not mean

it from the bottom of his heart. However, Samantha misunderstands; she feels he has said it on purpose. She is hurt by his behaviour towards her. This causes a strain in their relationship.

Even the marriage of Rio and Salomi becomes a matter of discussion. In the tiatr, Salomi seems to be the dominant spouse, while her husband seems like a puppet who follows every wish and command of his wife. While the Goan audience would mostly view this as being inferior and submissive to the wife, many women might strongly disagree. For them, Salomi is only trying to be an independent woman, especially by returning to her mother's place to keep certain things in place. This turns debatable when Rio, out of nowhere, shows up with his long-lost manliness and slaps his wife to remind her who the real boss of the house was.

Marriage also connects itself with the topic of mistrust, which often arises between couples. For instance, in the play, after Samantha faints, Sam's younger brother, Joel carries her to a room to recover. Sam sees all this and begins to get suspicious of his wife having an affair with his brother – which is not the case at all; he misunderstands Joel – who is being nothing, but affectionate towards his sister-in-law. However, Sam's sister, Salomi poisons her brother's mind by making him regret marrying Samantha. This brings to mind a saying in Konkani that goes along the lines of '*vishwaas nam, tor kaiench nam*'², which points out how trust is such an important aspect, especially when relationships are concerned.

The first thought that occurs to any person after reading or hearing the word 'abortion' is always negative because one just tends to. For example, in the tiatr, it is learnt that Salomi aborted her child nine years ago. For this, she earns a hard slap from her husband, Rio. Here, the question of choice is brought in; whether the woman has the right to kill her own baby or not. This has been an ongoing debate in recent years, at least in countries such as America

² If there's no trust, then there's nothing.

(according to Wikipedia). Women who have been supportive of pro-choice, might actually empathise with the character of Salomi, even though she is the antagonist in the play.

The failure to have children is a very important issue discussed in this tiatr, as it impacts the characters' relationships, making them question their self-worth. For example, the play focusses on the problems that Samantha - a married woman, has to face (Travasso 1:04:02). She is humiliated for being childless and has to face verbal and emotional abuse from her family, particularly her own husband and sister-in-law. This makes her feel lonely, helpless, and frustrated.

The priest in the play says that instead of making the childless couple feel guilty, people should console them. He then cites examples from the Bible of the women who could not conceive, such as Rachel, Rebekah, Sarah, Hannah, and Elizabeth (Sheffield). But it was their faith in God that kept them mentally stable.

This problem of women being childless is only exaggerated by the society. It indirectly makes them feel pressurized into producing children. This deeply impacts marriage and motherhood. In other words, this play depicts how women who are not able to conceive, are either seen as a problem, or are considered to be cursed or a bad omen, exposing the superstitious minds and backwardness of society.

Also, it so happens that when a couple has been childless for quite some time, people – whether directly or indirectly, begin pointing fingers only at the woman, not the man. Doesn't it take two to tango and two hands to clap?! Dousing all the blame on the wife is not fair. Perhaps, the problem could be lying with the man – which many might not be aware of, or might not accept it to be the truth.

Another message that the director could be conveying through this drama is that childless couples should try moving on by adopting a child. There are scores of children anxiously waiting to get adopted and seek the much-desired love, care and attention from their

foster parents. But while adoption may sound easy, it is not so – at least in the case of India, and more precisely in Goa (Chari). It is a tedious process; couples who wish to adopt, often get their names added to a long waiting list. Earlier, the process was much easier, especially through orphanage homes that were run by religious and government institutions. But rumours turned into a dark reality when cases began pouring in of children being bought, sold and used for human trafficking, illegal organ donation, prostitution and many other illegal activities, all under the pretext of adoption (Harmalkar).

Lawry Travasso i.e. the director of the play makes an entry as a beggar selling balloons (Travasso 2:00:37). He narrates his sad story to the priest about being childless. He reveals the way people mocked him and his wife. He blamed the society for his wife's death. While his wife was alive, he slapped his female neighbour as she continuously called him and his wife a *vanzdem*. This landed him into jail. Later, he learns about his wife's death. When he is finally released from jail, he buys flowers from the market and places them over his wife's grave. These flowers could possibly be the *mogachim fulam* i.e. the flowers of love.

He then directly speaks to the audience, pleading them not to call childless couples as childless. And he also asks them to look for gold instead of dirt in every human being. The scene blacks out with him lying down to sleep. The play ends with the priest conveying an important message. Staying together within a marriage is important, as it joins two souls. And as far as children are concerned, a couple being childless should not be seen as a sin; society needs to understand by putting themselves in the place of such couples. This is what is highlighted in the tiatr.

4.1.3. Mario Menezes' *Sangat Ami Bhurgim Konnachim*

This tiatr revolves around a couple and their two children, constituting a loving family. But this picture gets shattered with a slap, ultimately leading to a divorce. In this bargain, the children suffer, putting forth an important question before their parents i.e. whose children are they.

During the play, for example, Kimberly cries as she misses not only her mother, Salomi, but her dear brother too (M. Menezes 1:17:30). However, when her mother and brother pay her a surprise visit, she is overjoyed and hugs them, although she knows that Kimber has to return home with his mother again. At that moment, Kimberly receives dresses, shoes and a brand-new bicycle as gifts from her mother and maternal uncle, Leslie. When Salomi's ex-husband, Rio enters and quietly tells Kimberly that he has got her shoes repaired, Leslie and Salomi laugh. Kimberly soon understands that the gifts have not been bought for her out of love, but to humiliate her father. Kimber too is aware of this, but feels helpless; he fears that if sides with their father, he might either lose his mother, or even worse, she might not allow him to meet their father and his sister – whom he is very attached to, henceforth.

To allude to the topic of divorce, a scene from *Pushpa Impossible*, a TV serial that is aired on Sony Sab, would be worth mentioning. It revolves around the life of titular character, a middle-aged single mother, and the challenges that she faces. When one of her three children, messes up things between him and his wife, the latter files for divorce. When the wife's father and her mother-in-law try to convince the couple not to divorce, an advocate makes an observation, stating that the strength of love in relationships is only weakening and hence, every individual should try to do something about it (Sony SAB 5:38). Here, she talks about marriage, which in our nation, is considered to be something very sacred. Nowadays, couples

have not been taking it care of it, in the sense, a petty issue soon turns into a rageful situation, often leading to divorce.

On this note, it can be said that every couple, despite having misunderstandings or issues in their marital life, should try their best to make things work out between them. No doubt it sounds easy, but it is definitely not something impossible, right? After all, marriage is not something that is not to be taken lightly; it is a sacred institution that joins two souls. Relationships should also be well-maintained; they cannot just be discarded with some signatures on legal documents. While it has become an everyday-thing for Americans, divorce cases in India are on the rise (Banerjee). As far as Goan society is concerned, it is not taken that well; the couple, especially the wife is made to look like the guilty one.

This tiatr can also be looked the other way round i.e. divorce being a better option than something like domestic violence. It is better getting a divorce than being in an abusive or unfaithful relationship. Like in many cases, especially in India, if the wife learns that her husband is cheating, she would still remain in that marriage only for the sake of her children. The same thing could be applied to the victims of domestic violence or those stuck in toxic relationships.

As an example, this is seen in the beginning of the play itself when Salomi and Rio Fernandes dance together, symbolizing their love for each other. When he asks her why she has not confessed their love to her brother, Leslie as yet, Salomi replies that she is afraid of him. Later in the play, it is learnt that Leslie has something else planned for his sister; he has arranged a boy from London for Salomi to marry; he does not care about her choice (M. Menezes 3:52). For him, it is not the groom's external appearance that is important, but the money. This just shows that Leslie wants to marry his sister off for his own selfish desires. In Salomi's case, love seems to be more important.

In the play, when Rio himself confesses his love for Salomi to her brother, Leslie, the latter lays out a condition before her: If she decides to marry Rio, then she will no more be his sister. When Salomi earns a slap from Leslie, it is understood that she chose Rio over her brother. This brings to mind Indian arranged marriages. In most cases, either the parents or the brother do not consider it important to ask about their choice, or to seek permission from their daughter or sister when marriage is concerned. No doubt parents (or brothers, like in the case of this play) want the best for their daughter and hence, will ensure the proposal is perfect, but individual choices also do matter, right? This does not in any way mean that all love marriages have a guaranteed happily-ever-after scenario, and nor do arranged marriages. In reality, there has been a steady rise in cases of couples who did love marriages, but have faced many trials and tribulations later. But getting back to the point of individual choices, it is ironic to note that men are given the opportunity to make a choice even in the case of an arranged marriage. Not fair, right? This somewhat nudges towards gender inequality – as far as choice is concerned.

Talking about social responsibility, when an excited Salomi declares to Lorraine and Leslie that they are going to get a handsome amount after having their properties sold, Lorraine tries to stop them from doing so. This brings to mind our own Goans. Posh and beautiful properties they have here in Goa, but after they move and settle in foreign countries due to better job and lifestyle opportunities, they abandon their motherland. Eventually, they sell away everything to non-Goans, either as a way to get rid of it, or because they have been blinded by the shine of money.

The drama even looks at the responsibilities of parents towards their children. Rio and Salomi are reminded that their children are their responsibility, and they must work towards maintaining a healthy relationship with them. For instance, while Kimber is at his father's place, he does some gardening. He carries a flower pot back home and tells his mother that it has to be watered. To this, she replies to her children that the plant requires not only water, but

also sunlight in order to grow well. To this, Kimberly rhetorically questions her mother regarding their upbringing; she tells them that their parents are equally important to make their life successful. This makes Salomi and Rio realize how wrong they have been towards their children; they had turned self-centered, least bothered about their family life.

The tiatr also stresses on the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation within a family. In the play, as per court order, Rio and Salomi are given six months to reconcile. While Salomi seems to be adamant about her decision, Rio is hopeful that she will be her usual self. In one of the scenes, when the couple and their two children decide to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Vaillankani, Tamil Nadu just before Kimberly undergoes her brain surgery, Salomi suddenly faints, but she is safely caught by Rio. When she regains her consciousness, she sees her saviour. Although she does not seem to be happy seeing her saviour, there is a change of heart and behaviour in her at that moment. In the ending scene, Salomi forgives Rio.

Forgiveness is a quality which everyone should instil in themselves, irrespective of the amount of hurt he or she has been given. This does not – in any way – mean that people should still be bowing down to their enemy's feet. What is trying to be conveyed here is that one should not harbour wrathful anger. It definitely sounds easy to simply instruct someone to forgive the person who has caused a lot of damage, especially on an emotional level. But one thing should always be remembered – Forgive and forget, love and let go, just like the river flows and flows. The tiatr ends with the family of four all coming together and singing, asking the audience the same words as the title.

4.1.4. Fr. Nevel Gracias' *Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum*

This tiatr has a storyline that is filled with various themes, but the central one is unity, like the title suggests. Senhor Cordeiro is the protagonist, while Abdul Narayan D'souza

reveals his true colours at the end of play as the villain (Gracias, “Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum Part - 02” 43:20).

Firstly, this is a Lenten drama and the title is basically a verse from the Bible which states that everyone should be united. With this, it can be inferred that this tiatr’s main focus is on togetherness – which is brought out through the topic of religion. It causes many tensions and conflicts. For example, in the beginning of the play itself, there is a physical and verbal fight taking place between a Hindu and Muslim (Gracias, “‘Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum’ Part - 01” 6:14), highlighting the ongoing situation in different parts of the world, particularly in India (according to Wikipedia). Everything sounds good and easy on paper, but to put it into practice, it is not that easy. Even Christians are sailing in the same ship; they get blamed by the Hindus for forceful conversions.

