

# **Goan folk theatre: A comparative study of select folk forms**

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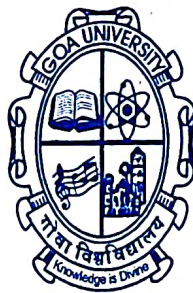
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## **DECLARATION BY STUDENT**

I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation report entitled, “Goan Folk Theatre: A Comparative Study on Select Folk Forms” is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Master of Arts in English at the Shenoi Goembab School of Languages of Literature, Goa University under the supervision of Dr. Sangeeta Dessai 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/college will not be responsible for the correctness of observations/experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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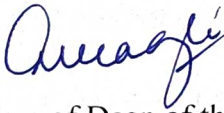
## COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to Certify that the dissertation report “Goan Folk Theatre: A Comparative Study on Select Folk Forms” is a bonafide work carried out by Ms. Pragathi Dharmu Raut Dessai under my supervision in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters of Arts in the Discipline of English at the ShenoI Goembab School of Languages and Literature, Goa University.

  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The present study is intended to examine folk theatre forms of Goa. Goan folk theatre forms are oral narratives and there has been very little study done on the elements used in Goan folk theatre forms. The present dissertation is a step taken to analyse the elements using a comparative approach to highlight their distinctive qualities, heritage, and cultural significance, adding the informative study to the existing knowledge of the society. Another purpose for conducting this study is to preserve the Goan culture in the English language since most of the books are written in the Konkani language.

The study investigates the theatrical elements, narrative framework, performance instances, and socio-cultural effects of folk theatre forms such as Siolim Zagor, Ranmale, and Dashavtari Kalo. The study intends to provide insights into the diversity and richness of Goan folk theatre, stressing both its original essence and modern modifications, by exploring their origins, evolution, and contemporary activities.

The present dissertation has used qualitative methodology to find information on these forms. The researcher has conducted interviews with specialists who are well-known in the field of folk theatre forms of Goa, also watched live performances, and did a close reading of some of the texts for the study.

Moreover, the comparative methodology provides a more profound comprehension of the interdependence and uniqueness of these dynamic theatrical customs within the Goan cultural context. The elements of the folk theatre forms have been analysed by using Aristotle's six elements of drama. The present study has also examined various ways to preserve and continue the cultural lineage through Google form analysis. Also, through theoretical analysis of genre and folklore theory forms it is evident that folk theatre forms can also be studied as a Goan folkloric genre.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The present dissertation is on the select folk theatre forms of Goa. The present study has been a revisitation of the cultural ethos, celebrated by the villagers in different talukas of Goa. This dissertation has opened up a new aspect and sensitised me towards our cultural legacy. Learning about our own culture is also important in language literature and preserving it in different fields of study. This fresh perspective that is a comparative study of Goan folk theatre forms namely, Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo would have been difficult to gain without the guidance and assistance offered by different individuals during the completion of this dissertation. I would like to acknowledge everyone for helping and guiding me in completing my dissertation. I would like to express my gratitude to all of them in this acknowledgment.

Firstly, I thank God Almighty for being there with me throughout the project and for providing all the valuable resources required for my dissertation. Secondly, I would like to express a sincere thanks to my Guide Dr. Sangeeta Dessai for guiding me and for giving me valuable suggestions to make my dissertation contribute to the existing knowledge.

In the successful completion of this dissertation work, I received guidance and authentic information from the specialists and practitioners from the field of folk theatre. Shri Zilu Gaonkar is an avid researcher in the folk form of Ranmale who shared informative knowledge on Ranmale, Zagor, and Kalo. His book on Ranmale also offers a true study of the folk form including in detail information about the form Ranmale. Dr. Pandurang Phaladesai is a renowned figure in the field of folklore and has written many books on the folklore of Goa. He shared his experience and information on all three folk theatre forms. I am grateful for his kind gesture. Dr. Tanvi Bambolkar for her precious time from her busy schedule to discuss the folk theatre forms. I would like to acknowledge her for providing relevant information on the folk theatre forms. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all these professionals for providing me



with relevant and authentic information which helped my dissertation to bring authenticity and to contribute for future reference.

This endeavor would not have been possible without the support of my parents who helped me reach out to the places where these performances take place and watch it live to gain an in-depth knowledge about the forms. Along with my parents, I would also like to thank my friend Natasha Toraskar for providing me with information about the Siolim Zagor and all my other friends who helped me find out when and where these performances will take place and also provide information on these folk theatre forms.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Goa University library and its staff for helping me find out books on my dissertation topic. Apart from Goa University library, I had the central library and district library at my disposal. I take this opportunity to also acknowledge the staff of the libraries for giving me access to an ample number of books related to my topic.

My love and appreciation go to all my friends, classmates, and family members for giving their valuable input in filling out the Google form intended to trace the popularity of the folk theatre forms among city dwellers.

The present dissertation is the fruit of all our combined efforts to make it a success by completing the dissertation on time.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

*"Theatre is a mirror, a sharp reflection of the society"*

-Yasmina Reza

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Folk theatre, which has its roots in India, combines elements from music, dance, epic and ballad recitation, graphic arts, religion, and festival culture. Folk theatre is embedded in the local identity and social values and has its roots in indigenous culture. It has traditionally provided public entertainment while also acting as an indigenous form of interpersonal, intergroup, and intervillage communication for Indian civilization.

One of the liveliest genres of literature, theatre is skilled at capturing audiences' attention with its ability to portray complex human emotions. Due to its direct connection to the human spirit, this art form has been used by people as a means of communication for many years.

Being an indigenous form, it transcends any formal limitations on human interaction and speaks to the populace directly. The vibrant world of Goan folk drama is a cultural extravaganza that has been preserved for centuries. This dramatic art form is a fusion of music, dance, and drama that is performed in the local Konkani language.

The folk form's oral nature, which has been passed down through generations, is another distinctive quality. This form's specific features make it a key subject for investigation. This art form has also been employed in Goa to spread awareness and effect social change. Folk theatre also plays a role in ceremonies and celebrations in Goa. The study

focuses on a comparative study of Ranmale, Kalo, and Zagor performed in Sanguem, Kale, and Cancona, respectively, which are rich in folk theatre legacies.

The comparative study of folk theater forms will throw light on the distinct cultural heritage of folk theater. The comparative approach will examine if there are any differences or similarities found in the selected forms. By providing the classifications based on various theatrical features, the proposed study will enhance our comprehension of Goan folk theater. To better understand both the modern play performed worldwide and the traditional form of India, it will compare and contrast traditional Goan and Western dramas. The suggested study is significant in several aspects since it intends to unify various objectives into a single field of study. The planned study is essential for an examination of the genre, comparing and contrasting ideas to comprehend and assess the forms of Goan folk theater in language literature. The proposed study is important because it aims to understand the many dramaturgical components utilized in Goan folk theater and whether the various Goan forms differ or are similar to one another.

## **1.2. OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH PROPOSED**

To examine the traditions and cultural significance of Ranmale, Kalo, and Zagor.

- To analyze the differences in all three forms—Ranmale Kalo and Zagor.
- To understand and examine folk theatre forms as a genre.
- To understand how the studied theatre forms have evolved.
- To understand the elements associated with folk dramas.
- To analyze the select folk theatre forms using a comparative approach.
- To study the social issues addressed in folk theatre forms.

## **1.3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature available in the field of the study is limited. In India, there are a variety of theatre forms; every state of India has its folk theatre. For instance, the eastern state of Assam has its own Assamese theatre, which started with devotional forms like *Ankiya Nat*, *Bhaoriya*, *Dhuliya*, and *Oja-Pali* performed in *nam-ghar* (community hall). The Western-style theatre with Anglo-European dramatic features was first seen in 1875 at Guwahati. The young generation, inspired by the Bengali theatre, started popular theatre in their language (Lal 11).

Assam is the only state that performs Indian street Theatre called “*Mobile Theatre*”, Achyut Lahkar is known as the father of mobile theatre. It is a popular theatre performed in different places with its crew members, first staged on October 2, 1963, in Pathshala, Assam (Sharma 26).

Along with the ancient Indian forms, there are many dramatic forms like tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, and epic, which are some known dramatic forms, but along with these, there are other types like documentary and agitprop that were established since in Russia some workers and peasants were not able to read newspapers and for political purposes needed their support; hence, there were documentaries where actors dramatized the news for their benefit (Leach 62). Farce is another dramatic form that is a type of comedy with no moral or didactic purpose (Leach 64). In addition, there are certain acting skills required to enact a play, along with directing and scenography skills to set a drama.

Similarly, Manish Surendrarao Gomase explains the different forms of theatre performed in Maharashtra. It mentions the role of folk theatre, i.e., its role in social awareness, representation of culture, depiction of politics (political agenda by ministers), honoring of the past, also serving as a means of earning where actors earn money after their performance, and also examines the challenges faced by folk theatre. One of the challenges

faced by performers is the exploitation of performers, treating them as puppets where half of their earnings would go to the owner. They even face sexual and physical harassment by both men and women (Gomase 31).

Also, there is a change in the story narration concerning its themes. The importance of folk theatre in India effectively breaks down formal communication barriers and appeals to the populace by conveying social, political, and cultural concerns through theatrical messages (Kumar 50).

Furthermore, Natyasastra in India plays an important role in shaping the theatrical stage for performance. Kulkarni in his book *“The Theatre According To The Natyasastra by Bharata”* gives interpretation regarding the dimensions of a theatre, divisions, and also the different types of theatre based on their dimensions in the second chapter of the book Natyasastra. The Natyaāstra, also known as the ‘*Dvādaśa-sahasri-samhita*,’ was a twelve thousand-stanza treatise initially composed by Adibharata or Vṛddhabharata. Bharata reduced the verses to six thousand, named ‘*Satsahasri-samhita*’ (Kulkarni 13). Bharata states that the art of drama was created to represent their divine form. The book was written to provide answers to the sage’s queries (Kulkarni 15).

On the other hand, *“Psychological, Behavioral, and Societal Effectiveness of Folk Theatre in Highlighting Educational Development in Jammu: An Evaluative Study”* (Bhardwaj Ramiyan et al.) examines the importance of folk theatre in educational advancement in Jammu. It focuses on the significance of raising general awareness and educating the general public about societal challenges. The study focuses on the audience, particularly college and university students, and how theatre has advanced education over time. The research concludes that theatre in Jammu is an

essential medium for fostering educational advancement, communication, and public awareness.

Jayanti Naik, in her book “*Lokved Vimarsha*” (Essays on Folklore), discusses folklore and its importance in socio-cultural exchange. This study illustrates the relationship between society, culture, language, and folklore.

Also, in her book “*Lokabimba*” (Essays on Folklore), she explains the definition and scope of folklore, folkloric importance in education, how culture can be preserved through folklore, the role of folklore in social history, and how folkloric traditions and cultures unify people in a space called “*maand*” (Public square/Stage).

Tanvi Bambolkar in her thesis “*Folk Theatre In Goa: A Critical Study Of Select Forms*” represents a modest attempt to critically examine three different Goan folk theatre forms by situating them within the context of theories concerning gender, culture, and folklore.

Also, in her other research work “*Semiotics of Traditional v/s Modern Space in Folk Theatre with Special Reference to the Maand System of Goan Folk Tradition*”, she aims to trace the development of traditional space into modern space of drama, highlighting its contradictions and possible remedies in the research paper. The study emphasizes the ritualistic space called “*maand*” which holds significance, where Goan folk forms are performed. It is in this socio-ritualistic setting that all traditional folk performances take place. The emergence of modern spaces is significantly altering the conventional association of this area with social, cultural, and spiritual semiotics (Bambolkar 49).

However, Pramod Kale, in his study “*Tiatr: Expression of the Live, Popular Culture*”, looks at communication as a social act and theatre as a social institution. It notes that although Tiatr may resemble other public performances such as circus, magic, ritual,

acrobatic, and martial art exhibitions, the most significant aspect of theatrical performance in Tiatr is the enactment of a story through action, words, and music. Tiatr is a unique performing arts genre, most widely celebrated by the catholic population, performed in the Konkani language; which shares the elements of drama, music, comedy, and improvisation, with the contemporary setting of family and domestic life (Kale 138).

Moreover, Tiatr is a popular form of entertainment not only in Goa and other states in the nation, but also in the Gulf, the United Kingdom, Canada, and other places across the world where the Goan diaspora is situated (Costa 1).

In conclusion, all these studies provide a broad perspective on folk theatre and examine different forms of theatre, their structure, the basics of theatre studies, types of plays, their significance in promoting social and political messages, and various challenges faced in theatre art. The studies provide us with information about the Goan folk forms and their significance in the socio-cultural life of the people. But do not cover a specific study of any form, and do not explain the theatrical elements that are significant to the proposed study. Also, it is evident through the literature review, that the source material reviewed does not have any comparative elements. Hence, the proposed research would be a useful step in this direction because it will examine the theatrical elements used in Goan folk drama and will also analyze the theatrical folk forms through a comparative approach.

#### **1.4. HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH PROBLEM**

According to prior findings, the three folk dramas that the researcher has chosen to study—Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo—have not been the subject of any comparative studies. It is likely to assume that there are no similarities in each of the select forms.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

- Are there any differences or similarities in the select Goan folk theatre?

- How folk theatre forms can be preserved and continued.

## **1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR PROPOSED RESEARCH**

The methodology of a research paper is the set of steps used to gather information about the proposed study, through which the statements made in the dissertation are supported by using critical theory and various tools used to gather information for the authenticity of the study.

### **CRITICAL THEORY**

The present research analyzes the comparative elements of folk theatre forms, two different theories will be used, as mentioned below, and to support the research on comparative approaches, a brief review of the comparative literature will be conducted.

- Structuralist Criticism by Fyre.
- Theory and History of Folklore by Vladimir Propp.
- Comparative Literary Theory: An Indian Perspective by K. Chellapan

### **TOOLS**

The following are the tools used by the researcher to acquire information based on primary and secondary data:

- Close reading of the selected forms.
- MLA style for referencing.
- Interview technique.
- Field surveys like watching performances, for first-hand information.

## **1.6. SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH**



The research topic is wide; however, it was decided to compare the chosen folk dramas. Goan folk drama has theological and historical significance. The locations of these performances must be known to city dwellers who are unfamiliar with the mythological and cultural facets of Goan culture.

The three selected forms—Ranmale, Kalo, and Zagor—will be compared and examined in this study. Although it hasn't gotten as much attention lately, comparative analysis is nevertheless crucial for the analysis of literature. The suggested study will look at any similarities or differences between the various components that comprise the performative aspects of the forms.

## **1.7. CHAPTERIZATION**

The chapters of the dissertation are divided as follows:

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

- The chapter presents a general introduction to the main topic. In brief, the introduction states the meaning of Folk Theatre, the three major forms selected for the study, and the meaning of comparative literature and its importance in Language and literature.
- Objectives
- Literature review
- Hypothesis and Research Question
- Chapter scheme

### **CHAPTER 2: AN OVERVIEW OF FOLK THEATRE**

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the evolution and history of folk theatre throughout the world. Researchers have analyzed folk theatre of the Western countries, Indian and Goan theatre forms.

### **CHAPTER 3: CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE SELECT FOLK THEATRE FORMS**

This chapter analyzes the select Goan folk theatre forms using the comparative approach with relevant comparative elements.

