

“Select Monsoon Festivals of Goa: Cultural and Historical Study of Nature Worship”

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation report entitled, "Select Monsoon Festivals of Goa: Cultural and Historical Study of Nature Worship" is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Discipline of History at the D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University under the Supervision of Prof. Sneha B. Ghadi and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will be not be responsible for the correctness of observations or other findings given the dissertation. I hereby authorize the University authorities to upload this dissertation on the dissertation repository or anywhere else as the UGC regulations demand and make it available to any one as needed.

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COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation report "Select Monsoon Festivals of Goa: Cultural and Historical Study of Nature Worship" is a bonafide work carried out by Ms Gautami, Shekhar, Amonkar under my supervision in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters of Arts in the History Discipline at the D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University.



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PREFACE

Out of the several topics that caught my attention, studying about the Monsoon Festivals of Goa, aroused my attention and interest. This topic was very much there in my mind, for a very long period. After reading some of the books, I was more into this topic and my curiosity increased to work on this topic. I was interested to know about Monsoon Festivals and nature worship through these festivals and an overview. Therefore, lastly, this topic was finalised as a part of my dissertation.

While studying about the Monsoon festivals of Goa, it is about the element of nature that is worshipped through those festivals. However, it also deals with various ways and forms of nature worship in India, particularly in Goa. This topic has been discussed while understanding the cultural traditions and customs of Goa. There are some books related to this research topic but the least amount of information is available. This topic has different layers attached to it and an effort has been made to study these festivals through the existence of elements of nature, further, this topic delves into Eco-Feminism, understanding the role of women and nature.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The study of Monsoon Festivals and Nature worship helps us to understand how nature is necessary for human life. It also helps us to understand the rituals, practices, and traditions that are linked to nature worship. It explores the links between various communities and religions, and different beliefs of people on protecting nature. My interest in this topic has come in the form of this dissertation.

Monsoon festivals and the way nature is worshipped through these festivals are briefly studied in this dissertation. Historical Festivals such as Konsachem Fest, Tousachem Fest, Sangod, and Chikal Kalo, are practiced for ages and have great significance with element of nature related to it.

This Dissertation would not have been complete without the people who Guided and supported me in this entire study. I take this privilege, with great pleasure, to acknowledge my indebtedness to my guide, Ms. Sneha B. Ghadi, Assistant Professor, ~~Discipline~~ of History, Goa University. I am Thankful to her for her valuable creative input and guidance throughout the study period.

My sincere thanks to our Dean Mr. Ganesha Samayaji of D.D Kosambi School of social science and Behavioral Studies and Vice Dean of Research Ms. Joanna Coelho. I sincerely appreciate the Teachers from the Department of History prof. Dr. Pratima Kamat, Prof. Dr. Nagendra Rao, Prof. Dr. Seema Risbud, Prof. Dr. Parag Parabo, Prof. Vinod Kankonkar and Prof. Dr. Nalini Naik have encouraged me throughout the research.

I am sincerely grateful to institutions Goa University, Library Directorate of Archives and Archaeology; Government of Goa, Krishnadas Shama State Central Library; Panjim, and the

Library of Xavier Historical Research Centre, Porvorim, Library of St. Xaviers College, Mapusa.

I owe my sincere thanks to Dr. Pratima Kamat for valuable input on this topic, I sincerely appreciate it.

I Dually thanks my friends for their help in various capacities during the present study.

I express a deep sense of gratitude to my parents Mr. Shekhar M. Amonkar and Mrs. Vijaya S. Amonkar and my sister Ms. Gauri Amonkar and my whole family for their constant encouragement, help, and cooperation through my Research.

Miss. Gautami Shekhar Amonkar

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Glossary

Aarti- Metal plate with burning cotton wicks.

Aakash- Sky.

Aaitar- Sunday.

Agni- Fire.

Apalipa- Hide and Seek Game.

Ardas - Prayer.

Avel- Sheaves of rice.

Baisakhi- Harvest festival of

Bhajan- Religious

Chakr- Wheel.

Chavath- The annual Festival of Lord Ganesh.

Chitrarath- Floats.

Chikal- Mud.

Chool- Wodden Stove

Devrai- Sacred Groves.

Dulpod- Goan Dance Song

Dhalo- Annual women's Festival.

Dhartimata- Mother earth Goddess.

Dhangar- Nomadic community.

Fov- Flattened rice.

Fugdi- A type of women's dance.

