

# **Theatre and Political Expression- A Case Study of Tiatr in Goa**

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**JONAS AARON RODRIGUES**

Seat Number: 22P0210016

ABC ID: 771-093-962-178

PRN: 201802684

Under the Supervision of

**MS. PRACHI NAIK**

D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies

Political Science



**GOA UNIVERSITY**

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Examined by: **MS. PRACHI NAIK**



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I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation report entitled, **“Theatre and Political Expression- A Case Study of Tiatr in Goa”** is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Political Science Discipline at the D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University under the Supervision of Ms. Prachi Naik and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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Jonas Aaron Rodrigues  
22P0210016

Political Science Programme  
D.D. Kosambi School of  
Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies

Date: 19 APRIL 2024

Place: Goa University

## COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation report “**Theatre and Political Expression- A Case Study of Tiatr in Goa**” is a bonafide work carried out by **Mr. Jonas Aaron Rodrigues** under my supervision in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Masters of Arts** in the discipline of **Political Science** at the D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University.



Ms. Prachi Naik

Supervisor

Political Science Discipline

Date: 19/04/2024



Prof. Ganesh Somayaji  
Dean

D.D. Kosambi School of  
Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies

Date: 19/04/2024

Place: Goa University



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## **FIGURES**

<b>Figure No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page no.</b>
4.1	Educational Qualifications of the Respondents	57
4.2	Occupational Status of the Respondents	57
4.3	Social Category of the Respondents	58
4.4	Gender of the Respondents	58
4.5	Age of the Respondents	59
4.6	Religion of the Respondents	59
4.7	Survey Question number 9	60
4.8	Survey Question number 10	60
4.9	Survey Question number 11	60
4.10	Survey Question number 12	61
4.11	Survey Question number 13	61
4.12	Survey Question number 14	62
4.13	Survey Question number 15	62
4.14	Survey Question number 16	63
4.15	Survey Question number 17	63
4.16	Survey Question number 18	64
4.17	Survey Question number 19	64
4.18	Survey Question number 21	65

**ABBREVIATIONS USED**

<b>Entity</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>
Bhartiya Janata Party	BJP
Indian National Congress	INC
Indian People's Theatre Association	IPTA
Members of the Legislative Assembly	MLA
Other Backward Classes	OBC
Scheduled Castes	SC
Special Economic Zone	SEZ
Scheduled Tribes	ST
Tiatr Academy of Goa	TAG
Théâtre Populaire de Lorraine	TPL

Chapter	<b><u>CONTENTS</u></b> <b>Particulars</b>	<b>Page Numbers</b>
	Acknowledgements	iii
	Figures	iv
	Abbreviations used	v
1	Introduction	1-15
	1.1 Background	
	1.2 Literature Review	
	1.3 Research Objectives	
	1.4 Hypotheses	
	1.5 Research Methodology	
	1.6 Chapterisation	
2	Political Theatre and Expression	16-35
	2.1 A Further Elaboration	
	2.2 A Worldview	
	2.3 National Analysis	
	2.4 Summary	
3	Goan Theatre and Tiatr	36-52
	3.1 Introduction	
	3.2 Historical Development	
	3.3 Uniqueness and Structure of Tiatr	
	3.4 Political Commentary and Political Expression in Tiatr	
	3.5 Summary	
4	Popular Understanding of Tiatr Today	53-71
	4.1 Introduction	
	4.2 Process of Field Work	
	4.2.1 Field Work Objectives	
	4.2.2 Field Work Duration	
	4.3 Findings and Insights	
	4.3.1 Survey Findings	
	4.3.2 Survey Insights	
	4.3.3 Interview Findings and Insights	
	4.3.4 Insights Gained from Secondary Data	
	4.4 Summary	
5	Conclusion	72-79
	5.1 Overview	
	5.2 Challenges	
	5.3 Findings and Recommendations	
	5.3.1 Overall Findings	
	5.3.2 Recommendations	
	5.4 Concluding Remarks	
	References	80-83
	Appendices	84-90
	Appendix I	84
	Appendix II	87
	Appendix III	88
	Appendix IV	89

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND:**

Political expression has been present throughout the various periods of history and has taken place in various forms. These forms may include literature, music, art, theatre and dialogue and discourse. A social commentary is an act in which various forms of expression are utilised to convey messages regarding political, social, economic and other issues and appeal to people's sense of justice and action. These forms of action may include theatre, literature, music, visual artwork, photography, public speaking, radio, television and film.

Social commentaries have been enacted as a means of political expression, often employed to criticise public policy, legislations of governments unfavourable to the public or even interference of foreign elements in public affairs. However, the crux of this research is aimed at analysing the political factors of social commentaries, so as to explain how these commentaries have aroused the political consciousness of the people and spurred them to take political action and reactionary measures. Hence, the researcher will refer to this phenomenon as a political commentary rather than social. While the term political commentary or political criticism is mainly defined as criticism of the political phenomena in the affairs of states and their expression, the researcher aims at using this term to describe the political underpinnings in the fields of art and culture. In the fields of art or culture, there are many depictions which are political in nature and have a significant impact in arousing the political consciousness of the public.



Theatre has been one of the significant expressions of political commentary which has aroused political consciousness among the masses since early times. From the plays of Shakespeare and the satirical pieces of Moliere to the works of George Bernard Shaw and theatre pieces of many contemporary playwrights, theatre as a form of political expression has been highly influential in making the audiences aware about the political events of their time.

In Goa, there have been many forms of art and theatre which have enlightened and entertained the audiences for many years. These have mainly taken the form of 'khell' or 'natak'. Konkani Natak (or Nattok) has evolved from the Marathi acts under the same designation of Natak. These are mostly created and performed by members of the Hindu community of Goa. These styles of theatre are present all over Goa but mainly prevalent in the North Goa district Talukas like Pernem, Valpoi and Bicholim (Cardozo, 2001). Khell-tiatr or Khell (sometimes known as Fell) is performed and witnessed largely by the Catholic community and is highly prevalent in South Goa district Talukas like Salcete and Vasco. These are usually performed during the celebration of Catholic feasts like Easter and even during the three day period of Carnaval known as Intruz.

Prior to the arrival of Tiatr as a form of theatre, Goans enjoyed folk drama in the form of Zagors, popular in the north and Khell, popular in the south. The deteriorating quality of content of the drama, increasing vulgarity and comedy made these forms of folk drama unappealing to the audiences. These forms of drama began to lose the patronage of the educated masses. Tiatr emerged as a saviour to theatre in 1892, in Goa with the protagonist's credit given to Lucazinho Ribeiro (Cardozo, 2001).

A youth from Assagao, Lucazinho Ribeiro was educated in English. He was highly interested in cultural activities and enjoyed singing English and Konkani songs. At his house balcony, he would present Konkani skits, songs and cultural programmes. He was later on, employed as a back stage artiste in the troupes of Italian Operas which were touring India, wherein he was deeply inspired by the dramatic flair and style of Opera. This experience was crucial in his development of the first Tiatr 'Italian Bhurgo', which was based on an Italian Opera titled 'The Italian Boy'. To make up for lost time in scene and costume changes, Lucazinho would drop the curtain and introduce songs and dances to the audience. While these 'sideshows' were not in any way related to the plot of the Tiatr, the audiences enjoyed them nonetheless. This was how the first Tiatr came into existence on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1892 (Cardozo, 2001).

The word 'Tiatr' derives its nomenclature from the Portuguese word 'Teatro' which means theatre. The terms Teatro or Theatre were more prevalent till the 1970s, and the latter was popular with writers of an English background. Theatre was sometimes spelt as 'Theatr'. In the mid-1970s, with the beginning of Tiatr Festivals by Kala Academy, the above terms were replaced with the Konkani version called 'Tiatr' (Cardozo, 2001).

Tiatr is a unique form of drama, combining various forms of art like music, prose and theatre. A plot is divided into 6 or seven parts known as 'Pordho'/'Pordhes'. The term 'Pordho' comes from the Konkani language which means 'Curtain' and the dropping of the curtain symbolises the end of one 'Pordho'. If a comparison is made between Tiatr and Natak on this criterion, a Natak may only have 2 or 3 pordhos or parts while a Tiatr has 6 or 7. At the end of the Pordho, is the portrayal of a 'Kant', which is a song related to the plot of the tiatr. These Kants are rarely performed, and a tiatr at most will have two or three Kants. The other

performance at the end of each Pordho is that of ‘Kantar’/ ‘Kantaram’. Both the terms ‘Kant’ and ‘Kantaram’ are derived from the Portuguese word ‘Cantar’ which means to sing. Kantaram are songs which have no relation to the plot of the tiatr and usually deal with social, political and religious themes. These songs are performed in the forms of solo, duets, duos, trios, quartets and larger groups. They may be comedic or serious in their nature. Another performance at the end of the Pordho is a comedic skit, which is related to the plot of the tiatr. These comedic skits ensure the audience’s undivided attention and keep the tiatr as entertaining as ever (Cardozo, 2001).

There are mainly four types of tiatr- Historical, Social, Political and Religious. Historical tiatrs are rare, as they are mainly depicting historical events. Social tiatrs are most commonly performed and deal with social issues like inequality, caste, discrimination and the like. Political tiatrs were produced only after Goa’s liberation and mainly expose political realities, inequalities, discrepancies and issues related to public policy. Religious tiatrs are mainly restricted to the Catholic community, which are performed during the Catholic religious season of Lent. These tiatrs are not commonly performed (Cardozo, 2001).

A good tiatr is described from the analysis of certain factors, mainly, a good narrative, attractive music and songs, comedy linked to the play, direction and effective sound and stage settings. The well- balanced and effective execution of each factor ensures that the tiatr is a success (Cardozo, 2001). Some popular names associated with Tiatr include Lucazinho Ribeiro, Joao Agostinho Fernandes, Saib Rocha, C. Alvares, M. Boyer, Souza Ferrao, Jacinto Vaz, Francis de Tuem, Prince Jacob, Agostinho, Tomazinho Cardozo, Saby de Divar and many more stalwarts.

One of the least researched concepts of tiatr as a social commentary is its effectivity as a means of political resistance. Tiatr, while mainly projecting social and personal issues, also deals directly or indirectly with the political landscape of Goa. There is very little research done on the impact that tiatr has made in arousing the political consciousness of the common masses. There have been instances of tiatr acting as a means of political resistance particularly during the post liberation period. Prior to liberation, it should be noted that use of political themes or issues in tiatr was banned by the Portuguese colonial administration as part of their ‘Censura’ or censorship measures. After liberation, during the Opinion Poll dilemma, Tiatr and Tiatrists (tiatr artistes) played a major role, through their performances, in influencing people’s opinions in favour of a separate state of Goa. Even the making of Konkani as part of the Official Languages of India, owes its success to the performances of tiatr, which motivated people to support this movement (Cardozo, 2012).

Tiatrists mainly use Kantaram to depict the political landscape and issues faced in Goa. Many policies which were disadvantageous to the Goan community such as Special Economic Zones (SEZs), Regional Plan 2011, and other immoral political activities were raised by the tiatrists and their Kantaram which have helped improve the popular understanding of such issues and increased their support for the same (Cardozo, 2012). The research problem centres around the way scriptwriters, lyricists and comedians, incorporate political values, issues and information in their works while maintaining cohesion in their plots and original scripts. Since very little data is covered on the same, the researcher aims to bring this phenomenon into the light. This research aims to highlight the importance of Tiatr in the socio-political, economic landscape of Goan society.

## **1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW:**

To better understand the role of Tiatr as a political commentary and a means of political expression, the reviewed literature included local, national and international sources. Works of Philip Auslander (1987) and Michael Kirby (1975) deal with the concept of political theatre and their characteristics. Articles by Michael Spingler (1985), Jan Gorak (1989), Linda Suny Myrsiades (1977) and Tahmina Rashid (2015) elucidate on theatrical works which have served as instruments of political expression in certain countries. Literature of Farley Richmond (1973), Rakesh H. Solomon (1994) and Darren C. Zook (2001) highlight the role of political theatre in India and how it has functioned as a means of political expression. Lastly, articles of Pramod Kale (1986), Dr. André Rafael Fernandes (2010) and Tomazinho Cardozo (2021) have provided inputs regarding the origins and characteristics of Tiatr as a theatrical form of art.

The review of the above mentioned literature is essential to understand the concepts of political theatre, political expression and how these concepts and their representation can be applied to the research of tiatr as a political commentary and a means of political expression.

### **1. Philip Auslander (1987) Towards a Concept of the Political in Post Modern Theatre**

In this article, Philip Auslander highlights the role played by theatre and its nature in postmodern times, in particular, Western theatre. It describes the transition of experimental theatre from modernism to postmodernism. It highlights the role of new social movements and their role in arousing political consciousness of audiences. It mentions the decline of political involvement in the arena of theatre, but not its complete departure.

It speaks about the collapse of distinction between economic and cultural realms, attributed due to the impact of postmodernism in the above mentioned fields. This article proposes a vision of a utopian form of government, revealing the counter-hegemonic tendencies within the existing political structures. Theatre during this period highlighted the social discrimination as well as racial or sexual discrimination.

This article has described the arena of theatre and its relation with political activity in a time period characterised by challenges to existing structures of post war capitalism.

## 2. Michael Kirby (1975) On Political Theatre

This article by Michael Kirby properly defines the concepts of ‘political’ and ‘theatre’. It describes how ‘political’ is mainly concerned with the government. It defines the concept of political theatre as intellectual theatre and how it deals with political ideas and concepts to attack or support a particular political position. It deals with politics as an active subject.

It also deals with the misunderstanding of political theatre and politically analysed theatre, wherein the latter deals with understanding of a theatrical performance from a political perspective, while the former deals with intellectual understanding, standards and structures. One of the arguments is that experimental and avant-garde theatre is political as compared to traditional and accepted forms theatre, wherein they explicitly point out governmental institutions and aspects which require change. If forced to make theatre based on abstract or non-referential works, the creators will ensure that political thought and ideas find a way to be expressed in the script or character design.

This article mainly defines the concept of political theatre and its relevance to current society. It highlights the ways in which political thought and ideas are communicated

through the medium of theatre. It mainly iterates the fact that political theatre is highly intellectual and made to reach the educated masses.

3. Michael Spingler (1985) The King's Play: Censorship and the Politics of Performance in Moliere's "Tartuffe"

Michael Spingler in this article discusses the critical views on society and politics of the French playwright Moliere, which was employed in his plays. This article mainly centres on the political element in Moliere's work 'Tartuffe'. It highlights the difficulties which Moliere faced in presenting his work, which was persecuted at the hands of censorship of political and religious content by the rulers and Church.

In 'Tartuffe', Moliere criticises the role of the Monarch i.e. Louis XIV, wherein all actions, political, moral, social and theatrical are dependent upon his pleasure. Censorship is the highlight of the play. The play depicts the control of power by the people as a means of escaping the restrictive grip of the state.

While the article continues explaining the plot of the play, the key takeaway is the method in which Moliere incorporated political values in his production and managed to convey the message to the audience.

4. Jan Gorak (1989) Nothing to Root for: Zakes Mda and South African Resistance Theatre  
This article by Jan Gorak describes the role played by the theatre and art forms to generate resistance in South Africa. These forms of theatre reveal historical, economic, social and political realities. It highlights the role of Zakes Mda, a multifaceted playwright, whose works highlighted such negative realities and acted as an effective

means of resistance. His works focused on revolutionary awakening of the masses, so that they would be able to resist against derogatory policies of the state.

This article highlights the causes for the rise of politically expressive theatre, mainly racial oppression and discrimination. This makes resistance theatre possible and utilises various means of expression to communicate such issues to the audience.

5. Linda Suny Myrsiades (1977) Greek Resistance Theatre in World War II

Linda Myrsiades, in this article, describes the Greek Resistance Movement during the Second World War led by the Ethnikon Apeleftherotikon Metopon (National Liberation Front) or EAM. It emphasises the role played by resistance theatre in making the populace aware of the political situations. This movement of resistance theatre helped in the political enlightenment of peasants living in the mountain ranges. It employed various local forms of theatrical expression including shadow puppet theatre (Karaghiozis), plays and secular theatre.

This type of resistance theatre helped the revolutionaries gain support of the public and ameliorate political consciousness among the masses. Masses provided the performers with food and other necessities instead of paying for tickets.

6. Tahmina Rashid (2015) Theatre for Community Development: Street Theatre as an Agent of Change in Punjab (Pakistan)

This article by Tahmina Rashid focuses on the role played by different forms of street theatre, mainly Lok Raqs and Ajoka, as promoters of the feminist movement in Pakistan, along with making the public aware about the political underpinnings of the state. These



forms of theatre encourage the dismantling of traditional hierarchies in conventional theatrical productions.

This article mainly covers the role played by this form of theatre in Pakistan and how they helped increase political awareness among the citizens, especially about the existing political conditions. This article also takes on the case of other social, linguistic, communal and cultural issues.