Practices or acts that seem unethical in certain religions, is also looked at in this play. There exist scores of pretender babas who fool innocent people (Gracias, “Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum Part - 02” 21:16). Such individuals take advantage of the person’s situation by promising to solve their issues only after they have been paid for the services. Here, the character who is disguised as a baba, advises people, in a humorous manner to try their best in never falling for such acts and tries to convey to them to have faith in their own Gods and Goddesses.

Through the central theme of unity, the drama tries to highlight that religious differences between people of different faiths will always be there. But what is important is to embrace these differences by trying to discuss and solve them peacefully; there should be mutual respect and acceptance. In other words, everyone should remain united, no matter what. Only then will there be religious harmony, thus, truly making our nation truly a secular country. The problem that is faced by the people living at the seaside is also briefly touched upon through Kevin and his parents (Gracias, “‘Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum’ Part - 01” 46:25). The cause of this is the CRZs i.e. the Coastal Regulation Zones. Under this, certain restrictions are laid

for those residing at such locations (according to Wikipedia). One of the main rules is that there should not be any construction or any such activities taking place in these protected areas. This is done in order to protect the coastal environment. However, many a times, the government fails to recognize how their so-called rules and regulations often cause hardships to the people living in such areas; they are made to deal with issues related to relocation, housing and livelihood – it is indeed a real-life challenge faced by them.

The theme of forgiveness has been beautifully depicted in this tiatr. When the news of what Amanda has done reaches Mariola's ears, she is shocked as well as greatly moved; Amanda decided to donate her eyes to Mariola just before the former died in an accident (Gracias, "Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum Part - 02" 56:27). This washes Mariola with guilt as she always thought of Amanda as the villain in her marital life. After she learns about her husband, Kevin's past relationship with Amanda, Mariola becomes insecure; she fears that Kevin will be snatched away from her. However, there is a twist in the play – it is learnt that it was Amanda herself who tried to make Kevin realize the mistake he was committing against his wife, Mariola i.e. trying to leave his wife for her.

The play has both kinds of emotional endings. One is sad because of Amanda's tragic death. On the other hand, the final part is happy with Mariola's eyesight being restored, all thanks to Amanda. With everyone singing and dancing on the stage about remaining united, the tiatr comes to an end.

4.1.5. Tomazinho Cardozo's *Mhonvall Vikh* (1989)

The plot of this tiatr revolves around a Goan couple, Francisco and Magdalena (aka Magdu), along with their children Jeri and Linda. Key characters include Cursinho Mergulhao (aka Turizm) and Lorsu (aka Anti-Turizm). Other side characters are Freeda, a German couple,

Wheel and Greene, and Mr. Pat'tuswami. Although the play mainly delves into the problems faced by tourism in Goa, other issues are also discussed.

In the very starting of the tiatr, it is learnt that Magdu lives with her two children in a big bungalow, while the head of the family i.e. Magdu's husband works abroad like many other Goans. When a couple from Germany approach Magdu for a rented room, an important issue gets highlighted. With the influx of tourists, many hotels are being built. However, the tourists still seem to suffer with no proper accommodation (Cardozo, "Mhonvall Vikh" 10, 21, 28, 30, 44-45, 48).

Magdu sees this as an opportunity to earn extra cash. So, she charges rupees two hundred per day to the couple after she rents one of her three rooms to them. The amount is inclusive of meals – which she is made to prepare for her guests. This just shows how many of the people in villages try to make a living in whatever way they can, even if it means renting out their most valuable things.

This tiatr also looks into the issue of drugs, which is brought out through characters like Wheel and Greene, as well as Mr. Pat'tuswami. This issue takes on a toll on the lives of Jeri and Linda. For example, in one of the scenes, the German couple asks Jeri to take them to the beach. When the trio return, the couple sway from side-to-side due to the effect of drugs. Although Jeri does not appear in the same physical state as them, it is assumed that he too has enjoyed himself. When Greene calls him into her room, he willingly walks in.

Wheel and Greene also influence Linda into taking drugs. On consumption, Linda feels high and good. When her father wishes her on her birthday, she forgets that it is her special day. She acts distant with everyone. She shocks everyone when she tells Wheel to sell the gold necklace that her father has gifted her in exchange for some dope.

At the end of the play, Jeri's involvement in drug dealing leads him to dig his own grave. He gets handcuffed after being caught red-handed selling charas and ganja to a man in

Anjuna. Jeri undertakes this job after Mr. Pat'tuswami, a tourist from Madras living at their house lures him with money. This depicts the greed for money as well as the manner in which locals are easily manipulated by outsiders in carrying out illegal activities. It also showcases how tourism can make locals, especially the youth, fall prey to dangerous acts and substances such as drugs.

The play then looks at the pressure that falls on people due to money. For example, after Magdu rents out all of her three rooms, she and her children live in a hut that is close to their house. The children complain about not being able to sleep properly and comfortably, etc. But at the same time, they try to make adjustments because they are getting paid for it. In the later part of the play, Magdu tells her husband of how much money she has gathered through this process of room-renting; she gets paid rupees two hundred for each room and per day, she earns rupees seven hundred. So, in the past three months, she has amassed an amount of rupees sixty thousand.

The character of Mr. Pat'tuswami further depicts the exploitation that can take place within the tourism industry. For instance, in scene two, he asks one of the characters to keep a college-going girl ready for him to spend the night with. In other words, he is looking for sex. And this becomes a problem because many tourists think that Goa is a destination for sex and prostitutes, which is very wrong. In this manner, the name and image of our beloved Goa gets tarnished.

There is also a clash in culture that can be seen through characters like Turizm and Anti-Turizm. For example, in scene four of the play, these two characters explain the significance of their nicknames; the former tries to bring in tourists in the state, whereas the latter is against tourism (Cardozo, "Mhonvall Vikh" 14-15, 33-34, 41, 45-46). They discuss the pros and cons of letting outsiders live in their homes in exchange for some money.

The cons of tourism are seen in one of the play's scenes that takes place the next day after Magdu rents out her room to the German couple. She sees that her two children are peeping into their room, while their door is slightly ajar. She is horrified to see them watching the couple naked in bed. Jeri takes a particular interest in this and even after his mother tries to pull him away, his sight and feet seem glued. This shows how the behaviour, their westernization, and the too-much of open-mindedness of tourists can cause negative effects on children.

The play also delves into identity crises faced by characters like Linda, who undergo behavioural changes influenced by external factors. For example, after the German couple begin living at their house, Linda gets swayed by their way of life; they influence her in many ways, especially in terms of her lifestyle. Her way of speaking and dressing change. In one of the scenes, she, while being high, dances with Mr. Pat'tuswami, which earns her a tight slap from her mother. So, through the character of Linda, this tiatr reflects a potential identity crisis faced by locals in adapting into external influences.

Environmental issues are also conveyed through this drama, and can be seen through the character of Freeda, a tourist living at Magdu's place for a period of fifteen days. She is actually a journalist who has come from Bombay to conduct a study on the negative effects of tourism in Goa. After having met Magdu's husband, Francisco, she explains him about the study that she has conducted on the pros and cons of tourism in Goa. She has observed that when tourists live with the locals, such an atmosphere usually has a negative effect on the lives of children. Her report is titled 'Mhonthall Vikh', meaning sweet poison and she further explains that our Goans are of the mindset that tourism is something sweet for Goa. But in reality, it is poison, and that too, a slow one. It may look very attractive in the beginning, but it leaves behind adverse effects, especially in terms of the environment.

Most of the times, when tourists come to Goa to party and enjoy, they leave her in a sorry state by not cleaning up after the mess they have created. On many of the famous beaches, scores of glass liquor bottles will be found. On beaches like Miramar, tourists eat maize and throw it on the sand instead of discarding them in the bins. No matter how many cleanliness drives are undertaken, the result is the same; tourists do not seem to learn. So, this play suggests the underlying environmental concerns associated with unchecked tourism growth. In a way, it also hints at the need for sustainable tourism practices that preserve local culture and local environment without compromising the well-being of the locals.

The play has an open-end. It makes the audience wonder what might have happened after Jerry gets arrested. It also plants another question in the minds of the people – whether tourism in Goa is indeed sweet, but can later turn into something harmful, especially from the state's ecological point of view.

4.2. How Tiatr is Embracing Change while Retaining Core Essence

With shifts in culture due to globalization, tiatr has found itself habituating to the rapidly-evolving world. For example, the content and presentation of tiatr has been affected – maybe to a certain extent – because of many reasons (Gama, *Tiatr: Tradition vs. Innovation*). These include the advancements in technology, exposure to various form of entertainment, introduction of new ideas, etc. Well-known tiatrists who are still active on the stage, but have now grown old, often feel outdated due to this newness that tiatr is made to adapt to. But they try to overcome this sort-of challenge with assistance from here and there. Also, there are a number of artists – whether young or old – who have received these changes in a positive way. tiatrists feel impelled to address a much broader range of topics and examine contemporary themes that make the audience feel connected.

While being welcome to change, Goan theatre has come across a fair amount of challenges in adjusting to the demands of contemporary times. For example, tiatrists have observed that the attendance of people in live theatres has declined to a certain extent, and they hold factors such as the rise of digital media and the influx of other forms of entertainment, etc. responsible. In addition to this, the younger generation has now shifted towards entertainment that is either in English or Hindi language. So, when trying to keep back its relevance and appeal, it becomes a challenge for tiatr. However, tiatrists do not let such things deter their spirit. With the help of their creativity, they try to cut through these challenges and find newer ways to reach and remain connected with the people.

By going into themes of the contemporary times and by voicing out issues that are present in the society, tiatr has been able to embrace change. Although tiatrists are known to discuss topics such as domestic violence, family dynamics, environmental crisis, etc., nowadays, there are artists who fearlessly tackle topics such as gender equality, mental health, corruption, love affairs, rape, etc. This clearly shows that tiatr has evolved over time and has stood as a powerful medium for social discourse while trying to maintain its value of entertainment.

It is no doubt that digital platforms have helped to reach and connect with wider audiences. They have also become a helping hand to many artists in order to get their productions promoted. This importance has all been recognized by the tiatrists. Production groups and tiatrist themselves have tried to gain control of this power that social media has in spreading the word, sharing updates, creating a buzz, and connecting with tiatr lovers and admirers. This has helped tiatr to expand its reach; to go beyond its traditions so that it can attract people from different parts of the world.

For example, many of the tiatrists promote not only their own tiatrs, but also of their friends and colleagues on social media. Information is shared of the upcoming tiatrs and the

show timings and other details through WhatsApp by putting status; on Instagram through posts and reels; on YouTube too. If there are some shows going on of a particular tiatr, then sometimes, short scenes or trailers are uploaded in order to create interest and suspense among the viewers. This is done not only for likes and views, but to also help viewers or tiatr lovers to get some details about the tiatrs (or any such related matter) that interest them.

With this, it can be said that it is fine for the tiatrists to adapt to the changing times. However, it is crucial to stick to their roots – and tiatr is a platform that has been following this for ages. If this art form continues to do so, then it will be able to maintain its unique identity while swaying with the current times.

4.3. Examination of Innovative Approaches Taken by Tiatrists to Connect with Wider Audiences

With the passing of time, the tiatr audience has evolved. This made the tiatrists realize that it is important to adapt themselves as well as their form of art i.e. tiatr so that they can connect with a diverse range of viewers. So, with the emergence of technology and the increasing popularity of other forms of entertainment, they became aware of the demand for new and creative content. To survive in today's rapidly-changing world, tiatrists have been swift in accepting the latest approaches which can engage and connect with a wider audience base (D'Cruz, "An Online Platform Only for the Konkani Audience").

It is no surprise that this age is now mostly digital. This means that tiatrists can now bring out their talent to a broad audience through social media platforms – which have the become the virtual stages (Gama, *Tiatrists' Ways to Promote Tiatr among Audience*). So, whether it is Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc., such platforms serve as a powerful tool to promote and share tiatr-related things such as songs, performances, and even behind-the-scenes

clips. Full advantage of these platforms has been taken by the tiatrists; through them, the latter not only share their work publicly, but they also build a loyal fan following with whom they can interact with, and they even draw enthusiasts who might be new to their shows.