Ganesh- A Deity.

Gharhane- Player Practiced before starting a Festival.

Ghadi- Clairvoyance.

Gurudwara- Temple of Punjabi Community.

Ghumat- Goan earthen percussion instrument

Khare- Dried fish.

Kopel- Shrine

Khichdi- Dish of rice with Moog and jaggery.

Krishna- Eight incarnation of lord Vishnu.

Lagin- Marriage.

Lagor- kind of Game.

Lakshmi- Goddess of Wealth.

Mando- Goan

Mandovi- River near capital city, also known as Mhadei.

Matoli- A Wooden Square where different fruits, flowers are hanged.

Mahadev- Lord Shiva.

Modak- A sweet dish made of coconut and jaggery.

Navas- Vows.

Pongal- Harvest festival of

Patolio- A sweet dish made out of coconut and jaggery in turmeric leaves.

Paush- Hindu Calendar.

Puran Poli- A sweet Chapati made with cereals and jaggery.

Palki- Palanquin

Pepino- Cucumbers.

Patri- Different leaves.

Prasad- Symbol of blessing.

Parvati- Wife of Lord Shiva

Roin- Anthill.

Rajbid- A royal pathway.

Santeri- Goddess Mother Earth.

Shravan- Fifth month of Hindu Calendar (July-august).

Vaayu- Air.

Vandevi- Goddess of Forest.

Vangor- A shareholder, member of the institutions such as Comunidade

Vaysa- Rishi portrayed in most Hindu traditions.

Yagna- Ritualistic Sacrifice.

Yamuna- River.

ABSTRACT

Geographically small state of Goa settled in the Western Ghats and West coast of India has a rich and varied tradition of nature that is worshipped, Nature Worship has been instrument in giving Goa, numerous festivals and practices that have evolved from the surrounding environment, and biodiversity and ecology. Our ancestors, who were living in this land of Goa, wanted to live in correlation with nature and hence have begun to protect and conserve various natural resources, through the folk religion and festivals. There are various forms of nature worship evolved through the folk religion that are deeply rooted in Festivals. Eco- spirituality, emphasizes the spiritual connection between human beings and the environment. In Goa, humans respect the earth as the mother goddess along with its resources. The tradition of eco-culture, eco-theology, and eco- Feminism, prevailing in Goa, has helped in the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity. This study was initiated to understand the relationship between human beings and nature. Wherein religion contributes to protecting and preserving the environment. The key role played by women is in preserving nature with traditions and customs. This study has explored the complex relationship between monsoon festivals and nature worship, interpreting the connection between human societies and the natural world.

Keywords: Nature worship, Festivals, Ecology, culture, traditions, Eco-Feminism, Goa.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Goa receives rain from southwest Monsoon from June to October. The word Monsoon owes its origin to the Arabic word "Mausam."¹ While there is a lack of agreement on the precise definition of the monsoon, the term is used to connote a seasonal wind that blows. Goa is located on the western coast of India, bordering the Arabian Sea. Goa is bounded by the state of Maharashtra to the North and Karnataka to the East and South. The Arabian Sea forms the western Coast of Goa, offering a coastline with beautiful beaches and seaside landscapes. The Geographical location of Goa makes it a popular tourist destination, which is known for its rich cultural heritage. During the monsoon, Goa and other coastal regions receive heavy rainfall and that is why the monsoon occupies a great significance in the heart of the Goan People. In the Indian Ocean Monsoon winds were used for Maritime trade as sailing ships headed for overseas Countries and trade was considered very important for the exchange of commodities. Monsoon season also plays a pivotal role in shaping Goa's agricultural practices. Monsoons control the lifestyle of several people in countries spread across Asia, Africa, and Australia.² The amount of rain received during the Monsoons critically controls the way of life, culture and economy.

with consistency and regularity during a part of the year.³ The average Rainfall Goa receives annually is 350 cm.⁴ During this time, the region experiences heavy rainfall, lush green landscapes, and a more relaxed atmosphere compared to the bustling tourist season. While the

¹ P.K Das, *The Monsoons*. (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1968), 1.

² P.N Vinayachandran, *Understanding and Forecasting of Monsoons*. Delhi: Daya Publishing House, 2008), 3.

³ Das, *The Monsoons*, 3.