7. Farley Richmond (1973) The Political Role of Theatre in India

Farley Richmond, in this article, emphasises the political role of theatre in India across varied phases of history. This article mainly covers the role of theatre during the pre-Independence and post-Independence periods.

These theatrical works mainly criticised the role of the colonial administration in the pre-Independence period highlighting issues of exploitation and discrimination. In the post-Independent period, theatre was used as a medium of spreading political ideology. This was mainly inspired by the Communist and Socialist movements in the international arena. These works inspired the masses to rally for political resistance.

8. Rakesh H. Solomon (1994) Culture, Imperialism, and Nationalist Resistance: Performance in Colonial India

This article by Rakesh Solomon mainly highlights the role played by the performance arts in fighting the cause of independence. The use of allegory and the local language aided in passing on the nationalist message to the uneducated people of the country. They used cultural events and heroes from history to spread feelings of nationalism, and encouraged participation in the freedom struggle.

The works of Anant Vaman Barve, Soman and D.V. Nevalkar have been instrumental in the use of allegory in their theatrical works and camouflaged them under cultural phenomena. Many historical figures were compared with the existing scenarios of heroes and villains to better explain the situation to the audience, as well as communicating feelings of nationalism.

9. Darren C. Zook (2001) *The Farcical Mosaic: The Changing Masks of Political Theatre in Contemporary India*

Darren Zook, in this article, criticises the tendency of revolutionary and politically active artists to become part of the existing state machinery which they vehemently resisted. It highlights the phenomenon, wherein earlier political resisting parties became a part of the government and began to suppress threats of dissent which were now raised by new political resistance groups. It shows how in post-Independent India, revolutionary political theatre is regarded as anti-national. This article takes the example of Kerala wherein the Communist ideology during the post- Independence period was gaining popularity. One of the major contributors is credited to Thoppil Bhasi, whose works highlighted Communist thought and propaganda.

10. Pramod Kale (1986) *Essentialist and Epochalist Elements in Goan Popular Culture: A Case Study of "Tiatr"*

This article by Pramod Kale focuses on Goan society, its hierarchical structure, the lower middle class migration from Goa, the spatial and temporal factors contributing to the formation of Goan ethos and the Konkani movement, other cultural performances both indigenous and foreign which preceded and affected the development of Tiatr. These provide the context within which Tiatr operate. The plays work within a strictly Goan

Christian moral context and reflect a complex set of attitudes which include, amongst others, an intense regional/national pride for Goa and things Goan, a strong belief in the sanctity of family life and an abiding faith in God and his Church. It also showcases how Tiatr's use of Konkani helped raise the cause for including it under the Eight Schedule of the Constitution as an official language of the Indian Union. This article also speaks about the social stratification of Goan society and how language played a crucial role in arranging this establishment. This article covers the role tiatr played in the socio-political, economic set-up of Goan society. The dynamics of Goan society though varied, complex and difficult to comprehend helped sustain and promote tiatr culture.

#### 11. Dr. André Rafael Fernandes (2010) *When the Curtains Rise*

This book by Dr. Fernandes is a descriptive insight into the world of Tiatr, its origins and evolution, as well as its issues, challenges and problems in contemporary and recent times. It discusses the originators and contributors to the development of Tiatr, as well as other stalwarts who assisted in the proliferation of the same. He describes the theatre scene of Goa prior to the advent of Tiatr vividly and extensively.

He further elucidates the various facets and types of Tiatr and analyses the works of various tiatrists over the years. He describes the entire process of Tiatr from the creation of the script, songs and side-shows, to the advertisement and publicity and to the performance and feedback of the same.

This book is a key insight into the various characteristics and structure of Tiatr, as well as the impact made by multiple personalities in its development. This will be crucial to formulating the groundwork of the research.

## 12. Tomazinho Cardozo (2021) History of Tiatr

This article by Tomazinho Cardozo denotes the historical beginnings of tiatr and its proliferation in Goan society. He speaks about the pre-existing forms of local theatre and how their deteriorating quality helped pave the way for tiatr. He also elucidates the characteristics and uniqueness of tiatr, its major contributors, as well as its distinction from folk art.

He lays a special emphasis on the intricate workings of a tiatr such as its types, songs (kantars) as well as differentiating it from other forms of theatre and folk art. He also has highlighted important contributors to the stage of Tiatr and institutions striving to keep the traditions and spirit of Tiatr alive.

The scope of this research is mainly to supplement the base of knowledge regarding tiatr in the state and increase its awareness among all the citizens of the state of Goa. It will also highlight the role played by tiatr as a means of political expression and its impact on arousing the political consciousness of citizens. While there exists very little information regarding the role of tiatr as a means of political expression, this article will add more evidence to the same.

One of the major gaps in the research is the availability of articles regarding local theatre forms as a means of political expression. Much of the literature review has been conducted with comparative studies of theatre as a means of political expression in other states or countries, or even in general. There is a vast availability of newspaper articles regarding the origins and structure of tiatr, but very little information is provided regarding its role as a means of political expression.

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:**

1. To identify the political phenomena incorporated by creators in the making of a tiatr.
2. To identify the relationship between theatre and political expression through the lens of tiatr.
3. To discuss the popular understanding of tiatr in contemporary and recent times.
4. To explore the role played by tiatr in constructing political movements.
5. To observe the effect of the tiatr on the political viewpoint on the audience.

### **1.4 HYPOTHESES:**

1. Tiatr has acted as a means of political expression in the post-Liberation political landscape of Goa.
2. The popularity of tiatr as a means of political expression has increased in recent times.

### **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

This research will employ both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. It will employ the use of surveys to gather information about the popularity of tiatr as well as public awareness about its role as a means of political expression. It will include personal interviews with directors, tiatrists, scriptwriters and other personalities crucial in the making of a tiatr. Primary data will include personal interviews and questionnaires, while secondary data will consist of newspaper and journal articles, reviews and other literary sources.

## **1.6 CHAPTERISATION:**

### **1) Chapter 1: Introduction:**

- This chapter will introduce the topic of the research. It will include the literature review, objectives, hypotheses, methodology, chapterisation, scope and significance and gaps associated with the research.

### **2) Chapter 2: Political Theatre and Expression:**

- This chapter will highlight the nature, characteristics of political theatre and political expression and the correlation of both. It will include examples of countries around the world as well as India and the states within it. It will study the role of theatre as a political commentary and its role in arousing the political consciousness of the audience.

### **3) Chapter 3: Goan Theatre and Tiatr:**

- This chapter will elucidate the origins of Tiatr and its unique nature and characteristics. It will also display the situation of Goan theatre prior to the arrival of tiatr, highlighting certain factors. It will also focus on the role of tiatr as a political commentary and its means of arousing political consciousness of the audiences and masses. This will in turn, describe the ways in which Tiatr can be a means of political expression.

### **4) Chapter 4: Popular Understanding of Tiatr Today:**

- This chapter will focus on current attitudes to tiatr in present times. It will look at a popular understanding of tiatr, as to how it can serve as a means of political expression. This will aim at collecting and analysing data and information from various sources, be it in qualitative or quantitative methods and approaches.

### **5) Chapter 5: Conclusion:**

- This chapter will present the findings of the collected and analysed quantitative and qualitative data. It will also consist of the recommendations and other conclusions of the researcher.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **POLITICAL THEATRE AND EXPRESSION:**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION:**

In this chapter, a major focus has been dedicated to providing clarity on the definition, nature and characteristics of both political theatre and political expression. Political theatre consists of two concepts, political and theatre. Political is defined as that which is concerned with state, government or politics, having a definite governmental organisation or dealing with political parties or politicians (Kirby, 1975). Theatre is a dramatic art form, wherein actors perform live in front of an audience. Political theatre differs from social theatre in that it has a clear-cut programme of action leading toward a specific goal. The social theatre recognizes the human quality of its material, and through profound treatment, either in terms of comedy or tragedy, endeavours to restore a measure of dignity to it. It appeals to sympathies of the audience, in the hope that once they recognize the essential human quality that informs all humanity, then a better understanding will follow, and perhaps, later, a more equitable distribution of justice will obtain (Robinson, 1936).

Political theatre differs sharply from social theatre. It recognizes a definite goal. What stands in the way of this is criticised with huge blows of devastating ridicule, biting satire, gargantuan laughter. What militates toward the desired end is portrayed with depths of warmth and feeling. Having analyzed the scene, having grasped its points of weakness and strength, this theatre moves toward its goal of a humane society with a force and spirit, a strength and purpose that could come only from a positive, well defined, sound programme. This is the kind of theatre advocated as political theatre (Robinson, 1936).

There are different types of theatre including street theatre, experimental theatre, improvisation theatre, virtual theatre and so on. Political theatre comes into being when the performance is concerned with the state or politics or incorporates political characteristics. Political theatre is intellectual theatre, and is concerned with political ideas, concepts and values. Most commonly understood as an attempt to attack or support a political position, it makes explicit mention of governmental drawbacks and inconsistencies (Kirby, 1975).

Political theatre points out the institutions and facets of the government that require change or an improvement. It makes an effort to modify and shape the beliefs and opinions of the viewer. In most cases, the ultimate goal of political theatre is to seek political action based on these modifications. The political interpretation of any performance however, depends upon the political knowledge of the audience. If someone attempts to evaluate and analyse the content of political theatre, he would do so in coherence with existing political standards (Kirby, 1975).

Theatre as a means of communication is more compelling and able to intellectually shape opinion and belief. The same can be said of political theatre. The 'live' characteristic of a theatrical performance enhances its political efficacy. Political theatre, besides arguing or contesting a certain issue, also provides emotional and intellectual support to those who hold a certain position. It can be considered a rendezvous for those who believe a certain political cause. It provides them a feeling of togetherness, and reassures them that others are also actively involved and pursuing the same goals, thus proving to be an important force in political change. Theatre makes the audience conscious of the wrongs being protested against, but also arouses it to immediate action (Kirby, 1975).



Political theatre analyses mental constructs that support the survival and flow of society. Attacking these structures thereby becomes a political act, and this is possible when the theatre performance has a political component which resonates with the audience and shapes their attitudes. It helps generate a critical consciousness in society and this consciousness is open and transformative, alienated from society and its ideology (Anton-Pacheco, 1982).

To revisit the previous definition of a social commentary, which involves the use of expression through different media to disseminate a message, a political commentary is one which utilises political expression in its media to convey the message to the audience. Political expression is not merely exercised in public discourse or policy. The very term 'expression' encompasses the use of multiple media, such as thought, art, craft, music, cinema, literature and theatre. Political connotations can be found in almost every form of expression.

Political expression has been the driving force of social change throughout history. From the literary works of Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle to the speeches of Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King Jr., political expression has a significant if not dominating presence. Political expression can be found in art, which has a uniquely powerful ability to convey complex ideas, challenge prevailing norms and create strong emotions among the audience. Art transcends the cultural and linguistic barriers, facilitating a shared understanding with a diverse audience, and this is fairly utilised in conveying political values. The most overt forms of political expression besides dialogue and thought can be found in the field of cinema, theatre and music. These forms of expression have proven to be more effective in disseminating political virtues and positions among the general public.

A political play or performance, presents an analysis of society from an ideological perspective, and the viewer relates the events depicted to what he knows of the real world. The action in the play is an imitation of what happens in the real world. The political ideas raised in the play are highly significant and questions brought up are not resolved because these social and political questions are not resolved in the real world. It is these questions that stimulate discussion towards a solution.

Political theatre has emerged as an effective form of political expression in contemporary times. The content of the theatre performance has proven to resonate with the audience and shape their thinking and opinions, and the same can be said about political theatre. Political theatre performances have the ability to instil political values and shape viewpoints of the audience. While there are other forms of political expression which have significant impact on shaping the political consciousness of the audience, political theatre still holds an important place, with its more realistic presentation of certain political phenomena. The strength of theatre lies in its ability to analyse social currents, utilise content and shape it according to the need. Political theatre is a form of art free from restrictions, an honest and progressive cultural force.

## **2.2 A WORLDVIEW:**

This chapter, in further defining the concepts of political theatre and political expression, also places a focus on exhibiting historical and international perspectives of the same and display its validity in arousing the political consciousness of the masses. Throughout history there have been examples of theatre pieces which have made significant political impact and effected political change.

In America, there are diverse viewpoints regarding political theatre, mainly as to how it is influenced by capitalism, modernism and postmodernism. A major characteristic of postmodernism is the collapse of the distinction between economic and cultural aspects. It has, however, been noted that a resistant political practice may reveal the counter-hegemonic tendencies within the dominant discourse, propose an alternative better form of political functioning and deconstruct the process of cultural control (Auslander, 1987).

Drama or theatre was utilised in American history to reflect the social and political problems existing then. Issues such as hunger, discrimination, poverty, economic instability were taken up by the theatre and channelled the political awareness of the people. Taking a gander at history, American theatre focused on a few major issues, one of which was the Great Depression of 1929. This facet highlighted issues of desperate social conditions, poverty, strikes, individual class consciousness, transition to socialism and decay of the middle class. Another issue was the rise of Fascism in Europe. This led to major power struggles in countries across Europe and the threats to democracy were heightened, eventually leading to the Second World War (Anton-Pacheco, 1982).

Interest and preoccupation with politics spread of course to actors and directors as well. Most of them belonged or were related to the groups that had been working in the little theatres of Greenwich Village during the twenties. Accordingly, their interest in experimentation united with their political and social concern and consequently the American theatre witnessed an invasion of dozens of groups dedicated to stage plays with political purposes. The intention of these groups was to confront the audiences about social and political issues and suggest positive alternatives. At that time Communism was heavily criticised against, so these groups

sought to create and encourage radical thought and followers. These groups were classified as workers', independent amateurs and professionals (Anton-Pacheco, 1982).

Workers' groups were political in their approach and were militant and uncompromising in the solutions applied to the social situation. They advocated the destruction of capitalism and its substitution with a communistic type of society. They were an artistic and popular success, creating new theatrical style, a combination of politically committed dramas, stylized productions and collective organizations that had an enormous influence on other groups. Their innumerable productions were based on plays written by themselves, which have been collected in a series of manuscripts, most of them unpublished or kept by private institutions (Anton-Pacheco, 1982).

They were spread all over the country and nationally organised. They were affiliated with the League of Workers' Theatres that later became the New Theatre League, a significant authority in the field of political theatre. A similar group was the Theatre Union whose plays had at their core a coherent political view, and were based on the point of view of the working class. There were other theatre groups as well which catered to productions, centred on ethnically oriented backgrounds (Anton-Pacheco, 1982).

Independent amateur groups were made up of young amateur actors that aimed at reaching the working class and shaping their political viewpoints. One of the characteristics of independent amateur groups was the fact that actors gave up looking for a job with the professional companies and along with a few colleagues and enthusiastic theatre-lovers, set up different groups where they all lived together. Professional groups were more lasting of the three. Their purpose as a group was merely artistic; they were seeking a conscious

audience to follow the program of a theatre that would grow with the years and make a permanent contribution to social-cultural life. The Federal Theatre was set up to facilitate the functioning of these groups. It was responsible for the production of over 1200 works of expression and social commentaries (Anton-Pacheco, 1982).

The 1960s however, painted a different picture. Radical theatre was proven to be supportive of authoritarian social systems. Many international situations were portrayed in a manner supporting the existing systems of government, which further led to the decline of theatre as a radical art form. Another argument was raised which stated that continued forms of political commentary would lead to commodification of politics which would lead to reduction of discussion and silencing of difference.

In France, the 17<sup>th</sup> Century was a dark period for political expression. The shining light was the works of Molière. He challenged the authority of royalty, clergy and boards and refused to concede to political and religious censorship, by embodying critical views of society and politics into the framework of his plays. He transformed theatre into a self –conscious instrument of ironic social and political commentary.

One of his most celebrated works is ‘Tartuffe’, which criticises the role of the monarch in a world designed only to please or flatter him. Censorship becomes the disguised base within the play of the problematic way that it works on stage, the motivating force behind a number of self referential theatrical concerns centred on the relationship between the play and its society and audience. These concerns combine to form a structure based on the presence within the play of a number of spectator-characters who watch other characters trapped in a performance which ricochets between conflicting endings. The spectators in the play then

intervene in an attempt to achieve the ending they desire. There is intrusion inside and outside of the performance either to stop a scene or even the entire play, which is an imitation of censorship (Spingler, 1985).

In *Tartuffe*, Molière uses the established conventions and well-used dramatic formulae imposed upon him by an authoritarian system of politics and manners as a way of criticizing that system, in particular its excessive reliance upon performance as a means of self-authentication. These interventions by the spectator-characters are made necessary by the dilemma of closure in *Tartuffe*, a dilemma which itself has its origins in the history of the banning of the play by the King and the clergy (Spingler, 1985).

Assuming control of performance and possessing the power to release players from the constraints of a performed existence contains the hidden political sense of *Tartuffe*. We find in the play a sequence of events constituting a central pattern in which spectators in the play intervene in an attempt to extricate other players trapped in performance. Successfully intervening spectators will assume powers that are authoritarian and directorial. They will 'write and direct' a scene to bring it and the play to closure. The results or climax varies between limited victory, total catastrophe and final success (Spingler, 1985).