In addition to this, tiatrists have also realized that video streaming services such as YouTube, etc. do have the potential to connect with audiences. So, this means that the latter are no longer confined to a physical theatre. No one thought that tiatr could someday see itself being connected to social media. But today, tiatrists themselves have made this possible. With the help of the internet, they are trying to make their videos available online for all. And they are not doing this just for the sake of doing; they take the trouble to bring out high-quality videos of their performances. All this is being done so that the people can enjoy watching tiatrs just from the comfort of their homes and screens. In this manner, tiatrists can ensure that their works are spread to a wider audience and at the same time, tiatr is preserved and promoted for the upcoming generations.

For example, during the COVID pandemic, the whole world was brought to a standstill, particularly during the second wave, in which too many lives were lost. During this time, cinemas, and theatres everywhere, even in Goa, were shut down. This was a huge unavoidable setback to the tiatr industry. However, they did not lose hope (Colaco). An individual decision was taken to get some of their works uploaded on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube. Reels, songs and tiatrs gained likes, while the artists gained followers, thereby helping the art form to continue even during such a difficult time.

Another method employed by the tiatrists to expand their reach in order to attract diverse audiences is through the power of collaboration (Gama, *Tiatrists' Ways to Promote Tiatr among Audience*). By pairing up with other genres of performing arts such as stand-up comedians and dance troupes, tiatrists have successfully been able to craft distinctive and engaging performances that offer a seamless entertainment. Such cross-promotions help to

expand tiatr to new audiences who might not have thought about going to see a drama before. And another thing related to this collaboration with other artists is that tiatrists have partnered with community groups and local organizations as well. They have been able to tap into new audience segments by making themselves align with social events and causes that relate with different communities. So, whether these performances are held at cultural festivals or charity events, such kinds of collaborations have aided tiatrists to reach a wider section of society and foster a sense of public participation.

Tiatrists know that tiatr has the power to address the ongoing issues in society. These are those that connect with the audiences on a deeper level. Some of the topics that are used into the stories nowadays are environmental concerns, mental health, gender equality, etc. Through this way, tiatrists have managed to grab the attention of people of different communities. They have created a platform to discuss and ponder certain things by coming out with stories that are not just socially relevant, but are also thought-provoking. This has allowed viewers to experience this form of art in a personal and emotional manner.

When the matter of reaching out to a wider audience is concerned, social media is actually a mighty tool that tiatrists have in their hands. These artists can leverage social media platforms to rapidly disseminate their art. This can help in spreading it widely and quickly. Not only are tiatrists skilled in acting, but they also have the ability to turn into social media wizards. This means that they create content that is captivating and sharable, thus attracting attention and increasing the online visibility of tiatr. From tummy-tickling content such as John D'silva's clips and Francis de Tuem's lyrical videos, to thought-provoking skits and monologues, tiatrists definitely know how tricks to make their content spread far and wide. So, the next time one happens to see a tiatr or any such related content, he or she should be prepared to get entertained and spread the laughter!

4.4. Impact of Digital Platforms on Tiatr's Accessibility and Popularity

In recent years, with the arrival of digital platforms, tiatr has undergone a significant change (Gama, *Tiatrists' Ways to Promote Tiatr among Audience*). These platforms – which range from social media networks to streaming services, have transformed the accessibility and fame of tiatrs. Rooted in the culture of Goa, tiatrs have traditionally been staged in local theatres, church areas, and community halls. This has restricted their reach to a broader audience. But with the growth of digital platforms, the popularity and reach of tiatrs have surged into the virtual world.

In other words, digital platforms have transformed the way we devour entertainment. This has given tiatrists and performers new opportunities to demonstrate their talents. With the onset of social media, online communities, and streaming services, the tiatr industry has discovered a new platform not only to expand its audience, but to also become a focal point in the digital landscape.

Digital platforms can be very advantageous. For example, they have the ability to break physical boundaries. Tiatrs – which were once upon a time confined to a local audience, can now be watched by audiences worldwide due to the availability of online streaming services. With just a few clicks here and there, anyone, from any part of the world, can immerse themselves in the dynamic performances and intricate narratives of tiatrs, surpassing physical boundaries to bridge cultures.

Earlier, tiatr lovers sometimes had to patiently wait to watch the scheduled performance. This can be seen even today; tickets have to be booked at the counter at least two days prior to the screening of that particular tiatr. But this is where digital platforms come in. They make sure that tiatrs are available all day and all night. In this manner, viewers are provided with convenience and flexibility. With these two things, there is surety that watching

the tiatrs will be an enjoyable experience. So, no matter whether that person is travelling, or is on a lunch break, or it is late at night, viewers can now experience the enchantment of tiatrs at their own convenience. This takes accessibility and engagement to a new level.

Many learnt about Agostinho Themudo's recent tiatr called *Past is Past* – which became international, by reading about it in the newspapers (Mergulhao, "From UK with Love: Troupe to Stage Tiatr in Goa for First Time"). Although not uploaded online, this tiatr was promoted on YouTube channels such as 'Konkani Non Stop', 'Goan entertainment', 'K for Konkani', 'MOG GOENCHO', 'Konkani comedy area', etc. and on some Instagram accounts. Although the entire tiatr has not been uploaded right away due to copyright issues, bits-and-bobs of it in the form of behind the scenes, and promos have been put up on the tiatrist's YouTube channel, under the name of 'Comedy King Comedian Agostinho' (Themudo). This helps viewers, especially those who are unable to travel and watch the tiatr, to get a close glimpse into the set and cast. Themudo has also uploaded quite a number of his old tiatrs on his YouTube channel. Similarly, Prince Jacob's *Padri Mhunis Nhoim?* and *Noxibantlem* can be watched online through 'SUPER8OTT' – an OTT platform that charges rupees two hundred, and is managed by Joywin Fernandes (J. Fernandes). Many others have also uploaded their works on YouTube. The only drawback of is that these are not the recent tiatrs.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This chapter, besides providing the key findings of the first four chapters, will also include the researcher's personal experience of watching a tiatr in the twenty-first century for the first time. Other things included are the hypothesis of the research and whether it has been proven or not, and lastly, some recommendations for the future w.r.t. the research topic.

5.1. Personal Experience of Watching a Tiatr in the Twenty-First Century

After having learnt about the reopening of Kala Academy after almost three years, the researcher decided to watch with her parents a tiatr called *Goykarponn* (2024) on 29 February 2024, directed by Michael Gracias, which was part of the annual tiatr competitions 'A group', held by Kala Academy, Goa.

This was her first experience w.r.t. to watching a live tiatr performance. It was delightful. It showed the reality of the tiatr in bringing out the things taking place in society today, which a lot of the people among the audience appreciated by giving a huge round of applause, especially while the stage actors were delivering their dialogues and the singers performed melodiously.



Fig. 5.1: A still from Michael Gracias' tiatr, *Goykarponn* (2024).

People of different walks of life were seen, such as tiatrists, directors, and priests. Like all tiatrs, this too had a happy ending, whereby the Hindus and Catholics came together on stage while doing away with their differences. This gave pleasure to the audience. The tiatr ended with the audience carrying with them an important message. Most importantly, it was a memorable experience for the researcher, leaving an eagerness to watch more of tiatrs in the future.

5.2. Chapter-Wise Summary of Key Findings

In chapter one, it was found that tiatr is a kind of theatre that began in Goa. It celebrates not only drama, but also songs, dance, and music. It mainly takes place in the language of Konkani i.e. the mother tongue of Goa. In this manner, tiatr promotes language, art, and culture. Secondly, Lucasinho Ribeiro is the pioneer of tiatr, as he adapted the Italian play called *Italian*

Boy into a tiatr called *Italian Bhurgo* in 1892. Joao Agostinho Fernandes is the father of tiatr. Earlier, the word 'tiatr' had many different spellings due to the influence of the Portuguese language. Also, in tiatr, *cantar* or *cantaram* are the songs, *podde* or *poddes* means curtains which are used to mark the scenes in the drama, and are usually six to seven in number. Music, satire, and comedy are used to convey messages. There are four thematic categories of tiatr i.e. historical – which are very less, social – which are quite common, political – which are limited, and religious – which are usually held during Lent and Easter. All these tiatrs have some or the other kind of impact on the people and society.

In chapter two, it was found that in earlier times, women were not allowed to act due to social restrictions. So, men took on female roles. In the history of theatre, some of the notable women were Madame Dhermaivilla, Isabella Andreini, Binodine Dasi, Mrs. Bristow, Regina Fernandes, Mrs. Deacle, etc. The theatre in Goa has its roots in two art forms i.e. Khell and Zaagor – both of which include elements of vulgarity. This caused their decline, giving rise to the Goan form of tiatr. Many of the professional tiatrists – right from the 1930s to the present times, have kept the tradition of tiatr alive by participating from a very young age in village feasts, festivals, and competitions. Additionally, they have also brought many changes to the Konkani stage.

In chapter three, through the conduction of a couple of interviews, it was found that the tiatr industry was facing a number of challenges. These mainly include the lack of documentation – due to financial issues, and lack of readership; women and gender biases – due to transport, financial issues, and favouritism; tradition vs. innovation – such as painted curtains vs. technological advancements, traditional singing format vs. singers from own groups today – due to expenditure, wind and string instruments vs. keyboard, and printed vs. digital advertising; promotion – through the Church's support, tiatr competitions organized by educational institutions, and initiatives by academies; and lastly, the Government – due to the

non-functioning and closure of halls, and censorship of political tiatrs, thereby harassing tiatrists.

In chapter four, five tiatrs were analyzed. In each of these, many themes and issues were addressed, such as the functioning of politics and the issue of trust in Francis de Tuem's *Konnak Patiepatchem?*; childlessness in Lawry Travasso's *Mogachim Fulam*; divorce and the effect it has on the children in Mario Menezes' *Sangat Ami Bhurgim Konnachim*; unity among the people in Fr. Nevel Gracias' *Tim Sogllim Ek Zaum*; and the problems posed by the tourism industry in Goa, especially from an ecological point of view in Tomazinho Cardozo's *Mhonvall Vikh*. It was also found that due to factors such as COVID, globalization, etc., the content and popularity of tiatr has changed; some things have become digital through the use of social media. While tiatrists have been using them to reach a wider audience, they have maintained the tradition of tiatr quite well.

5.3. Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis formulated at the outset of the study was that, 'tiatr has evolved from a traditional folk theatre to a contemporary art form, incorporating contemporary themes and social issues while maintaining its cultural significance'.

History clearly states that tiatr was a result of the Zaagor and Khell. The same has been reiterated in the research. Thus, this work has been able to successfully prove the hypothesis.

5.4. Future Recommendations

Through the interviews that were conducted, it was observed that children and the youth are uninterested in tiatr. Hence, a suggestion to this could be that they should be encouraged

from a very young age to join tiatr – or any other such traditional form of art. Also, educational institutions should introduce a subject related to acting, theatre or oration. This will not only help students to gain confidence, but it will also add to the fun

The younger generation of tiatrists, with help and assistance from the stalwarts of the tiatr industry, can also be guided based on their individual talents.

Tiatrists should support their colleagues too. This can be done by attending each other's tiatrs, which can help to understand the different themes and issues that are brought out through those productions, thereby deriving ideas. Through such collaboration, a sense of unity can be built in the community.

Since most of the tiatrists struggle to get the scripts of their plays sold due to financial constraints and no sale, a suggestion would be to organize book fairs and get the books sold at a discounted rate. For example, a choice of three to four books could be sold for a certain amount. In addition to this, tiatrists can also get their scripts digitalized, as many youngsters spend most of their time in scrolling their screens, while also having the interest to read. These e-books can be monetized, but care should be taken by the tiatrists not to make them too expensive.