- Chapter introduction
- An overview of the folk theatre forms
- A critical approach to studying the select folk theatre forms
- Comparative analysis of the elements of folk theatre forms: Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo.

### **CHAPTER 4: THEORY AND PRAXIS**

Chapter four presents a theoretical background to the proposed study to support the argument with appropriate theory.

- Structuralist Criticism by Fyre.
- Theory and History of Folklore by Vladimir Propp.
- Comparative Literary Theory: An Indian Perspective by K. Chellapan.
- Reception of the Google form analysis to answer one of the research questions.

### **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

The last chapter of the dissertation provides a conclusion of the research findings and future recommendations.

- Introduction
- Findings of the study.
- Limitations of the study
- Future recommendations
- Chapter conclusion

## CHAPTER 2:

### AN OVERVIEW OF FOLK THEATRE

*“The purpose of theatre is to put the audience in a better position to understand the world around them” -Mark Fortier*

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Folk drama refers to traditional and non-commercial theatre. Folk drama is a hybrid art form rooted in local identity and native culture that combines dance, music, and dialogue. Folk theatre relies on the memory and creativity of the performers rather than a written script. In this case, music takes precedence over speech. To put it simply, folk drama is often defined as theatre intended for folk life that is verbally passed down from generation to generation. Dance, theatre, and music have a long history that dates back to human civilization. Before humans learned to talk, during the dawn of human civilization, people expressed their inner thoughts through a variety of gestures, such as dancing. With time, they started to weep to express their melancholy feelings and to make frightening sounds to announce their victories over other creatures and animals. Through song and dance, they were able to convey their excitement and joy. Folk art was created when people harmoniously combined those sophisticated musical forms with their physical manifestations. Agrarian society was a primitive society. To live a fruitful existence and to show their appreciation to deities or gods, they observed several socio-religious festivals (Saikia). Socio-religious practices are the combination of social and religious factors (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Where society is governed by religious practices and people celebrate each festivities related to God wholeheartedly.

Throughout the world people celebrate their own culture, each one has its cultural heritage and they celebrate it in their own way, performing their customs and traditions that are associated with the specific folklore. The chapter presents a background overview of Western folk drama, Indian folk drama, and Goan folk drama.

## **2.2 WESTERN FOLK THEATRE**

When it comes to Western Drama, its existence is traced back to the late 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC, when the Greeks held a feast in honor of the Greek God Dionysus. In honor of God the first tragedies centered on the Gods and Greece's mythical past. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, the audiences in Greece enjoyed the plays of four well-known playwrights, from it, three playwrights were Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides (Tragedians). The recurring themes in the early works focused on the good and evil that existed simultaneously in the world as well as the contradictory forces of human nature and the outside world, it is said that the stories derived by these playwrights were from Greek myths and legends, bringing development to the art form. The tragic themes used by the playwright Aeschylus were vengeance and justice. Sophocles wrote many works but only seven survive into modern times and one of his great works is Oedipus the King, whereas, Euripides questioned the traditional values and the ultimate power of the gods. It is seen that comedy also developed from the same religious rituals as a tragedy. Aristophanes was a well-known writer of comedies in the early period known as Old Comedy (c.450 BC- c.385 BC). ("Greek Drama: Movement Origin").

It Is difficult to understand exactly how theatre began due to a lack of documentary evidence, it is believed that the theatre form evolved from religious rituals. And it is hard to find out when and how these rituals became theatre. However, a theory on nature worship held about the origins is believed that rituals represent natural events symbolically, making the unknown more accessible. The evidence of this can be found in cave paintings and

engravings from the Late Palaeolithic Period in southern France, which showed the figures of half-human, half-animal in animated poses which suggest the early use of masks and costumes. (Rea).

In ancient societies, rituals involved natural elements being given personalities that were abstracted as spirits and gods. During the people impersonated the deities by wearing masks and moving in specific patterns. Sacred dances were performed to influence nature, bring rain, facilitate harvest, and drive out evil. One significant pattern was the enactment of the cycle of seasons which was dramatized through a battle where a year-king was ritually killed and replaced by a new king (winter-spring), initially, it was human sacrifice of propitiation, but later this killing was mimed. This theme is used to explain mock battles in folk traditions like European mumming plays or the multiple deaths and rebirths of such figures as the Padstow Horse in Cornwall (England). (“Western Theatre”).

A second theory suggests that theatre may have evolved from Shamanistic rituals that depicted a supernatural presence to the audience, in this instance, the Shaman (actor/priest) was able to enter a state of introspection and work as a medium between the other world and himself as an actor/priest. It was believed that the Shaman was possessed by spirits or driven in the spirit realm. One of the primary functions of Shamanism is the removal of evil spirits. It is believed that Shaman performs acrobatics, juggling, or energetic dancing for a prolonged period and it is also considered that he takes in self-torture activities such as fire-eating, and fire-walking, which are evidences of the supernatural elements. All this is the antithesis of illusion, which relies on deceit to accomplish such deeds. Puppets and masks are also used as manifestations of supernatural forces, with elaborate costumes and body paint further personifying the spirit or demon. (Rea).

All the ritual elements gave rise to an archetypal genre called demon play in which the force of good removes the force of evil. It is still performed in some parts of Asia and it is still performed in various ways, parodying serious figures with the help of distorted clowns. According to the “nature worship” notion, one of the main components of an actor is the art of concealment (according to Aristotle’s definition of theatre- “imitation of an Action”) whereas, Shamanism is a direct expression rather than an imitation. Play and dance dramas have an air of profound reverence and power over their audience in civilizations like South India and Bali that still maintain full ritual aspects. On the other hand, the ritual reduces to nothing more than a charming amusement in situations where it continues in bare form long after the meaning of its contents has been lost, just like the Padstow Horse or present mumming plays. Likewise, ancient Egypt advanced toward a more explicit theatre performance. Ceremonies and rituals derived inspiration from the pantheon of the animal-headed gods and the stories of the soul’s journey into the afterlife. Carvings of masked dancers dating to 3500 BCE have been discovered in Egypt, supporting the theory that priests impersonated the gods by wearing masks and singing hymns and prayers. (Rea).

During the medieval period, the drama form developed that paralleled with the early Greek period. Originally, the Christian faith was expressed through medieval theatre. In this, the influence of folk play is also seen. This dramatic form had two sources, firstly the ritual dramas of the seasons example Plow Monday play or the European folk drama of the Wild Man of the Woods. The second source was the mimetic elements in dances held at village feasts, for instance, the Morris dance and sword dance. During the late Middle Ages, both ritual and mimetic elements came together in the mumming plays. (Rea).

The folk theatre was not a literary genre but was used to fulfill a communal function in the village. The significance of the folk theatre was because of its familiarity with the style. It provided funny moments from folk dramas that were frequently incorporated as interludes

in religious performances, and it served as a strong spur for more serious theatre. But as Christian mythology took center stage, paganism's relevance declined as pagans' original purpose was lost and their actual importance was overlooked. With this, there came various types of plays/dramas such as Liturgical drama, Mystery plays, Morality plays, and Interludes (Performed in Europe by small companies during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, ideas of morals). (Rea).

### **2.3 INDIAN FOLK THEATRE**

India has the longest history of theatre dating back to at least 5000 years with its vibrant cultural environment. Indian theatre has been performed since about 1000 A.D., marking the second phase of evolution. The earliest type of Indian theatre is Sanskrit theatre, which emerged from Greek and Roman theatre and is closely associated with ancient rituals. The world's oldest and most comprehensive treatise on dramaturgy is called "Natya Sastra," which was written by the renowned dramaturge Bharat Muni. It offers a comprehensive account of Indian theatre's supernatural origins. In India theatre was a narrative art form with its essential components like singing, dancing, and recitation. Because of these elements Indian theatre was practically dramatic from the start. It has incorporated all other genres of writing and fine arts into its physical presentation. These genres include mime, literature, music, dance, movement, painting, sculpture and architecture. This combination of genres is known as "Natya" or theatre in English (Das 3, 4).

Folk theatre in India originally appeared in Buddhist and Vedic cultures. It was based on oral tradition and was used to share their life stories in authentic settings, which trace back to the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. ("Folk Theatre in India")

The classical theatre that derived from "Natya Sastra" was distinctly more complex in its form and content, with a strong urban focus. Whereas the traditional theatre developed



from its rural roots and was more simple, immediate, and closer to the rural settlement (Das, 4)

Indian folk theatre can be divided into two groups: religious and secular. These divisions give rise to two genres that are- Ritual Theatre and Theatre of Entertainment. Even after being categorized as folk theatre traditions, most of them possess all the characteristics of classical theatre. Folk and traditional forms such as Ramlila, Rasleela, Nautanki, and Swang are often narrative or vocal in nature, involving singing and reciting without the use of complex gestures, movements, or dance elements. India is also famous for ballad-singing traditions like Rajasthan's Pabuji-ki-phar and Manipur's Nupipaalaa. ("Traditional or Folk Theatre in India").

Although there are some general parallels among these theatrical genres, each has its distinct form based on local customs. They vary from one another in terms of execution, staging, clothing, makeup, and acting style. The north Indian forms are classified as dance dramas, whereas the south Indian forms focus more on dance styles like Kerala's Krishnattam and Kathakali. ("Traditional or Folk Theatre in India").

Indian song styles such as the Khyal from Rajasthan, the Maach from Madhya Pradesh, the Nautanki from Uttar Pradesh, and the Swang from Punjab place a strong emphasis on singing. The execution of dialogue is emphasized in the Bengali Jaatra, Maharashtra's Tamasha, and Gujarati Bhavai, whereas humor and sarcasm are highlighted in the latter two. ("Traditional or Folk Theatre in India"). Many other locations in India saw the emergence of puppet theatre: Shadow (Gombeyatta in Karnataka, Ravana Chhaya in Orissa), Glove (Gopalila in Orissa, Pavai Koothu in Tamil Nadu), Doll (Bommallattam in Tamil Nadu, the Mysore State, and Putul Naach in Bengal), and String (Kathputli in Rajasthan, Sakhi

Kundhei in Orissa) puppets are some of the most well-liked types currently in demand. (Das, 5)

Certain solo Indian classical dance styles, such as Bharat Natyam, Kathak, Odissi, and Mohiniattam, as well as folk dances like the Mayurbhanj Chhau of Orissa, Seraikella Chhau of Bihar, and Gambhira and Purulia Chhau of Bengal, are examples of dramatic art. Certain regions, like Kerala, incorporate dramatic elements into their ceremonial rites, such as Mudi yettu and Teyyam. (Das, 5)

According to Bansi Kaul, folk theatre provides “social wisdom” and shouldn’t be ignored as simple amusement. Folk theatre forms have been used to spread social messages on topics including adult education, family planning, health, and other topics since the post-independence era. Many contemporary playwrights focus their narration on folk tradition forms. (“Traditional or Folk Theatr in India”).

## **2.4 GOAN FOLK THEATRE**

In Goa, the most widely celebrated folklore comprises folk dance, folk music, and folk theatre. The most widely celebrated folk theatre forms in Goa are Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo. All these three forms are celebrated in different places and villages in Goa. Folk Drama plays an important role in Goan society because it depicts Goan culture, tradition, and rituals associated with these forms. It gives an essence of the ancestral epics that were performed by the local villagers; it portrays the stories from Ramayana and Mahabharat that guide people and make them aware of humanity and to follow the right teachings set forth by Lord Krishna in Mahabharat it revolves around moral teaching and moral lessons to empower audiences. Through the power of storytelling, these performances not only entertain but also educate and inspire, preserving the cultural values and traditions of Goa. The vibrant world of Goan folk

drama is a cultural extravaganza that has been preserved for centuries. This dramatic art form is a fusion of music, dance, and drama that is performed in the local Konkani language.

The performances typically take place in open-air spaces, such as village squares or temple courtyards, allowing the audience to immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of the vibrant performances. The stage is adorned with hand-painted backdrops, depicting scenic landscapes or traditional Goan architecture, adding a touch of visual splendor to the entire spectacle.

It is said that all these folk theatre forms have evolved from the Vidhi (rituals) and this platform of rituals took the form of a theatre and tried to improvise it. These folk theatres were initially called “*vidhinatya*”. (Naik, 165). Goa's two most popular drama forms are Zagar and Tiatr. The oldest dramatization of traditional Indian themes is known as Zagar. Social themes and epic tales like the Ramayana and Mahabharata are frequently featured in these plays. Goa's distinctive play form, Tiatr, features music interspersed with the acting. (“Dance and Drama”)

In any discussion about Goan theatre and dance, "Dashavatara" must come up. This genre uses song, dance, and drama to depict Lord Vishnu's 10 incarnations. One of the most well-known traditional Indian art forms, it shares many similarities with Indian classical dance forms. There are connections between this art form and the dances, particularly those from the Southern states of Kerala and Karnataka. (“Dance and Drama”) The most ancient form is the Zagor followed by Ranmale and then the Kalo. In Perni Zagor they used to wear wooden masks and it is believed that from there the mask of Ganesh in Ranmale is derived.

The Goan folk dramas represent the ancient practices carried out by the villagers to give tribute and respect to the specific village deity. It is practiced as a part of rituals and to continue the traditional practice to the future generation.

## **2.5. CONCLUSION**

To conclude, it is evident that throughout the world, the evolution of each folk drama was through rituals. Every folk theatre, whether it be in Western countries or the Indian subcontinent, shares a commonality in its performances. For instance, every folk theatre presents mythological stories; for example, in India and Goa, the folk theatre performances are based on the Mahabharata, Ramayana, and Puranas. Western folk drama also narrates their cultural significance through the narration of the myths that are linked with their religion and God.

All these are studied under folk literature, where folklore is the preservation of oral traditions, which take several forms and all include conventions or predictable structures that make them easier to memorize. Folk literature aided in the understanding of people's relationships with others and their surroundings after the invention of written language. A community's elders were able to condense the essence of its culture into a small number of cultural artifacts, such as folklore stories, that would aid future generations in navigating life's journeys, thanks to predictable themes, forms, and motifs (Linford).

It is very important to preserve our ancient oral narratives since they are becoming extinct, and the essence of folk theatre or folklore needs to be preserved so that the next generation becomes aware of the tradition and culture. It is through folk theatre that people are made aware of the rituals, customs, and traditions and also narrates the mythological story to maintain the religious history and pass on the ancient Greek and Indian mythological significance to future generations.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

# **CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE SELECT FOLK THEATRE FORMS**

## **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

The present chapter provides a detailed analysis of the three folk dramas that are selected for the study that is Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo, it will provide the history of the select forms and the six elements of the drama. It gives a detailed analysis of the folk performing arts with its unique traditions and rituals associated with it. Goa is also known for its unique and vibrant ways of culture associated with different parts of the state. The traditions of the performing arts are rooted in local communities.

Its depiction of culture differs from one community to another, the presentation of each folk theatre form is associated with a particular shrine and limited to a few families and communities. For instance, Zagor is associated with a specific community, and the rights of the performance are given to the respected family members that have been carried out from past lineage. Similarly, other folk forms have their own rules and rituals associated with their performance.

Through this chapter, there will be an introduction to each folk theatre form, its tradition, culture, and customs associated with the performance. Along with its evolution and traditions, the study will present the six elements of the play in an organized manner.