*Tartuffe's* representation of the social and political environment of France suggests that all are merely players in the King's vast comedy. The play reflects the political conundrum of massive concentration of power in the hands of the monarch which displays the reality of the French social world as fragile and illusory. Everyone is a puppet in the hands of the king. The play uncovers a tragic state of affairs wherein one's political being is an invention caught in an illusion controlled by the monarch (Spingler, 1985).

The French Revolution is another event which was immortalised in many plays and political commentaries, the most notable group being the Théâtre du Soleil. It rediscovered the social and political character of the historic narrative and dramatic form, by producing material in the form of fable, fairy tale and other forms of popular theatre. It pursued the dream of emancipating the labour from the capitalist relations of production. The resolute artistic and political integrity of these productions was widely popular in Europe. It offered plays with aesthetic and ideological premises better suited to intellectual audiences. A major work from this group is the 'Mephisto', a historical play, which inscribed the troupe's prior proletarian theatre into a network of social relations that produce a sobering reflection on the contradictory and differential position of political theatre in the social and discursive power grids of capitalist society (Solich, 1986).

Mephisto's place in the tradition of political theatre is compelling because it maps the position and limits of theatre itself in an order where difference is inextricably tied to social class. It attributes the malignant contradictions of capitalist society to its abiding class structure. By thematising the proletarian theatre and presenting it as a problematic venture in capitalist society, the Théâtre du Soleil abandons the impossible project of appropriating the voice of the proletariat. Its critical and reflective understanding of proletarian theatre marks a prudent retreat to the discursive and social position of intellectuals and artists in the social power grids (Solich, 1986).

The French political theatre in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century was developed by artists such as Armand Gatti, André Benedetto, Carlos Reyes and theatre groups such as Théâtre Action de Grenoble, Théâtre Populaire de Lorraine (TPL) and Théâtre Éclaté d'Annecy. These included works

which dealt with themes of social revolution, social and political rights, workers' movements and other political issues (Champagne, 1975).

Another major contributor to political theatre in the international sphere is Bertolt Brecht, who is well known for his form of theatre known as 'Epic Theatre', a form which permitted the playwright to take various approaches to the script. Brecht attached historic and social problems in his works. He argues that social conditions and problems are determined by economic factors. Brecht's influence can be found in theatre across the world. By its very nature, its opposition against the purely commercial aspects its insistence on the rightness of public financial support for an art, this was one of the left. Much of his theatre philosophy was attempted at production by the British and many other countries, with performances such as 'A Man for All Seasons', 'The Devils', 'The Royal Hunt of the Sun', 'Chips in Everything', 'Their Very own and Golden City', 'Happy Haven' and 'Live like Pigs'. Many artists who have followed the Brechtian thought include John Arden, Peter Hall, John Osborne, Arnold Wesker and Christopher Logue (Esslin, 1966).

In England the labour movement's interest in theatre goes back to the staging of mystery cycles by medieval guilds of craftsmen. More recently, in the 1930s, agit-prop theatres were especially active. At the beginning of that decade there were about 150 such groups in England performing plays along principles outlined by the Soviet Communist Party. Such theatre was an expression of the workers movement, and continued until World War II. The economic boom following the war together with the Cold War had profound effect upon the labour movement in England and there was very little political theatre until the 1960s (Shank, 1978).



A major political group, formed in 1968, was the Red Ladder Theatre which began producing plays supporting the fight of tenants against rent hikes in governmental housing. In 1967, major support came to the development of political theatre with the Royal Charter of the Arts Council. This charter aimed to increase access of theatre to the public. The Red Ladder Theatre became the first political theatre group to apply to the Arts Council, encouraging the formation of many other theatre groups with similar political aspirations (Shank, 1978).

The Red Ladder Theatre focused on three different sorts of productions. The first of these was a short skit format of 15 -30 minutes, with the main focus on a particular point rather than a whole story. Sometimes, these plays were made hurriedly for a specific occasion, polished as a result of performances, and frequently adapted as circumstances changed. One example was 'The Industrial Relations Act', crafted in response to the identically titled legislation of the Conservative Government in 1971. The intent of this play was to reveal the economic and social forces affecting the lives of the public. Another example was the 20 minute play by the Broadside Mobile Workers' Theatre, titled 'Divide and Rule Britannia'. It discussed the crucial issue of racism, especially that between the English and Irish workers. The play attempted a class analysis suggesting that class solidarity should be the major focus of the public and that racial antagonism creates a divide between workers in their struggle against a common enemy (Shank, 1978).

All of the political theatre groups have adapted popular entertainment techniques which they hope will be universally enjoyed by audiences. The most common are based on music hall comedy, songs, and sing-a-longs. But a few socialist theatre companies have incorporated a more recent form of popular entertainment- rock bands. An example of such a company was

the Belt and Braces Roadshow Company, with their production 'A Day in the Life of the World' in 1977. It presented an analysis of international capitalism through songs and scenes. All of the political theatre groups toured to survive, but most of them considered their headquarters to be London. A few, such as Red Ladder Theatre, moved to other areas of England to concentrate on the specific problems of worker audiences in a single region. This also increased the opportunity for developing closer continuing relationships with certain union branches (Shank, 1978).

The socio-political and ethical structures of Thatcherite Britain of the 1980s brought the British political theatre into deep crisis which was aggravated by the spectacular fall of official socialism in Eastern Europe. Political theatre has had to re-examine all its parameters - goals, audiences, economics, and thematic resources - and start a critique of its own aesthetics and ideology. Under the pressure of Thatcherism some writers responded by hardening their old Marxist opposition, others by getting assimilated by the bourgeois culture and only few showed a combined integrity and flexibility so as to revise the old discourse of political theatre and attempt a renewal of its morphological and ideological structures. From these discourse emerged new forms of political theatre, the carnivalesque and catastrophic theatre, both of which however, could not revive political theatre successfully (Sakellariou, 1992).

The Greek resistance movement, supported and directed by Ethnikon Apeleftherotikon Metopon or the National Liberation Front (EAM) in the Greek mountains under the German occupation of World War II, spawned a popular resistance theatre that schooled itself among the people and brought a measure of political enlightenment to peasants in the mountain villages, who had limited exposure to theatre (Myrsiades, 1977).

Because the theatre was one of the few places where Greeks could gather legally, and in gathering, confirm to each other their mutual determination to resist the occupation, performances were regarded in the popular mind as communal or national experiences. The Germans, in turn, plagued the theatre with censorship and deletions in the plays, closure of playhouses, and detention of troupe members (Myrsiades, 1977).

There were different kinds of theatre- Karaghiozis (shadow puppet theatre), Lenten plays and secular theatre. due to the pressure of German censorship during World War II, some performers gathered in the mountains to form small groups that learned the songs and dances of the people, improvised and put on didactic plays, Tales of the Greek Revolution of 1821 and scripts were modernized and adapted to the folk mentality while collections of poems and songs made up other performances. Local youths were recruited to play less important roles and local musicians to supply musical accompaniment. The most popular play performed in the mountains was Vasiles Rota's 'Rigas o Velestinles'. Rota's 'Na Zei to Mesolonghi', G. Stavros' comedies, G. Kotzioula's 'To Kainourgio Eikosiena', and the mixed bag agitprop performance 'E Laike Demokratia' were among the slender remains of the repertoire (Myrsiades, 1977).

The people in the villages often took into their own hands the writing of plays based on stories of popular heroes and myths. They printed and circulated the plays and put up wall newspapers when there were no plays available. Most of the free villages tried to give performances, sometimes once or twice a month. Some developed special plays or groups of plays for which they were known. In these performances villagers acted, and the schools, churches, and plateias (squares) of the village provided space for the cheap wooden platform and green-brown curtains that made up the stage (Myrsiades, 1977).

Another source of entertainment was the politicized troupes that toured the mountains. Travelling was dangerous and their reception was sometimes an unwelcome one. Having been denied passes to travel by occupying authorities, the troupes had to pass from village to village at night, by foot, aided by resistance groups and friendly villagers as they carried messages and news to isolated outposts. The resistance government in the mountains helped them meet their daily needs in free territories, arranged for their reception, and provided guards for their passage across the mountains. In spite of their protection, actors were stopped, jailed, and sometimes executed. Often looked upon as foreigners or threatening outsiders in the towns they visited, the troupes had to break down unsympathetic responses to their performances and make friends for the cause. They entered what often appeared to be empty villages singing and marching to attract the attention of the people and to earn a friendly welcome (Myrsiades, 1977).

The historical realities of Africa have often times put theatres in conflict with governments. In the 1950s plays frequently attacked the prevailing colonial authorities. Productions that were overtly political were banned and the producers fined. Though the Kamiriithu Theatre of Kenya, the Samaru Community Theatre Movement of Nigeria, the Zambuko/Izibuko of Zimbabwe, and the Refugee Theatre in Tanzania were genuine, creative, theatrical experiments in their own rights, they do seem to share some common theoretical base in the work of Paulo Freire, Frantz Fanon, and Augusto Boal (Ukpokodu, 1988).

Relevant theories from these men were slashed, merged, adapted, and built into native theatrical experiments that had been attacked by the political establishment but embraced by an ever-growing audience. Freire's main theoretical contribution was in his 'conscientization'- referring to the process of learning to perceive contradictory social,

political, and economic realities that cause oppression and against which action must be taken. It enabled an oppressed population generate its own socio-political consciousness along a revolutionary path (Ukpokodu, 1988).

The Kamiriithu Theatre followed the form of African storytelling, using mime, music, and dance. The storytelling format allowed an active verbal and tactile relationship between performers and spectators. More than this, it seems to have had a didactic purpose since it permitted telling stories about the history of the people. The theatre became a continuous learning process for its members: learning Kenyan history; what happens in factories, farms, and plantations; developing the native tongue; and learning anew the elements of traditional African theatre-song, dance, and mime. Acting was done by the peasants themselves and people who actually experienced particular aspects of the history were encouraged to be in the cast. There was emphasis on active participation both during rehearsals and in production. The rehearsals were all in the open, attracting an ever-increasing crowd of spectators and an equally great volume of running commentaries (Ukpokodu, 1988).

In Tanzania, the Refugee Theatre was one of first African National Congress (ANC) inspired theatre groups. The population of the refugee camps of these South African exiles, ages 14 to 20 mostly, was always changing as new escapees from the apartheid system. There was a great need to educate them both politically and culturally. Theatre in its African tradition of song, dance, dialog, storytelling, and audience participation was the answer. The many experimental plays teaching the history and politics of the ANC and the liberation struggle finally crystallized into a play called *Freedom in Our Lifetime*, first produced at the refugee camp in Morogoro, Tanzania, in 1978. The play and its film version are still used to teach

young ANC members the history of the struggle, which by now none of them are old enough to have experienced (Ukpokodu, 1988).

The experiment theatre inspired by the ANC was adopted by many countries, one of which was Zimbabwe and its group, the Zambuko/Izibuko. Deriving its name from 'ford' or 'river crossing', Zambuko/Izibuko is an egalitarian, socialist theatre group. To members of the group, theatre is not only a means to "navigate history" but a reliable arsenal in the fight for a society that would be free, peaceful, and just; non-racist, non-sexist, non-capitalist, and non-imperialist (Ukpokodu, 1988).

Its famous works include 'Katshaa! The Sound of the AK (1986)', 'Samora Continua (1988)' and 'Mandela, the Spirit of No Surrender (1990)'. All the productions were geared toward articulating vividly and eloquently the social, cultural, economic, and political developments in the frontline states as they were related to or triggered by events in South Africa; it is the strong belief by members of the group that South Africa and its neighbours are locked in one wheel of fortune/misfortune. The intention of Zambuko/Izibuko had been to unite all Zimbabweans in support of the struggle in South Africa (McLaren, 1988).

The plays have a 'pungwe' or 'ngonjera' format. A pungwe is a nocturnal guerrilla political meeting marked by cultural activities like songs, dances, slogans, sketches, and political dialog and speeches. An ngonjera is a short performance for a political occasion; it is made up of poetry, dialog, dance, and song. Invariably in each play, a nostalgic or emotional reference is made to the history of the country where the production is taking place, and this becomes the transition or the trampoline to leap to the South African problem which is central to the production (Ukpokodu, 1988).

Katshaa was based on the *pungwe* format with speeches, songs, and dances in which the audience and the actors together celebrate Zimbabwean independence. Katshaa went on to be performed in schools, mines, halls in working-class suburbs, beer halls, and shopping centres (Ukpokodu, 1988) (McLaren, 1988). Another prominent personality in South African political theatre was Zakes Mda. His works including 'Dead End', 'Dark Voices Ring' and 'The Hill' both speak about political resistance and expression. He targeted corruption in institutions, religious issues, discrimination and poverty and poor socio-political conditions (Gorak, 1989).

Political theatre in Japan has been active since the 1920s and it has always found itself either pre-empted politics or has itself, by duplicating the prevailing paradigm, served to reinforce thinking it had sought to oppose. One of the major groups associated with this is Theatre Center 68/71. It seeks to be both a political and a revolutionary theatre. Politically, it seeks to reinvigorate the vitiated left, not simply by presenting political ideas but by being itself a responsible political entity and thus a rallying point. At the same time, Theatre Center 68/71 seeks to be revolutionary by alienating history and by forcing its audience to confront a new, unified synthesis of that history (Goodman, 1975).

### **2.3 NATIONAL ANALYSIS:**

India has seen its share of political expression in the last few centuries. The arena of theatre is no different. And the confluence of both has resulted in one of the best showcases of political commentaries. Political theatre has had a crucial role to play in many social, political and economic issues. From arousing the political consciousness of citizens during the colonial period or in contemporary times, political theatre has been a key facet of political expression. Prior to Independence, protest was directed against an alien rule as well as social evils in Indian society. In the latter half, theatre gave voice to discontent regarding political

corruption, economic poverty and social oppression in independent India. Used initially only to entertain, theatre later became a vehicle of protest against the political domination of the British and the social ills of Indian society. The vital role that theatre played in the social and political awakening of India should not be underestimated, for in a society where literacy was low and the oral tradition strong, theatre was a potent force for change.

The introduction of English education, establishment of the judicial system, and extension of administration and commerce had brought into existence an English-educated, urban middle class which was alienated both from its own cultural roots and from the rural masses. The aspirations of this class to enter the higher echelons of government service were denied by restrictive practices since imperialist trade and industrial and revenue policies had impoverished India and narrowed employment opportunities elsewhere. Education and exposure to new political ideas in the West, coupled with growing economic distress and political repression, led to rising political consciousness, especially in Bengal where their effects were most commonly felt. The Partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon in 1905 and the consequent Swadeshi movement, which initiated a mass boycott of British goods, increased political tension (Sundar, 1989).

At the same time, the inquiry of scholars and intellectuals into India's past led to an awakening of pride in India's heritage and a renewal of the self-confidence which had been shattered by the British political domination. The cultural renaissance resulting in a great efflorescence of literature, drama and art, contributed to, and drew strength from, the political awakening. The search for roots and a desire for political self-determination, in turn, highlighted weaknesses in Indian society such as gross inequalities and injustices caused by the rigidities and hierarchies of the caste system, and the indignities suffered by women



(purdah, child marriage, denial of education, and prohibition of marriage for widows). This awareness led to various social and religious reform movements. Indian theatre grew and matured against this background (Sundar, 1989).

One of the most famous personalities in Bengal associated with political theatre is Badal Sircar. With his group Satabdi in Calcutta, his performances focused on the issues of the oppressed, even dealing with anti-colonial issues. He focuses on the indifferent nature of the middle-class people to the struggles of the poorer sections of society. Bengali theatre was now firmly situated as a component of civil society, a space in which political battles would be reflected and a future dreamt of. A few examples of Bengali political theatre included 'Neel Darpan', 'Samudra Darpan', 'Chakar Darpan' and 'Gaekwar Darpan' (Menon, 2011) (Sundar, 1989).

Another playwright who explored the past history of India in relation to the pressures and tensions of contemporary Bengal was D.L. Roy, with works such as 'Rana Pratap', 'Mewar Patan' and 'Shah Jahan'. He argued for possibilities of Indian nationalism, and how Indians could be politically free only if they could abandon their feudal values and expiring social priorities (Sundar, 1989).

In 1943, the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) was born as the theatre counterpart to an opposition to capitalism and feudalism, concerning itself with issues of hunger, poverty, social backwardness, caste and political subjugation. Theatre-based political expression since the sixties has tended, though not exclusively, to be strongly oriented towards formal political ideology. Social protest has been couched in terms of power relationships. Bengal still leads in political theatre but has been joined by the regional theatres of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and

Tamil Nadu, because it is in these states that differing political ideologies rival for power (Sundar, 1989).

#### **2.4 SUMMARY:**

Theatre and expression are two separate entities united by political phenomena. Political theatre and political expression may have separate dimensions, but they are inextricably linked. Political theatre is considered to be intellectual theatre which points out the flaws in institutions, while political expression utilises various media such as art, literature, poetry, cinema and crafts. The success of political expression in theatre is dependent upon the understanding of the audience of various political phenomena.