⁴ S.K Mhamai, *Goa: in the Indian Subcontinent*. (Panaji: Directorate of Archives and Archaeology, 2001), 4.

monsoon plays a very important role in our life. It's one of the most important seasons. This study attempts to analyze how monsoon festivals in Goa are celebrated. To understand their socio-cultural and religious importance in our lives, through these local festivals. Goa is known for its rich and diverse culture and tradition. This study will help to explain the indigenous Festivals of Goa. Festivals play an important role in the life of every Goan. And to study more about Monsoon Festivals eco-theology plays a significant role in it.

Every Goan considers the earth, water, forest, and trees as God and worships them with sun and fire.⁵ In India, most of the events or act is observed and assessed in a religious content. Humans have deified forests, trees, rocks, and stones.⁶ Man is bounded by nature, which has a thriving impact on his socio-economic life. The Earliest form of worship was probably the worship of Mother Earth, for blessing human beings, fertility, procreation, and for the plants and animals. Religion has a strong hold on human lives. It influences our thinking, behaviour, moral views, and the way we adapt ourselves to different changes. Religion and nature worship play a significant role in the cultural and spiritual structure. In India, there are diverse religions co-existing including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism, and Buddhism, among others and each religion has their own beliefs, rituals and practices related to nature and environment. Various religions have their definition of nature worship and protecting nature. The awe and admiration human beings always had for nature has been expressed in different ways. Nature worship is one of them. Nature worship goes much beyond mere offerings and prayers. It is manifested in the implicit trust human beings have in the wisdom and goodwill of nature.⁷ Our Festivals, most of which are associated with nature reflect our close links to it.

⁵ Vinayak Vishnu Khedekar, *Eco Culture Goa Paradigm*. (Panjim: Broadway Publishing House, 2013), 8.

⁶ Khedekar, *Eco Culture Goa*, 11.

⁷ Khedekar, *Eco Culture Goa*, 79.

Women play a major role in celebrating festivals that honor nature. The major festivals are centred around women in their essential role as nurturers and caretakers of nature and earth. Their involvement in preserving traditions, passing down ancestral knowledge, and leading to ritualistic practices intricate the deep connection between women, religion, and the natural world. Women's roles are dynamic in all fields. This research will focus on women's role and participation in celebrating the Goa Monsoon festivals.

These Festivals often carry a deeper connection to environmental consciousness. Understanding the Eco-theology of the Monsoon festivals of Goa can shed light on the ways human societies have adapted to, modified, and shaped their natural surroundings. The Awareness of the Impact of the environment on man is not a recent phenomenon. There is a need to look after the environment in the Arthashastra.⁸ The Gupta kings were often concerned about preserving the forest and wildlife.

The monsoon season brings forth an assortment of vibrant festivals that celebrate the bountiful gifts of nature and the rich cultural heritage of the region. From the religious Sangod to the ancient Chikal Kalo, the tranquil Touxeachem Fest, the delectable Patolleanchem Fest, each celebration is a captivating experience that unites communities in revelry.⁹ The celebration of these festivals has been a unifying factor. They bind the villagers together as one family, irrespective of their religion. A unique factor of some of these festivals is that they are part of the identity of the villages.

1.1 Identification of Research Problem

The main aim of the dissertation is to analyse how the participation of women plays a major role in shaping the monsoon festivals of Goa. The research will also record the evolution of

⁸ B.D Nag Chaudhari, *Introduction To Environmental Management* (New Delhi: Interprint Publishers, 1983), 2.

⁹ Apolinario Cardozo, *When Goa Celebrates* (Panaji: Dalgado konkanni Akademi, 2022), 5.