Google Adsense can also work well, as far as gaining views and a bit of money are concerned. When deciding to upload tiatrs or songs on YouTube, advertisements can help a lot. Tiatrists could give affiliate marketing a shot, where one posts the advertisement of the video, song, or anything related to tiatr, and a link to these are also put up. So, everytime someone visits the page or clicks on the link provided, it will generate a little monetary fare.

As far as government support is concerned, there have been initiatives that have been undertaken. However, they are not enough; more effort should be put in. For example, schemes

of giving grants can be introduced. One way the government can greatly help the industry is by cutting down taxes. It can also lend financial support to the tiatrist who are very much dependent on tiatr. Those who have aged and have no more means of earning, can be helped in this matter.

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Appendix I: Interview Transcripts

Name: Francis de Tuem

Date: 10.12.23

Location: Mapusa, Goa

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background and your journey as a tiatrist, including any significant milestones or achievements?

I hail from Tuem, Pernem. From my childhood, I used to sing in local tiatrs. Our village celebrates 2 feasts every year i.e. in the month of May and December. So, we used to hold 2 tiatrs during this time. Our full family used to sing in village shows, including my father, younger brother – who is a Selesian priest at Don Bosco, my sister – who teaches at Tuem, another brother – who now stays at Bombay. Slowly, after watching my songs, the neighbouring villages used to approach me to sing in their local tiatrs.

Marceline de Betim, a famous tiatrist from Vai Dongor... so he hosted a show at Vai Dongor... and I sang 2 songs there. Then Ruzarin de Calvim – he used to organize/ participate competition shows. He approached me there and asked me if I would sing in his tiatr. So I agreed as I was looking for the opportunity. So from his tiatr, others too approached me from Bardez, Pernem, Aldona, etc. Accordingly, in one of the tiatrs, Selferns Fernandes from Guirim, Sangolda saw me in that tiatr and he approached me for the first time for professional tiatr. They had come with a professional tiatr called ZeeMix Trio from Bombay. He approached me if I was willing to sing and I said “yes”. That was my first professional tiatr in 1998 and from thence, there was no looking back; I continued with professional tiatr.

During that time, I was working as a senior technician for the ‘Black end Dagger’ and ‘Compton Greaves’. I then joined ITI as an instructor for electrician trade. In between, I went to Dubai. Within a short span of time, due to a personal problem, I left the job and returned back. I then again went to Kwait. There, I worked for some time and then I left that job too and then joined ITI.

I used to sing political songs and for this reason, I was being harassed. During that tenure, while I used to frequently travel abroad (on Gulf tours), I used to get questioned as to why I was travelling again and again... as I was in demand that time. Everytime, someone or the other used to put an RTI asking how I got the leave and they harassed me, especially during politician X’s time – who put false allegations on me for an extortion case and so, I was arrested. During that time, I was in jail. So they took that opportunity and I lost my job. Now I’m fully on tiatr.

How did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this unique form of theatre/performing art?

As I told you, village tiatrs used to take place and I used to find it very interesting. So I used to by-heart and sing the songs of Marcelin de Betim, Souza Boy, Trio Kings songs, William de Curtorim, M. Boyer, etc. The school at Tuem used to have programs and dignitaries used to attend. So, the priest used to request me to conduct programs. So one day, while doing so, Fr. Aurelio Mascarenhas’ main sponsorer – who is from Italy, was to come.

The priest encouraged me to compose my own songs. So based on the points he gave me, I sang a song on the sponsorer. At that time, I was in SSC. So I organized a get-together and a small concert. People appreciated my performance. But the sponsorer couldn’t follow what I was saying. So when the priest translated it for him, the sponsorer liked it so much, that he told

the priest to bring me to Matunga, Bombay to perform in the program. So, father took me and another 8 boys by a jeep. It was my first time there. We got medals of Don Bosco and other things.

So this made me interested to pursue professional tiatr. People also accepted me... and I was also working at that time side-by-side. But after some problems, I had to give up my work... and also, I had to choose between tiatr and work (even if he had to work elsewhere). So I continued with tiatr, by singing political songs... although there too some had problems with me... but I stayed back because of the people's support.

How has lack of/inadequate documentation become a challenge for tiatr?

Francis de Tuem: See... nobody thought that tiatr would come so far... so no one really bothered to preserve these. I have got many paper cuttings... but I haven't kept all of them... and it wasn't even possible to do so. Nowadays, some store them on computers, mobile... and some even print... or they even put it on a hard disk. Now see... many from the older generation didn't even know how to operate these things... so they were unable to... C. Alvares showed 100 CRs... but he didn't have these many preserved, and neither does his family have them... the family even made an announcement, asking if anyone had any banners, tickets, handbills... kept as a remembrance... and to also support them in this way. At least now we have the money... but those days, it was difficult... so it was a hardship. At the same time, they didn't know the importance... or they might have not found it that important... or perhaps due to their condition, they weren't able to preserve. But still, it is difficult.

I remember... an elderly man from Santa Cruz... he had all tickets, handbills, articles, banners... he used to collect from here and there. So we took him to Kwait for a show...

actually, we tiatrists organize shows there and send the benefits to those tiatrists who – due to old age – are unable to act, or are financially weak, etc.

As a solution, in my opinion, after the tiatr is written and performed, it should be published. Now Alfred Rose had his songs published... even the solfej. So tomorrow, if someone wants to learn these kantaram, they can always make use of these books... these can also be referred by the future generation. This is the best format... by writing and keeping. No doubt we can store these things online through software, etc, but they can become corrupt anytime. But these books can be preserved as many read. Now whatever was recorded about the Portuguese, was done in the book form as there was no electronics at that time to preserve such records. And people should support them to write these books... forget about profit... at least they'll be preserved.

Karina Sequeira: So all tiatrists don't print their scripts? All are online?

FDT: No... as in, only if it is taken in the book form and stored in the library, will they be preserve. How much can we tiatrists write and keep at our homes? Now I have written so many cantars, but I don't have any of them preserved at home. I have uploaded them on YouTube, and on CDs.

At least now, there should be some documentary. There are some tiatrs... like that of comedian Dominic, Mario Menezes... that have been made into a book format, or have been computerized... nowadays, they have started writing. Even Dalgado Academy gives supports... like when releasing a book of any tiatr. So we have to take the initiative, right?... if we want t to be preserved for the future generation... but at least nowadays, if you type on the

net, you get some information... maybe some photos, videos or memories... which you couldn't find earlier. So through this way, I think it will survive.

What are some threats to traditional art forms like tiatr in the face of globalization?

Now see... I had brought out a tiatr called *Serkar 420* before COVID... it was to be held in Sankhlim. By its name, people came to know what the tiatr is about... I had even booked the hall in 2 days, but they cancelled the tickets. I have proof of this... an audio recording... the argument with the manager. When asked the reason for such an action, he replied saying that the poddo isn't working... so I told him that my tiatr is the next day and previous to that is the naatok... how is it working for the naatok? I even asked him if he scared of the audience. You are allowing them... why not cancel their too? So, this is a hardship for us tiatrists. Then I took asked for support from Prince Jacob, Roseferns, Mario Menezes and together, we took the initiative... Advocate Radharao Gracias helped us a lot... we had a meeting... got all the signatures of the artists, got it drafted, wrote a letter to the CM, forwarded it to the Information Technology Minister... it was all going well... then we were asked to get a censorship... now all this is also a hardship for us, right? Now in another case, Ravindra Bhavan also pressured us to get the political cantaram censored... so what wrong or bad things are taking place, those they don't want us to expose... now see, we don't simply expose, right? What's fact, we bring out. Now if what we are showing is wrong, then out a defamation case on us. See... what comes on newspapers, those things only we are bringing out. So yes, this is a huge hardship for us... and all this is for us to get suppressed only. Even if we stay in Bombay, we have to go to the same... we cannot even avoid it; we have to do it. First we have to send the tiatr for censoring, then get it passed or approved. Sometimes, we even have to send the script... now this isn't applicable to UK... but in the Gulf, this process is compulsory.

How does competition from other entertainment options/mediums impact the popularity of tiatr?

Now for example, those who come out with movies, its fine for them because they can afford to spend in crores. Now suppose we require a crore to create a good film, from where will we be able to afford such an amount? Now in films, there are certain scenes where knife or gunshot is used... it looks real, doesn't it?... all this can be done with technology. But we can't do the same things in tiatrs... on the stage... as we don't have the technology because it's very costly. So this too, is a hardship for us. For example, in the movie *Baahubali*, they have shown all this very nicely... and crores were spent for this. So people will leave watching tiatrs and run towards films because of these aspects. In the past, people, especially the well-to-do, used to entertain themselves by watching TV, listening to radios... this was their source of entertainment. But now, there are so many channels from which you can choose and watch. So these have damaged us.... and we cannot even stop them... we do whatever we can.

Some tiatrists upload their tiatrs on YouTube and some don't because they don't earn much and neither do they get sponsorship... but if you have popularity, then you can earn well. Now if you want to record the tiatr, you will have to spend nearly 40 to 50,000 on the cameraman, shooting, for editing... then the artists will have to be paid. Now to shoot a direct on the stage directly, at least a lakh will have to be spent.

During COVID, we remained for 3 years at home with the fright of death. So like a remembrance, I uploaded my cantaram on YouTube. See... I have written so many good songs... they have also been played on the radio... but there was no proper documentation; my songs were not recorded... they are nowhere. Earlier, there was the gramophone, which is no more... then cassettes too get worn out. Videos also got over... CDs too soon get scratched

and then become useless. For now, the only format that's running well is YouTube. Since there's little chance, I have put some of my works on it... also, you cannot put it everytime as the quality decreases.

What are the struggles to attract younger audiences and performers due to generational shifts and changing audience demographics in tiatr? What efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences?

See. In some homes, Konkani is not spoken at all. So how will children get attracted towards tiatrs? What will they understand? Now to understand Konkani, they should be taken to attend Konkani mass. Now if you find Konkani difficult, why will you attend tiatr? No right?

As far as efforts are concerned... now I have brought out tiatrs to get the youth involved... Milagres de Chandor had made a tiatr by involving only the youth... then Mario Menezes had staged a tiatr with only children in it... see, when children are involved, then automatically there's a fan following within that same age group... so, this makes them motivated and they participate. So, we have made an attempt to conduct tiatrs like this.

Also, nowadays, reviews are there... so according to that, we come to know what people exactly want. We try to make some modifications. See... there's no direct interaction... sometimes, audience gets to meet the director or writer backstage... they then give their opinions like how what should be done and what shouldn't... so by taking such suggestions, we make certain changes. Also, nowadays, if the contact number of the director is provided on newspapers, people phone the director and share their reviews about the tiatr. For example, if you have watched a tiatr and came across a vulgar scene, you can call the director and express your views. So we will know that we have to remove that particular scene. When tiatrs mostly

critique anything on religion, people immediately phone. Once, Marcuz performed a short scene at Panjim in which he depicted something of distributing Holy Communion... people at once called up the director and told him to cut the song. So indirectly, people give us their suggestions and we accordingly work on it.

How does tiatr preserve tradition with innovation?

See... some things we can show through the projector... not entirely... or else, it will turn into a film. We do this for certain things... like we show on TV, newspapers, make posters... then we started to make it on flex also... now, we show it on the projector. So yeah... it cannot be done totally; we try to balance it.

Years ago, the format of the tiatr was solos, duos, trios, quartets. But now in modern tiatrs, things can easily be done... there's no need to change the curtains everytime. So, though we have somewhat modernized, we still preserve those traditions. Usually, a tiatr is divided into 7 poddes... after every poddo, there is a comedy scene, or a cantar... in this way, the whole story is shown; we don't show the entire thing in one go. In films, it is not like this; it is continuous. So we have maintained tradition and style in this manner of performing tiatr.