Many countries around the world have employed political expression through the medium of theatre to effect political, institutional and social change. Political theatre was employed in India, to enlighten the masses to join the freedom struggle. It also has been used to criticise certain policies and initiatives of the government, capitalism, poverty social discrimination and other evils.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **GOAN THEATRE AND TIATR**

##### **3.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Goa has always been a land of diverse prosperity and amalgamation of various cultures and traditions. Much of this can be attributed to the influence of various dynasties and kingdoms in historical times. But neither of which had a stronger impact, other than the Portuguese colonial regime of over four hundred years. As a result, Goa became a confluence point of many Oriental and Occidental cultures. This is evident in the presence of various forms of art and expression, in fields of theatre, song and dance. In the field of theatre, one finds various forms even in present times. The most prominent of these are Tiatr, Natak (Nattok) and KHELL Tiatr, which are performed all over the state of Goa and outside. Other forms of expression include Sangodd, Dhalo, Fugdio, Ghodemodni, Chapai, Romtamel, and many more (Fernandes, 2010).

Although it began in Bombay, Tiatr is an essential facet of Goan society and culture. It is one of the most dramatic forms of theatre with a unique structure. Tiatr is a product of modern theatre, with a great influence of contemporary European Theatre, along with a fusion of modern prose and song and music. With a presence of over 130 years in the cultural arena, elucidating the significance of Tiatr in Goa is crucial. As a form of political commentary and political expression, Tiatr and its many facets have shaped the political consciousness of citizens, resulting in supporting policy initiatives beneficial for the state of Goa. While the focus of this chapter is dedicated to the theatre form of Tiatr, it is necessary to provide a historical background for the same.

### **3.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT:**

Prior to the arrival of Tiatr, there existed different forms of theatre and cultural entertainment, mainly ‘Zagor’ and ‘Khell’ (or phell/fell). The term zagor, derived from the word ‘jagar’, refers to a vigil or nightlong performance. It combined religious rituals with dance, song and theatre in the portrayal of the plot. They were performed at the time of certain village and church festivals, sponsored by the village community as a whole. The participants and audience would gather at an open clearing and with a fire at the centre of the space, the latter sat around the fire while the former performed in the space kept for acting. The acting was unscripted, with no fixed theme or story, and characters portrayed it through song and dance. Zagors were performed in places such as Salcete, Siolim, Calangute and Candolim. The plot also included vulgarity and profane attitudes. The production had no rehearsals, script or direction, but it entertained the audiences (Cardozo, 2021) (Fernandes, 2010).

Another form of entertainment was Khell which consisted of ritual dances performed at the time of festivals such as Holi or Easter. The theatrical component of Khells was highly evident during the Carnival period in places such as Colva, Benaulim, Varca, Chinchinim and Raia. Performances consisted of humorous and satirical plays and sketches on village life, folk tales and traditional mythological stories. Many of these performances contained obscene or vulgar themes of extra-marital affairs and cuckoldry (Fernandes, 2010).

While Zagor and Khell enthralled the audiences in Goa for a significant period of time, its popularity began to dwindle. The standards of these forms of theatre slowly began to deteriorate, with the increased use of vulgarities and cheap elements of comedy, along with declining quality of staging such performances. Many people, especially the educated classes

were disgusted with the presentation of such forms of theatre. The result of this was the need to develop a more qualitative form of theatre (Cardozo, 2021).

The credit of the creation of tiatr goes to Constancio Lucazinho Caridade Ribeiro, whose fascination with the writing and singing, and working for the touring Italian Opera troupe in India inspired him to create the first Tiatr titled 'Italian Bhurgo' at the New Alfred Theatre in Dhobitalao. Following the success and the strengthening of the foundation of this new form of theatre, he translated classic stories like 'Aladdin', 'Ali Baba' and 'Carlos Magno' and presented them in the Tiatr format (Fernandes, 2010) (Cardozo, 2021).

Another major personality in the arena of Tiatr is Joao Agostinho Fernandes who is also known as 'Pai Tiatrist'. While Lucazinho Ribeiro may be credited with the conception of Tiatr, Joao Agostinho Fernandes is mainly credited for utilising original scripts, and effecting a higher standard of excellence to this form of theatre. He wrote a total of 30 Tiatrs, making significant improvements to the script as well as the Kantaram or songs. These works included 'Belle of Cavel', 'Revolt de Sattari', 'Bebdo', 'Kunbi Jaki', 'Batcara', 'Mozo Khapri Chakor' and many other famous works. In these works, he elucidated themes of social injustice in Goan society, including caste system, dowry, besides composing original lyrics and scores. The influence of European theatre and literature aided his development of Tiatr, and the Konkani stage (Fernandes, 2010).

After the success of 'Italian Bhurgo', Lucazinho Ribeiro formed a theatre group as Goa Portuguese Dramatic Company. Other popular theatre groups which emerged were Goan

Union Dramatic Company, Ribeiro and Cruz Opera Co., Dom Carlos Dramatic Club, Union Jack Dramatic Company, Goan United Dramatic Association, Goan Capital Theatrical Co. and many more (Claro, 1991).

There are different phases attributed to the development of Tiatr:

- a) The Introductory Phase (1892-1940s)
- b) The Colonial and Post Colonial Phase/ Golden Phase (1940-1970s)
- c) The Contemporary and Recent Phase (1970-present)

While Lucazinho Ribeiro and Joao Agostinho Fernandes are considered stalwarts of the introductory phase, other personalities also deserve a mention such as Sebastiao Gabriel D'Souza (popularly known as Karachiwala), Caitaninho Fernandes, Agostinho Mascarenhas, Regina Fernandes, Carmelina Fernandes and Joao Lazarus D'Souza. Karachiwala translated Shakespearean works of 'Merchant of Venice', 'As You Like It', 'Winter's Tale' and 'Hamlet' into Konkani and presented them as Tiatrs. Joao D'Souza produced 'Romeo and Juliet' as a tiatr (Cardozo, 2001) (Fernandes, 2010).

While the second phase (also known as the Golden Phase) has two parts, before the Liberation and after, the Tiatrs began to develop further, with more focus on indigenous situations, colonial rule, as well as other social, political and economic issues. While political tiatrs were written to criticise the colonial rule (Pai Tiatrist's 'Revolt de Sattari'), these were performed in Bombay due to the censorship laws of the colonial regime. However, following the Liberation of Goa in 1961, censorship was lifted and this led to the unfettered production of tiatrs of varied genres. The major tiatr artists and creators (tiatrists) of this phase include Saib Rocha (born Domingos José Rocha), J.P. Souzalin, Aleixinho de Candolim, A.R. Souza

Ferrao, C. Alvares, Rennie Colaço, Manuel Santan Aguiar (M. Boyer), Minguel Rod, John Claro Fernandes and many more (Fernandes, 2010).

Aleixinho de Candolim penned tiatrs such as 'To Bavtto Dhormacho' and 'Amchea Xetachi Pavnni', which highlighted socio- religious issues and tenancy issues. J.P. Souzalin crafted Tiatrs such as 'Hem Asa Tem', 'Oxench kelear Sudrot Goem', 'Tiklem Cheddum', which focused on social and religious issues. C. Alvares wrote 'Goencho Mog', 'Kednam Udetolo To Dis', 'Mhoji Vonnin', which exhibited issues of the poor, the physically challenged and marginalised (Fernandes, 2010).

With the political freedom obtained after Liberation, many Tiatrists began penning tiatrs with politically expressive content, the most prominent being Nelson Afonso and M. Boyer. Nelson Afonso wrote the tiatrs 'Nationalist' and 'Doctor Salazar', which strongly contained political themes. M. Boyer was considered to be another radical tiatrist, who was able to capture social and political themes in his works. He is the only tiatrist to be awarded the Songit and Nattok Academy Award and the Padmashree from the Government of India. He wrote a Tiatr 'Ghor Dukhi Ganv Sukhi', which highlighted issues of student activism. He also wrote tiatrs such as 'Chintnam Zalim Sopnam', which spoke about the drug menace following the increase of hippies, 'Ekuch Rosto', which focused on the need of unity between the Hindu and Christian population for the development of Goa and communal harmony and 'Rinnkari', which dealt with the discrepancies between the landlords or 'Bhatkars' and the tenants or 'Mhundkars' (Cardozo, 2009).

The last and current phase focuses on tiatr in recent times and also features the development of Khell-Tiatrs or Non-Stop Tiatrs. The artists in this phase include Tomazinho Cardozo, Wilson Mazarello, William de Curtorim, John De Silva, Mario Menezes, Roseferns, Prince Jacob, Lawry Travasso, Menino de Bandar, and many other significant figures. The themes of this period have mainly attributed their focus to social issues (Cardozo, 2012) (Fernandes, 2010).

### **3.3 UNIQUENESS AND STRUCTURE OF TIATR:**

Tiatr is fairly unique as a form of theatre as it cannot be considered musical drama or Shakespearean theatre. Although the musical component is present, it cannot be classified as a musical. The etymological roots of the word Tiatr stem from the Portuguese term 'Teatro' or 'Theatro', which translates to 'Theatre'. With further Anglicisation and development of Romi Konkani, the term evolved into the currently known 'Tiatr' (Cardozo, 2021).

The major organisation associated with Tiatr is the Tiatr Academy of Goa (TAG), which oversees the development and proliferation of this form of theatre. This organisation also holds events and competitions to further spread the awareness of Tiatr and in increase the participation in the same. Tiatrs are organised and performed at various centres in Goa, such as the Kala Academy, Ravindra Bhavans, Gomant Vidya Niketan and Pai Tiatrist Hall. The Tiatr Academy of Goa (TAG) hosts an annual Tiatr Competition cum Festival with its beginnings in 1974. This has provided a major boost to budding and new artists to showcase their talents (Cardozo, 2012).



A good Tiatr consists of an excellent plot, attractive songs and music, comedy linked to the script, as well as other factors such as acting, stage setup, light effects and background music. Another unique facet of tiatr is its structure, wherein the entire plot is divided into seven parts or 'Pordho/Pordhe'. There are songs sung in between the pordho called Kant, which are relevant to the storyline. There are a few of these sung in tiatrs and can be short or long in duration. At the end of each pordho, there are two songs or Kantaram, which are sung. These songs mainly deal with social, political, economic and other recent issues which are present in the state. These kantaram can be sung as solos, duets, trios, quartets and more (Cardozo, 2021).

There is an assumption made by many that Tiatr is similar or identical to a Natak. However, there are stark differences between the two. While there is a big distinction between the number of parts of each, Tiatr has proven to cover a wider scope of themes as compared to Natak. The script of a tiatr determines its success to a significant degree. The standards of scripts in the years of tiatr's inception exhibited high levels of quality owing to the highly educational background of the writers and directors. Tiatrs at the beginning mainly created adaptations of English Drama and theatre such as Hamlet and Ali Baba. Joao Agostinho Fernandes was the first to write and direct tiatrs with an original script. Other writers include Karachiwala, A.R. Rocha, Aleixinho de Candolim, C. Alvares and M. Boyer. These scripts dealt mainly with issues of family, society and other virtues (Cardozo, 2021).

No tiatr script or performance is complete without the element of comedy. Most of the comic skits have some relation to the plot of the tiatr. The right balance of comedy and its integration with the plot determines the success of any tiatr. Often comedy is also employed in the singing of kantaram. A crucial factor determining the success of any tiatr lies in the effective direction and guidance by the director. The director ensures that the actors recite their parts with correct vocal timbre and intonation, along with voice modulation and facial expressions. He also coordinates the efforts put forth in the stage setting, lighting and background music. The performance of actors in a tiatr is extremely crucial for its success. They give life to the characters designed in the script, and enthrall the audiences with their stellar performances (Cardozo, 2021).

So to announce the arrival of a tiatr, back in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, a unique method was employed. A jeep, pick-up or rickshaw was fitted with a Public Address System, along with attached billboards. While the vehicle plied on the streets, popular Konkani were played to attract the attention of the locals. Handbills filled with the details of the tiatr were handed out to those who were interested. Announcements were also made over the PAS to convey the details and timings of the performance. In some places, handbills were distributed at churches after Sunday mass services. Even posters were displayed at prominent shops and spots (Fernandes, 2010).

Nowadays, newspapers and dailies have a section dedicated to advertisements of tiatrs and their timings. Digital modes of circulation have also been implemented by creators, such as through Meta, Whatsapp and Instagram. While the TV commercials have declined, there are still a few advertisements made through this medium.

### **3.4 POLITICAL COMMENTARY AND POLITICAL EXPRESSION IN TIATR:**

Tiatr has served as a popular avenue of theatre and entertainment for the Goan masses. Its role, however, as a political commentary has been highly significant. Many tiatrs have been created along political themes, highlighting various errors and discrepancies of the existing structure and performance of the government. The major boost to tiatr being a form of political commentary is evident in the portrayal or singing of various songs or kantaram after each pordho of a tiatr.

While during the colonial regime, tiatrs were not political in nature, due to the censorship imposed by the former, tiatrs of such nature were presented outside Goa in Bombay and other places. After Goa's Liberation in 1961, there was more freedom to directors to employ political plotlines in their tiatrs. Many major issues were undertaken by tiatrists and their works along with the singers of various kantars. These issues included the Opinion Poll which decided whether Goa should merge with Maharashtra or become a union territory, the language agitation which would eventually declare Konkani as an official language of Goa, as well as other significant issues such as public facilities and infrastructure, tourism, Regional Plans, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), etc. (Cardozo, 2012).

During the Portuguese Colonial regime, 'Censura' or censorship was highly prevalent. Any form of literature, art or other forms of expression was subject to heavy scrutiny and censorship by the colonial authorities. This also extended to the avenue of tiatr as well, which made it rather difficult for creators to create plots which criticised the functioning of state affairs. Many of such tiatrs were however presented outside Goa in places such as Bombay. An example of this was Pai Tiatrist's 'Revolt de Sattari' as well as Nelson Afonso's 'Dotor

Salazar', which were critical of the Portuguese colonial regime (Cardozo, 2021) (Cardozo, 2012).

The stalwarts of incorporating political content in Tiatr include Nelson Afonso, M. Boyer, Tomazinho Cardoso, Remmie Colaco, Kid Boxer, Roseferns, Francis de Tuem, Seby de Divar, A.S. Conception, C. Alvares, and many others. The Kantaram (songs) of tiatr became the major facet of political expression. These kantaram were able to uniquely transmit political values and messages to the audiences in order to arouse their political consciousness. The various artists associated with this are Kid Boxer, Alfred Rose, Tomazinho Cardozo, Saby De Divar, Francis De Tuem, Nelson Afonso, Olga Vaz and Lawry Travasso.

Following the Liberation of Goa, two main topics occupied the political discourse- the Opinion Poll and language agitation, not excluding other significant issues. While there were no tiatrs openly dedicated to these two issues, the major role played was by the kantars which helped arouse the political consciousness of the citizens. The role played by the singers of kantars was truly influential in shaping the political opinions of the citizens and the success of Goans in these issues. Songs of M. Boyer, Remmie Colaco, Carmo, Kid Boxer, Anthony, Nelson Afonso and A.S Conception, encouraged the citizens to rally their support behind the formation of Goa as a Union Territory rather than let it be a part of Maharashtra. Besides performances in tiatrs, these artists also would perform at meetings which would discuss this issue. It is often said that the songs of these tiatrists resonated among the audiences gathered and shaped their political consciousness.

With regards to the language agitation, which would decide the official language of the state of Goa, the role played by tiatr was highly significant. As one of the few platforms of Konkani theatre, new vocabulary was introduced in tiatrs which expanded the base of Konkani as a language. In this movement, the role played by tiatrists such as M. Dod de Verna, Tomazinho Cardoso, Miguel Rod, Remmie Colaco, Wilmix Trio, Zemix, etc. through their songs was highly influential. Even today, tiatrists are the strongest supporters of the Konkani language. Certain songs during this time include ‘Sundor Mhoji Bhas’, ‘Amchem Goem’, ‘Dista Toxem Nasta’, ‘Bhed- Bhav’, ‘Ekponnan Jiyeum-ia’, ‘Aicho Goenkar’, which stressed on the importance of the Konkani language, Goan identity, communal harmony and discrimination (Cardozo, 2022).

To not talk about M. Boyer vis-à-vis political content is truly insignificant. His incredible work in the field of tiatr earned him many accolades and prestigious awards like the Padmashree. Being an exceptional tiatrhist, writer and singer, he was also an ardent social activist. Much of his works underpinned social and political themes, exhibiting social problems, political problems and other problems plaguing Goan society. He lobbied for the preservation of the Goan identity and the importance of the Konkani language in the same. He used the stage as well as songs to arouse feelings of solidarity among the Goans. His works stirred social and political consciousness, extolled communal harmony, criticised social evils such as alcoholism, superstitions, drug addiction, student issues, marriage and many more. While incorporating humour in the tiatr, he ensured poignancy in the overall storyline. Besides incorporating political content in his scriptwriting, M. Boyer also effected the same in his song writing and presentation of kantars, depicting social, economic, linguistic, political and cultural issues (Cardozo, 2009).