The depiction of this folk theatre form will enhance our knowledge about Goan theatre and will also help in preserving and retelling these folk performances so that it is not forgotten or outlined from our Goan history of culture. It is important to maintain our traditional oral folk form into written texts in a comprehensive way.

This chapter delves into the three select folk theatre forms that is, Zagor, Kalo, and Ranmale. It will examine the cultural and traditional importance of the folk theatre forms in the respective places selected for the field study and obtain first-hand information from the village seniors and the people who are involved in the religious ceremonies that take place during the Ranmale, Kalo, and Zagor. This chapter will also provide information on the evolution of these folk theatre forms and the different elements that are used in the performance of the drama along with addressing the different social issues that are highlighted through the folk theatre performance.

Through the analysis of the folk theatre forms this chapter will provide a comparative analysis to understand each folk theatre with a broader perspective. It will highlight the uniqueness of each theatre form and how each form has its own cultural history and rituals associated with it. It will also elaborate on the elements of drama that are used in Goan folk theatre forms and if there are any similarities or differences seen in each of the folk theatre forms. The present chapter will also analyze the various social issues highlighted through the folk theatre forms. It will also provide a comparative analysis based on the Goan folk theatre forms.

The following folk theatre forms have been compared based on Aristotle's six elements of a tragedy; that is Plot, Character, Thought, Diction, Music, and Spectacle. Before this examination, a brief overview of each form will be undertaken.

### 3.2. ZAGOR

Zagor is a folk theatre form of Goa and it is celebrated in different parts of the state. Different types of Zagor are performed by different religious communities. The first type of Zagor is Perni Zagor, it has the elements of drama and dance and it seems to have originated from the Neolithic period (Phaldesai, 61). This form is performed by the traditional Perni community in five villages of Goa namely in talukas like Phonda, Quepem, Sanguem, Cancona, and Bicholim. The second type of Zagor is performed by the Hindu Gauda community known as Gauda Zagor. It is celebrated in the villages of Phonda and Tiswadi taluka. The third type of Zagor is also called Gauda Zagor but it is celebrated by the Christian community. It is performed in Salcete and Mormugao talukas of Goa. The last type of Zagor is performed in Siolim village and is called Siolim Zagor. (Phaldesai, 61-68). In the present study, the researcher chose Siolim Zagor for the field study.

Siolim Zagor is a festival celebrated by the villagers of Danda, a place located in Siolim. The Zagor of Siolim is a well-known festival celebrated with much joy and devotion. It is celebrated on the 1st of January of every year, and the Zagor takes place mostly on Mondays. If the Sateri Zatra comes on the same day, then the deity Sateri is given honor first, and the next day the Zagor takes place. At first, Zagor was only observed in the Siolim settlement of Danda; however, for some reason, people now celebrate Zagor in both Danda and Gude.

Christians and Hindus get together to celebrate Zagor, a festival that symbolizes communal harmony and unity. The spirit of the Zagorayo is supposed to be dumb and voiceless but very powerful. He is considered for his responsiveness to his devotees, and his willingness to meet the people's request for progeny, protection, survival, healing, and prosperity. It is also believed that the god *Zagreshwar* (local tutelary deity) is not associated

with any particular religion and does not have a distinguishable look. In this instance, the family members are granted certain religious rights, and only they are authorized to perform the allotted duty to continue the lineage of the procession.

The yearly ritual of Zagor is performed by two Hindus and seven catholic families with the main singer being Hindu and the main actor being from the catholic religion. It is a festive night vigil that portrays religious rituals and offerings and night-long singing and dancing as an homage to Zagorayo. (Phaldesai, 70).

People offer oil, candles, flowers, and palm liquor on Sunday or Wednesday after their wishes are fulfilled. (Phaldesai, 71)

Zagor is a wakeful night where the villagers remain awake until dawn. To keep the people awake and engaged in the festivities, a Gaon folk form called Tiatr is performed by the villagers to keep the procession erupting and to meet the motive of the festival. According to Shirodkar traditionally there was no Tiatr performed, it was only in 1967 that the villagers started performing Tiatr to keep the people awake the whole night but initially, it was just the Zagor performance where “*Oviyos*” were sung and characters danced with a particular step associated to the characters on the stage. Ovi (Konkani verses) are the lines sung and narrate each character’s role by the Shirodkar (The right to narrate these videos is given only to the Shirodkar family).

Earlier, the Zagor was performed in a more traditional way, where this folk theatre form was continued till the dawn repeating the same lines several times but later the villagers shortened the Zagor traditional play and the local villagers started with Tiatr, it had a difference in stage set-up and instruments used as a part of the theatre element. The characters in Tiatr have been developed, where initially all the characters in the play were



from among the villagers, and the female characters' roles were portrayed by the male characters due to their religious beliefs. Later, they saw the female characters needed to be included to make it more engaging, and recently, a female character was hired from outside the village to be part of the crew. The way the makeup is done on the characters has been developed along with portraying social issues. Most of the social issues are taken from day-to-day life and of audience interest, showing household and youngster issues by providing certain solutions and ending the drama on a happy note.

### **3.2.1. EVOLUTION OF THE FORM**

It is believed that bunds constructed by the local farmers on the banks of Chapora River used to break frequently overburdening the fields with salty water which destroyed the crop. Therefore, the people of Siolim pleaded with the Zagorayo also referred to as Ghadghadayya in the Jaguar performance, and promised to celebrate a day in his honour. Since then, the bunds of the field remained intact and the annual Jaguar celebration continued (Phaldesai, 71). First *Yesai* (practice) to the Zagor festival is done during the Diwali festival. In between days from Diwali to *Tulsi Vivah*, villagers celebrate “*Fovachi Parab*” and during this ceremony, only on Wednesday and Sunday 5 coconuts given to the Khaneshwar deity and from then they pray to the god to protect the village and to let the annual celebration of Zagor end peacefully without any obstacles.

### **3.3. RANMALEM**

Ranmale is a folk theatre form that is not known to the Goans, especially locals from Margao, Phonda, Cuncolim, and Panaji, or the city dwellers and the tourists who are coming to Goa to learn Goas culture they are not provided with a proper presentation of the form.

And since it is celebrated in the forested areas of Sattari and Sanguem where people face problems with network issues to date it is difficult to reach out to the places to witness it live.

It is celebrated by the male members of the peasant community of Sattari and Sanguem taluka during the Shigmo and Gudi Padwa (Phaldesai, 73). And it is believed that after *Padvo* there should not be any performance of Ranmale. It is an unwritten rule of the Sattari village. After the Ranmale before the *Padvo* festival, farmers used to gather at the *Maand* and would perform a Ranmale and then used to go to the mountains in search of land for farming. The farmers burnt the crops and made the land ready for cultivation and it is believed that if the crops are burnt fully and properly then only the pulses will grow in abundance. After cleaning the land, they used to come back and perform another Ranmale called Kalekhudheche Ranmale. (Gaonkar)

It is mainly performed at the traditional *Maand* or on *chavato* (place embarked for sacrifices) in the temple complex. In Sattari there are many places where Ranmale is performed such as Zarme, Karanzol, Dhavem Ustem, Surla, Satrem, and Bambar. (Phaldesai, 73).

### 3.3.1. EVOLUTION OF THE FORM

Ranmale is the combination of two words *Ran* + *Malem*, *Ran* means battle and *Malem* is a short form of *marlem* which means victory, a victory in a battle. As per the legend, the region was ruled by the Meshe tribe. There are many synonyms to Meshe such as Habbu, Hebar, and Bhill. Kulvadis the original inhabitants of the region experienced extreme oppression and tyranny from the Meshe tribe. They used to kidnap young women from the Kulvadi families. To take revenge and to free their people from Meshes' autocracy, they invited the leading Meshes for a dinner with liquor, music, and dance. When the party was in

full swing, they ambushed Meshes, and genocide was taken place. This victory over Meshes was celebrated with a night-long performance called Ranmale. (Phaldesai, 74-75). It is believed that the characters say dialogues in recent times but initially, there were no dialogues and with singing the Jat they were not allowed to exit the stage. The Jat's that are sung are not fully understandable due to the language barrier and it is as mentioned by Zilu Gaonkar, the main purpose behind the vocabulary of Zagor and Ranmale is that it should not be understood by others with the intention that it is their folk form and others should not copy it. The particular Song or Dhong should be from a particular assigned family and others cannot play the role of any Song or Dhong according to their wish.

Ranmale's performance has become a necessary part of the annual festival of Chor (thieves) in the Zarme and Karanzol villages of Sattari. It is performed on the sixth day after the Holi festival just one day before the Chor festival Ranmale is performed which has become a ritual performance of the Kulvadi community. That is on the auspicious day of Sanvasar Padvo. (Phaldesai, 75).

### **3.4. DASHAVTARI KALO**

Kalo means “mixing” or “to mix”; a preparation made of bread, and rice squeezed up into a mass with buttermilk or curd. Dashavatar is a widely recognized style of theatre form dating back to 800 years. The ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu such as Matsya (a fish), Kurma (a tortoise), Varaha (a boar), Narasimha (a lion-man), Vaman (a dwarf), Parashuram, Ram, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki are referred as Dashavatar of Vishnu. It takes place on the temple grounds after midnight during the village deity's yearly celebration. It is executed without the use of any digital assistance. Every character comes onto the stage from behind a curtain that is supported by two people. (Phaldesai, 78).

There are various terms associated with Kalo such as Sankasur Kalo, Dashavtar Kalo, Raat-Kalo, Dis-Kalo, Gavlan Kalo, Dahim Kalo, Gopal Kalo, Balkrida Kalo, Fovam Kalo, Shena Kalo and Chikal Kalo. There are four major forms of Kalo such as Dashavtari Kalo, Gavlan Kalo, Gopal Kalo, and Chikal Kalo. (Phaldesai, 78).

### **3.4.1. ORIGIN OF THE FORM**

According to Bharatiya Sanskruti Kosh (Vol. IV), the Dashavatar tradition was started by the Malla-Raja of Vishnupur in the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. the original form of Karnataka named Yakshagana Bailata which was also known as Dashavatar Ata which was later evolved as Dashavatar in Maharashtra. It was later brought to the Konkan region by Shyamji Naik Kale in 1728 A.D. The first performance was held in the Mahakali temple in Adivare village and then onwards it became famous in Konkan and Goa state (Phaldessai, 87). It has evolved from Karnataka then to Maharashtra, and lately to Goa. Even today the Dashavtari performing groups are not originally from Goa but they come from Maharashtra to perform it. In the interview conducted with Zilu Gaonkar, sir said that it is not the original folk form of Goa but it was adopted from Maharashtra.

The next section of the chapter briefs on a critical approach used for the study, it presents an overall examination using a comparative approach.

### **3.5. CRITICAL APPROACH TO STUDY THE SELECT FOLK THEATRE FORMS**

Rabindranath Tagore spoke about comparative literature in India, stating that it is still in search of its identity and academic recognition (Dev, 4). But lately, several associations have come up, and several departments of single literature have introduced courses that are known as comparative literature.

Nowadays, analyzing conventional literary genres including fiction, drama, poetry, and literary nonfiction is referred to as comparative literature; however, the term can also apply to visual media like film, television, and even art. The goal of any research, poetry or art included, is to understand the stories and cultural narratives that different cultures have produced over time. (Dev)

If we look at a comparative study, it is a critical approach used for research. There are no theories as such with critical terms to be used in comparative literature, but it is the findings of the researcher comparing two or more things together to come to a more generalized conclusion. It only highlights similarity or dissimilarity, if found in any comparative approach conducted in the field of literature.

The current study deals with Goan folk theatre forms that have been selected for comparative analysis. There are three major traditional folk theatre forms of Goa selected, namely Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo. The study will delve into the elements used in the folk performances, taking into account their origin and cultural significance.

To make a critical analysis of these folk theatre forms, the first thing to say is that there is a similar structure used to enact a play. The elements used in these three folk forms

are the same: plot, characters, spectacle, music, thought, and diction. With these elements, it can be said that it can be considered a form of drama, and if it has to be studied as a form of genre, then the oral narration will have to be presented in written form since it has all the characteristics of a literary genre theory.

Though the structure of each form remains the same, that is, the plot, characters, and setting, each form presents a different story. For example, in Ranmale, they take up a few parts from the Ramayana and narrate a story of Ram, Laxman, and Sita, where in one plot, Ram kills Ravan since he tried to trap Sita and took her with him to Lanka. Whereas in Kalo, the plot of the play tells us about Lord Vishnu, who kills Shankasur for stealing the *Ved* from Lord Brahma. Both of these plays depict a different story with different characters, but the end motive of the play remains the same: victory over evil. In these plays, the antagonist is defeated by the protagonist.

In Zagor (Siolim), no divine characters or gods are coming up on the stage, except their village deity. The characters in Zagor are the Firangi Raja (king), Clown, and Florist, and the play ends with the character named Zagaryo (the deity of the village), and the play ends when all the candles placed on his head in a round structure blow off. Whereas in Kalo and Ranmale, there are characters of different gods like Ram, Vishnu, Brahma, Ganpati, Saraswati, Riddhi, Siddhi, etc. Kalo and Ranmale depict mythological stories, whereas in Zagor there are no mythological characters, and no myths are seen in this form.

Another similarity between Ranmale and Kalo is that there are common characters found in these forms, such as Ganpati, Saraswati, and the priest.

The music and melody in the play are very unique and important to the theatre form. The music and lyrics seen in the traditional Goan folk theatre forms are very different from

each other and present their uniqueness through these forms. The language used in these forms is very different from our original Konkani language; it has the essence of the Konkani dialect with the use of Marathi words.

Ranmale, among the other two forms, is unique in terms of its plot structure since it not only tells the mythological story from the Ramayana but also presents side stories that are based on the daily lives of the people, highlighting social issues through the play.

The common element in these three major folk theatre forms is some of its characters, for example, Ganapati and his wives Ridhi and Siddhi, goddess Saraswati, and Bhat (Priest). Another similarity is that all these plays narrate epic stories, and since it has cultural significance with the play, all these performances start by giving due respect to the gods, with the invocation of their specific god, and then the performances begin. Adding to this, all these performances start late at night and continue till dawn. All these plays begin with their village traditions and customs and God is at the center of the play performances.

The comparative approach helps us understand how each form is unique and shares its cultural history and beliefs. Through comparative analysis, it becomes easy to understand how each form has evolved and to gain knowledge about each plot of the play in a single study.

Thus, the next section of the chapter will undertake an in-detail examination of the comparative analysis of elements found in the select folk theatre forms.

## **3.6. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTS OF FOLK THEATRE FORMS: ZAGOR, RANMALE, AND KALO**

### **3.6.1. PLOT**

The Zagor starts with an ancient ritual called *Suwari* by the villagers. It starts from a chapel where they sing their religious hymns, set fire to the dried coconut leaves, and proceed towards the temple along with a character called Savang (a man disguised as a woman). It is said that during then there were no lights and that is why they used to light coconut leaves with fire to show them the way while they came dancing towards the Maand. The lighting of coconut leaves is done to date to keep up with their age-old tradition and to pass on the same to the younger generation so that they too know the reason behind this tradition. The “*Suwari*” comes from two directions and meets at the “*maand*” where all the Zagor performances take place.