What are some of the challenges faced by women in the tiatr industry?

Now to return home, is it a bit difficult. Sometimes, there's no proper mode of transport, or their condition is not okay, or if there's no one to help them at home. Rosy Alvares, etc. used to sleep at the location itself due to transport difficulties. So someone called Filu used to be there, who used to give them some accommodation... that's hardship, right? So those who don't have their own bike or car, it's a bit difficult for them. Suppose there's a girl who is new in the tiatr industry... in the beginning, she will find it difficult to wear suitable costumes or

jewellery. To get these things, she will have to spend at least rs. 10,000. Another difficulty is that she has to spend for the makeup and also provide for her home... little of what she has earned.

Now why is there hardship here? See... in films, there is big sponsorships... so there's not much difficulty in buying things. For example, if you need to buy a wig, it is quite expensive... such kind of hardships are there. But still, looking at the difficulties of the actors, sometimes, we tiatrists and directors of the tiatr help to buy some costumes... like suits are given to the men... director helps by giving money to the tailors, etc.

How has technology been used/integrated for wider reach and engagement?

Years back, there were no lights... so petromas was used. Then came lights... bulb, stroke light... they brought in halogen. Now tubelights are used. Before, this wasn't the case. When characters were on stage, there was no focus. But now there is. Suppose something is to be highlighted, it can be done now because of lights. So day-by-day, modern technology is used. Regarding sound, there was no sound system before... due to this, we had to say very loudly. But then, we used funnel... now there are good speakers, sound mixers. So the quality of the sound improved. But everywhere, this sound system cannot be made use of as it is quite costly... but they do it as per their convenience. For example, in villages, there is low voltage at times... so we use generator. So we try to reach out to the people in many ways for the success of our tiatrs.

How can collaborative efforts between tiatrists and scholars, with religious/educational institutions promote tiatr among the youth?

In my opinion, tiatr is a small-scale industry. So there should be one circular subject in schools... with a small salary, an artist can be brought to teach about tiatr... like how to write a story, or create a tune, music... how good direction can be given. Different people working in the tiatr industry can be brought, like the director, a singer, musician. In this way, children will learn quickly. Now see... for many, Maths is useless, and yet they have to learn... okay, to learn accounting is useful... but what about algebra, formulas... okay, they might be useful to students who are going to take engineering... At least other subjects, you can use it in life somewhere... now in History, I am taught about Shivaji who is dead and gone... but what is the use of this history in my life? But if a student begins to learn music, he can become musician and then earn. Or even if I am told to teach singing, a student can learn from me how to compose cantaram and in this way, he can become a singer. In school, some subjects are useless. Now in this field of tiatr, we can make an identity and also earn. Okay... it can be kept as an optional subject as not everyone might be interested. Some other subjects can be kept... like carpentry.

What strategies can be implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through tiatr?

See... now, we are already depicting how women can act in tiatrs.

What are your thoughts on the future prospects of tiatr in the contemporary era, and how do you see it continuing to preserve and contribute to Goa's cultural identity?

As I mentioned... if tiatr is not brought to light in schools or churches, then there is a high possibility of tiatr losing its identity. The main are the youth; they should come forward. Now for example, if someone's child is performing in the tiatr or in any other gathering, then the parent(s) or relatives attend the event... otherwise, they are absent; they are not interested. If the youth is encouraged to get involved, then tiatr will automatically move forward. We try to

sing very old cantaram, we even imitate their dressing style, way of speaking. Now for example, if someone is singing a cantar of Minguel Rod, he will wear a tailcoat and do so.

Name: Prince Jacob

Date: 19.12.23

Location: Margao, Goa

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

My name is Miguel Jacob Carmo Luis Fernandes. But I'm called Prince Jacob because it was in 1982 I was crowned the 'Comedy Prince of Goa' by Fr. Antonio Pereira, who is no longer now. He's a Jesuit priest. And from then, I worked as Prince Jacob only. So I'm from Fatorda. I studied at my- my primary at Our Lady of Rosary. Then my school, fifth onwards at Holy Spirit Institute, Margao. After that, I was doing a course at Don Bosco's Machinist cum fitter then I started teaching there. Then after that, I had to decide- I had to choose any one: teaching or acting. So I chose acting.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

In my school time, teachers were very supportive towards me. I was one of the best orators in the school for elocution competitions... for speeches. There was one teacher... she's still there, Fatima Rebello by name. She's to take me for elocution competitions. Myself and another boy... another class mate Ashley... we both used to go there and she used to come along with us. When the children used to see both of us... from the other schools, they said "Oh! My God. Prize is gone." So everytime, wherever we used to go, we used to bring first, second prize. I used to take first, he used to take second. And from that time, that fear of the stage had gone. Then in school, Father Luis Orland is- was a teacher. So he was there. So for Funs Day especially. Sir Menin Furtado, who's the principal. So they were very supportive. Once we had Parents' Day. And that day, I was- it was difficult for me to perform that day. I said "Father,

I'll not be able to come this time." "If you are not coming, then no Parents' Day. Cancel Parents' Day." But Parents' Day was shifted the next day. So it was that. So they supported me and from then onwards... Then Jacinto Vaz – he's my mentor; I was looked at him and he's a good man also. I acted with him in one of his tiatrs also. Uhh... *Niti Daar*. When I used to do comedy in his plays, he used to come and watch. Beside- And I... after I finished, he used to put his hand on my shoulder and say, "Jacob, you did well. In future, you will become a great comedian."

Any significant milestones or achievements?

There are plenty awards. But my biggest award is- now till- this year, this is my 36th year. My own production. Before that I acted- so till today, people are watching me. People are coming to see me. That is my biggest prize; biggest award. And my milestone is- in the history of tiatr- my tiar *Padri*, which has completed 350 shows. Till today, not- no show has been completed at this milestone. After that also, I did a film of that... *Padri*. Still that film was watched by thousands, lakhs of people.

How has lack of documentation become a challenge for tiatr? What are the possible solutions to address this challenge?

See. Documentation has recently started... previously, it was less. So it's not that it is not there; it is present. And it is not enough to do documentation. Now if books are published, who bothers to read them? They are kept in the library. But no one is interested. So most of them don't write because there is no sale. Who will buy by spending so much? Now the Tiatr Academy tries to help... you only have to give them the book and they will print it.

But the challenge is that tiatr is being killed. The reason why I'm saying so is because the government doesn't want tiatr to happen... because whatever happened yesterday is brought out today in tiatrs... whatever takes place in the government, we bring them to the stage. So they don't want all this.

Now see... in Panjim, 3 years have passed there's no hall. So ultimately, people's interest to watch tiatr will gradually die. The same thing happened in Ponda for 5 years... 1 tiatr took place in 5 years. I remember... I used to perform at least 5-6 tiatrs, but cannot be done anymore. In Vasco hall, it's been 3 years since the AC is not working. So, we don't have any hall to stage tiatrs. Now because of the priests in villages, we are able to have tiatrs... otherwise, no. I always tell the government to support us... we are not asking you to give us a job; we are creating jobs. In my group, there are 25 people who are working. Now if there are 20 such groups, then imagine the number. Plus, there's sound, light, band, publicity... we are catering to more than 4000-5000 employees. Hence, government should support us – which is not happening. But people/audience have supported us because they are watching tiatrs... for this reason, tiatr has remained alive. It's been 129 years since tiatr begun... without the government's help. So unless and until there is government support, any art cannot sustain.

They are killing tiatr here in Goa. Years back, in London, 1 tiatr used to take place. But now, in 1 hall itself 3-4 tiatrs are shown. So one thing about the Goans who have gone abroad to make their living is that they haven't forgotten their mother tongue... they have started tiatrs there, they speak Konkani, they come together, etc. I appreciate them.

So the only solution to this problem is the government changing its mind. See... what I'm saying?... we are not against y'all when we sing *cantars*. Now newspapers bring out things

about y'all... so why don't y'all stop the newspapers? Whatever comes on the paper, we tell them through our *cantars*. Y'all are blaming us, but not the newspapers.

What are some threats to tiatr due to globalization?

Prince Jacob: Okay, let me ask you something. When was the last time you watched a tiatr?

Karina Sequeira: I haven't watched any tiatr.

PJ: See?! So this is a threat because the younger generation is not watching tiatrs. Nowadays, some colleges are doing so. But most of the younger generation is not doing because they feel something old will be shown. Tiatr has evolved in many different ways... there are different topics. So if the children and the youth come to watch tiatrs, they will survive. When the older generation won't survive, tiatr too won't survive... because the biggest threat is the youth.

How does competition from other entertainment options (like Konkani films, etc.) impact the popularity of tiatr?

PJ: See... I don't think it will impact. If the picture is good, then the people will come to watch it. If the tiatr is good, people will attend it. So it's up to the people to decide what to watch – a film or a tiatr. I give both – films and tiatrs. So tomorrow, if tiatr goes down, I can sustain in films and vice versa.

What are the struggles to attract younger audiences and performers due to generational shifts and changing audience demographics in tiatr? What efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences?

See... now most of the people have gone abroad. They are feeling the pinch because people have become less in tiatrs. Tiatrs are increasing there... which means that many Goans have gone there. And I don't blame them also... what will they do here in Goa?... there is no job. Even if they have a job, how will they manage with a salary of just 8000-9000? And if you want a good job, you have to spend lakhs. So people have gone abroad for survival. I remained here; I asked myself why I should go... they are there and I'll make tiatrs here. So, demography is changing... and children should be coming... girls come nowadays. So awareness is there.

And let me tell you... through tiatr, you can make your future... at least I did so. I built my house, got married, all my children are educated – my eldest daughter is a MBA in HR, my second daughter is a MBA in healthcare management and my third son is a B.Sc. in hospitality; he's a chef... so I got them educated. You can do a lot through tiatr, but you have to sacrifice yourself. If you earn 1500, but spend 2000, it won't work... so you've to pinch yourself. So if you're a good artist or singer, then you can earn nothing less than 30,000 to 40,000 or even more. Side-by-side, you can even work... so 30,000 plus 40,000 will make 70,000... so why will you want to go abroad; there's no need. So you can make this a full-time job also... like I've done... I was on the radio for 12 years; I was a celebrity artist... that also I got because of tiatr; they saw the popularity.

So to answer your question on what efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences... as I told you... I do lot of different tiatrs... something innovative everytime. Especially in tiatr competitions at Kala Academy, the topics are good and different... maybe our audience might not like their topics, but there's something different that they do. I always say... I'm a director, writer and a chef; if people like what I prepare, they will either enjoy it or not.

How can collaborative efforts between tiatrists and scholars, with religious and educational institutions promote tiatr among the youth?

See... now, churches conduct our tiatrs. I did a religious tiatr on St. Francis Xavier, St. Joseph Vaz, etc. To do such tiatrs, a lot of costumes of that time are needed... they are quite expensive, but still, I have managed somehow. I always say... that there should always be a theatre subject in school. I don't know what exactly is being taught, but I do know that music, P.T. are taught. If there's a subject like theatre, you might not become an artist, but your stage-fear will go. I always say that if you give a dog a bone, it will not let go of it. Similarly, if you give an actor a mic, it is dangerous because he/she too doesn't let go of it. You can become fit if there's P.T. If there's a subject in art or in acting, you can become a good orator; you become a good person, citizen, your personality changes... so lot of changes are there.

How has technology been used for wider reach and engagement?

Now it's there's FaceBook, WhatsApp... earlier, you had to spend a lot on newspaper. But now you can get everything for free. But sometimes, it's plus and minus... as in, you get unwanted things – which is demoralising also. Technology is good, but everything has side-effects... like if you take too many tablets, there's side-effects. So you've to know how to use it also. It always said... anything excess is abuse.

How does tiatr preserve tradition while adapting to contemporary times?