In one of his tiatrs, 'Rinnkari', M. Boyer elucidates the issues between the landlords (Bhatkars) and tenants (Mhundkars) regarding property and the discrimination and ill-treatment meted out to the latter by the former. The tiatr displays the victory of the Mhundkars over the Bhatkars. Following Goa's Liberation on December 19<sup>th</sup> 1961, the abolition of censorship meant the return of free speech and expression. Many socio-political movements were undertaken by citizens especially students. One such movement was the concession of bus fares, which led to protests as well as violence. This movement formed the basis of one of M. Boyer's tiatrs, 'Ghor Dukhi Ganv Sukhi', which recognised the right of students to protest causes affecting them as well as Goans in general, but abhorred the use of violence to implement such measures (Cardozo, 2009).

Another issue tackled by M. Boyer was that of tourism. While in the early years of being liberated, many social, political, economic and other changes engulfed Goa. One of these changes encouraged the promotion of Goa as a tourist destination, which was effectively implemented. This led to an influx of tourists in Goa, domestic as well as foreign. While revenue generated from tourism boosted the rate of development in Goa, it also brought in problems such as narcotics, drugs and other psychotropic substances. Goan youth and families began to suffer from problems of addiction and drug abuse. M. Boyer penned a tiatr titled 'Chintnam Zalim Sopnnam', which highlighted this serious issue and warned the government of serious consequences if this issue was not dealt with in a proper manner (Cardozo, 2009).

Another Tiatr which highlighted the political acumen of M Boyer was the one titled 'Ekuch Rosto', elucidating the importance of communal harmony. This tiatr dealt with the communal tensions which arose during election periods wherein leaders would campaign along communal lines. He stressed on unity between different religions for the overall development of Goa. This tiatr was famous not within Goa but outside as well. Another tiatr which depicted the issue of superstitions and other social issues was 'Adim Tem Atam Hem'. One of his most celebrated tiatrs was 'Sonvsar Sudhorlo', which highlighted the evil effects of the dowry system. This was loved by audiences all over Goa, which dealt with social and political issues. Besides these tiatrs, M. Boyer also performed various kantaram with political undertones and social issues as the subject to further ameliorate the understanding of the masses on such situations. During many agitations, especially during the periods of agitation regarding the merger of Goa into Maharashtra and the resultant Opinion Poll and Konkani being the Official Language of the state of Goa in the 1980s, M. Boyer had a crucial role to play in arousing the political consciousness of the masses (Cardozo, 2009).

Another prominent figure with regards to political content in Tiatr was Nelson Afonso, whose tiatrs were mainly popular for dealing with the political theme. His political themes were very much appreciated among the Goan audiences. His tiatrs include 'Dotor Salazar', 'Nationalist', 'Almas do Outro Mundo', 'Dolorosa', 'Jikle re Jikle', 'Goemkar te Goemkar' and 'Ghorabo'. Besides tiatrs, he also sang political kantaram and formed a trio with A.S. Conception and Anthony to do the same. They criticised the ill-effects of certain governmental policies on the people, especially their implementation. They were active during the 1960s and 70s. Even during the Opinion Poll, they were crucial in pointing out the flaws in the merger (Cardozo, et al., 2019).

Another such person was Pedro Xavier D'Costa, also known by his sobriquet 'Prem Kumar', who revolutionised the Tiatr stage with development, especially in the field of stage setting and visualisations. His tiatrs 'Jawan' and 'Abdul Narayan D'Souza' and 'Fulam Ani Kantte' dealt with political themes such as patriotism and communal harmony. Another character who was controversial in the field of political expression in tiatr was Kid Boxer. He brought out political tiatrs which at times were against existing structures of governance and would invite their ire on him. Some of his works include 'Sozmonnent Chuk Zali', 'Zulum' and 'Kidachem Sopon' (Cardozo, et al., 2019).

A major influence in the field of tiatr as well as political expression in the same is Mr. Tomazinho Cardozo, whose efforts and works in Tiatr and Kantar and their preservation and proliferation are unparalleled. With over 50 tiatrs made, his presence in the field of tiatr is highly eminent. The same can be said with regards to the matter of political expression be it in the scripts or the kantars of his tiatrs. Many of his politically expressive works include 'I Love Goa' 'Kallokh Ani Uzvadd', 'Ixtt', 'Ontoskorn Ani Kaido', 'Kanttech Kantte', 'Sanklleo' and 'Somaz Seva.' 'Kallokh Ani Uzvadd' was a tiatr with a theme of communal harmony, while 'Ontoskorn Ani Kaido' dealt with the ramifications of the Mundkar Act (Menezes, 2021).

'Sanklleo' was a political drama, highlighting the disenchantment and frustration of a freedom fighter, who witnessed Goa fall into the evil forces of corruption after struggling for freedom and liberation from Portuguese rule. 'Kanttech Kantte' highlights the frailty of being an upstanding personality in a dirty and corrupt environment of politics and governance. Values of sincerity, honesty and integrity suffer tremendously in the pursuit of power and



staying at the top. The protagonist is a sincere hardworking person who becomes a legislator, only to find that he must corrupt himself in order to keep his office and power. The tiatr ‘Somaz Seva’ follows the story of a political leader who works for the development of his constituents, but hands the contracts of such developmental projects only to his relatives. This highlights the issue of bias, abuse of power and familial interference in the course of development (Menezes, 2021). ‘I Love Goa’ deals with the issue of reckless emigration of Goans into foreign lands, who sell off their ancestral lands and indirectly lead to policy changes harming the well-being of the state of Goa.

In contemporary times, one of the notable creators who worked on Tiatr is Mr. Antonio Rosario Fernandes, popularly known as Roseferns. His works revolved around social and political themes, mainly on the issue of influx of migrants into the state and other themes such as corruption, political power play and elections. Some of these works include ‘Goenkar’, ‘Hem Amchem Goem?’, ‘Ami Goenkar Tumi Konn?’, ‘Goenkara- Tum Ragar Zainaka’, ‘Hem Oxench Choltalem’ and ‘Mhaka Kiteak Poddlam?’ (Pires, 2023).

In recent times the most prominent name attributed to political expression in Tiatr is Mr. Francis De Tuem, often known for his tiatrs and kantars, which directly or indirectly criticise political leaders, parties and governments. Some of his works include ‘Social Worker’, ‘Ger’rak Nhoi, Vor’rak Melo’, ‘Savdhaan Goa’, ‘Reporter’, ‘Question Mark’, ‘Serkar 420’ and many more. His work ‘Social Worker’ elucidates the situation of social workers only attempting to gain political mileage in elections, and the legislators weighing grievances of the public in terms of winning probabilities at upcoming elections. It even deals with political

evils such as corruption. The kantars used in this tiatr also highlight political issues (Herald, 2023).

In his Tiatr 'Reporter', Francis De Tuem portrays the spirit of a reporter in exposing the truth in spite of ulterior schemes by those in power. It showcases issues of votebank politics, political pressure on media operators and corruption. This tiatr crossed 100 shows and also included politically expressive kantars. The Tiatr 'Serkar 420' deals with a plethora of issues be it social or political, such as public sanitation systems, coal pollution, protection of heritage monuments. This tiatr also features one of Francis De Tuem's Kantars 'Dha Ghatki Hat' which directly criticised the real life defection of 10 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) of the Indian National Congress (INC) party into the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). He also places focus on the Anti- Defection Law which requires strengthening and proper implementation (Desk, 2019) (Goan, 2015) (Esteves, 2019).

The tiatr 'Question Mark' takes into consideration the Regional Plan, environmental destruction, migrant overpopulation and controversial real estate projects in the state of Goa and is based on the real life and death of Fr. Bismarque Dias, a social activist heavily involved in protesting against such projects. The tiatr explains in detail, besides other problems, the issue of land conversion in Goa and the discrepancies associated with it. This tiatr has been heavily crucial in increasing political awareness of the citizens regarding the above-mentioned issues, either through the script or the kantars. The Tiatr 'Savdhaan Goa' is a political drama, which elucidates issues of elections, defections and other challenges to democracy, particularly in Goa. Francis De Tuem puts forward the message of awareness to

Goans regarding the political scenario in Goa, and to vote responsibly in elections and help in maintaining democracy (Times, 2016) (TNN, 2016) (Desk, 2017).

### **3.5 SUMMARY**

Tiatr began in Goa almost 130 years ago and has undergone many changes since then. With a unique structure and evolution, Tiatr has painted the entire landscape of Goa on the stage, the good, bad and the ugly. While depicting various social, cultural, historical and religious themes, Tiatr has been crucial as a political commentary, acting as a means of political expression throughout the various phases of post-Liberated Goa. This political expression has been implemented by many directors, singers, actors and other tiatrists.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **POPULAR UNDERSTANDING OF TIATR TODAY**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Tiatr has been a source of entertainment for over 130 years, undergoing a journey of evolution and proliferation over this course of time. It has showcased a myriad of themes ranging from society, polity, economics, culture and religion. As a political commentary, tiatr and its varied facets have been very influential in key political issues in the post- Liberation period such as the Opinion Poll and the Official Language agitation, along with other political, social and economic issues. This avenue of political expression has been popular even in contemporary and recent times, taking up a plethora of issues ranging from Special Economic Zones (SEZs), Regional Plan, environmental destruction, flawed implementation of governmental policies and schemes, political defections and the like.

Over the course of this dissertation, the researcher conducted an analysis of political theatre, political commentary and political expression practiced in countries around the world as well in India. This analysis helped in the researcher's comprehension of the above mentioned concepts, as well as provides some insights into the study of Tiatr as a political commentary and a means of political expression. This chapter focuses on the field work conducted by the researcher as well as the analysis of the same, along with the findings reported and insights gained.

#### **4.2 PROCESS OF FIELD WORK:**

The researcher was apprised of various research methodologies and techniques. Based on this understanding the researcher aimed at gathering information using the survey methods, questionnaires and interviews. This was also due to the fact that the researcher had to gather

data regarding people's perceptions and attitudes with regards to Tiatr. While conducting the survey, importance was given to snowball sampling along with random sampling methods. The use of internet assisted in circulating the survey among multiple respondents. The researcher utilised archival studies to collect secondary data focusing on research of existing documents, online journal articles and reviews.

The field work consisted of collection of primary as well as secondary data. This included interviews, survey questionnaires, subjective and objective questions, newspaper and journal articles, books and reviews of tiatrists and tiatrs. With regards to the inventory utilised to conduct the field work, the researcher employed the smartphone to record interviews with respondents, capture images of the varied articles and documents, download internet articles, reviews and online books. The researcher also made use of notepads and stationery to note down key points and facts made by the interviewees. The researcher utilised a scooter to commute to the various locations of data collection.

#### **4.2.1 Field Work Objectives:**

- a) Collection of Primary Data (Surveys, Interviews)
  - Close- ended questionnaires.
  - Personal Interviews with open- ended questions.
- b) Collection of Secondary Data (Newspaper, Journal and Research Articles)
  - Books
  - Tiatr reviews
  - Tiatrist profiles
  - Origins and Evolution of Tiatr

Vis-à-vis the collection of primary data, the researcher identified various tiatrists and resource persons to be interviewed across contemporary and recent periods of time. These

included Dr. Carlos Fernandes, Fr. (Dr.) Ramiro Luis, Fr Luis Gomes, Mr. Tomazinho Cardozo, Mr. Francis De Tuem and Mr. Antonio Rosario Fernandes (also known as Roseferns). The interviews consisted of subjective questions, so as to gather the inputs of the interviewees regarding Tiatr as a political commentary and a means of political expression. These interviews also helped the researcher gain insights into the past, contemporary and current perceptions of Tiatr, and comparatively analyse tiatrs across various time periods.

A Google survey cum questionnaire was generated by the researcher with the aim to gather public perceptions and attitudes regarding tiatr as a means of political expression among the citizens of Goa. The researcher was able to gather over 260 responses from respondents almost covering the entire state. It covered respondents across varied age groups, social categories and educational and occupational backgrounds.

To collect secondary data, the researcher conducted visits to both, the Krishnadas Shama Goa State Central Library, Panjim and the Goa University Library to perform the same. The major source of information, owing to the lack of existing literature, was 'Tiatr Machi', an anthology of articles related to Tiatr in Goa. This anthology covered the phases of Tiatr from its inception to recent times. Besides this work, the researcher also explored various online journal articles and books, such as 'When the Curtains Rise' by Dr. Rafael Andre Fernandes, along with newspaper reviews of various tiatrs like 'Question Mark', 'Serkar 420', 'Reporter', 'Savdhaan Goa', etc. and tiatrists such as Francis de Tuem and Rosario Antonio Fernandes (Roseferns)

The collected data assisted the researcher in providing a comprehensive analysis and background to the role of Tiatr as a political commentary and a means of political expression. It also ameliorated the researcher's understanding of the various facets, intricacies and historical bases of tiatr.

#### **4.2.2 Field Work Duration:**

The researcher began fieldwork with the circulation of the survey questionnaire among the citizens of Goa. The entire fieldwork process lasted for over a month, and included visits to interviewees and respondents, phone calls and recording sessions and library visits to collect secondary data. The researcher covered places in North Goa district in a physical capacity, while relying on the internet to circulate the survey questionnaires to citizens all across Goa. The researcher also maintained a field diary to record the various interactions and physical visits undertaken during the period of field work.

### **4.3 FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS:**

#### **4.3.1 Survey Findings:**

The researcher generated a Google questionnaire cum survey which was circulated among citizens, students, peers, lecturers, members of the tiatr community and many more respondents. This questionnaire generated a total of 261 responses from respondents across villages and Talukas all over Goa. The survey inquired various aspects of political expression and tiatr, with the aim to gain insights into the perceptions and attitudes of the population regarding the same.

### Educational Qualification

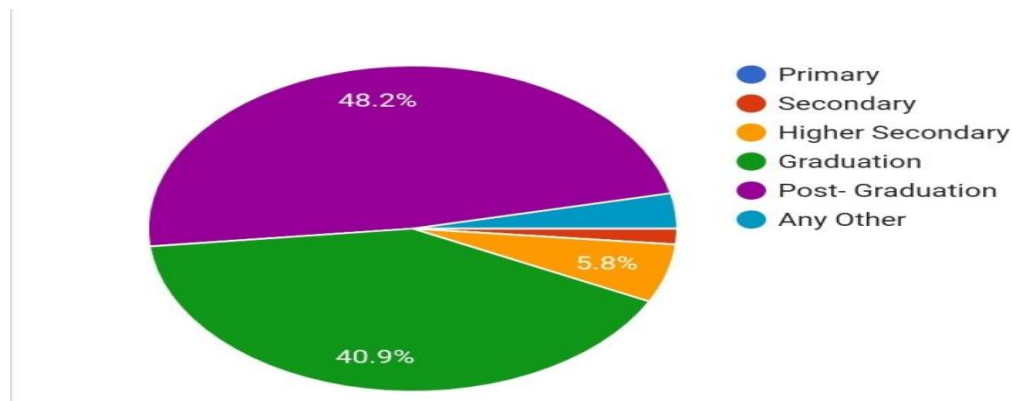


Fig. 4.1: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Vis-à-vis the educational backgrounds of the respondents, 128 respondents pursued post graduate studies, while 105 respondents were graduates, which accounted for around 49% and 41% respectively. Almost 6% of the respondents were higher secondary pass-outs while the rest of the respondents were secondary pass-outs and graduates from alternative forms of education.

### Occupational Status

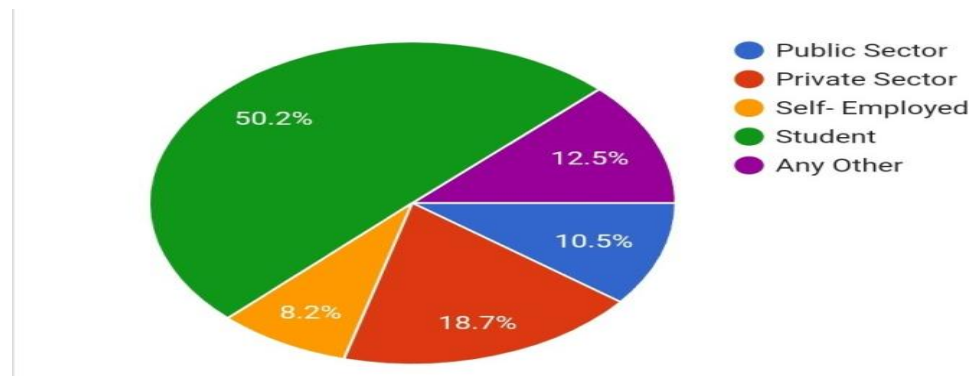


Fig. 4.2: Occupational Status of the Respondents

129 respondents belonged to the student community, while 49 respondents were privately employed. 30 respondents were employed in the public sector, while 21 respondents were self employed. Approximately 50% of the respondents were students, 19% were privately employed, 11% were employees of the public sector and 8% were self-employed. The rest of the respondents had alternate occupational statuses.