At the outset, the invocation in Ovi form is sung as an offering to the holy Trinity that is to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary, St. Anthony the patron saint of the village, and other catholic saints. Along with catholic saints they offer invocation to Hindu gods and deities such as *Sateri*, *Ganesh*, *Shantadurga*, *Mahadev*, *Laxmi*, and other respective deities, also spirits of the village such as *Zagorayo* and *Khazonayo*. (Phaldesai, 71)

At the beginning, the play starts with comic dialogue and songs between Sayeed and Firangi Raja. After that, Maloni the female gardener comes on stage and sings about beautiful flowers and five garlands that she prepared to offer each to Jesus, St. Francis, Bishop, and King, and the fifth is to the people who have gathered to watch the Zagor (Saba).



At the end of the play, a very important performance called Bhonvor is staged by Zagorayo who is also known as Ghadghadayya, who dances in a rotating manner. After the last performance, Tiatr is performed as an interlude and followed by a Mahar couple who perform the last rites. At the end of all the rituals and ceremonies they recite the final prayer and the Zagor is over, after this, the *suwari* has to return to the same place from where they started the procession and keep all the instruments in the specific house.

Whereas, in Ranmale at the beginning of the folk performance, a lamp is lit. After that, the main narrator Haridas, and his singers come and stand in a row facing the audience. An interesting element about the Ranmale is the human that moves back and forth with rhythmic steps. The singers narrate the tales of Ganesha and keep on singing the Jat (singing of the storyline) till the Songa (Divine characters) dress up. The play begins with a Jat that alerts the audience on the arrival of lord Ganesha followed by a prayer of Sharada the goddess of knowledge. During the singing of Jat, a dancer wears a mask of Ganesha and comes along with his wife's wives, Riddhi and Siddhi. Subsequently, a priest arrives to do a pooja of Ganesh and entertain the audience with humor. After the Ganesh pooja, the narrator begins with the praise of Goddess Sharada followed by the enactment of scenes from Lord Ram's life. They have special Jats to sing according to the story that they choose to perform. The whole story is conveyed through Jat's. for instance, if a story of Shravanbal is portrayed the Shravanbal Jat is sung. After a Puranic scene, there are special characters called Dhonga (characters depicting traditional occupation) enter and entertain the crowd by making local references and presenting a short unconnected skit. The themes portrayed in the side shows are socio-cultural issues and the family life of the local communities. They sing a particular Jat about any social issues. The end of Ranmale is always with Ravan Vadh (Killing of Ravan) and Ran Rajyabhishek (Coronation of Ram). And overall, the performance ends with the arrival of Bhairavi. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.)

On the other hand, two components in the Dashavtar are Purva Rang and Uttar Rang. The legendary figures of Shankasur, Bhat, Riddhi, Siddhi, and Ganapati may be found in Purva Rang. Shankhasur was formerly known as Haidruvasur. The story begins with the entry of Sutradhar (peti master, initiator, and narrator). He performs an invocation song about Lord Ganesha and Goddess Sharada. Followed by the arrival of Siddhi and Riddhi who then take a seat next to Ganapati. The priest does the Pooja for Siddhi, Riddhi, and Ganapati in a jocular manner. After that Goddess Sharada enters and bestows blessing to the Sutradhar and disappears. The following scene depicts Brahmadev in a state of deep meditation. Haidruvasur, also known as Shankhasur, snatches four of Brahmadev's Vedas when he is meditating and hides in the shank (conch). Brahmadev is notified by Sutradhar that Haidruvasur has pilfered his four Vedas. He expresses this in a song called "Jat 2." Brahmadev approaches Lord Vishnu and expresses his displeasure about the same. Lord Vishnu then adopts the form of a fish (Matsya) and attempts to destroy the demon Haidruvasur after mock furious fighting Vishnu in his first incarnation kills Sankasur. The Malvani language is used to execute this Purva Rang. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed and Phaladesai, 80).

Uttar Rang comes after this. The Uttar rang, sometimes referred to as "Akhyani," is regarded as the principal performance based on Hindu myths, showcasing one of Lord Vishnu's 10 incarnations. It tells several Puranic stories and it is performed in pure Marathi language. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.)

### **3.6.2. SPECTACLE**

The play's visual elements, including makeup, costumes, stage design, and special effects, are collectively referred to as the Spectacle. Drama is essentially a performative art form; hence this is the most crucial component.

## **COSTUME**

In Zagor Sayeed wears a costume that resembles a clown and Firangi Raja appears in aristocratic attire. The costume of Zagorayo is noteworthy especially his headgear which is decorated with burning candles along with long decorated staff in hands. ( Phaldesai, 72).

But in Ranmale, Zilu Gaonkar mentioned in the interview that earlier the villagers did not spend money on buying ready-made costumes but used the easily available clothes and since the Ranmale used to take place every year they stitched their costumes and used it every year. But the costumes used were very simple and burrowed Sarees and during the ceremony of Talle people offered kapad to the god this Kapad was used by village men for playing the role of Ridhi, Siddhi, and Sharada. Whereas Men playing the role of any Dhong used their occupational clothes which they used to wear every day. All characters have their costumes. In recent times people have tried to make it decorative and attractive by buying it for rent or by stitching costumes from a tailor for their allotted role.

All the singers wear a white Dhoti, a coat and Uparne (small single cloth worn loosely over the shoulders), and a Pagdi/Topi (head cap).

Whereas in Dashavtari Kalo the characters are clothed in elaborate jewels and vibrant, Puranic (ancient) attire. Various weapons, such as the mace (Radha), disk (chakra), bow and arrow, and sword, as well as natural resources like flowers and leaves, are used following the roles of the characters. For the viewers, who are mesmerized by the creation, this produces a heavenly spectacle. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.)

## **MAKEUP**

In Zagor a make-up artist from their village does the make-up for all the characters and all the other villagers also help them in doing their makeup.

In Ranmale Zilu Gaonkar says that during ancient times people used natural colours that were easily made from natural spices. Initially, they used coal to prepare the black color, roof tiles were used to make the red color, from different shades of stones, the juice was extracted from creepers and colors which can be used from flowers and kajal was made by burning oil on a banana leaf. Today's time artists use make-up kits to do the make-up and to look attractive.

Whereas in Dashavtari Kalo the characters in the drama make use of gaudy make-up. They are notable for their use of bold, heavy makeup to make them seem beautiful and divine. Another reason for the thick makeup was that, in the ancient days when there was no electricity, performers needed to wear bright makeup to stay visible to the audience until the play's conclusion. Since there were no beauty products back then, people made their natural hues with stones and flowers. Due to their lack of a personal makeup artist, the Dashavatar characters must wait in line to get their makeup done once they arrive at the location. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.)

### **3.6.3. CHARACTER**

The characters in Zagor are Sayeed, Firangi Raja, Maloni and Zagorayo. Maloni and Mhar couple represent the occupation and caste of the character. The character Firangi Raja represents the administrative authority.

In contrast to Siolim Zagor, the characters in Ranmale the play performance begins with the characters of Ganesha with his two wives Riddhi and Siddhi where they perform a few Dance steps and exit the stage. Next comes Goddess Sharada with a Peacock feather

broom tied to his back or a whisk of peacock feathers in his hand symbolizing Goddess Sharada. There is also a character called Netyo who appears after Sharada and in his performance, he narrates that he is moving around the earth. Moreover, his appearance itself rotates around himself. Other mythological characters are Tratika, Ram, Laxman, and Rushi, who are the major characters, and these characters are called Songa. Other characters represent traditional occupations of the people, and these characters are called Dhong. These characters are based on the 12 castes of the society. There are occupational characters like Bhat, Chamar, Ghadi, Mhar, Baman, Madval, Dhanger, Nustekar, etc. All these characters raise social issues and add a comic element to the play. The characters and the storyline are different from the Siolim Zagor.

In Dashavtari Kalo the majority of the characters are mythological figures from Hindu scriptures. There is usually a Narad, Kunti, Asur, Ganpati, and Raja (King). The characters in Kalo differ based on the story chosen by Mahabharata. Before beginning their performance, a Pooja of the weapons and Ganapati's mask (known as mukhvato) is done.

Every select Goan folk theatre form represents different characters either from Ramayana, Mahabharata or based on the ancient history of the local occupation.

#### **3.6.4. DICTION**

Most of the songs recited in the Zagor performance by the characters accompanied by dance display harsh satire and even crass vulgarity. The play begins by singing “*Oviyos*” (lyrics/lines used to narrate the story. The language is a mixture of three languages that is Konkani, Marathi, and Portuguese.

For example,

सांता आंतोन भला। फिरंगी कुरुयच्या ॥

तुझ्या लिबरार खेळता । मिनीन जेझू राजा ॥ आयज शिंजोर देव..... शिंजोर देव.....  
शिंजोर देव स्मिजेरी कोरदीया ॥

दरया उत्या माजारी। कोसलोय वोयगाय घुवरी ॥

पात्री येता कुवरी। भक्त सांता आंतोन हाय ओनोद बापा। ओनोद पुत्रा

देवा इस्पीरीता सांता ॥

तुझ्या लिवरार खेळता म्हणून । नोसा सीयोरीन घातली दिमी। ओचोरयाई करी। भक्त  
सांता आंतोन। हाय स्वामी देव स्वामी देव - स्वामी देव। तुझे ठाय आसा ॥ (Naik, 26)

The above lines are the verses of Firangi raja. Suggest that the language is difficult to understand and interpretation of this lines needs to be analysed for the better understanding of the verses.

Whereas in Ranmale, Ranmale isn't complete without singing the “*Jat*”. A *Jat* is a particular kind of song that is sung across the Ranmale. *Jat* is given a name based on the entrance and exit of the characters in the scene. Such as Shravanbalachi *jat*, Sitechya *janmachi jat*, Sita Swayamvarachi *jat*, Ram Laxmanachi *jat*, Guru Ravanachi *jat*, Indrajatichi *jat*, Shrikrishnachi *jat* and Rumbdachi *jat*. Ranmale begins with the recitation of Naman and concludes with the song Bhairavi. Most of the play performance and singing of the *Jat* is with a mixture of Marathi, Konkani, and Malvani languages.

For example,

पांयाना पांगळी दोळ्यान आंधळी

पुत्रा पुत्रा माज्या बाळा सर

आमकां व्हर रे पुत्रा काशी ततरताक

चलता सरवोणा गेलो वकाराच्या घरी

वकर मामा सोड तुजा ततयां काम

आमचो सरवोणा बाळ खांय नी आसा

तुमचो सरवोणा बाळ चुकोन वधलो

बाळा-बाळा म्हणान ककांकाळ फोडली

पुता- पुता म्हणान हड्डा रे बडयलां . (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.)

This particular Jat tells the heartbreaking tale of Shravan's physically afflicted parents, who express a wish to visit Kashi, a holy place. They are told that their son has been killed as they are waiting for him to go with them to the pilgrimage site. When the parents learn about the tragedy that has befallen them, the Jat conveys their deep anguish and sorrow. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.)

And even in Kalo most of Dashavatar's tale is told through songs called *Jat*. They sing *Jat* even when a character enters the scene to let the audience know which character has arrived. They also sing Jat when there's a battle scenario. When there is a serious situation, they make sure that viewers are aware of it by playing musical instruments and using facial expressions that convey severity. The play is narrated in the Marathi Language.

### 3.6.5. MUSIC

The musical accompaniment is provided by a band of traditional folk musicians for the entire Zagor performance with the help of folk musical instruments such as Ghumat, Zanj, Shamel, Mhadalem, and Kansalem.

Whereas in Ranmale at the beginning of the performance Pooja of all the musical instruments. Ranmale makes use of Tashe, Kasale, Zanj and Dhol. Kasale and Dhol are the traditional instruments giving it a desired effect. People are observed utilizing ghumat in villages like Saleli and Zarme.

In Dashavtari Kalo musical instruments used are Zanj (clash cymbals), Paddle Harmonium, Tabla and Pakwaaj (double-headed drum) are some of the instruments utilized in Dashavatar. A pair of tiny metallic cymbals used for rhythmic purposes is called a Zanj. These cymbals are circular, flat discs joined by a cotton thread or cord that goes through a hole in the middle. Similar to Mrudung, Pakhwaaj developed in north India. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.) Musical instruments are used to give a tune and style to the lyrics. All these folk theatre forms make use of a variety of instruments to give the desired effect and rhythm to the songs.

### **3.6.6. THOUGHT**

To continue their ancestral traditional practice of the Zagor festival people believe and have faith in the *Zagorayo* that he will protect the village from dangerous threats. People fear the wrath of the deity and continue to perform it every year with purity and wholeheartedness.

Similar to the above thought Ranmale is also performed to maintain their traditional culture and since it is part of a ritual and associated with God, people continue it with the fear of God that if they do not perform it annually that bad omen will happen in the village. Through the performance, they try to show the traditional occupation of the village, and through their dialogues, they mention that a specific character from an occupation is not an old one. There are various social issues like household chaos between husband and wife in



respect to marital affairs or drunkard husbands and conflict between Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is also shown and also provides solutions to these problems. Other social issues like mining, water scarcity, caste-based problems, etc are portrayed through the act.

Whereas Dashavtari Kalo is performed to maintain and preserve the cultural Puranic stories. The main theme is to regenerate Puranic history and to show that in the end, the victory will be of truth and true soul. And whatever negative or evil is there it will be diminished or punished at the hands of God. (Joshi, et.al, T.Y.Project, B.A.B.ed.)

The common motive and thought behind all these folk theatre forms is to preserve the ancestral practice spread mythological stories to the younger generation and secure their age-old tradition and culture by passing it to the future youths to continue their village legacy.

### **3.7 SOCIAL ISSUES PORTRAYED THROUGH FOLK THEATRE FORMS**

Social issues refer to the problems present in society. In Ranmale there are several social problems highlighted through their performances. In the interview specialists listed certain social issues acted out through their performance such as mining issues, household issues, issues related to government, and traditional occupational problems in modern times. Household issues like fights between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, domestic violence, discrimination, alcoholism issues, extramarital issues, etc. There is some sort of mockery done to talk about their issues especially related to their caste, all the occupational characters highlight their caste and this provides them a platform to talk about their discomfort and various problems that they face in recent times.

Whereas in Siolim Zagor there are no social issues as such but the Tiatr performed as an interlude during the Zagor showcases social issues like household problems of a woman, corruption, education road safety, etc. Dashavtari Kalo is more concerned with the preservation of Puranic stories and in between the acts there is commentary on the political issues. Along with the mythological story they indirectly comment on the political leaders.

### 3.8. CONCLUSION

The folk theatre forms under study have distinctive elements of drama. Through the research, it has been observed that there are specific drama elements that have been retained for a very long time, such as plot, characters, thought, spectacle, and music, which are structured in a theatrical form. Through the study, it is examined that in Zagor, the language used is Konkani, and the whole act is narrated musically through songs and dialogues. The narration is done through Oviyo. The characters in the play depict a king, a clown, and real-life characters belonging to a certain caste. The role played by the characters on the stage must be played by the specific family members who have been given the right to play the role. Some characters do not narrate anything, and their part is narrated by the narrator, who is from the Shirodkar family. One distinct thing about this form is that earlier the play used to continue till dawn by repeating the same lines so that it went on till late, but in 1967, the villagers started doing Tiatr for their entertainment purposes and to keep the people awake. Initially, it was done by repeating the Oviyos. And now the Zagor gets over at 1:00 pm, and soon after that, Tiatr begins.