Monsoon festivals The research aim is to understand how one can study the eco-theological importance of the monsoon festivals of Goa by analysing the monsoon festivals of Goa and nature worship. The Study's aim will be to understand how Religion and Nature worship plays a significant role in the Cultural and Spiritual Aspects of Goa and India. The Present study will also Focus on the ways different Religions co-exist with Nature worship like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, and Islam. The taken place from Liberation to Present. The research also delves into the eco-centric Aspects of Monsoon Festivals in Goa and also sheds light on dynamic interplay between tradition, environment, and Necessity for conservation in the face of modern challenges. The research provides a comprehensive understanding of the cultural, social, and environmental significance of these traditional celebrations. One could delve into how monsoon festivals are deeply rooted in the local community, inquire about their historical evolution, rituals, and the role they played in the lives of the people of Goa. The research mainly consists of selective Monsoon festivals. The main focus of this study is to analyse how environmental history is co-dependent on Monsoon festivals in Goa. Moreover, the study of monsoon festivals from the Eco-theological perspective offers valuable perspectives on the creativity and adaptive capacities of local communities in the face of environmental change. The research proposal tries to give indications that will help in understanding the Study of the Significance of the Monsoon festivals of Goa. The research will also include the concept of Eco-Feminism and certain festivals celebrated by women in Goa. These festivals serve as a platform for the preservation and Promotion of Goan tradition. Understanding the Significance of these Festivals is Crucial in Appreciating the rich Cultural Heritage of Goa and its Profound Impact on the lives of the Goan People.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To study the environmental history of Goa through an analysis of the select monsoon festivals.
2. To examine the evolution of the monsoon festivals in Goa.
3. To understand the Socio-Cultural and Historical Importance of Monsoon Festivals through ecology and gender.
4. To understand the historical relationship between humans and their natural habitat.
5. To study the role of women and nature.
6. To examine the contemporary adaptations and modifications to access the Continuity and Change in the monsoon festivals of Goa Selected for the Study in this Dissertation.

1.3 Review of Literature

Gazetteer of India: Union Territory Goa, Daman, and Diu Part 1 edited by V.T. Gune is a comprehensive document that provides insight into the Geography, History, Culture, and Socio-economic aspects of the region. The author also talked about the Portuguese rule over Goa. This book Also contains a lot of background information about the land and history of Goa. The Gazetteer is classified into Districts, State and National Series According to its scope and importance. And also includes information about the Climate, Topography, flora, fauna. It also deals with ancient and medieval history of the region, detailing the various rulers and dynasties and events that have shaped their developments.¹⁰ The Gazetteer also sheds light on Cultural diversity, tradition, Language and festivals. This Reference book has valuable information which will help to conduct research.

Ethnography of Goa Daman and Diu by A.B. de Braganca Pereira this book gives information about the location and geographical features of Goa. In the book, the author also describes the

¹⁰ V. T Gune, *Gazetteer of the Union Territory: Goa, Daman and Diu*. (Panaji: Director of Archives and Archaeology, 1979), 8-10.

rituals, customs and manners of various castes and religions, their habitat, their artisanship, their environment and all aspects of Goa and Goan society.¹¹ The author has also mentioned the location, geology, climate, area, and population of Goa, Daman, Diu. By this, we get the basic information about the region of Goa.

A Socio- Cultural History of Goa from Bhojas to the Vijayanagar by V R Mitragotri. This book has highlighted different aspects of the socio-cultural history of Goa. The author has presented accounts of different aspects like communities, customs, traditions, sculpture, architecture, education, local deities, the status of women, etc.¹² He has also written about the political history of Goa. The introduction of this book has helped to know more about Goa.

The Cultural History of Goa From 10000 B.C.–1352 A.D. by Anant Dhume. This book is a route of discovery to the cultural history of Goa. The Author has given all the information regarding the formation of kingdoms in Goa to the rise and fall of different dynasties like Satavahana, Chalukya, Rashtrakuta, and Kadamba. The Author has traced the events from the coast of the Neolithic age to the brighter period of the Middle Ages.¹³ But political history is not the soul and essence of life and the author has done well to delve into the cultural ethos of the people.

Goa: In the Indian Subcontinent by S.K Mhamai book deals with the various aspects of social, cultural, archaeological in the Indian Subcontinent. The book also gives detailed information regarding the land of Goa including the climate And Rainfall patterns, The Flora Faun, and other environmental aspects are also stated in this book.¹⁴

¹¹ A.B de Braganca Pereira, *Ethnography of Goa Daman and Diu*. (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2008), 12.

¹² V.R Mitragotri, *A Socio-Cultural History of Goa From Bhojas to Vijayanagar*. (India: Institute Menezes Braganza, 1999), 10.

¹³ Anant Dhume, *The Cultural History of Goa From 10000 B.C.–1352 A.D.* (Panaji: Kamala Niwas Santa-Inez, 1985), 8.

¹⁴ S.K Mhamai, *Goa: In the Indian Subcontinent*. (Panaji: Directorate of Archives and Archaeology, 2001), 4.

Monsoon Islam: Trade and Faith on the Medieval Malabar Coast by Sebastian Prange has written about Indian Ocean Historiography with its rich account of Muslim merchants' communities and trading network. The author provides a case study of how monsoon Islam developed in response to concrete economic, socio- economic and political challenges.