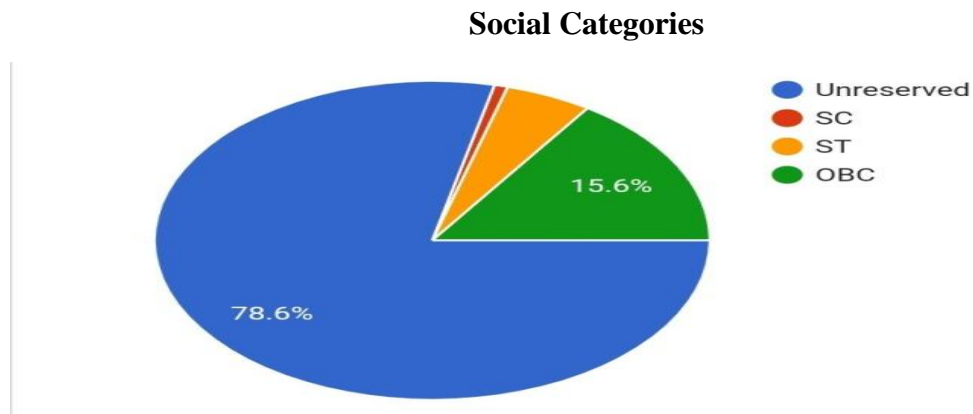


Fig. 4.3: Social Category of the Respondents

A vast majority of 206 respondents belonged to the unreserved social category accounting to around 79% of the total respondents. Roughly 16% of the respondents belonged to the social category of Other Backward Classes (OBC) amounting to 40. The rest of the respondents belonged to the social categories of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), accounting for 13 and 2 respondents respectively.

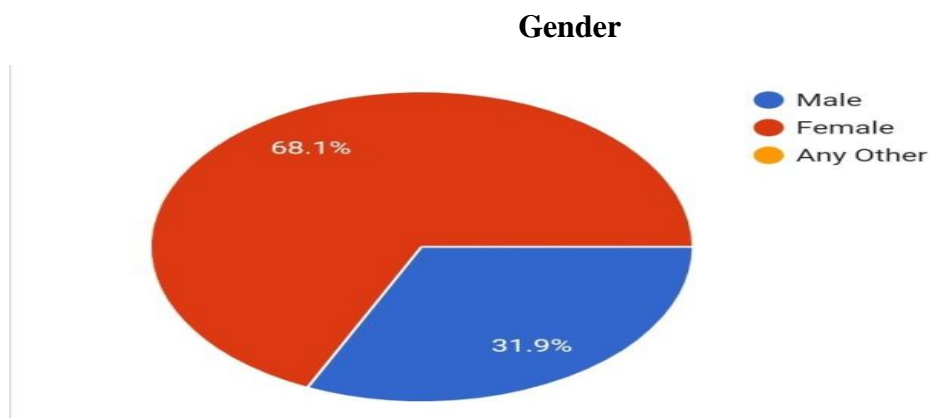


Fig. 4.4: Gender of the Respondents

With regards to the gender, a significant share of the respondents surveyed were female accounting for 176 or roughly 68% of the total respondents. The male respondents surveyed amounted to 85 or approximately 32%.

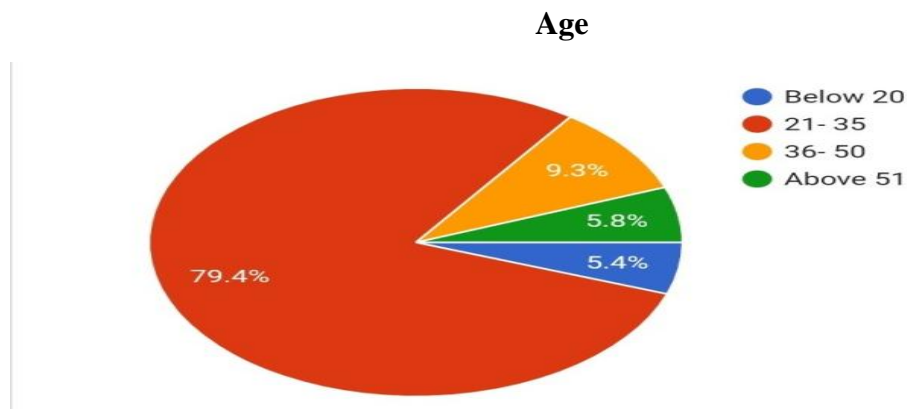


Fig. 4.5: Age of the Respondents

Vis-à-vis the demographic analysis of the respondents, 206 respondents belonged to the category of adults (21-35), amounting to roughly 80% of the total respondents. 24 respondents (almost 9%) were middle aged (36-50), while the remainder of the respondents belonged to the categories of youths and elderly, accounting for 14 and 17 respectively.

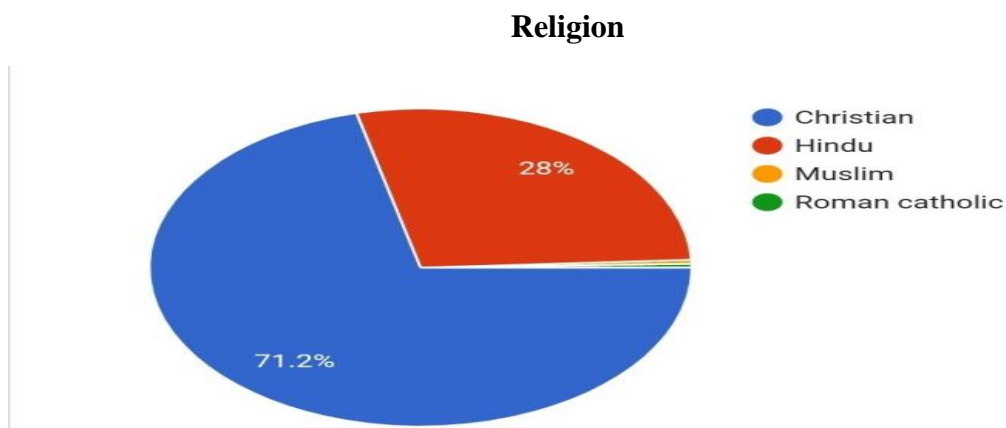


Fig. 4.6: Religion of the Respondents

188 respondents, accounting to almost 72%, belonged to the Christian Religion, while 72 respondents (roughly 28%) were Hindu. The Muslim respondents amounted to 1.

**Are you aware of the term 'Political Expression' (discussion of political issues like government, policies, corruption, budget, etc.)?**

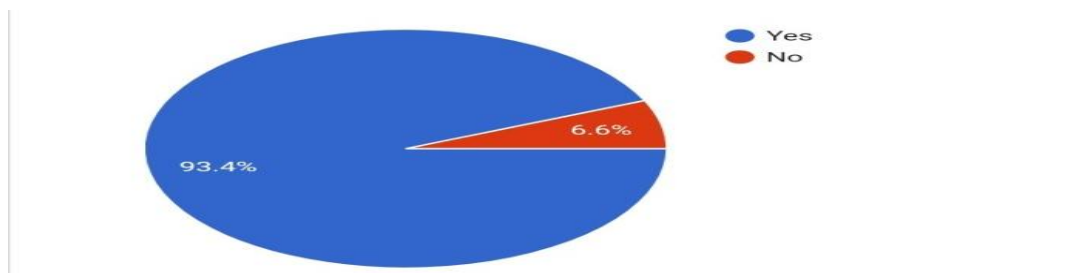


Fig. 4.7: Survey Question number 9

When posed the question regarding awareness of the concept of political expression, 244 respondents (almost 94%) answered in the affirmative, while the rest of the respondents were not aware of the same.

**Are you aware of the theatre form of Tiatr?**

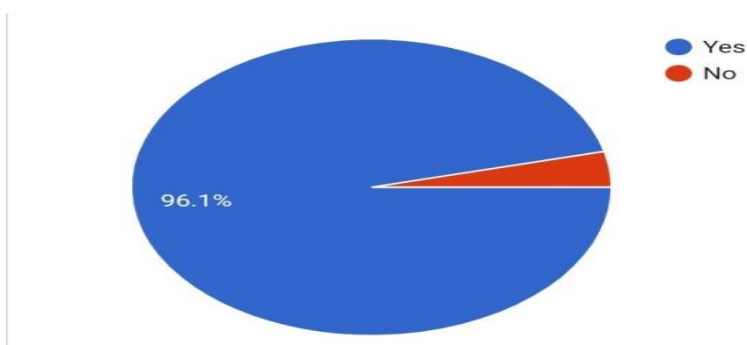


Fig. 4.8: Survey question number 10

With regards to the awareness of the theatre form of Tiatr, 251 respondents (approximately 97%) positively responded, while the rest of the respondents answered otherwise.

**Do you watch Tiatr?**

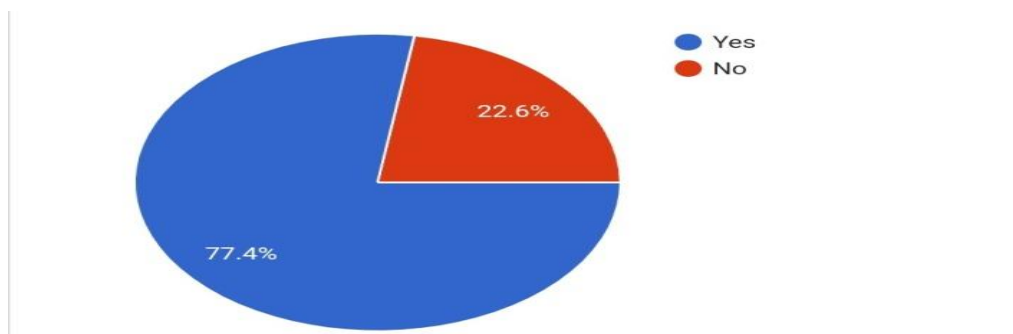


Fig. 4.9: Survey question number 11

Approximately 78% of the respondents i.e. 203 watched Tiatr, while 58 respondents did not, which accounted to roughly 22%.

#### How many times do you watch Tiatr?

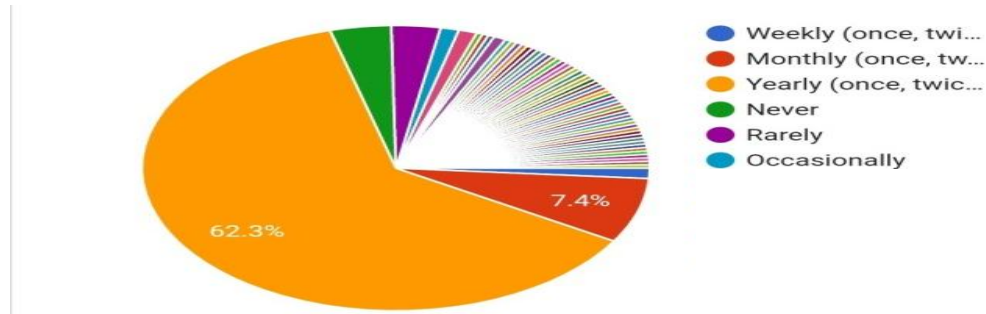


Fig. 4.10: Survey question number 12

Vis-à-vis the viewership of Tiatr, 163 respondents (roughly 63%) watched Tiatr on a yearly basis, while 20 respondents watched the same on a monthly basis. While 3 respondents watch Tiatr on a weekly basis, the rest of the respondents have either occasionally, rarely or never watched tiatr.

#### Does Tiatr highlight phenomena such as elections, governance, corruption, scandals, etc.?

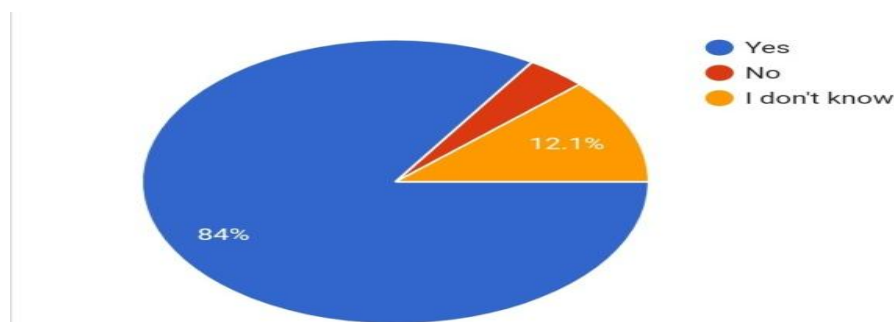


Fig. 4.11: Survey question number 13

Vis-à-vis the question regarding the highlighting of political phenomena such as elections, governance and other political issues through Tiatr, 220 respondents accounting to roughly 85% responded in the affirmative. The remaining 41 respondents were either unsure or responded in the negative regarding the same.

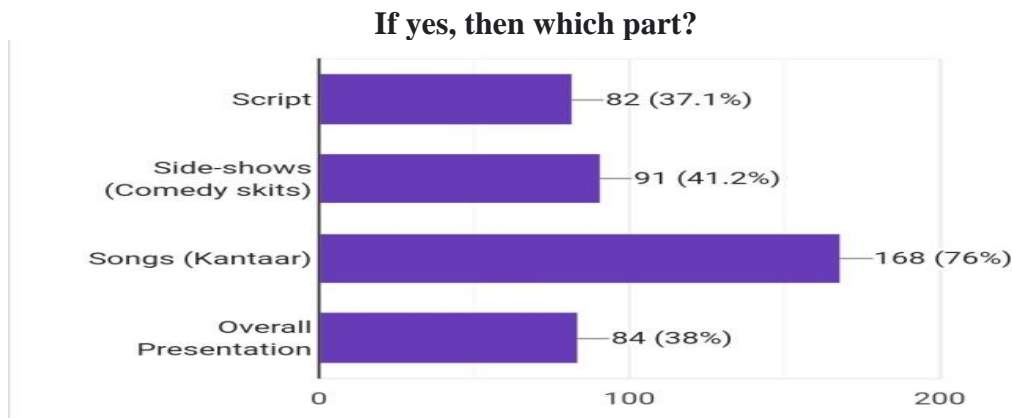


Fig. 4.12: Survey question number 14

As a supplementary question to the previous one regarding the prominence of political phenomena in Tiatr, the respondents were asked to select in which facet was this present. 172 respondents chose songs (Kantars) as inclusive of political phenomena, while 92 respondents believed that the sideshows (comedy skits) highlighted political phenomena. 86 respondents identified the script as having the presence of political phenomena while 84 respondents believed that the overall presentation of the Tiatr highlighted political phenomena.

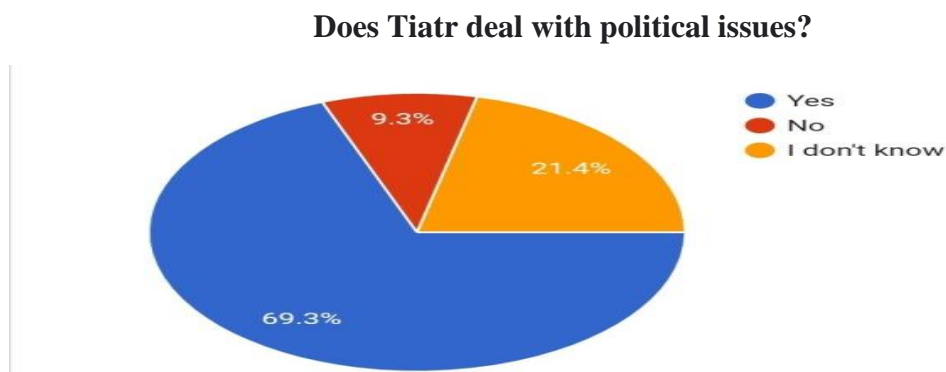


Fig. 4.13: Survey question number 15

In response to the question of whether Tiatr deals with political issues, 182 (roughly 69%) respondents believed that Tiatr deals with the same, while 55 respondents (around 21%) were unsure of the same. The remaining 24 respondents replied in the negative.

**Does Tiatr play a key role in political expression (portrayal of political issues)?**

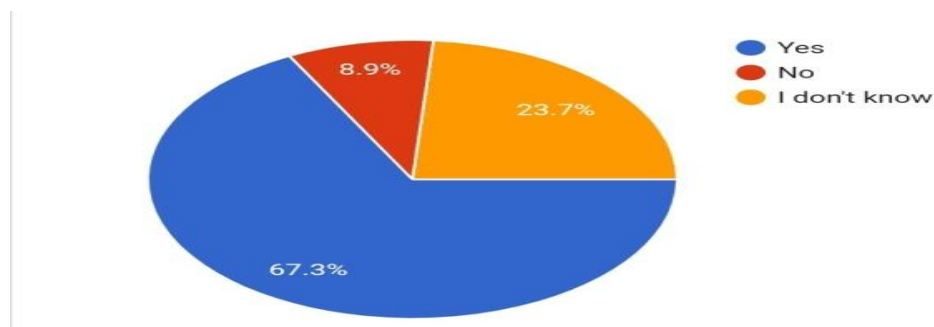


Fig. 4.14: Survey question number 16

With regards to the question of Tiatr playing a key role in political expression, 177 respondents answered in the affirmative, accounting to around 68% of the total responses. While 61 respondents (roughly 24%) were unsure, the rest denied the same.