With these, the actual performance of Zagor is shortened, and through Tiatr, they try to keep people awake, but hardly any people wait for the Tiatr. Soon after the Zagor people go home or roam the fair, and only the Goankars of the village wait to do the last ritual of the festival.

Whereas in Ranmale, the storyline is taken from Ramayana, and there are also side stories where the real-life characters from the village narrate their own story about their traditional occupation and how it is taken up in modern times. There are various social issues brought up through the side skits, and in the interview with Zilu Goankar, sir said that these social issues are brought up from real life and showcased in Ranmale without taking the

actual names of the person humorously. In Ranmale, the narration is done by singing Jat and dialogues. The Sutradhar asks questions of the upcoming characters, and a due answer is given to the Gaonkars who stand in a row. One significant element in this form is that there are two types of characters called "*Songa*" and "Dhonga," distinguished based on divine characters and real-life characters that arrive on the stage.

In contrast to Ranmale in Dashavatar, all the characters are mythological, and it is said that without a character called Sankasur, the Kalo is incomplete or cannot be called Kalo. In Kalo, one distinctive feature is that the play is divided or narrated based on Purva Rang and Uttar Rang. The narration is done through dialogue and Jat. One common feature used in the Ranmale and Kalo is the singing of Jat.

There are various commonalities seen in these folk forms in terms of their traditions and rituals. All these folk theatre forms begin by worshiping Lord Ganesha, along with his wives Riddhi and Siddhi, praying to Goddess Sharada, and doing pooja of the masks, costumes, instruments, and make-up products that are used by the characters. Another similarity is that all the characters in these folk theatre forms are male, and the role of women is also played by men.

All these forms have their storyline and differ in their dialects, costumes, make-up, instruments, rhythm, and narration patterns. Zilu Gaonkar mentioned that the Jat and the language are used in such a way that they cannot be understood by the audience since they are a mixture of many dialects, and they purposely maintain the same complex language so that others do not use their culture or take up their culture and use it as their own.

In the discussion held at Ranmale Mahotsav, it was discussed that the people have tried to keep their form traditional without making any modifications to the play. It was the

same then and even now. But Shrikant Gaude said that when it is a stage-based performance, we can make changes and try to modernize it to make it interesting and attractive. Zillu Goankar said that certain villages in Sattari have formed groups and have tried to glorify it to give it a modern touch. But they have also said that when it comes to the performances on Maand, they will try to keep it as it is so that the culture, tradition, and rituals remain the same and the authenticity of these forms is passed on to the next generation without any changes.

It is also evident in a field survey that most people are not aware of the Goan folk theatre forms, and there is a need to spread our Goan culture in our state first and then globally. To reach a larger audience, especially in urban areas, the first step should start in schools and colleges; it is through youngsters and social media that the form will be retained and studied from a broad perspective. Zilu Goankar mentioned that there was a workshop conducted on Ranmale, and there were very few numbers of participants, and no boys were ready to sit in the workshop since all the characters in the play are men and they play the role of women, and they feel shy to play the roles. To keep the forms alive and to carry forward the lineage after their grandfathers, the young generation needs to understand its importance and should develop an interest in it to preserve and continue with our Goan culture. But when it is a stage-based performance, women are given opportunities to participate and to showcase their talent.

To spread our Goan culture, there have to be workshops organized in the schools, and as said by Zilu Gaonkar, there should be many centers set up to perform each folk theatre form so that a wider network will be aware of these forms. In the modern generation, people find it outdated or boring to watch these plays since they take place late at night and in far-off

forested areas. There has to be a discussion on this matter, and a proper solution needs to be taken to spread and preserve the authentic theatre form along with its rituals and traditions.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **GOAN FOLK THEATRE FORMS: THEORY AND PRAXIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The following chapter highlights three critical theories to support the researcher's argument and supplement the analysis of Chapter 3 with theoretical perspectives. The first theory that will be used is a comparative approach; the second is structural criticism, where critical points or statements made by structural theorists will be applied to this study conducted on folk theatre; and the last theory is Propp theory, which examines folklore and culture.

These chapters will bring forth critical views to support the researcher's findings and broaden the area of study. The critical view that supports the researcher's analysis and adds to the understanding of the various folk theatre forms will be examined.

#### **4.2 COMPARATIVE APPROACH AND FOLK FORMS**

Comparative Literary Theory: An Indian perspective is a theory by K. Chellappan, that elaborates on the need for comparative theory and how each theorist has their views on comparative literature. According to academics such as Muntaeno, comparative literature is a complementary synthesis of the vertical history of ideas and the horizontal literature. But to develop a more inclusive literary theory, it is important to compare works of literature from various cultural backgrounds; along with historical perspectives. In Wellek and Warren's classic Theory of Literature, generalizations on literature are based on Western theories. (Dev, et.al, 295). However, Arthur Kunst makes a strong case for the synthesis of literary theories when he states that the goal of a comparative study of Asian and European literature

should be to develop a truly comprehensive theory of literature that is based on independently developed imaginative traditions rather than a knowledge of mutually reinforcing works from English, French, Spanish, German, and a few other languages. (Dev, et.al, 296).

Similarly, this critical approach gives a comparison between the Indian and Western works based on fundamental ideas and literary genres, with particular emphasis on *Tolkappiyar*, *Bharata*, and *Aristotle* and depicting how each form has its uniqueness. There are various instances provided by the theorist to show how each form is unique in its way in its regional background.

For instance, in the theory K. Chellappan gives an example of Fyres classification wherein he states that “*myth constructs a central narrative around a figure who is partly the sun, partly vegetative fertility and partly a god or archetypal human being, Tolkappiyar’s situation/archetypes are without mythic significance: the general setting, character, and emotion being linked together.*” (Dev, et. al., 298).

The way there is a contrast in Fyre’s and Tolkappiyar’s narrative classification, the same is evident between *Ranmale* and *Zagor*. In *Ranmale* the narration or the storyline is mythological where there are characters from Ramayana and a myth from Ramayana is performed in front of the audience. Along with mythological characters, there are side skits based on the local occupations and their problems. Whereas *Siolim Zagor* performed in Goa does not narrate a mythological story but narrates a story on history wherein the dialogues remain the same every year.

Each folk form has its uniqueness and its way of performance with specific rituals associated with each of the performances. Just like the imitation for *Aristotle* is a representation of things as they are in the real world through a form *Bharata’s* concept reveals the ideal (perfect) by making it real, whereas *Tolkappiyar* believes that all reality is



mediated. (Dev, et. al,299). In the same way, *Siolim Zagor* has its plotline, style of narration, and characters in the play are different from the *Ranmale* and *Kalo*. The main character and his attire vary from other folk theatre characters. The language used to narrate the story is very ancient and traditional which is also seen in *Ranmale* but the style and message are different. In *Ranmale* the story is of Ram, Sita, and Ravan wherein the protagonist (Ram) kills the antagonist (Ravan) along with side skits based on local characters based on their occupation, and in *Kalo*, there are no side skits but there are the protagonist (Vishnu) who kills the antagonist (Shankasur) for hiding the spiritual *Ved* from the gods.

In this manner, each folk theatre form is special in its way, has its origins from a different background, and has rare qualities in its each form. This analysis concerns the above-stated critical point of view mentioned by the theorist. Though the particular critical theory is conducted based on the comparison between National and international genres the researcher tried to take out points from the theory, analyze them, and apply them to the study.

Thus, by using the critical perspectives of K. Chellappan on Tolkappiyar, Bharata, and Aristotle's views on drama, it has been found that each form has its uniqueness. There are differences and similarities in each of the folk forms. By analysing the folk theatre forms and applying Aristotle's concept of imitation it can be said that *Ranmale* is the representation of the real world through side skits. The way each theorist has their perspective on imitation and reality, each folk theatre forms imitate and represents mythological stories to maintain their ancient history.

#### **4.3 STRUCTURALIST CRITICISM AND THE TEXTS**

Structuralism is to organize the world systematically. Every action is governed by a structure. For example, the English language consists of millions of words, and every word is pronounced in several different ways by different speakers. In this matter, there is a basic

simple structure that we master unconsciously. (Tyson, 199). The structures are inborn structures of human consciousness that we present to the world to be able to deal with the world.

According to the structuralist Claude Levi-Strauss, Structural anthropology which is related to the area of cultural studies, seeks the structures that link all human beings regardless of the differences among the surface phenomena of the cultures to which they belong, seems that all the human cultures have some codified process. For instance, taking a bath after returning from the funeral or taking a bath before performing the pooja, both are connected to a structural similarity that is ritual (surface phenomena). The existence of structural similarities among seemingly different myths of different cultures was one of Levi-Strauss's particular areas of interest (Tyson, 204). His goal was to find out when different myths are different versions of the same myth in different cultures that share structures of consciousness that project themselves in the formation of structurally similar myths. He argued that “there is no “true” or “original” version of any myth. Each version of a given myth is equally valid because each embodies the attempt of all structures to make sense out of an otherwise chaotic world”. (Tyson, 204)

Similarly applying it to the study, all the folk theatre forms selected for the study may have a different surface phenomenon but they involve some kind of ritual ceremony that is a part of ‘structure’. For instance, Zagor there are different rituals associated with the commencement of the Zagor. Even in Ranmale, there is due respect given to the Mand, and the pooja of Lord Ganesha is held before the Ranmale begins. Ranmale and Kalo (Dashavtari) present a mythological story and story that attempts to make sense of the chaotic world and give it some coherence.

Therefore, as stated by Levi-Strauss all myths form a narrative they narrate a historical story, and mythemes he defines them as “bundles” of relations because a mytheme consists of all its variants, which are the narrative structures. (Tyson, 204). So, the structural analysis of myths has obvious implications for the structural study of literature as it is believed by critics that literature consists of the retelling of the same myth in various guises.

The Idea behind a structural approach to mythology is that, despite the vast array of diverse tales created worldwide, there is a relatively small, knowable language (underlying structure) that allows us to organize and make sense of them. (Tyson, 204)

Structural anthropology applies structuralist insights to the comparative study of human cultures Semiotics applies to the study of sign systems. Semiotics examines the ways linguistic and non-linguistic objects and behaviors operate symbolically to “tell” us something. (Tyson, 205).

For instance, in an example provided by Barthes Semiotic analysis of professional wrestling, argues that it can be viewed as a sign system. He gives an example of the Barbarian costume worn by a wrestler and its purpose is to provide the audience with the cathartic satisfaction of watching justice triumph in a situation that makes it clear who is good and who is evil. (Tyson, 205).

In the folk theatre forms too, costumes play such kind of symbolic role as Barthes argues which provides cathartic satisfaction to the audience. For example, in Dashavatari Kalo the costume of Sankasur is fully black in colour and it is like a robe which symbolizes that he is an evil character. The costumes worn by the character Vishnu in the play are very sophisticated with heavy jewellery which symbolizes or dresses similar to the mythology character of God. Whereas in Ranmale characters playing the role from Ramayana wear costumes similar to the mythic characters resembling divinity. In side skits where the

villagers take up the role of a farmer, Fisherman, priest, or man who plays the role of a woman dressed up in saree and navwari, tell us something about the particular character for example the temperament is a profession or gender in the play, the costume serves as a sign that communicates with the audience.

As remarked by Barthes “Each match ends with the triumph of goodness over evil” (Tyson 205). Similarly, Characters from Ranmale or Zagor and Kalo portray their culture and family background, occupation, mood, and suffering faced by low-class people and end the play with a victory over evil which is a universal concept of good versus evil.

The match, Barthes further observes greatly resembles the spectacle of ancient Greek theatre, as wrestler act out their pain, despair, or triumph (Ram, Vishnu, local occupational characters) with exaggerated gestures and grimaces. (205)

The exhibition of suffering, defeat, and justice is the purpose of the spectacle. The signs to reach this conclusion include the names, physiques and costumes, body language, and facial expressions that convey their anger, pity, fear, and emotions (Tyson, 206).

All these can be applied to the folk theatre forms of Goa portraying its structural Semiotics. Semiotics expand the signifier to include objects gestures, activities, sounds, and images that can be perceived by the senses, giving the signifier a wide range of possibilities. For semioticians, anything can be a sign “*The whole world of human culture is a “text” waiting to be “read” and structuralism provides the theoretical framework to do it*” (Tyson 207).

In literature, structuralism is important because literature is a verbal art: composed of language. (Tyson, 207).

The primary focus of structuralist criticism is the story or a narrative and Because the story is the primary focus of structuralist criticism, this concentration is not as limited as it

might appear at first, though, when we consider that narrative encompasses a vast history and a variety of texts, ranging from the straightforward folktales and myths of the ancient oral tradition to the intricate mash-up of written forms seen in the postmodern novel. Furthermore, a great deal of poetry and most drama, even though they are not considered narrative, nevertheless have a narrative quality because they tell a story of some kind. Regardless, narratives offer a rich environment for structuralist criticism, as narratives, despite their diversity in the range of forms, narratives share certain structural features, such as plot, setting, and character. (Tyson, 208).

With this, it can be said that in the folk theatre forms, there are structural features that remain the same when we talk about a narrative or drama since all these three features (plot, character, and setting) are present and used in the enactment of the folk plays.

Thus, all three folk theatre forms are part of 'structures.' They are the ways of making sense of the world, 'costumes' that work as a 'signifier' of the myths and there are certain universal tropes like the victory of good over evil. All the narrative shares a common structural feature, such as plot, setting, and character which is also evident in the Goan folk theatre forms.

#### **4.3.1 GENRE THEORY AND THE FORMS**

Initially, a written text was developed from the oral narration of epic stories and then to text.

When it comes to narratology folk tales were narrated orally and then a form was developed. If the writers start writing about the Goan folk theatre narrative in a proper dramatical form then it can be studied as a Goan theatre genre, the way we study other dramatic and poetic genres.

Genre theory is related to a text however it can be applied to an oral form like the folk theatre since it has the same structural elements that are part of literary genres.

Talking about the structuralist approaches to the genre, Northrop Frye calls his '*Theory of myths*', which is a *theory of genres* that seeks the structural principles underlying the Western literary tradition. (Tyson, 209).

Mythoi is a term Frye uses to refer to the four narrative patterns that, he argues structure myth. He asserts that these myths explain the structural elements of literature's four main genres—tragedy, romance, comedy, and satire/irony. (Tyson, 209)

According to him, human beings project their narrative imagination in two fundamental ways: in the representation of the ideal world and in representations of the real world. Frye calls the genre of Romance the mythos of summer. This is the world of adventure, of successful quests in which brave, virtuous heroes and beautiful maidens overcome villainous threats to the achievement of their goals. (Tyson, 209).

For instance, in Ramale there are two types of stories narrated in a single plot. When we talk about the Mythos of summer, in the Ramale the protagonist, Ram, who is brave and virtuous saves Sita from the trap of Ravan. The side skirts or small skits are performed based on their real-life stories, depicting their occupation and the problems they face, raising social issues where human frailty is mocked, which shows a world of satire providing a solution to it at the end can be classified under the satire genre which is a real-world according to Frye, calls it a mythos of winter. The side skits in Ramale contain humor and comedy which according to Frye the genre of comedy is the mythos of spring. Similarly, in Kalo there is comedy (Narad and Sankasur) there is triumph, conflict disorder, and confusion which are three structural components seen in these forms.