See... our *cantarams* have solos, duos, duets, trios, quarto, cinco... this is our tradition... and it is there in tiatr... maybe in all the tiatrs this might not be seen because it's difficult to get artists also. Now suppose everyone is there in the tiatr... for all the 5 songs, you will have to bring 5 *cantarists* (singers) separately. The cost will be a lot. So in such cases, what we do is

that we select the singers from our tiatr itself... so this tradition is also there. Music is also there... we still have blowing instruments today... nowadays, children also learn instruments... so this tradition is there too. Then we have also stuck to the tradition of the pordes... the curtains falling, showing a garden scene.

Are there any challenges faced by women in the tiatr industry? If yes, what are they?

See... earlier, there were many challenges. What used to happen is that after the tiatr at night was over, they were dropped to Margao and then they were on their own. There were some who used to spend the night in the gardens and would then leave by bus in the morning. When we came... I, Roseferns, etc. we didn't let this happen; we would drop all the artists to their place at night. And the second floor at my place is only for artists... with WC, beds, toilets, breakfast, lunch, dinner... you sleep or do whatever you want there. Nowadays, everyone has a vehicle to go back home. But during that time, all, especially the female artists... I never used to send them home at night. So that security was not there earlier. When we came, it was there. So because of this security, the parents too changed their minds; they allowed their children to go. So we brought these changes.

Do you feel there is gender inequality in tiatr? If yes, then what strategies can be implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through tiatr?

As for me, in my group, all are equal. I don't know about others, but some people say, "They are treated well... we are given little roles." In my group, we are one family and everybody has to be treated equally. So I'm always there for equality; there's no favouritism... I praise all my artists and that is why my tiatrs are successful.

Have you faced any challenges? If yes, what are they and how have you overcome them?

Yeah... till today, every show is a challenge. Once, in one of my tiatrs, three members i.e. the main drummer, main trumpeter and the main hero, did not show up. They were all from Sanvordem. It was 8:30 pm and we were waiting for them at Margao... and during that time, not many had mobiles; there was only the landline. At the same time, it was raining heavily here as well as in Sanvordem... so that's why they didn't come. So we got a call saying that the tiatr will be held in the hall. I decided to go, but my other members didn't want to do so because of the absence of the 3 members. So I replaced my bass guitarist as the drummer... I made 1 of the 2 trumpeters play and the main hero was played by my stage manager. So, these were challenges, but I like them; I'm determined.

As far as criticism is concerned, it has to be there... but it should be genuine. So if you want to criticize, then come and meet me... then you listen to mine also. Just because you have a pen, doesn't mean you'll write anything. We'll discuss... you also understand what my difficulty is. So I don't mind criticisms; I'm open to them.

Finally, what are your thoughts on the future prospects of tiatr in the cotemporary era?

See... it's very difficult to survive. Unless and until there's help from the government, any art is not going to survive. It's high time the government should look into it. We are doing our best. God does the rest. But they also have to do something.

Name: Tomazinho Cardozo

Date: 28.12.23

Location: Candolim, Goa

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

I was born in Pomburpa. My father died when I was only a month old. My mother was from Candolim. So there were a lot of problems in the family. So my uncle, who was in Mozambique at that time, requested to leave there and come here. So at the age of 4, we came to live permanently in Goa. As a result, our childhood was quite disturbing... sometimes, there was no proper finance to get good clothes and even to go to school, etc. But somehow or the other, my mother, brother and uncle managed. My brother had to leave school at the age of 10 and start working... now he has 'Simonia's' bakery at Mapusa and other places too... he expired during COVID. It was him who was responsible to give me whatever I wanted. So although they suffered, they made sure that I went to school, completed my segunda grao (secondary) and after that, I joined the English-medium school, did my SSC through Pune Board. Then I graduated in B.Sc. from Dhempe College, Miramar and then I started teaching at St. Theresa's High School, Candolim. In between, I got married to Irene – who was also a teacher. So we thought of doing M.A. instead of postgraduation.... And at that time, postgraduation classes had just started in the new dental college in the afternoon. Then in 1987, I became the headmaster... in between, she first joined the higher secondary and then became the headmistress. I also became the Sarpanch of Candolim for 22 years... so I was doing all this simultaneously. But those days were somewhat better... compared to my first 15-20 years of my life.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

Actually, tiatr is not my career, but my hobby... and that is the reason our whole group is non-commercial... mostly teachers and students. Our main is to improve the quality of tiatr. You will find the real tiatr in the A group tiatrs that are organized by the Tiatr Academy. All these commercial tiatrs are not tiatrs, but *tamasha*... they do anything and everything in order to make the people laugh... they want to attract people by laughing. So tiatr was our passion. In 1957, my brother staged a tiatr in Saipem and I was given a song to sing... it was a comedy solo. The people liked it and encouraged me... so I started taking part in signing in tiatrs in Candolim, Verem, Nerul and other surrounding villages. Every feast used to stage a tiatr. Only once, our school Principal, Fr. Alvito Vaz... during that time, the school was under construction... and I used to move with him to collect funds, etc. He had brought a tiatr by Prem Kumar (who is now no more) in aid of St. Theresa's High School. He told Prem Kumar that he (Fr. Vaz) has a boy who can sing tiatr... he requested him... and accordingly, I was allowed to sing. But before I sang on stage, he first wanted to hear my song... he was not unavailable... I finally met him when the musician and notes writer, Alex *mistri* from Salcete was there. Alex took down the notes at 9:30 P.M....and when Prem Kumar arrived at 10:30 P.M. –just when the show was about to begin, he asked me to sing before him. The words of my song were comic... but when he heard, he didn't like it... and my enthusiasm went down. After he left, Alex told me not to listen to Prem Kumar; the song was very good... sing confidently and the rest will be taken care of. My song was after the 5th poddo... so the tiatr was very interesting because Prem Kumar was known for bringing out technological advancements on the stage. Now although there were popular commercial artists, the songs weren't up to the mark. When I began with my song after the 5th poddo, it was liked by everyone; they brought me twice-thrice. Finally, at that time, Prem Kumar hugged and

congratulated me. That night was fine. The next day, the tiatr was in Margao – a place very popular for tiatrs. My mother didn't know to read and write... so there was no guidance as such... so I used to think by myself and do. I was financially dependent on my brother. Since I would have had to miss my inter-science practicals, etc., I decided not to go to Margao... I coaxed my mother into telling the people who would come asking for me, that I'm not home. When they came, I was sleeping at my neighbour's place... they eventually left. I always think about it... if I had to go that day to Margao and sing the song, maybe I would have become a commercial artist for sure. And since then, I never entered on commercial stage.

But every year, we started bringing tiatr and brought innovations in village level tiatrs. When Kala Academy started All Goa Tiatr Competitions in 1974, it was the best opportunity for us to display whatever our talent. I had a friend, Nevis Machado (he died), Wally D'mello and Romel D'mello... the four of us were all educated... we knew that we wanted to do something on the tiatr stage. So every year, there were different things on the stage when we were doing our tiatr at Saipem. For the competition, we used to always win first or second place. There were setbacks... like when bringing innovations on the tiatr stage, the audience doesn't know about it; they are seeing it for the first time... it was a risk. In our case, our judges didn't know what we are doing on stage. For example, once, we showed flashback for the first time on the tiatr stage... so as far as the technical things are concerned, Liganath Naik – a well-versed in Marathi drama used to help us. So he suggested us to put flashback in our tiatr. Everything went well until we were given the third prize... on enquiring, the judges said they found it flashback-thing confusing. In those days, there was a Hindi film called *Dhul ka Fhul* – in which a flashback was used. So I asked one of the judges (who is no more) whether he watched this film... and that's when he understood about the flashback. So like this, we have suffered. But we don't concentrate on the prizes... we went ahead. To present tiatr every year, we spent at least 2 lakhs... and if anyone wants to see our show, then they'll have to come either to Panjim

or Margao; we don't go to any village mainly because lights, scenes cannot be shown properly there and most importantly, there are no proper dressing and wash rooms... so we go only to the halls.

How has lack of documentation become a challenge for tiatr? What are the possible solutions to address this challenge?

Tomazinho Cardozo: The founder of tiatr, Joao Agostinho Fernandes led the foundation also of writing and preserving in the form of books. What he did 130 years back... even today, modern tiatrists is not doing; he is only doing one part of his i.e. show tiatr and collect money. That's all; nothing else. But that time, Fernandes also used to show tiatr; he used to put tickets... but at the same time, he used to print his script in the book. Even today, if you go to the library, all his works are preserved.

Irene Cardozo: Otherwise individually, not much is written. Even Tiatr Academy of Goa has this research paper... there's nobody taking up the challenge; there's hardly anybody coming.

TC: After Tiatr Academy, they also published some tiatr. Before that, Dr. Rafael had done that. Wilmix has written one book. And a government committee, under my chairmanship... and we had- all the tiatrists were felicitated, stamp was released, then a book of cartoons was published by Alexis... o many things. And again, that was the thing which was supposed to be for preservation. And of course, lot of tiatrs... old tiatrs like M. Boyers, Afons, Remmie, C. Alvares... their tiatrs were shown as a part of that celebration. Tiatrs started in Bombay and so, we said we have to have all the programs... so we had there also. And about 600 artists were felicitated that year.

What are some threats to tiatr due to globalization?

TC: See. As far as tiatr is concerned...

IC: It has spread to UK.

TC: I don't know whether you heard that a group from UK is coming to Goa with a tiatr.

Karina Sequeira: *Past is Past*, right?

TC: Yes. See... there is a threat. But as long as our churches have Konkani masses and people speak in Konkani... till such time, nothing will happen to tiatr. But present-day threat- if you go to see a tiatr and just see the audience, you find less youth. Basically, the college students... less number. It does not mean they are not there; they are there. Therefore, I was always telling these tiatrists when I was there then: You must change your way of showing and writing the tiatr; it must attract the young minds today because you may have full house... in that full house of a thousand people, even if there are no 200 youths, then it is meaningless for me... because after all that, the people are gone; there won't be anybody for the tiatr. So that is the reason youth have to be attracted... and I find little less presence of youth.

IC: But ironically, today there are more youth on stage than there used to be... It's sort of an irony.

TC: And basically, because of tiatr competition by the Kala Academy, whoever comes on the stage... they are youth... and that has given a good platform for the youths to come on tiatrs.

How does competition from other entertainment options (like Konkani films, etc.) impact the popularity of tiatr?

No. Tiatr has got its own charm. There are no rivals whatsoever. However good the film may come, the way the people enjoy for the tiatr, it cannot be shown... people flock to see. Tiatr is the only dramatic form in Goa which cannot be compared to anything... as far as the popularity is concerned. In Margao, one single tiatr can a maximum number of 39 shows. Kala Academy has had a maximum of 19 shows. But expenses have also increased. Tiatr audience doesn't get attracted to the TV, YouTube, etc.; they want to go to watch tiatrs.

What are the struggles to attract younger audiences and performers due to generational shifts and changing audience demographics in tiatr? What efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences?

So far, these efforts are not there. So therefore, I was telling them again and again... at least for us, it is in material. We are not earning our daily bread from the tiatr. But those who are earning their daily bread from tiatr, they have to be cautious. And they have to find out ways and means how to attract the youth... how to attract other people. Now other people who have settled in Goa and speak Konkani... because there are lot of- now almost 30-40% are outsiders in Goa. So how we can attract them? Therefore, they have to first change the topics, the way of writing, better direction, etc. So, it's a big challenge which can create a problem for tiatrs in future.

How can collaborative efforts between tiatrists and scholars, with religious and educational institutions promote tiatr among the youth?