**Are you aware of any political phenomena (movements, protests or campaigns) inspired by Tiatr?**

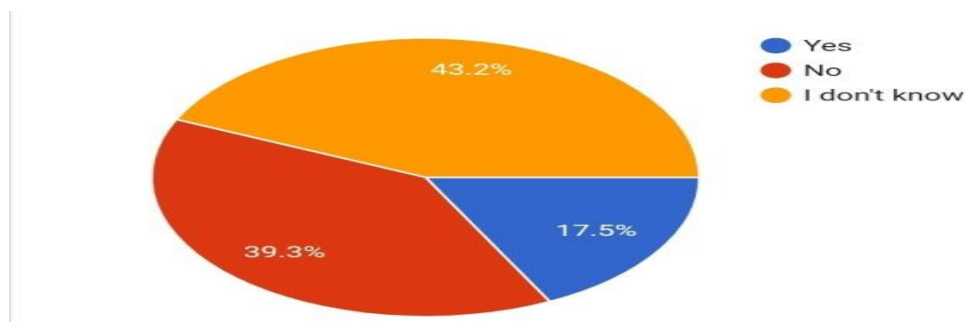


Fig. 4.15: Survey question number 17

Vis-à-vis the awareness of any political phenomena inspired by Tiatr, 111 respondents were unsure, accounting to about 43% of the total responses, while 102 responses (roughly 39%) denied such awareness. Only 48 respondents (around 18%) were aware of such a situation.

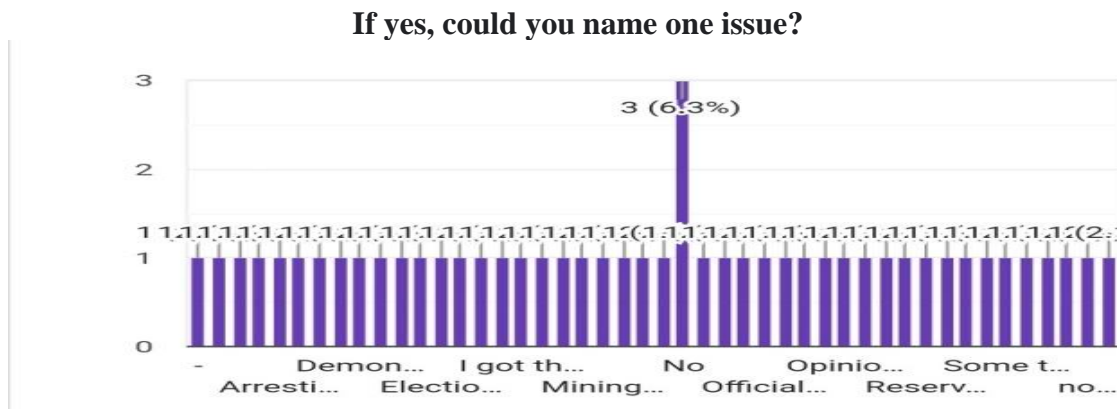


Fig. 4.16: Survey question number 18

This question was posed as a supplementary question to question 17 (Fig.4.15), wherein respondents were asked to describe such political phenomena or issues brought about by Tiatr. These included roads, communal harmony, defections, river Mhadei issues, Opinion Poll, mining, casinos, misdeeds of legislators, black money, corruption, demonetisation, migrant issues, arresting of tiatrists, Konkani language issue, illegal land use, elections, communal violence, inflation, development, environmental problems, tourism issues, outsider-insider divide, vote-bank politics, religious issues, reservations, citizenship, heritage site destruction, mismanagement during the Covid-19 pandemic, village development, governance and the like.

**Are you aware of Tiatr artistes or creators who incorporate political elements in their performances?**

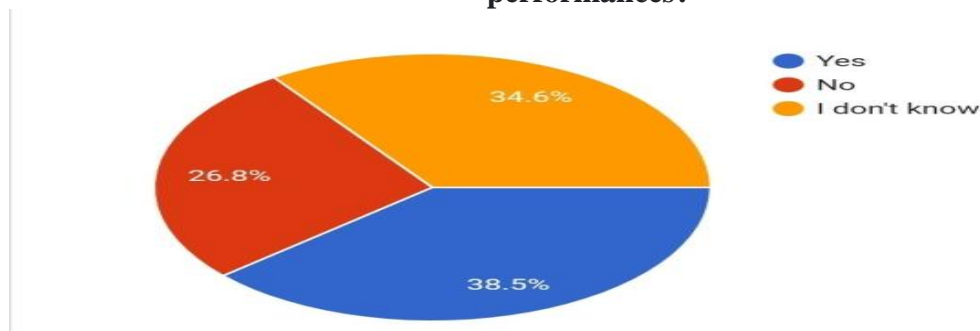


Fig. 4.17: Survey question number 19

Vis-à-vis the awareness of the incorporation of political elements by Tiatr artistes and creators in their performances, 103 respondents (approximately 39%) were aware of the

same, while 89 respondents (roughly 34%) were unsure of such a situation. The remaining 69 respondents (almost 27%) were not aware of the incorporation of political elements by tiatrists and creators in their performances.

Of the positive responses, these artists or creators included Francis De Tuem, Ulhas Tari, Lawry Travasso, Pascoal Rodrigues, Olga Vaz, Peter Roshan, Marcus Vaz, Rosario de Benaullim, Ambert, Saby De Divar, John D'Silva, Prince Jacob, Anil Pednekar, Ciana, Anthony Cardozo, William de Curtorim, Anita, Menino Mario Araujo, Benny de Aldona, Alison de Curtorim, Xavier Gomes, Agostinho, Pascoal de Chicalim, Roseferns, Tomazinho Cardozo, Dominick D' mello, Edwin D'Costa, Selvy, Simon Dias, Sammy Tavares, M. Boyer, Comedian Bryan, Mario Menezes and Marcelin de Betim.

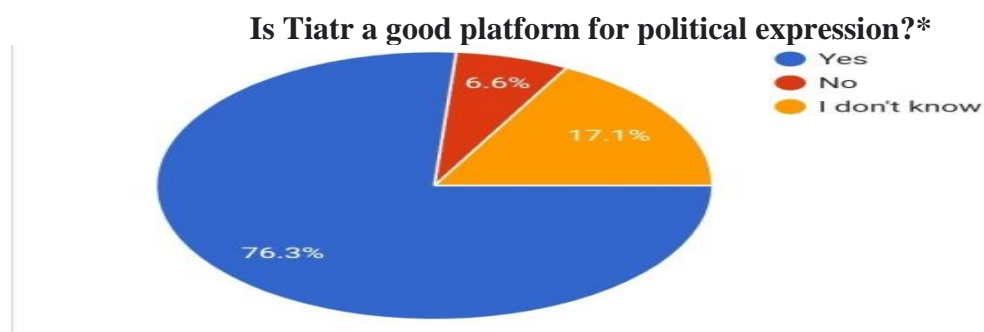


Fig. 4.18: Survey question number 21

To verify the viability of Tiatr as a platform for political expression, 200 respondents answered in the affirmative, accounting to approximately 77% of the total responses. While 44 respondents (around 17%) were unsure, the remaining 17 respondents denied such viability.

#### 4.3.2 Survey Insights:

From the data collected from the survey questionnaire, the researcher gained new insights into the current perceptions and attitudes of citizens regarding and its role as a means of



political expression. The researcher was able to cover respondents from almost every taluka and village in Goa, which allowed for comprehensive analysis of data. The researcher was also able to cover almost all demographic indicators in this field work and present their perceptions in this field work. The researcher was able to gather and analyse data vis-à-vis viewership of tiatr, presence of political expression, political phenomena, along with other factors.

Almost all the respondents were aware of the concept of political expression, while many respondents were aware of the theatre form of Tiatr. This was crucial for the researcher in gathering further inputs from the respondents. The viewership of tiatr by the respondents was mostly once, twice or more in a year, while the rest of the respondents watched Tiatr on a monthly, weekly or occasional basis. The researcher was able to prove, through the responses, in which facets of the Tiatr was political expression portrayed, with the majority of the responses in favour of the songs or Kantaram. The researcher was able to ratify the viability of Tiatr as a means of political expression through the answers of the 261 respondents.

One of the major insights gained was the increased prominence of Tiatr as a political commentary in recent times, and increased involvement of tiatrists, directors and singers in the portrayal of political expression. The researcher was able to mainly cover the responses of the young adult and middle aged demographics, which helped the researcher gain insights into the current attitudes towards Tiatr. The respondents were able to cover major political phenomena expressed through the medium of Tiatr, as identify tiatrists and creators involved in political expression. Some of the major issues raised through the medium of Tiatr were the

issues surrounding elections, infrastructure and administration. Some of the major artistes involved in political expression in Tiatr include Francis De Tuem, Olga Vaz and Saby de Divar.

The current perceptions and awareness of the respondents regarding the various concepts and facets of political expression and Tiatr proved crucial in the analysis of the collected data. The knowledge of the respondents vis-à-vis Tiatr as a means of political expression has effectively aided the researcher in proving the dissertation hypotheses of Tiatr being a means of political expression in the post-Liberation political landscape and that its popularity as the same has increased in recent times.

#### **4.3.3 Interview Findings and Insights:**

The researcher conducted a few personal interviews with members of the tiatr community, and posed subjective questions so as to gather more data regarding Tiatr and its evolution across the Post- Liberation era till now. It also covered various political phenomena and issues which were given an impetus through the political commentary of tiatr. It also measured the interviewees' perceptions and attitudes regarding Tiatr as well comparative analyses of the same across various time periods.

One of the key insights of these interviews was that politically expressive content in Tiatr or political tiatrs has increased in recent times, albeit in a blunt, overly critical and direct form. One of the key characteristics of tiatrs with politically expressive content in the post-Liberation period was the indirect criticism of legislators or policies sans the name-calling. Creators in this phase would pick up certain political issues or flaws in policy implementation

and make those the core of their tiatr. The current creators of tiatr directly pick up a policy and name-bash the leader or party responsible for the flaws in the implementation. Another critique of current political tiatr is the increased commercialisation over quality content.

The researcher was able to make comparisons between political tiatrs across different time periods. One of the major observations of the post-Liberation period was that while there were not many political tiatrs, political expression was carried out in other facets of tiatr such as the kantars. These kantars dealt with political issues especially during the Opinion Poll and language agitation. In the contemporary and recent time periods, many creators have incorporated various political issues such as policy, infrastructure, Regional Plans, and other Development projects in their tiatrs and kantars. New forms of comedy such as mimicry have become more evident in current tiatrs. One of the critiques of current tiatr is the decline in quality of scripts and storylines, repetitive plots and vulgarity in comedy, which has caused viewership of tiatr to decline in recent times. The bluntness of Tiatr in recent times has been criticised for maligning personalities. This critique is limited only to the stage and the issue at hand, not the people affected by it. The tiatrist may be a vehement critique of a policy or issue on stage, but may not have the same attitude off the stage. This was one of the stark differences identified between the tiatrists of the recent times and post-Liberation and contemporary times.

Much of the political expression in Tiatr is exhibited through the kantaram, which has proven effective in conveying the gist of political phenomena and issues to the audience. The respondents were also of the opinion that while the tiatr was able to arouse the political consciousness of citizens across all time periods.

#### **4.3.4 Insights Gained from Secondary Data:**

With the perusal of various sources of secondary data, the researcher was able to gain new insights vis-à-vis the growth and facets of tiatr as a means of political expression. The reviews of certain tiatrs enhanced the researcher's understanding on the impact of political tiatr on the audiences. These also detailed the process with which creators incorporated politically expressive content in their tiatrs. The researcher was also able to access literature which specified the importance of songs or kantars/kantaram in political expression through Tiatr.

The researcher was able to analyse the profiles of various artists, creators, directors and personalities associated with Tiatr, their works, as well as their political viewpoints, ideals and beliefs, and the process of incorporation of the same in their works or performances. The most significant of such personalities included M. Boyer, Nelson Afonso, Tomazinho Cardozo and Francis De Tuem.

#### **4.4 Summary:**

One of the major goals of the researcher was to observe objectivity in the research. The field of Tiatr was one which the researcher was not an ardent follower of, so neutrality in research was achieved. The researcher generally assumed that Tiatr only dealt with social issues and political satire was implemented only for comic relief. After conducting the field work, especially the interviews, the researcher's understanding of the origins and evolution of Tiatr was heavily reinforced.

The interviews gave powerful insights into the various facets of Tiatr and how it has served as a means of entertainment as well as awareness for the audiences. They elucidated the various political issues which were taken up in tiatrs, which spanned across the post-Liberation period, contemporary and recent times. The interviews also described how creators, songwriters and scriptwriters would incorporate politically expressive content in their works, thereby arousing the political consciousness of the audiences.

Prior to the implementation of the field work, the researcher had conducted impromptu discussions with peers regarding their knowledge of Tiatr, finding out that much of the citizens in the northern villages and Talukas have little to no knowledge regarding Tiatr. This however was changed with the survey responses, wherein people were more aware about Tiatr as well as its use as a means of political expression.

The field work carried out in this research was a month-long initiative, which included the collection of primary as well as secondary data. This collection aimed to fulfil the research as well as field work objectives of the dissertation, along with proving the hypotheses of the same dissertation. The researcher carried out survey questionnaires, personal interviews, perusal of newspaper, journal articles, books and reviews, regarding the theatre form of Tiatr and its importance as a means of political expression. The data and insights gained from this field work have been crucial in proving the research hypotheses of this dissertation and increasing the scope of knowledge of the researcher regarding the same.

The researcher was able to discern that tiatr has been utilised as a platform for political expression from the post- Liberation period in the state of Goa. Various political issues were undertaken be it in the script of the tiatr or other associated facets such as side-shows or kantars. This trend has drastically increased in recent times, based on the findings made by the researcher. As a political commentary Tiatr has been able to bring to the fore, multiple political issues and problems, along with social, economical and cultural issues, affecting the state of Goa.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 OVERVIEW:**

Theatre has been, is and always will be a significant avenue of entertainment. With a reach across various themes of romance, tragedy and comedy, it has entertained audiences all over the world. As a means of political expression, theatre has played a major role in issues and movements across multiple nations. It has brought to the fore various political phenomena and related problems in a unique manner, through various media of script, song and actions. It has helped pass legislations, referendums and policies for the benefit of citizens. This phenomenon of theatre being a political commentary and a means of political expression was the key focus of the researcher in this dissertation.

While exploring various forms of political theatre across varied countries including India, the researcher studied the impact of these in effecting political changes and reforms. Keeping this in mind, the researcher chose to conduct the dissertation on a local form of theatre in Goa, Tiatr. With a rich history of intermingling European and local theatre, Tiatr emerged with a unique structure of facets and characteristics. Since the presentation of the first Tiatr on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1892, 'Italian Bhurgo' by Lucanzinho Caridade Rebeiro, Tiatr has undergone a journey of 132 years and is thriving even today. Across these years, Tiatr has proliferated and evolved, portraying social, religious, historical, nationalist, economical and political themes, entertaining, enlightening and inspiring the audiences both young and old.

While Tiatr did not openly experiment with political themes during the Colonial rule owing to censorship policies, it became more prominent following the Liberation of Goa in 1961. With the spread of fundamental rights of speech and expression, creators and performers of

Tiatr began using political expression in their performances to bring to the fore various political, social, economic, religious and cultural issues. Tiatr not only comprised of acting and a script, but also songs (Kantaram) and sideshows which thoroughly entertained and made the audience aware of certain issues. These facets along with the script were utilised by the creators and artistes (Tiatrists) as a means of political expression.

The researcher and research guide carefully deliberated over the title, formulation of the objectives and hypotheses of this dissertation and decided to explore the theatre form of Tiatr as a form of political expression. The topic has explored theatre as a political commentary keeping in mind Tiatr and Goa, with objectives aimed at identifying political phenomena incorporated by creators in making a tiatr, the relationship between theatre and political expression through Tiatr, discussing the popular understanding of Tiatr in contemporary and recent times, exploring its role in constructing political movements and observing the effect of Tiatr on the political viewpoint of the audience. The research hypotheses were created to prove that Tiatr has acted as a means of political expression in the post-Liberation political landscape of Goa, and how its popularity as a means of political expression has increased in recent times.

The researcher utilised qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. This consisted of collection of primary data, which included personal interviews with directors, scriptwriters, tiatrists and other sources crucial in the making of a tiatr. The researcher generated a Google survey questionnaire circulated amongst the citizens of Goa to gather their attitudes and ideas regarding Tiatr as a means of political expression. The researcher also conducted literature review and analysis as part of the collection of secondary



data, which included books, anthologies, newspaper and journal reviews and articles as well as online sources and reviews.