Accordingly, Frye notes that taking together all these four genres defines the structure of what Frye calls a “*total quest-myth*”. Thus, for Frye, all narrative is structurally related because it’s all some version of some part of the quest formula (Tyson 211).

Frye calls this method of classification *archetypal criticism* because it deals with the recurrence of certain narrative patterns throughout the history of Western literature. (Tyson, 211).

According to Frye structure of each genre remains the same even if the surface phenomena are different (genre). Similarly, the genre of each folk theatre form varies but the structure of the genre that is plot, character type, and setting is the same. (Tyson, 211).

Another approach used by Frye is called the theory of modes. In this, he states that character’s modes are also established by whether they are superior to others in kind (of a kind that is unattainable by common people, such as gods or demigods) or just in degree (having the same positive attributes that all humans are capable of but having them to a greater degree). (Tyson, 211). He gives a chart to define the mode of a character. According to his chart a protagonist who is superior in kind to both men and their environment, the fictional mode, in this case, is Myth where the character type is called a divine being. This can be applied to Ranmale and Kalo where the characters are superior to men and their environment where the characters are from mythology, embodying divine characters (Vishnu, Ram, Narad, etc).

Although myths are ancient kinds of narrative, Frye observes that they generally defy conventional literary classifications. Because of this, and because it seems a little strange to combine comedy and realism, Robert Scholes proposes an alternative interpretation of Frye’s modes, one that he thinks will offer a more useful and transparent foundation for

distinguishing between genres by removing the non-literary mode of myth and adding a new category to account for the distinctions between comedy and realism. (Tyson, 211).

According to Scholes's interpretation, if the protagonist's power is superior in degree to men but not to their environment. He names this fictional mode as *high mimesis* (imitation of life, like that found in epic and tragedy) and he calls this character type a *leader*. In contrast to Fyre's *modes*, Scholes's mode gives a clearer picture of the structure of a genre based on the *modes*. Concerning this the fictional mode of Kalo can be called as *high mimesis* since it imitates the life that is found in the epic. According to his second mode of classification, the protagonist is equal in degree to men, and their environment is called *Middle mimesis* (imitation of life, like that found in realism), and the character type in this fictional mode is the ordinary people like ourselves. In this regard the characters in The Ranmale perform side skits based on the local life of the people presenting their own household and occupational problems, narrating our traditional way of occupation in the form of a drama, this can be classified under the *middle mimesis* where the character in the play is the ordinary people. (Tyson, 212). Along with *middle mimesis*, it is also can be classified under *high mimesis* since there are also divine characters found in Ranmale. When it comes to Ranmale it seems difficult to categorise this form of theatre under a single mode.

Thus an attempt can be made to study the folk theatre forms of Goa as a genre since it embodies all of the play's elements and by recording the forms on paper Goan folk theatre can be studied as a Genre.

#### **4.4 PROPP'S FOLKLORE THEORY**

Vladimir Propp in his book "*Theory and History of Folklore*" talks about the nature of folklore and the principles of classifying folklore genres. He states that "*folklore is the*



*product of a special form of verbal art. Literature is also a verbal art, and for this reason, the closest connection exists between folklore and literature”* (Propp, 5-6).

According to him, the works of folklore and literature have different morphologies, and folklore has specific structures. It is difficult to study the inner structure of verbal products, their composition, and their makeup. There is limited knowledge of the rules governing the composition of songs, charms, riddles, epic poetry, and folktales. Propp, (6). The Goan folk theatre is also a form of verbal art where there is no written structure available to examine the literary works. But as said by the theorist, literature is also a verbal art, and even if it has different content in folklore and literature, it can also be determined by literary analysis. Folklore possesses a most distinctive *poetics*, peculiar to it and different from the poetics of literary works. The incomparable creative beauty of folklore will become evident via the study of this poetics. (Propp, 6).

He also mentions in his theory that literary analysis can only discover the phenomenon and the law of folklore poetics, but it is unable to explain them. “To avoid the error of equating folklore with literature, we must ascertain not only *how literature and folklore are alike*, related, and to a certain extent identical in nature, but also *how they differ*” (Propp, 6).

Looking forward, he explains that there is an important difference between folklore and literary works, namely that folklore does not have an author, whereas in literary works there is an author. Similarly, the traditional Goan folk theatre does have an author, or we cannot recognize a single person as the author of the form since the forms originated hundreds of years ago. On these pages, Propp states, “*I cannot go into this problem here and will only mention that in its origin, folklore should be likened not to literature but to language, which is invented by no one and which has neither an author nor authors. It arises*

*everywhere and changes in a regular way, independently of people's will, once there are appropriate conditions for it in the historical development of people"* (Propp, 7).

Regarding the issue of establishing the actual origins of folklore, it is sufficient to mention that folklore can initially be an essential component of ritual. This can also be applied to the folk theatre forms since, in the interview with the experts in this field, namely Zilu Gaonkar, he said that he believes that the evolution of Ranmale and, for that matter, all other folk theatre forms have originated out of rituals.

Concerning the problem of conceiving *empirically* the origin of folklore, it will suffice to note that in its beginning folklore can be an integral part of ritual. This can also be applied to the folk theatre forms since the evolution of Ranmale and for that matter, all other folk theatre forms have originated out of rituals.

A work of folklore is dynamic and cannot be thoroughly explored if it is only documented once. Due to this reason there as to be as many recordings as possible. According to Propp, each recording is referred to as a variant, and these are entirely distinct from a virgin of a literary work created by the same person. One of the distinctive qualities of folklore is its constant changeability, which also makes literary works vulnerable to being entangled in its circle. (Propp, 8)

Considering that folklore is a form of verbal art, the question of how to categorize this genre arises. The complete poetic system defines the genre in literary criticism. In folklore, the same idea remains valid. A genre, in its fullest definition, is a collection of monuments bound together by a shared poetic language. Since folklore is composed of literary arts, we must begin by learning about the characteristics and rules of this genre, or poetics. Poetics is a term used to describe artistic methods and reflections of the intellectual and emotional

realms; it is a form associated with a particular content, such as a story and its accompanying message. (Propp, 40)

According to Propp, a genre is defined by its poetics, application, style of performance, and relationship to music. Generally speaking, no single characteristic is adequate to characterize a genre, which is determined by all of them together. Therefore, each person's folklore genre should be examined and defined so that we can learn how each folktale and different kind of legend is told before learning from one another what kinds of lyrics and epic songs each people have. Since the offered works of various genres are frequently connected, it is impossible to separate the original characteristics of each person's folk poetry from their richness. (Propp 42).

Thus, with this critical point of view applying the principles of the Folklore genre to a specific field of folklore that is the Folk theatre forms can be studied as a folkloric genre or can be a subgenre under the folklore studies. Another important element of folk theatre form is that there is no author for the folk forms and empirically it is evolved out of rituals. However, Propp has also mentioned that folklore is constantly changing and repetitive analysis needs to be conducted on these forms, and to study it as a literary work certain characteristics and rules of it need to be studied.

#### **4.5. RECEPTION OF FOLK THEATRE FORMS: GOOGLE FORM ANALYSIS**

Folk theatre forms in Goa are celebrated every year in rural villages, and densely populated areas. The select folk theatre forms Ranmale are widely celebrated in the villages of Sattari and Sanguem taluka, which are surrounded by forests. Whereas the Zagor undertaken for study is the Siolim Zagor where agriculture is the prominent occupation and similarly Dashavatari kalo is selected for the present study by the researcher.

All these folk plays are celebrated in distinct areas where it is only known to the people of that particular taluka and since these areas are far away from the urban settlement, most of the people living in Margao, Cuncolim, Phonda, Usgao, etc. are not fully aware of the folk theatre forms celebrated in Goa. According to the survey conducted in the form of Google form, it is evident that most of the people know about Tiatr and a Natak that is carried out in most of the cities, and on other platforms due to various reasons.

The goal of conducting the Google form survey is to find out if the folk theatre forms are known to the city dwellers, and if the folk theatre forms can create job opportunities and spread social issues through the performances. It is also to find out the reception and future of the folk theatre forms and their need to spread to a larger audience and to preserve it as a written record and also to teach the future generations about these folk theatre forms so that our Culture is retained and passed on to every corner of the state.

Following is a summary analyzed based on the responses of the people.

The following pie chart shows the age of the people who have answered the Google form. From the below chart it is evident that 54.2% of respondents are from 18-25 years and 25% are from 25-40 years old 12.5 percent belong to 40+ years and only 8.3% are between 12-18 years old

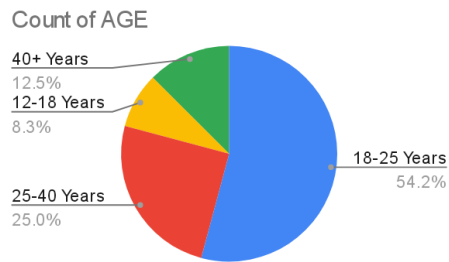


Fig. 1 Age group

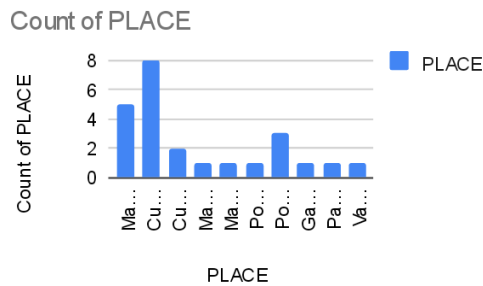


Fig. 2 Location of respondents

The above Bar graph shows the location of the respondents. From the above chart, the highest number of respondents are from Cuncolim, the second highest is from Margao and the third highest respondents are from Ponda.

Most of the respondents were students and working-class people.

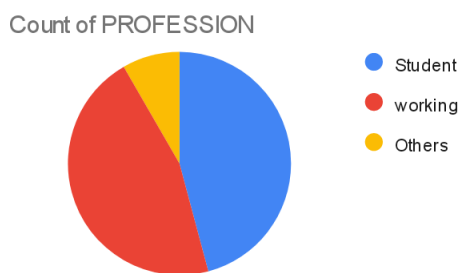


Fig. 3 Profession of respondents

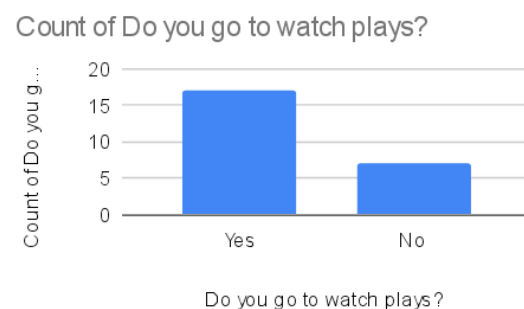


Fig. 4

In the survey conducted most of the respondents said that they go to watch plays and to the next question which was on what type of play they watch, people answered that they watch Comedy plays (50%), Some replied that they watch Tiatr and Natak (30%), very few of them said that they watch historical plays. Based on these responses it is obvious that

people are fond of comedy plays and they have watched Tiatr and Natak which takes place in temples Ravindra Bhavan and other community centres. But it is understood that when it comes to culture hardly any of the respondents mentioned folk theatres such as Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo. But most of them said that they are aware of the folk theatre forms.

Count of Do you know about Goan Folk T...

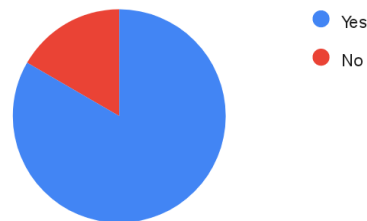


Fig. 5

Through the above pie chart, it is recorded that most of the individuals are aware of the folk theatre forms and very few are not aware of it.

Which folk theatre form have you watched?



Fig. 6

From the above pie chart, it is understood that the majority of the respondents have watched Kalo, talking about Kalo has different variants most of the villages throughout Goa celebrate Kalo but it differs from the traditional Dashavatori Kalo because in the southern part of Goa Kalo is not based on the Dashavator but they heir a performing group where a play is directed by the performing artist for financial purposes which is based on a select theme and its popularity of their drama that they have set. It can be on different issues and themes. Whereas none of the respondents are aware of Ranmale. However, most of the

respondents are aware of the Zagor. And very few are aware of other folk theatre forms like Tiatr.

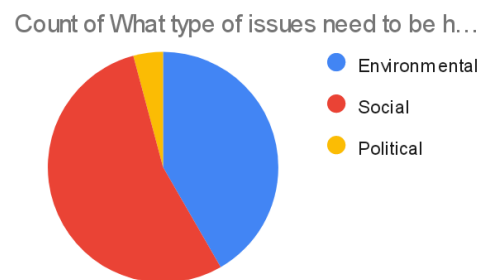


Fig. 7

From Fig. 7 majority of the people suggested that social and environmental issues need to be highlighted through the folk theatre forms and these can be portrayed in Ranmale where there are side skits based on social and moral issues. A minority of the respondents suggested showcasing political issues through the plays.

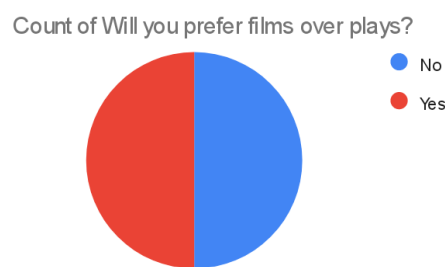


Fig. 8

There was a 50-50 count on the question asked which is whether they would prefer films over plays. People who said that they would prefer films over plays explained that it is easily available on our phones, is it heart touching, they can be spread across the world, films help people understand the message in a better way because plays are not very common, similar to it one respondent says that films are widely accessible through various platforms. The convenience of being able to watch a film at home or in a theatre without the need for live attendance/audience. Advances in filmmaking technology can be captivating and more appealing than stage plays. These are the responses recorded on the Google form who prefer

films overplays. Whereas 50% of respondents don't prefer films over plays and their reasons for the same are, some prefer plays as they give us hands-on experience also there is no exaggeration as compared to films. Because it's a live performance on stage, one responded that Folk theatre is an essential part of a culture. They teach the history, traditions, and values of a people. Other respondents say that they are realistic, spread awareness, and impactful in modern times.

Through the above-mentioned responses by the individuals, it is understood that both films and plays have equal weightage and the response to plays can be increased by making the folk plays impactful and doing performances in different places so that people find it more engaging.

Further, there was a question based on suggestions or changes that can be used to improve the play performances. Every respondent gave their input such as:

1. Spreading awareness among the people particularly youth can create opportunities for youth to participate in the performance.
2. People should develop an interest in folk theatre forms. It is only when they are interested and with a larger audience, the cast and crew will also be motivated to give their best and will improve the play's performance.
3. By adding songs.
4. Good character roles.
5. Dressing should be season oriented.
6. Good facilities should be provided by the government.
7. Giving the correct role based on the specific character.
8. Conduct workshops in all schools and Higher secondary on folk art theatre, script writing, acting, stage design, etc.