As far as promotion of tiatr by religious institutions is concerned, the Church is doing the maximum... the tiatr is brought in aid of the school, etc. So promotion of tiatr as far as the

priests are concerned, is fantastic in Goa. When we produce tiatr during Lent season, the religious aspect is looked after. But with Catholic colleges, lots of them are participating. For example, there is St. Xavier's, Rosary's, Tiatr Academy, Kala Academy, etc. As long as Konkani is spoken, nothing will happen to tiatr. But the number of Konkani-speaking persons is declining year after year... like see... nowadays at home, parents don't allow their children to speak in Konkani... so that way it can be affected.

How has technology been used for wider reach and engagement?

Now see what happens... it is basically- now first, as far as the improvement of the performance is concerned, technology... means modern equipment in lights, etc. that were used... even for the last 30-40 years and basically, few artists... not all... one was Prem Kumar, another was Souzalino... they used to make use of- to show something new. In Goa, it was Belson Afons who did the revolving stage. Otherwise, all other tiatrists used to have a nice acting, good story. Prem Kumar was doing innovative work. And after Kala Academy started from 1974, lot of innovation started taking place on stage. It's not only our group; there were many more... they used to bring something new because that was a competition; we wanted to do something better than the others. So many things used to come. And Kala Academy's competition has brought real growth and development as far as the tiatr is concerned. The other technological... that we have now... for example, YouTube, All India Radio was doing it earlier, Doordarshan and TV channels are doing it. Only thing what happens ... as far as we are concerned... Doordarshan has recorded our play, *Jivitachi Vatt*... but I couldn't go as I became sick. Background music has to be set. It becomes a problem because recording play takes time. If you record when the tiatr is going on, all the mistakes are there. 3 hours' play can be recorded in 3 hours, but editing is needed. So in that way, and financially, it becomes...

How does tiatr preserve tradition while adapting to contemporary times? (OR) How do you balance the preservation of cultural identity with innovation in tiatr?

This will depend on our present-day writers and performers because whatever takes place in the society, that we have to scrutinize or analyze and give our views on that... this is being done through the plays – which can be a source of giving information or public opinion. If tiatrists take every issue that takes place in society... if it relates to what we are saying that contemporary tiatr will be as per the things that are happening in society. If what was shown earlier is being shown now, then it would be tradition... if it's still good and appears now, it will continue side-by-side. For example, the dowry system was there in Joao Agostinho Fernandes' tiatrs... but today, it cannot be found; today, if it shown in the tiatr, people will first only form an opinion against the dowry system. So for some reason, it depends on how it is depicted in the tiatr... if it shown as something like a curse to the family, then it people will automatically react to that... saying that this shouldn't happen. So this is the relation... you cannot change the society directly... you mobilize people to think, act and then put it into action. So you'll see the reaction during the tiatr itself... like they have been educated by these earlier plays.

Are there any challenges faced by women in the tiatr industry? If yes, what are they?

TC: No. As far as we are concerned...

IC: I think it would basically if you take them case-wise. The main challenge to a Goan artist would be- because for them to take it especially as a career... like I'm a teacher... how do you balance your home life and especially if you are married, etc. Then how do you balance... the same challenge could be faced by them because for them it's a career and then their home. So are they are able to maintain the balance. Because otherwise, security... today, everyone is

rating tiatr on a high scale. But if you have gone into tiatrs and spoilt your name, just as if you- when you are a teacher, you have spoilt your name, people will rate you in the same. Otherwise, basically as a woman on the tiatr stage, I don't think we are really facing any other challenge. One other challenge I could see is if that lady-tiatrist is the sole earning member... then it depends. For example, how much as a tiatrist she can earn... because it will also depend on how much audience they are getting... because then only the tiatr fellow will be able to- because our salaries... people like us who teachers, etc. are totally dependent on their salary... which is quite good in most occupations. That could be another challenge as well. Otherwise, for security, social status, we are not facing any challenges.

Do you feel there is gender inequality in tiatr? If yes, then what strategies can be implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through tiatr?

TC: I feel as far as tiatr is concerned, I don't see any because whatever role has to be done, that is given to them. Whatever share is to be paid, it is well-discussed earlier and because you are agreeing, you are coming. So, there is no inequality as such. And as far as our group is concerned, wherever we are totally- including the director... everybody on the same level. Suppose we have a profit of rs. 10,000, we divide that into 20 people or so and then distribute.

IC: If it's a loss, we take care of that.

Have you faced any challenges? If yes, what are they and how have you overcome them?

When we are not in the commercial field, for us, our biggest challenge is our financial aspect. So that, we manage through our friends. We are all basically salaried people through pension. But as far as the commercial tiatrs is concerned, for them it's a big challenge. If they produce a tiatr... say by spending even- just one lakh minimum... and if it is shown once or twice and

then people not coming... then it's a big loss for them. It's a big loss only for the director, but all the participants too because they are paid. So they definitely suffer from those challenges... and it does happen... in many cases, one or two shows, the tiatr is gone.

Finally, what are your thoughts on the future prospects of tiatr in the cotemporary era?

See... there are two things... first, how our tiatr writers, directors, performers are going to behave in future... as far as tiatr is concerned. And secondly, the audience. Now, in the modern times, our directors, writers and producers must think what the modern generation wants... and accordingly, to survive in future, they will have to give the people what present generation is wanting. On the other side, Goans love tiatr.... so as long as they speak and understand Konkani, tiatr will not die.

Name: Cezar D'mello

Date: 29.12.23

Location: Panjim, Goa

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

I studied acting at the age of 9... in the tiatr... at the village festivals in Batim. Slowly, I started writing Biblical plays which were staged at Panjim Church... and I took active part in participating tiatr... cultural activities... later in 1974. I directed a tiatr in Kala Academy tiatr festival in 1976... till 1990, I staged many tiatrs for Kala Academy competitions and bagged various prizes... 4 times first prize, 4 times second prize and 3 times third prize, and so on.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

Regarding my journey as a tiatrist, I acted in professional tiatr by forming a formidable trio, MIL-MEL-NEL... it is still existing... by singing politicals, comedy and directing songs side-by-side. I also participated in musical plays, presented musical shows, one-act plays, and produces film, etc.

What is your role as a tiatrist and what are the various responsibilities that come with it?

My role as a tiatrist is writing scripts, lyrics, composing tunes, etc.

Any significant milestones or achievements?

Yeah... 40 years completed on the professional stage and bagged several awards.

How has lack of documentation become a challenge for tiatr? What are the possible solutions to address this challenge?

There are at least 15 to 20 directors in this industry who stage tiatrs completing 100, 200, even 300 shows. But lack of documentation... no one bothers to bring it in a form of a book... there are some writers who have published, including me... that will remain for future generation. Even Joao Agostinho Fernandes had published books at that time. Dalgado Konkani Academy of Goa, Tiatr Academy Goa... has taken initiative in publishing books now.

What are some threats to tiatr due to globalization?

Threats to tiatr due to globalization are digital media, internet and streaming services... like for watching movies, TV shows and listening to music from anywhere in the world.

How does competition from other entertainment options (like Konkani films, etc.) impact the popularity of tiatr?

Tiatr is a unique type of theatre and you will never get around the world, except Goans staying in other countries. Tiatr will never die due to other entertainment.

What are the struggles to attract younger audiences and performers due to generational shifts and changing audience demographics in tiatr? What efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences?

I think younger audience are more involved in other activities... but recently, Tiatr Academy has organized a competition for children, schools, higher secondary, colleges and lot of children, and teenagers have taken part in this competition. So, future... there is a lot of scope to attract younger generation.

How can collaborative efforts between tiatrists and scholars, with religious and educational institutions promote tiatr among the youth?

Religious institutions and villages present tiatrs during the church feast... does involvement of only village artists... as was done in earlier stages.

How has technology been used for wider reach and engagement?

Technology... by bringing scenes, sceneries, light effects, 3-dimension stage, revolving stage and background music has brought changes in the tiatr.

How does tiatr preserve tradition while adapting to contemporary times? (OR) How do you balance the preservation of cultural identity with innovation in tiatr?

Tiatr Academy and Kala Academy organize competition to preserve the traditional tiatr and also balancing with new ideas and technology.

Are there any challenges faced by women in the tiatr industry? If yes, what are they?

No.

Do you feel there is gender inequality in tiatr? If yes, then what strategies can be implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through tiatr?

No.

Have you faced any challenges? If yes, what are they and how have you overcome them?

My challenge is to bring all artists... Hindu, Christian, Muslims... on one platform... which I succeeded. On a long run, my acting skills and directing have been improved.

Finally, what are your thoughts on the future prospects of tiatr in the cotemporary era?

My thoughts on future prospects... tiatr is a collaborative art for which combines words, voice, movement and visual elements to express meaning. As I said earlier, tiatr is a unique form of drama which will never die.

Name: Joesan Afons

Date: 21.12.23

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

I come from a family who have contributed towards the tiatr and konkani language. My father Salvador Afons is a reputed tiatr and khell tiatr director whereas my mother is a reputed actress and singer, So I believe that I got the talent from the genes itself. Regarding my studies, I have completed my Higher secondary education from Fr. Basilios Majorda. I am a trained bartender and professionally I work as a photographer and videographer under my own firm Filmcraft Studio.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

As a kid I used to watch my fathers tiatr as well as khell so by the appreciation they used the receive from the audience, I used to get motivated to join the stage. At the age of 3 years I sang the my first song on the Konkani Stage for tiatr *Borem Vo Vaitt* by my father. It received encores and I was awarded prizes for my song at various places where the shows were held. For the first show I was a bit nervous, But after receiving so much love from the audience I gained enough confidence. After that there was no looking back for me.

Any significant milestones or achievements?

I have brought in a lot of innovation in Carnival Khell Tiatr. I am the first director of khell who has introduced programmed background music for khell. I have also won the Zomnivoile Khell Competition 2023 Organized by Tiatr Academy of Goa. I have also won the first prize for Best Actor, Best Director, Best Kantos, Best Opening Song, Best Background Music at the same

competition mentioned above. In the tiatr arena, I was recently felicitated as the Youngest Writer Director on the Konkani Professional Stage.

Name: Jennifer Fernando

Date: 30.12.23

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

My grandparents were tiatrists. My grandfather was a renowned painter, actor, singer, and composer. He became a tiatrist by his artistic talent. He began by drawing portraits for the Tiatr ads and then gradually transitioned into acting, singing, and composition. My mother trailed behind him, it's nearly been 35 years for my mother in this field after she developed her acting and singing talents. I used to adore performing and singing. I began acting and singing after seeing my mother perform.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

Since the great Mario Menezes, sir, saw my potential and gave me a chance to show my talent and with my families support I've been flourishing on the Konkani stage. I don't really want to pursue a career in this field but I never want to even totally leave this field. My inspiration has always been my mother.

Any significant milestones or achievements?

I've received numerous accolades and gifts in recognition of my abilities.

Name: Rioma Menezes

Date: 02.01.24

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

Well-known as ‘The Wonder Girl of the Konkani Stage’, I, Rioma Menezes, began my tiatr tiatreer at the age of seven in my father’s tiatr, ‘The Tragedy King of the Konkani Stage’, Late Mario Menezes’ tiatr, ‘Hevui Chukik Bhogsonnem Nam?’ and went on to act and sing in more than 20 of his tiatrs. I’ve also sung on many audio and video cassettes for eminent personalities like Francis de Tuem, Xavier Gomes, S. Caitan, Lawry Travasso, Fr. Domnic, and many others. I have also performed in various musical shows across Goa. I have many songs uploaded on YouTube, some of them being ‘Xinkop’, ‘Bhurgeacho Fuddar, and many more, including an interview conducted by Mr. Michael Gracias on CCR TV. I have performed all over Goa and in different states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat. I have also performed several times in Gulf countries like Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, and Qatar. I have also performed in the United Kingdom. I have earned many awards, including the Gulab Award, Dr. Jack Sequeira, Brain Box Institute, and Tiatr Academy of Goa accolades. The 125th Anniversary of Tiatr Celebration Committee also honoured me for my contribution to tiatr. In high school and college, I was often involved with singing contests and skits, and I received a lot of recognition for my work.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

I joined Tiatr when I was just seven years old. In the year 2007, my mother taught me a Konkani song called ‘Kontrad Sasnacho’. When I sang that song for my own movie, everybody loved it. It was then that my dad, Mr. Mario Menezes, and Lawry Travasso had a conversation about

introducing me to Tiatrs. My first tiatr was ‘Hevui Chukik Bhogsonnem Nam?’ Written and directed by my dad. I went on to act in other tiatrs, however, I had to take a break due to my studies. I have still not taken up the yard as a profession, but I do it for the love of singing and my talent.