## **5.2 CHALLENGES:**

The concept of theatre and political expression is one that is researched on a regular basis as independent entities, but a rarity when researched together. Articles on political theatre and expression of countries around the world were not uncommon, but since the researcher was focusing on a specialised local avenue, the availability was severely restricted. This served as a double-edged sword, providing scope for original research, but at the same time limiting the scope of comprehensive comparative analysis. While there was literature available describing the theatre form of Tiatr as well as its facets, these focused solely on the origins, evolution and structure of Tiatr. These articles also focused on social and cultural themes enacted in tiatrs. There was limited literature describing the political impact of Tiatr and its role as a means of political expression. This challenge compelled the researcher to conduct collect and analyse data based on limited local literature and descriptive analysis of international and national literature related to political theatre and political expression.

During the process of field work, the researcher was hampered by personal impediments, wherein a road accident subjected him to a period of bed rest for almost two weeks. This limited the scope of physical survey visits, and reliance on the online circulation of the survey questionnaire. This reduced the scope of survey respondents across various social, linguistic and cultural barriers which could have been accessed through the physical mode. This is highly evident in the survey responses which show the absence of respondents belonging to certain religious, social and demographic groups, thereby hampering the overall analysis by a

certain magnitude. This also reduced the personal visits to tiatrists and resource persons by a significant degree. Scheduling conflicts and religious festivities reduced the opportunities to meet and interact with members of the Tiatr community within the specified period of fieldwork. Arranging personal interviews was also hampered because of this challenge. The researcher was able to conduct a few personal interviews and voice recording sessions.

### **5.3 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The researcher conducted a period of field work spanning over a month which included collection of primary and secondary data. Data was collected through the means of commuting via scooter, audio recording and image capturing using a smartphone and maintaining a written field record of physical visits. A total of 261 respondents were surveyed gathering data regarding their perceptions and attitudes vis-à-vis Tiatr as a means of political expression. Secondary data was collected and analysed from online and physical sources such as books, newspaper and journal articles, anthologies, reviews and profiles related to Tiatr and tiatrists and other facets associated with the same.

#### **5.3.1 Overall Findings:**

The data collected and analysed from the survey questionnaire revealed a strong support for the research hypotheses of the dissertation. The responses were able to prove the increased prominence of Tiatr as a means of political expression in recent times. The data elucidated various issues and phenomena brought to the fore by Tiatr as a means of political expression, while also highlighting various tiatrists, directors, singers and comedians involved in political expression through Tiatr. The responses collected and analysed came from respondents

across various Talukas and villages of Goa which has helped denote a comprehensive element to the research process.

The interviews were conducted with eminent resource persons who have played a crucial role in the proliferation and preservation of Tiatr from contemporary times till now. This enabled the research to collect and analyse comprehensive data encompassing inputs from the post-Liberation time period till today. This data comprised the evolution of Tiatr from the period of Liberation till current times, elucidating the proliferation of Tiatr as a political commentary and a means of political expression. This also included the role played by Tiatr in changing the course of certain political events for the betterment of Goan citizens.

This data also helped the researcher make a comprehensive and comparative analysis of Tiatr as a means of political expression across the post-Liberation, contemporary, recent and current time periods, highlighting differences in direction, scriptwriting, song writing and overall presentation. The analysis of the data collected through the personal interviews has strongly supported the research hypothesis of Tiatr acting as a means of political expression in the post-Liberation political landscape of Goa. Events of such a phenomenon include the Opinion Poll of 1967 and the Official Language agitation of the 1980s. Besides these major events, multiple political phenomena of governance, corruption, policy implementation, elections and infrastructure were brought to the fore by Tiatr and its various facets of Kantaram and side-shows of comedy skits.

### **5.3.2 Recommendations:**

While the research hypotheses have been proven with the conducted fieldwork, there is further scope of reinforcing these hypotheses and the dissertation in general. A major step would be an increased period of field work which would encourage more physical visits which were previously undertaken on a smaller scale by the researcher. This would enhance the comprehensiveness and analysis of the collected data.

Another step would be to increase the personal interviews of members of the Tiatr community. This should not only be limited to directors or writers, but also actors, singers, comedians and other personalities associated with Tiatr. This would ensure the inclusion of inputs regarding portrayal of political expression through all the facets of Tiatr. The publication of more written matter and research articles of Tiatr from a political perspective, besides other themes would be crucial for future study and analysis. This would also help strengthen and supplement the existing base of knowledge regarding Tiatr. Another benefit of added literature would be to increase the awareness of Tiatr as a means of expression and theatre- not just political expression- among the Goan landscape as well as the national and international landscape.

### **5.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS:**

The researcher would like to stress on the importance of Tiatr as a political commentary and a means of political expression. It has been crucial in bringing to the forefront various political phenomena and issues from the post-Liberation period till now. It has helped entertain and enlighten the audiences as well as arouse their political consciousness vis-à-vis certain political issues. While the focus of entertainment has shifted to online and television modes,

Tiatr still occupies a significant share of viewership among the Goan population, owing to its unique structure and presentation of story-telling along with the side-shows and kantaram. Being a live form of theatre, Tiatr helps convey a more humanistic approach of the story to the audience. This results in the positive reception of the story and values put forth in the plot. The same can be applied to political expression in the same.

Although the quality of political tiatr may have deteriorated in recent times, the viewership of the same has drastically increased with more tiatrists and directors employing devices of political expression in their works or performances. Tiatr is in need of a revival of the methods of the post-Liberation and contemporary time periods. In these time periods, creators conducted thorough research of other theatrical works and forms from different places and incorporated a local element in their script, which made the tiatrs highly eloquent and polished. They would convey the politically expressive content to the audiences without the need of blunt or brash criticism. Many creators still employ this process in recent times which can be emulated by the rest as well. This would lead to a more positive image for Tiatr as a means of political expression, resulting in increased participation of audience as well as members of tiatr groups or troupes.

As a political commentary, Tiatr has been politically expressive since the post-Liberation period. With improvement and thorough research of the script rather than blunt, overly critical content, Tiatr can once again be educationally insightful vis-à-vis political phenomena and issues, and can be used to arouse the political consciousness of the masses. Tiatr has a plethora of artistes dedicated to the pursuit of political expression and they can continue to do so, only by exercising certain limits in their expression so as to not cripple the quality of their

performances. Increased viewership of Tiatr as well as its awareness among the rest of the Goan populace is essential to its importance as a means of political expression. While Tiatr is mainly popular in the southern Talukas and villages, the residents of the northernmost villages and Talukas are mainly viewers of the form of theatre known as Nataks. The awareness of Tiatr needs to spread to these places which still consider Tiatr and Natak to be alike.

The researcher made an attempt to maintain objectivity throughout the dissertation, vis-à-vis the analysis of literature, collected data, interview inputs and other sources. To conclude, the researcher asserts that Tiatr will function as a political commentary and be instrumental as a means of political expression. Tiatr mirrors the social, political, economical, religious and cultural landscape of Goa and appraises the audiences of any changes made to this landscape. Tiatr and its various facets will continue to arouse the audience's political consciousness as long as there are political phenomena and related problems and issues in the current times. Tiatr will function as a pillar of democracy, highlighting the flaws and errors made in legislation or policy of the government and aid in ameliorating the citizens' understanding of multiple political phenomena and issues.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I

#### Survey Questionnaire

#### **POLITICAL SCIENCE PROGRAMME, GOA - UNIVERSITY DISSERTATION**

Greetings Sir/Ma'am,

I am **Jonas Aaron Rodrigues**, a student of the **Discipline of Political Science**, Goa University, currently pursuing **M.A** in the same. I am conducting a survey on the impact made by Tiatr as a means of political expression in the state of Goa, as part of my dissertational research which has to be submitted to Goa University. Your cooperation will help me in ensuring comprehensive research on my topic. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and not coercive and your responses will be kept in confidentiality. Your participation in this survey would be highly appreciated and positive to my research.

*Name of the Researcher:* **Mr. Jonas Aaron Rodrigues**

*Name of the Research Guide:* **Ms. Prachi Naik, Asst. Professor, Political Science**

*Title:* **THEATRE AND POLITICAL EXPRESSION- A CASE STUDY OF TIATR IN GOA**

*Political Science Programme*

*D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies*

*Goa University*

**\* Indicates compulsory response**

**1. Name of the Respondent**

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**2. Address of the Respondent\* (Village/Town, Taluka)**

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**BACKGROUND DATA (Tick the relevant option or write accordingly)**

**3. Educational Qualification\***

- a) Primary
- b) Secondary
- c) Higher Secondary
- d) Graduation
- e) Post-Graduation
- f) Any Other

**4. Occupational Status\***

- a) Public Sector
- b) Private Sector
- c) Self-Employed
- d) Student
- e) Any Other

**5. Social Category\***

- a) Unreserved
- b) SC

- c) ST
- d) OBC

**6. Gender\***

- a) Male
- b) Female
- c) Any Other

**7. Age\***

- a) Below 20
- b) 21-35
- c) 36-50
- d) Above 51

**8. Religion\***

- a) Christian
- b) Hindu
- c) Muslim
- d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**9. Are you aware of the term 'Political Expression' (discussion of political issues like government, policies, corruption, budget, etc.)?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No

**10. Are you aware of the theatre form of Tiatr?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No

**11. Do you watch Tiatr?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No

**12. How many times do you watch Tiatr?\***

- a) Weekly (once, twice or more)
- b) Monthly (once, twice or more)
- c) Yearly (once, twice or more)
- d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Does Tiatr highlight phenomena such as elections, governance, corruption, scandals, etc.?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I don't know

**14. If yes, then which part?**

- a) Script
- b) Side-shows (Comedy skits)
- c) Songs (Kantar)
- d) Overall Presentation

**15. Does Tiatr deal with political issues?\***

- a) Yes

- b) No
- c) I don't know

**16. Does Tiatr play a key role in political expression (portrayal of political issues)?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I don't know

**17. Are you aware of any political phenomena (movements, protests or campaigns) inspired by Tiatr?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I don't know

**18. If yes, could you name one issue?**

---

**19. Are you aware of Tiatr artistes or creators who incorporate political elements in their performances?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I don't know

**20. If yes, then kindly name three**

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**21. Is Tiatr a good platform for political expression?\***

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I don't know

## **Appendix II**

### **Personal Interview Questionnaire**

1. What has been your experience as a creator in the world of tiatr?
2. As a director/ screenwriter/ songwriter, how do you incorporate the political element into tiatr? (supplementary questions to follow)
3. If you were to make a comparison between contemporary (1960s-2000s) and current tiatr (2000 onwards), what distinctions would you identify between the two? (supplementary questions to follow)
4. During your tenure as a creator of tiatr, have there been any political events, issues or phenomena which formed the base of your tiatrs? If yes, can you explain the event and how you used it in your tiatr? (supplementary questions to follow)
5. According to you, what is the current attitude of the people towards political content in tiatr? (supplementary questions to follow)
6. As someone who creates/watches a lot of tiatr, what is your opinion on including political expression or content in tiatr? (supplementary questions to follow)

## Appendix III

## Field Records

**M.A. DISSERTATION**  
**POLITICAL SCIENCE PROGRAMME**  
**D.D. KOSAMBI SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES**  
**GOA PROGRAMME**  
**PERSONAL DIARY / FIELD RECORD**

Name of the Researcher: JONAS AARON RODRIGUES  
 Title: THEATRE AND POLITICAL EXPRESSION - A CASE STUDY OF GOA

Name of the Guide: Ms. PRACHI NAIK

SR. NO.	DATE	PLACE VISITED	PURPOSE OF VISIT	TIME	SIGNATURE OF OFFICIAL
1	11/3/24	ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE	INTERVIEW	16:30-16:30	
2	12/3/24	DATA GRAMMEST LIBRARY	INTERVIEW	15:30-16:30	
3	16/3/24	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	INTERVIEW	15:30-16:00	
4	19/3/24	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	RESEARCH	14:20-15:30	
5	19/3/24	LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE	DATA COLLECTION	15:40-16:20	
6	16/3/24	CENTRAL LIBRARY, PANAJI	RESEARCH	13:25-14:15:30	
7	20/3/24	DISCUSSING OF PORTUGUESE	DATA COLLECTION	09:30-09:45	
8	20/3/24	CANDOLIM ASRO	INTERVIEW	15:40-16:40	
9	03/4/24	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	RESEARCH	16:05-17:15	
10	06/4/24	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	RESEARCH	16:20-16:00	
11	05/4/24	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	RESEARCH	13:30-15:05	
12	06/4/24	CENTRAL LIBRARY	RESEARCH	12:45-16:45	
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18	10/4/24	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	RESEARCH	15:20-18:30	
19	11/4/24	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	RESEARCH	17:30-18:30	
20					

Signature of the Researcher: Rodrigues  
 Signature of the Guide: Prachi Naik

Fig. 3.1: Field Diary Records

## Appendix IV

### Field Visit Data



Fig. 4.1: Secondary data source

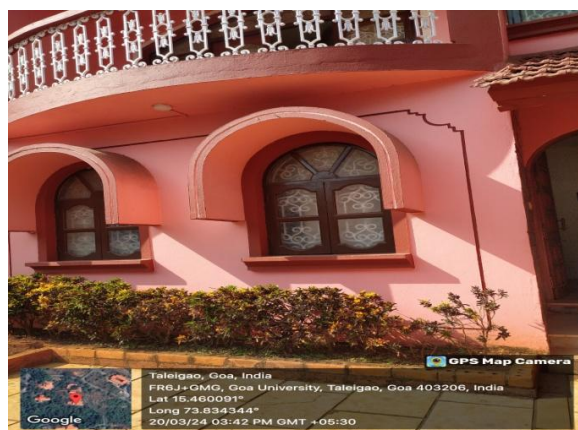


Fig. 4.2: Interview Location 1

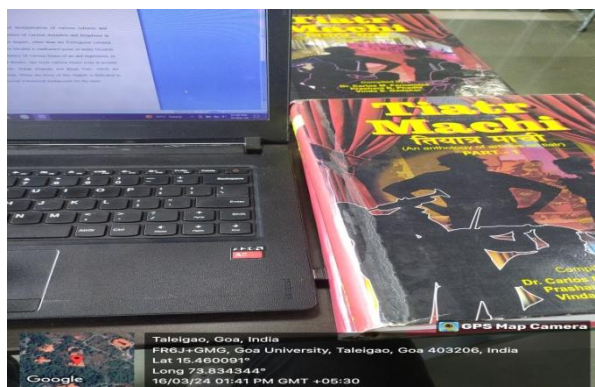


Fig. 4.3: Library Visit 1 (Central Library)



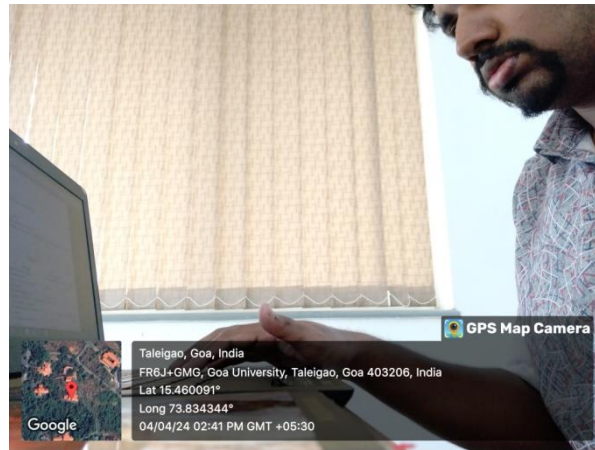


Fig. 4.4: Library Visit 2 (Goa University)

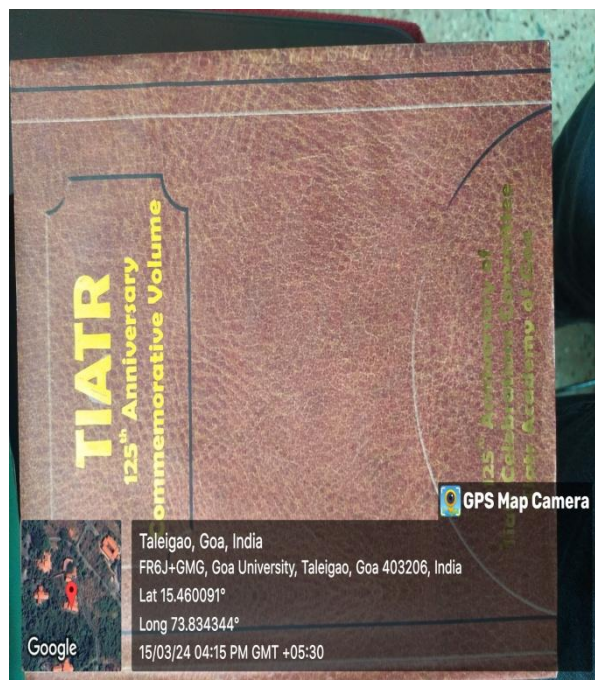


Fig. 4.5: Interview Location 2