9. Technology should be used.
10. Voice or speech is a very important aspect and it should be made sure that the speech is clear and audible to every audience.
11. From early schooling, children should be made aware of play performance and make them act. In a way, the parents and audience will also be interested.

These are some of the responses wherein valuable information was provided by the respondents which makes the folk plays impactful and raises awareness about these forms from the school level where community involvement is more.

From the Google form analysis, it can be understood that the majority of the population living in the city area is not aware of the folk theatre forms thoroughly even if they have a basic idea about the plays, it is seen that Ranmale is not widely known to the audience and there is a need to spread all these folk theatre forms. Even if most people are aware of Kalo and Zagor various types of Zagor and Kalo need to be preserved and spread to the local audience.

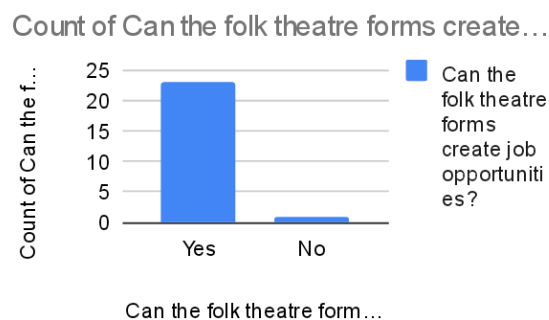


Fig. 9

The above graph shows that the majority of the individuals agree that folk theatre forms can create job opportunities.

On the other hand, people suggested their views on how we can spread folk theatre forms to a larger audience. Responses to these questions are:

1. Street plays, newspaper columns, social media.
2. School and college students should be made aware of these folk forms, and an interest should develop in them. Social media influencers should also try to spread Goan culture.
3. The plays can be streamed on digital media and Institutions can introduce elective courses on various forms of folk theatre.
4. Promotion and encouragement among the younger generation to watch and participate in it.
5. Should be performed in Kala Academy.
6. Showcasing live performances or video clips through online platforms.
7. Promoting / Organising Cultural festivals and Events (Lokotsav- Goa)
8. Awareness of financial assistance.

The above responses can be considered to continue and preserve our culture and to spread it to a larger audience with the help of various tools and methods. Based on the responses from the audience these steps or activities could be undertaken for continuing and wide exposure of the folk theatre forms.

Similarly, even Zilu Gaonkar mentioned in the interview there should be certain centers set up and, in each center, there should be the performance of all these folk theatre forms. It is of utmost importance to spread the form to a larger audience in every way possible. People should make use of technology, social media, newspapers, pamphlets, and other platforms to spread it not just to their specific taluka or covering a specific area but it should reach to both the district of Goa. And since the traditional folk performances take place late at night there should be a documentary made on each of these forms to show the form in detail to the future generations in schools and colleges because that is the first step where all types of knowledge are gained by the students. He also mentioned that to keep the form alive they have started a

committee to collect all the people especially the younger generation to practice the form Ranmale so that it doesn't become extinct since most people who know about the folk theatre form are moving abroad and the performers of the village are becoming old and due to this reason he with his committee members tried to form a group wherein they tried to glorify the form, little different from the traditional performance. For instance, the traditional performance of Ranmale is performed only by men, and the role of women is also played by them but in the modernized form of Ranmale, they have included young Girls to show their talent in acting so that they can also be a part of their folk theatre form. He also mentioned that the Ranmale form has reached the national level and they trying their best to reach out to the international level.

These folk theatre forms are performed in distinct rural areas, far away from city life where there are network issues. It becomes problematic for the first-time visitor to locate the destination place. If we want to promote and spread it to a larger audience and to study it in different aspects accessibility to these places is important and there should be prior announcements or invitations about these folk theatre performances through all the newspapers and social media so that people can enjoy it live. Though now Prudent media and social media influencers provide information about Goa's rich culture experiencing it live with the crowd gives a different vibe.

To promote it and to influence tourists to witness Goa's rich cultural performances there have to be good interpretation and promotion done of these forms. Through the Google form survey people see a future through these forms in creating job opportunities with the help of government support many artists could perform in different centers throughout the state; schools and colleges are the first steps to start with its promotion and for these workshops need to be conducted so that people from every corner know about Goa's folklore history.

Hence, these are the suggestions and opinions of the academicians and Google form respondents on how we can protect, secure, and continue the age-old practices of Goa.

#### 4.5. CONCLUSION

In the present chapter, analyzing different critical theorist and their perspectives, it is evident that through comparative critical analysis, it is studied that there are certain similarities and differences in the Goan folk theatre forms that make each form unique and special with its origin, characters, and plot of the play. Through structuralist criticism, the structure of the genre remains the same that is plot, character, and setting are common to the enactment of a drama. Propp's theory on folklore and history supports the statement that traditional folk theatre forms evolved from rituals. Propp's Structuralist critique and folklore theory provide insightful analyses of the underlying patterns and structures found in folktales and narratives. Through the identification of recurrent character types and narrative purposes, Propp established the foundation for comprehending the features of storytelling that are common to all cultures. Building on Propp's research, Structuralist critique highlights the interdependence of story elements by placing narrative analysis within larger cultural and linguistic contexts. When combined, these methods improve our comprehension and appreciation of folklore by illuminating how stories represent social norms, cultural values, and collective imagination.

The critical theory helps us to support our points by citing a critic and by giving examples increases the authenticity of the work. All the above-mentioned theories help us to study the critical comparative approach, Structuralist criticism supports the basic common structure present in the enactment of the play, and folklore theory gives a strong point to prove that the origin of folklore is through the rituals and there are separate rules and laws to study the oral folklore study as a genre. Google form analysis and views of academicians suggest various changes that can be made to improve folk theatre performances and various ways through which these forms can be preserved and spread to a larger audience.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

The study aimed to examine three major folk theatre forms of Goa that are Siolim Zagor, Ranmale, and Dashavtari Kalo. The following were the objectives of the dissertation:

- To examine the traditions and cultural significance of Zagor (Siolim), Ranmale, and Kalo.
- To understand how the studied theatre forms have evolved.
- To understand the elements associated with folk drama.
- To analyze the select folk theatre forms using a comparative approach.
- To examine social issues shown in the select folk theatre forms.

Chapter two explored folk theatre practiced in Western countries and folk theatre forms performed in India and also in general about the folk theatre of Goa. It highlighted its evolution and development seen in the overall folk theatre forms present throughout the world, starting from Greek mythology to Indian mythology.

Chapter three analyses the elements of drama present in all three select folk theatre forms using a comparative approach.

Chapter four has examined various theories to support the present dissertation and the structuralist and folklore theory can be applied to the present discussion.

#### **5.2. FINDINGS**

In studying about the Goan folk theatre it was found that most of the work is written in Konkani and Marathi language but there are hardly any books written in English that

discuss the Goan folk theatre. There is a need to develop the Goan culture through various ways and higher authorities should also take into account the cultural significance which is lacking behind in Goa.

To highlight in brief the findings on each of these forms is that the plot of Siolim Zagor remains the same throughout the year whereas in Dashavatari Kalo the starting part is the same that is killing of Sankasur but the second part of the play depends on which story they choose to perform from the Mahabharata Epics. Whereas in Ranmale the plot has many acts from Ramayana and is based on the traditional occupation and the social issues seen in their surrounding. The content keeps on changing.

Another key point is that all these folk plays make use of Satire and the language is complex in terms of grammar, accent, and style. It becomes difficult to understand what they narrate and for this reason, there has to be a study conducted based on the interpretation of the language.

The stories portrayed in Ranmale which is performed by *Dhong* are real stories from society where the names are changed and it has an impact on the person and he/she tries to change it in a better way. Whereas in Siolim Zagor there are no social issues highlighted but in Kalo political issues are highlighted in between the dialogue in a satirical way.

In the process of collecting data and reading about folk theatre and culture it is likely can be said that every country and state throughout the world has its folk theatre forms but by doing a close reading on folk theatre it is understood that all these folk theatre forms throughout the world have evolved from rituals. One of the cultural significance according to a specialist in folk theatre is that ritual is one of the important elements of the folk theatre. It has evolved out of rituals and it has also played a role to inform people and make them aware about what is going on in society and also to entertain the audience. All these forms are

community-centric and play an important role in bringing people together. Another reason behind the significance is to thank nature and the deity through invocation.

The present dissertation studies the different elements used in these folk theatre forms and has analyzed them with a comparative approach. All six elements described by Aristotle in his *Poetics* have been used to qualify it as a theatre form. These six elements are plot, character, spectacle, music, diction, and thought. According to structuralist criticism, the structure of theatre that is plot, character, and setting remains the same, accordingly the structure of folk theatre also follows the same structure. The plot of Siolim Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo consists of a beginning, middle, and end. The characters in all these forms vary based on the mythological story that has been selected to perform. The beginning of the plot in Ranmale and Dashavtari Kalo present the same story that is, there is the arrival of Lord Ganesha along with his wives Ridhi and Sidhi along with a priest performing pooja of the Ganapati where a priest is seen as a comic character who makes the audience laugh which is full of humor. The spectacle of the folk theatre forms consists of costumes, make-up, and stage setup. The costumes in all these plays make use of easily available clothes, for instance, saree and navwari and other accessories they borrow from the village ladies to perform the role of a woman or they make use of the clothes offered to the goddess whereas all the mythological character already have their costume ready since they use it every year. The characters are done by their village makeup artist and also other members of the village help them in dressing up, bright makeup is done for the mythological character. The costumes worn by the characters resemble the mythological characters for example the character of Hanuman dresses up similarly to the role assigned in the play that is he makes use of a tail and makeup done to him similar to the Hanuman to resemble who he is. Based on the costume and makeup the audience is made aware of which mythological character has arrived on stage. The diction deals with the language used to portray the message to the audience.



Language in all these folk theatre forms is the mixture of two or three languages, different from the local Konkani language spoken by the Goans. All these forms of language to some extent seen as an influence of colonialism. Further elements used are music and thought. All these folk theatre forms have their lyrics and musical instruments used to give a desired effect to the play whereas the thought behind all these folk theatre forms is to give respect to their deity and to continue their traditional lineage of these performances and to pass on the mythological and puranic stories to the future generation and keep these stories alive among the people.

Hence research questions on similarities and differences found in these three forms have been examined and resolved.

The critical approach used by K. Chellappan to distinguish three theorists such as Aristotle, Bharata, and Tolkappiyar helps in understanding the different concepts used by the three select theorists and how the comparative approach helps in highlighting its own perspectives' uniqueness.

Critics like Fyre and Propp have discussed the structure and the genre of folk theatre. According to Fyre, there is a structure common to the plays and Propp says that there is a special Poetics that needs to be studied to study the folk theatre as a genre under folklore. Structuralist criticism, studying Barthe's semiotic analysis shows how costumes and makeup act as 'signifiers' to make the audience aware of which character has arrived, hence signified.

Rituals and the three structural elements that is plot, character, and setting show commonality between these folk theatre forms and can be considered as a universal structural framework for the study of these folk forms.

Through the Google form analysis, it is examined that certain steps and activities can be applied to preserve and continue the age-old practice of the folks.

Thus, the formulated hypothesis that there are no similarities in the folk theatre forms has been examined and it can be said that there are similarities among the folk theatre forms which can be evident that some characters in Ranmale and Kalo are the same. At the beginning, there is an invocation of God. The starting plot of Ranmale and Kalo are the same. The thought behind all these performances is somewhat similar.

And in Chapter 4 through Google form analysis there are various steps and activities mentioned to preserve and continue the folk theatre forms. Hence the second research question on how to preserve and continue the folk theatre performances have been examined.

### **5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:**

The following shortcomings have been identified:

- Three folk theatre forms are examined due to time constraints.
- A comparative study on inter-state folk theatre forms could not be covered by the researcher because it would be a wide area for study.
- The study is restricted only to the folk theatre forms and could not cover other folk forms of Goa.

### **5.4. FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A thorough study on an individual element of drama can be conducted.
- A comparative study of one Indian form and a Western form could be conducted.

### **5.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION**

To conclude the present dissertation, it is important to include that Goa is a state rich in cultural heritage and there has to be a lot of research needs to be conducted on Goan Folklore in English literature. The study has analyzed the elements used in the folk theatre forms and has conducted a comparative analysis of these select folk theatre forms. The

primary aim of the study was to gain knowledge about the Goan culture which was not known to the researcher. With the help of the dissertation work researcher has also learned about these unique folk theatre forms which were not known earlier since the location of these folk performances is far away from the researcher's locality. It was altogether a new experience and a plight to learn something new about Goa's culture. The researcher managed to watch live performances of Siolim Zagor and Ranmale. The dissertation intends to provide insights into Goan drama and differentiate it from Western drama. Before examining Western dramas, it is necessary to examine a form of theatre that is deeply seeped into Goan culture. This dissertation therefore will also undertake a quick summary of the performance style of Goan dramas and how they differ from Western dramas.

There aren't many publications regarding Goan culture in English, since Konkani is Goa's native language and most of the works are written in Konkani. It's important to study Goan theatre as a genre. A language barrier shouldn't prevent people from learning about Goan culture and folklore, hence it's crucial to preserve Goan culture in vernacular languages and make it available in English which has a global reach. It is hoped that the present study will provide an avenue for further research into this area and contribute towards the understanding of the local culture and sensitize them towards appreciating the legacy of native culture through the mirror of Folk drama.

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## APPENDIX I

### INTERVIEW DATA

#### INTERVIEW OF PANDURANG PHALDESAI TO COLLECT INFORMATION ON FOLK THEATRE FORMS

##### 1. What is the cultural significance of the folk theatre forms?

Pandurang Phaldesai sir says that cultural significance is their language, Sanskruti, and it is an original form of art to maintain their culture it has a different artistic presentation. Culture is known to the people through folk theatre forms. Singing culture is called an intangible culture and the Goan food is a tangible culture. These are different forms of our culture.

##### 2. How have the folk theatre forms Evolved?

According to him, the first ancient form of theatre is Zagor followed by Ranmale and then Kalo. Ranmale is limited to Sattari taluka and in Sanguem but now it has changed, now they perform half Ranmale followed by a Natak performed in a Tiatr style. Zagor in Goa is of 4 types, for the academic purpose of studying them separately we divide them based on the community as a sign and symbol but in their village, it is called Zagor. The Zagor celebrated at Perni it is called Perni Zagor. Zagor is celebrated by the Hindu Gauda people it is called Gauda Zagor, Zagor is celebrated by Christian Gauda it is called Christian Gauda Zagor and the fourth one is Siolim which is celebrated by both Hindus and Christians. Ancient Zagor masks called “*Mukhvataycho Zagor*”, made use of wooden painted masks. Everywhere there is a ritual of wearing a wooden painted mask. The ancient mask used was of birds and later other masks evolved. The use of bird masks is present in Perni Zagor and also in wild animals



like lions. There are 12 to 15 different masks used by the People during the Zagor performance.