Any significant milestones or achievements?

I received an accolade on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Tiatr, and I feel truly privileged. I have also been felicitated by the BrainBox Institute. As mentioned earlier, I have won many awards for my performances, and I was also felicitated in Dubai and Kuwait for my singing and acting abilities.

Name: Kevin D'mello

Date: 29.12.23

Location: Panjim, Goa

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

Kevin D'mello: My family is into tiatr. My dad has written all the tiatr in the alphabet 'K'. Because of that, it was super hit that time. So he kept my name in alphabet 'K' only... Kevin... so sister also Karen and then cousin sister also Kimberly. So 'K' letter was very famous in dad's... so all his competitions were in the letter 'K' was very famous and they won all prizes. So that's how- I mean, after that, when I started my journey in school, dad used to write songs/lyrics/*kanataram* and I used to sing... in Dhempe College also, I sang and won the first prize... all three years; first year, second year, third year... first prize in singing competition because of my dad's lyrics and me singing the song wearing the costume. So that's how the background was there. And then, when I got a chance in Konkani films, this helped me... whatever I was doing- that acting in Konkani films. And still, whenever I act in Konkani films, that background of tiatr... whatever is there, it is still there. And when I perform, I just take advantage of whatever is there... to do this or that... he tells me because he has the experience. So that's how I imbibe it in my- whenever I perform.

Karina Sequeira: Okay... so you've performed in tiatrs.

KD: Yeah, I performed in tiatrs and naatak also... all forms of theatre... even English theatre I performed.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

KD: I used to perform and sing *kantaram*... dad's musical shows were there. And then, when I joined Kala Academy, that time, first tiatr I acted in was *Vont Laagim, Kaaliz Pois*... in that, I played the lead role. After that, many musical shows happened. And when I used to act in films, I used to act with Prince Jacob, John D'silva... all the popular tiatrists were there. Whenever we performed this song, *Love You Charu*... a music video, we did it in a tiatr style, but keeping forward the filmmaking also... so this touch was there because audience/people like this tiatr... so we have to keep that soul in it whenever we are doing. Whenever I act in films, that tiatr always is there because I always act with this famous personalities... in my movies *MMS, Oh Maria, Zanzoim Number 1* with Prince Jacob sir, Varsha Usgaonkar, Bendkar... all these films, they are there... and whenever my dialogue is with them, they help me a lot.... When I get a script in Roman Konkani, I ask my dad, "what is the meaning of this" or "how to say this?" So that's how that help is needed, otherwise it'll not happen. That help is always there and because of that- even when I used to sing *kantaram*, how to take the lines, how to sing the song... there is a style... that style we've to sing... audience listen to it and then like it. So you cannot change anything... the tiatr style is the same; you have to keep the style and perform... then audience like it.

KS: So you've acted in Konkani films also.

KD: Yes. In 13 Konkani films I acted.

Any significant milestones or achievements?

I won prizes for cantar competitions... the lyrics used to be composed by my father. After this, I got a role in the Rajendra Talak's movie 'O Maria' – which went for International Film Festival of India (IFFI)... so that was my biggest achievement. Talak didn't know that I had a background in tiatr... but when got the dialogues, I asked my father and another tiatrist, Sharon Mazarelo for help... so after they helped me, I performed well. And since I did my theatre in Kala Academy, I was able to get my emotions out and perform better. The first I acted in was in 'Just a Minute'... after this, I joined theatre – due to which I began acting well in tiatrs, singing, etc.... everything improved... having my family's talent was one thing, but I had to learn and get it polished... which I was able to.

Name: Joylita Silveira

Date: 31.12.23

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

My name is Joylita Silveira . I am 23 years old and i live in the beautiful village of st.Estevam. I am the oldest child in my family. I am currently pursuing my bachelor's in education (second year) along with that tiatrs, music, literature and writings are some of the few things that grab my interest.

Regarding your journey as a tiatrist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

I was spotted at the age of 17 for a tiatr held in our Village by Milagres de chandor who later introduced me in his tiatr GO TO HELL from where other directors appreciated my acting and singing and accepted me on the stage.when i recieved praise for my work and dedication I was somehow inspired to continue acting and singing in tiatrs and offcourse from the unwavering support of my parents .

Any significant milestones or achievements?

i recieved the best female lead award for tiatr academy tiatr competition A group in the year 2023. I have also travelled to the UK for tiatrs.

How has lack of documentation become a challenge for tiatr? What are the possible solutions to address this challenge?

many good scripts and songs and also artists have gone un noticed due to lack of documentation. Recording the shows and using internet space to document the same will be a very good initiative to gather information for future reference

What are some threats to tiatr due to globalization?

unavailability of theatres .lack of people interested, tiatrs can not sustain a family so artists prefer settling abroad thus decreasing the amount of viewers.

How does competition from other entertainment options (like Konkani films, etc.) impact the popularity of tiatr?

i don't think it has any impact on tiatrs rather I'd say it compliments the actors because they have more experiences both complimenting the mother tongue Konkani

What are the struggles to attract younger audiences and performers due to generational shifts and changing audience demographics in tiatr? What efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences?

youngsters don't want to get involved into tiatrs because they are influenced by other genres thus involving younger generations and youth might attract their own

How can collaborative efforts between tiatrists and scholars, with religious and educational institutions promote tiatr among the youth?

By using their individual platforms to promote tiatrs and influencing youngsters and others to partake in Goas cultural identity.

How has technology been used for wider reach and engagement?

digital posters, social media YouTube and other platforms reach a wider audience and is more effective.

How does tiatr preserve tradition while adapting to contemporary times? (OR) How do you balance the preservation of cultural identity with innovation in tiatr?

involving all the generations and age groups, khell , musical shows using SFX and the traditional podde keeps i goodthe traditions going on.

Are there any challenges faced by women in the tiatr industry? If yes, what are they?

travelling late night for shows and back home can be dangerous plus tagging care is household work can be crucial time management is a problem too.

Do you feel there is gender inequality in tiatr? If yes, then what strategies can be implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through tiatr?

No i have not come across any such inequalities

Have you faced any challenges? If yes, what are they and how have you overcome them?

Skipping classes, hectic schedule, reaching home late and many more difficulties are a part of tiatrist Life

Finally, what are your thoughts on the future prospects of tiatr in the cotemporary era?

i hope it continues to grow and involving more people and if it continues to touch young minds
then it will live on forever

Name: Maverick Alvares

Date: 31.12.23

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

Im Maverick Tomston Alvares, residing at Morrod, Sangolda. Currently pursuing my Final year bachelors degree in Business Administration at Dempo College of Commerce and Economics. My Hobbies are playing Music (keyboard, Guitar, Drums), Playing Football, Singing, Dancing and Acting.

Regarding your journey as a tiatr, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

I have been on stage since my KG school. Always taking part in various activities like Fancy dress, dance, singing, etc. The same continued in my primary and secondary school. At first I got a chance to act and sing in a tiatr by our school (St. Anthony's Monte de Guirim) for a Tiatr competition organised by the Kala Academy at the age of 10, in which we won the First place for 3 consecutive years and it continued. Later on in college we took part for the All Goa Tiatr Competition Organised by the Tiatr Academy of Goa where we won the first place for 2 years. At the age of 18 I was introduced on Professional stage by my favourite Director. Late Mario Menezes for his tiatr Thank You and then it continued with various other directors.

Any significant milestones or achievements?

- All Goa inter college tiatr competition (Tiatr Academy of Goa)
- Best Comedian 2021-2022
- Best Comedian 2022-2023
- Best Actor (merit) 2023-2024

Also many others awards for singing and acting by Kala Academy as well as Tiatr Academy Of Goa.

How has lack of documentation become a challenge for tiatr? What are the possible solutions to address this challenge?

The director can record his first show and after the season is over, he can publish it on social media for the people who have missed the show.

How does competition from other entertainment options (like Konkani films, etc.) impact the popularity of tiatr?

Konkani films doesn't impact the tiatr.

What are the struggles to attract younger audiences and performers due to generational shifts and changing audience demographics in tiatr? What efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences?

This generation loves more of comedy and happening youth stories. They want something different from us performing on stage. They want the social trends on stage. It's a bit difficult to give them all but we give them our best.

How can collaborative efforts between tiatrists and scholars, with religious and educational institutions promote tiatr among the youth?

Having school and college competition helps a lot to promote tiatr among the youngsters. Good execution by the tiatr academy .

How has technology been used for wider reach and engagement?

By publishing posters, making reels and videos and circulating it to a bigger audience which help to get more audience.

Are there any challenges faced by women in the tiatr industry? If yes, what are they?

Mostly no challenges faced by any women in the Tiatr industry.

Do you feel there is gender inequality in tiatr? If yes, then what strategies can be implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through tiatr?

No.

Have you faced any challenges? If yes, what are they and how have you overcome them?

No

Finally, what are your thoughts on the future prospects of tiatr in the cotemporary era?

There is a long way to go, it all depends on the audience on how they support us though our journey.

Name: Aleka Cardozo

Date: 04.01.24

Before I begin, could you share some information about your background?

I started acting at the age of 3 my grandfather was a Tiatrhist he was well known as Godop Caitan he never wrote plays of songs on paper but he kept everything in on his mouth and thought everyone then my father started directing Tiatrhist n so it is in the family

Regarding your journey as a tiatrhist, how did you first get involved in tiatr, and what inspired you to pursue a career in this?

For my waddo gathering i sang song n acted in one act play and then from there acted in khell tiatr and then tiatr n still working in tiatr since then

Any significant milestones or achievements?

Appreciation from the audience is a big achievement. I have also won many first second prizes for fancy dress competition won all Goa monologue competition twice been voice of ravindra bhawan 1st runner up and c Alvarez duet competition organised by TAG was 1st runner up n many more can't really recollect right now

How has lack of documentation become a challenge for tiatr? What are the possible solutions to address this challenge?

About of history of tiatr the is plenty of documents director personally document their respective tiatr some are also preserved in library

What are some threats to tiatr due to globalization?

I can't really say any

How does competition from other entertainment options (like Konkani films, etc.) impact the popularity of tiatr?

Tiatr doesn't have the competition till now where as konkani films are struggling for audience n tiatr are usually run houseful

What are the struggles to attract younger audiences and performers due to generational shifts and changing audience demographics in tiatr? What efforts have been taken to adapt tiatr to these changing audience preferences?

They implement more comedys n some new generation tubes for songs also more relevant topics

How can collaborative efforts between tiatrists and scholars, with religious and educational institutions promote tiatr among the youth?

Religious n education institute help a lot by putting up shows in the compounds n bring audience it helps a lot

How has technology been used for wider reach and engagement?

By promoting it on social media YouTube n so on

Are there any challenges faced by women in the tiatr industry? If yes, what are they?

Maybe going home late by bike is the only challenged I faced earlier now I hv a car otherwise tiatr is very safe for women

Do you feel there is gender inequality in tiatr? If yes, then what strategies can be implemented to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through tiatr?

No

Have you faced any challenges? If yes, what are they and how have you overcome them?

Not yet

Finally, what are your thoughts on the future prospects of tiatr in the cotemporary era?

It will keep flourishing