He also mentioned in his interview that there is a belief that if they don't perform the Zagor then it will hurt their village or it is also believed that if any family denies to perform the Zagor then he will be doomed by God. And due to this fear, all the traditions and rituals are continued and if it was not there then all these performances and rituals would have stopped. Rituals and traditions are the reason that the performing art of Goa is still present. Secondly in Perni Zagor the *Mukheli* (leading person) does not wear a mask. In Ranmale, there's only one mask that is worn at the beginning of Ranmale which is of lord Ganpati, and as a researcher, he has studied that the pooja performed by Lord Ganpati comes much later. Every new thing is adopted by the people that have evolved later on developing the performing aspect of the form. Mask form is later adopted in Kalo. The character called Sankasur has a *Kapdi Mask* (cloth mask). Kalo evolved from Vaishnavism since it is related to lord Vishnu and in Dashavtari Kalo they show the 10 incarnations of lord Vishnu. Sankasur robs the *ved (knowledge)* and hides on a couch and because of this Vishnu takes the form of a fish finds Sankasur and kills him. And also highlights the story of lord Krishna.

### **3. What are the various social issues highlighted through Goan folk theatre?**

He says that in any folk theatre of the folk song, there is a mention of social issues, the root plot may be different but in between the play, they portray social issues, For example, when the pooja is performed of Ganpati by the priest, the priest in the play raises social issues, like water scarcity extra. And how the Brahmins reacted towards the other caste during the earlier period. And in kalo, sankasur mocks on brahman. Point out the "*Samajik Vyang*". It is performed in a joking way.

Each Dhong in Ranmale comes with a certain social issue. And the main story is from Ramayana. In Zagor the Portuguese banned the performance of Hindu and catholic Zagor. Hindus are the singers and the actors are Christians. As a part of rituals, these performances are performed.

**4. What social change can be brought through folk theatre forms?**

According to him, it is a form of mass communication; whatever you want to tell to the society you can tell it through the folk theatre forms. people keep what is relevant and important to benefit society and whatever is not important is left out according to the generational change. It contributes to the society.

**5. How do folk theatre forms help in socio-cultural development?**

He says that because of dialogues in the folk theatre forms and due to street performances, the impact of these can be greater.

**6. What are the changes seen in traditional and modern folk theatre forms?**

He replied that traditionally whatever was available naturally from nature was used for the makeup of the characters, and in modern times whatever is ready-made is more frequently used. For instance, certain stones available in rivers give different colors, and mud of different colors is used. Now due to development and learning use of technology is seen.

**7. How the Goan folk drama can be modernized?**

His views were that Kalo was performed in 300- 400 villages but now it is not performed in those villages because people diverted their minds due to T.V. and mobile.

**8. Do you see any future through these forms? Will it help in creating job opportunities?**

According to him, they can themselves create a play. There is scope in theatre performances. People want something new to watch and by adopting new forms one can build their future in theatre art.

## APPENDIX II

### INTERVIEW OF ZILU GAONKAR TO COLLECT INFORMATION ON FOLK THEATRE FORMS.

Zilu Gaonkar sir provided General information on Ranmale: Ranmale is a *Vidhinatya* it takes place at a traditional place called *Maand*. The elders of the village are getting old and youngsters are not attracted to this form. To keep the traditional practice alive among the people, the Gramin Kala Sanskruti Sanstha of Sattari taluka took the initiative to collect people from the village and bring them together on a platform to present the form and have tried to glorify it and to make it attractive in a modernized way and even women have taken part in the Ranmale presentation. Originally traditional performance on *maand* goes on till 6 am but in Ranmale Mahotsav the performance is only for one hour. In Ranmale there is a narration of entire Ramayana stories starting from the birth of Ram, shravanbhal, etc. Since in Ranmale Mahotsav, the performance cannot take 6 hours that is why one hour is given to each of the groups to present their Ranmale. It starts during the Shigmo festival and goes on till the Padvo festival and there is an unwritten rule that they cannot perform Ranmale after Padvo. It is the belief of the people but now there are facilities for it and some groups have reached the national level.

#### 1. What is the cultural significance of the folk theatre forms?

He says, Historically Zagor and Ranmale are very old forms, and their relation is traced back to *Krusha Sanskruti* (agriculture). These rituals were performed to impress God and then these rituals took the form of Natya (theatre).

#### 2. How have the folk theatre forms evolved?

He answered that all these forms started with *vidhi* (rituals), kumari farming which was practiced in our village, doing farming in the mountains. Cleaning the area for ragi

cultivation, after the padvo they used to do the cultivation and this was the ritual practiced every year after going to the mountain they used to return after burning the field for the next cultivation and if the fields burnt then it meant that the next production will be fruitful. And with this happiness, they would come back home and perform another Ranmale called *Kale khutyeche Ranmale*. Zagor and Ranmale's performances are somewhat similar in the characters, and way of dancing, but instruments may differ. traditionally there was only singing and dialogues were not there. But now there is singing and dialogue. And singing is compulsory and without the last song after the character's performance, the character cannot move out of the stage. The main reason behind the complex use of language in Ranmale and Zagor is that it should not be understood by others because if village art is known to others, then new performing art may evolve and our culture will be reduced and it is our culture belong to that specific family and for this reason, they still have the mentality of preserving their culture in their village. Dhong in Ranmale should be only performed by the specific allotted family members. Kalo is not the original form of goa and was first performed in Karnataka and from there it reached Konkan and from there it reached Goa. The performers are from Maharashtra and only in Gulle village of Sattari taluka they formed their group and performed in their village and they used to collect cow dung cakes to light fire since then there have been no lights in the village. Another information provided by the interview is that Kalo is incomplete without the Sankasur and he robbing the Ved this scene is of Kalo and after that Dashavtari natak is performed. Puranic characters are shown.

### **3. What are the different elements used in the forms, Ranmale and Kalo?**

He explained that Characters in Kalo sankasur, Vishnu, and Brahma Dev, are the major characters in Kalo. Sanskasur hide in a sea and Vishnu takes the *masya avtar* and kills sankasur.

Instruments in kalo are table, zanj, pakwaz harmonium and instruments used in Ranmale are dhol, and kasale, in some places, they use taso and ghumat. Whereas Ghumat, shamel, and *Charma Vadya* are used in Zagor

Puranic stories in Zagor are less and characters remain the same, in Ranmale we see puranic songs like Jat is puranic.

Characters in Ranmale are Ram and Laxman Ravan, mostly from Ramayana but in some villages for example in Zarme village characters like Mahadev and Parvati were shown but not it has stopped because the people who performed these roles are no more. Their social characters are more. Based on their caste. In rituals, there were no dialogues but now giving it a theatrical style dialogues are used. It is performed in the temple where a concrete stage is constructed.

#### **4. What are the various social issues highlighted through the folk theatre forms?**

He answered that many social issues are portrayed in Ranmale like family problems and husband-wife problems, a wife narrates her marital problems if her husband is a drunkard then what problems she faces is expressed in Ranmale. If a daughter-in-law faces a problem at her husband's place, then she comes to her mother and shares her problems, these scenes are acted out in Ranmale. Caste-based characters come and share their caste-based problems. Even the latest issues like mining issues, and forest issues are shown.

There are no social issues that can be seen but it has not gone away from their traditional rituals.

There is a social message shown in Kalo based on the political scenarios. The character of Vishnu represents the king so some other character brings a recent political issue which is on the present Goan political leaders. Political issues and minor social issues are raised.

### **5. What social change can be brought through the folk theatre forms?**

It is seen in Ranmale, it is the only form that kept on developing, based on dialogues, characters changed, music was developed, and also in Kalo, the costumes changed.

He said that people do not bring costumes on rent; each group has their costumes since he is an artist and plays the same role every year. In *Ranmalyachi taali* people give *kapad* is given and this *kapad* is used by the men who play the role of women. Now due to the development people started using makeup kits but earlier natural products are shown.

Along with the social problems solution is also given through the folk theatre forms.

### **6. What are the changes seen in traditional and modern theatre forms?**

He says that costumes, makeup, music, instruments characters will be the same but the dialogue and message in Ranmale will be different.

### **7. How the Goan folk dramas can be made modernised?**

According to him, folklorists think that It should be maintained as a traditional folk theatre form. But if we want to spread the form and let the people know about these forms then there has to be modernised. The role of women is played by women in staged-based performances but the original folk form ritual does not include women in Ranmale they have to maintain it in the traditional practices and some modernisation can be made in the stage-based performance. Different Goan folk centers can be set up.

### **8. Do you see a future in these forms? Will it help in creating job opportunities?**

He says that art and culture have appointed music teachers, and theatre art teachers, in the same way, to develop the folk theatre, the folk artist should be given jobs, and provide jobs on these centers or in one complex. In the new education policy, it is mentioned that students

should learn about the culture, and for this, the folk artist should be given the job of teaching about these forms.



### APPENDIX III

#### INTERVIEW OF TANVI BAMBOLKAR TO COLLECT INFORMATION ON THE FOLK THEATRE FORMS.

##### 1. What is the cultural significance of the folk theatre forms?

Ma'am said that these folk theatre forms must have been started as a ritual. They have also played a role in informing people to make them aware of what's happening, she also discussed in her thesis how it is a form of infotainment (information plus entertainment). They also played a significant role in bringing people together, they are very community-centric and that's what they have been doing for centuries together. Zagor is probably the oldest one it is performed by the earliest settlers like Gaudas and only in certain places it is celebrated by Christians who were converted during the Portuguese era.

The significance of Zagor is that it is a vigil festival and there were sentiments of thanking the deities for giving plenty since the Gauda community is an agrarian society and still is and it is in a way thanks the nature. Kalo signifies the change in weather since it starts from the month of November which is the beginning of the winter season. It represents a different set of performances since it narrates the puranic stories. Ranmale has its own history it is performed in Sanguem and Sattari, it is also part of the Shigmo festival and it is believed that it was performed to celebrate victory.

##### 2. How have the folk forms-Zagor, Ranmale, and Kalo evolved?

There is no real historical documentation, whatever we can assume is through the songs and through what people tell us. These forms may have been in existence much before the Portuguese era started. For instance, Zagor was much before the Portuguese era since it was probably performed when the Gaudas settled here as a community. There have been influences of different Islamic reigns like the Vijayanagar empire which was in Goa and that

is why there is a Muslim character. There is an influence of Portuguese especially in Siolim Zagor the Naman is modified and there is an influence of Christianity. Probably it must have been earlier celebrated only by Hindus and recently after the Portuguese era it has been performed by Hindus and Christians. Despite all the changes, these forms have survived.

### **3. What are the different elements used in these three folk theatre forms?**

She said that music is an important element of folk theatre forms. But the kind of music which is there in all these three types is different. In Zagor there is the use of *ghumat*, (Goan instruments), whereas in kalo there is Pakwaz and Harmonium which might not be of Goan origin.

She also said that there are different characters, especially those characters are based on social characters found in society, and some characters are inspired by mythological narratives in Ranmale there are characters of Ram, Sita, Tratika Ganesha, and Riddhi, Siddhi.

There is a lot of focus on costumes and there are hardly any props only a few props are used. There are a lot of body movements and there is a focus on dialogue and conversing with the audience.

She mentioned that satire is an important element in folk theatre, by mocking, by making fun of certain things from society. It is also a way of making people aware of certain things in society.

### **4. What are the various social issues highlighted through the folk theatre forms?**

She said that there are social issues portrayed for example in Zagor there is a character of “*Mahrili Sun*” (daughter-in-law of the Mahar community) who talks about her problem of how her husband spends money on alcohol. So indirectly it talks about the plight of women whose husbands are alcoholics. In Ranmale most of the contemporary issues are taken up like

the tiger conservation in Sattari. In Kalo it is indirect and it is more focussed on mythological narratives. Caste is an important element in a lot of narratives of kalo like there is an episode of Sutradhar and the priest, and there is a mockery about the priest community. It not directly talking about social issues but it is talking about the caste dynamics which were present for a certain period. Through these forms, they attempt to satirize their position in society since that was the only way to show their anger and discomfort towards the hierarchy that existed in society.

### **5. How do folk theatre forms help in socio-cultural development?**

She mentioned that they help in asserting an identity, there is a need for propagation (awareness), and there has to be an effort from the government side to propagate, there are efforts but it has to be done more seriously. It helps in showcasing the rich heritage that the religion carries. It helps in tracing the history of these communities.

### **6. What are the changes seen in traditional and modern folk theatre forms?**

She said that there have been a lot of changes in costumes, and more sophisticated costumes are now available. Mic is used which was not used before. There was no use of curtains because these forms were performed in *maand* areas and these *maands* were either built of mud and smeared by cow dung which is now converted into cemented or concrete stages. Other than these, the content keeps on changing and it will keep on changing with time.

### **7. What are the differences seen in Goan and Western drama?**

She answered that it is a social practice and it is not done in isolation and there are differences based on the climate, geography, and the kind of food that's available, it depends on where these forms are getting developed. There will be linguistic differences, however,

there can be certain common factors such as thanking nature, worshipping the mother earth, or coming together as a community.

#### **8. How the Goan folk dramas be modernised?**

She replied that she doesn't feel that these forms need to be modernised, since we are no one to decide whether it has to be modernised or not. It is the community who will decide whether they want to modernise it or keep it as it is or they don't want to practice it anymore because there have been performances that have gone into extinction like Perni Zagor is not performed in many of these areas. It is performed in some areas because the community is the Perni belonged to the devadasi system since that system is not practiced in Goa even though the form has become extinct. According to her views, they should continue with their practices and try to take up opportunities and exposure that they get in terms of performing in other spaces, other than the traditional spaces. Artists should be given the same respect similar to other celebrities.

#### **9. Do you see any future through these forms? Will it help in creating job opportunities?**

These forms can become harbingers for the change of image that we need very badly in terms of Goan origin. They can show the outside world that Goa is much better than what they have been seeing all this while.

**APPENDIX IV****QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GOOGLE FORM ANALYSIS****1. NAME**

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**2. AGE**

1. 12-18 years
2. 18-25 years
3. 25-40 years
4. 40+ years

**3. PLACE**

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**4. PROFESSION**

1. Student
2. Working
3. Others

**5. DO YOU GO TO WATCH PLAYS?**

1. Yes
2. No

**6. WHAT TYPE OF PLAY DO YOU WATCH?**

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**7. DO YOU KNOW ABOUT FOLK THEATRE FORMS?**

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**8. WHICH GOAN FOLK THEATRE FORMS HAVE YOU SEEN?**

1. Ranmale
2. Zagor
3. Kalo
4. Other

**9. CAN YOU DESCRIBE ANY FOLK THEATRE FORM THAT YOU HAVE WATCHED?**

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**10. DO YOU FEEL PLAYS ARE USEFUL IN SPREADING SOCIAL ISSUES AND A SOLUTION TO IT?**

1. Yes
2. No

**11. WHAT TYPE OF ISSUES NEED TO BE HIGHLIGHTED THROUGH THE FOLK FORMS?**

1. Social
2. Political
3. Environmental

4. Economical

**12. WILL YOU PREFER FILMS OVER PLAYS?**

1. Yes
2. No

**13. IF YES/NO, WHY?**

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**14. CAN YOU SUGGEST SOME CHANGES THAT CAN BE USED TO  
IMPROVE THE PLAY PERFORMANCES?**

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**15. CAN THE FOLK THEATRE FORMS CREATE JOB OPPORTUNITIES?**

1. Yes
2. No

**16. CAN YOU SUGGEST SOME WAYS THROUGH WHICH THE FOLK  
THEATRE FORMS WILL BE KNOWN TO A LARGER CROWD?**

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