In the Monsoons by P.K Das the author has tried to bring out the global and the regional aspects of the monsoons as there is a revival of interest on monsoons today because it's one of the most important of the seasonal effects of the world. He has written about the definition of monsoons signifying its historical background. The book also deals with Monsoonal changes. The whole book gives ideas about Monsoons, the monsoon regimes. And also, the composition of atmosphere with reference to the sea breeze, land breeze, The summer monsoon low level winds.

Understanding and forecasting of Monsoons by P.N Vinayachandran this publication presents a collection of 16 selected research papers on various aspects of Monsoons. The topics covered in this book includes observed aspects of monsoons in several countries, analysis techniques, and projections of monsoons in the future climate.¹⁵ The book gives us an idea about the ability to figure out how monsoon and climate results which lead to better management of agriculture and water supplies and other resources.

Fish curry and Rice by Claude Alvares the book deals with the history of Goa. And the background of the land of Goa. The author has also written about Monsoons and Geography of Goa. The Eco- Traditions are also mentioned in the book, the natural worship and Hindu Rituals. The book also deals with ecosystems, sacred groves, fauna flora, and forest Management. It talks about the Environmental aspects of Tourism and Mining.¹⁶ The main

¹⁵ Vinayachandran, P.N. *Understanding and Forecasting of Monsoons*. (Delhi: Daya Publishing House, 2008),4.

¹⁶ Claude Alvares, *Fish curry and Rice*. (Mapusa: The Goa Foundation, 2002), 2-20.

focus of the book is on the Response to Environment which has environmental laws and initiatives.

Nature, Culture, Imperialism: Essay on the environmental history of South Asia by David Arnold and Ramachandra Guha the book is based on environmental history. It gives a brief definition of environmental history. As environmental history is a fast-developing field of historical enquiry. In both ecological and cultural terms, South Asia is characterized by unparalleled diversity. ¹⁷This book brings together a set of pioneering essays in the environmental history of South Asia. There are various contributors throughout the world, including historians. Some essays document the radical reshaping of resources using patterns under colonial rule, others focus on the environment as a contested space, the site of conflict and confrontation.

Introduction to Environmental Management by B.D Nag Chaudhari the author has written about environmental management. The meaning and scope of the environment. And deals with the nature of ecological systems. The book tries to give an idea of the environment and its management with issues related to it. The book also offers an introductory survey of the constantly changing interaction that defines India's environmental history. ¹⁸

Environment and Life by Chandola RP has written about how the environment is connected to our lives. He also talks about the various ways of environmental management. The author gives a deeper understanding of the Environment and the need for its preservation in the changing modern times. The author very well explains how human life is completely dependent on Environment. ¹⁹ And both of them are closely correlated to each other.

¹⁷ David Arnold and Ramachandra Guha, *Nature and culture and Imperialism: Essay on the Environmental History of South Asia*. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 2.

¹⁸ Chaudhuri, Nag B.D. *Introduction to Environmental Management*. (New Delhi: Interprint Publishers, 1983), 4.

¹⁹ R.P Chandola, *Environment and Life*. (Jaipur: RBSA Publishers, 1995), 3.

Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development Towards a Theoretical Synthesis by Braidotti Rosi This book is an attempt to present and disentangle the various positions put forward by major actors and to clarify the political and theoretical issues that are at stake in the debates on women, the environment and sustainable development. The author has also written about the Production of knowledge, women, environment and development, Environmental Reformism and Deep Ecology, Social Ecology, and Ecofeminism.

Matoli: ek Girest Dayaj written by Bhushan Bhawe the author has written about the Ganesh festival and the uses of Matoli, explaining the Eco-theological aspects of this festival. The author has also written about the festivals celebrated by the women in Goa.²⁰

Hindu Rites and Rituals: Origins and Meanings written by K.V. Singh, the author talks about various rites and rituals involved in Hindu Religion. He has also written about various forms of worship that evolved in Hinduism. And their importance in our planet. The author talks about sacred plants, rivers, and animals connected to our religion.²¹

Guru Granth Sahib: The Sikh Scripture written by Jaspal Singh, the author has well written about the Sikh religion and mentions their ways of protecting nature and ecology. The author also talks about how plants, animals, and insects are given importance on this planet and their protection is necessary.²²

Planet, plants, and animals: Ecological Paradigms in Buddhism written by Anand Singh, the author has written about Buddhism religion and their origin. The author has also written about the importance of nature and ecology in this religion, and their own beliefs towards the tiny

²⁰ Bhushan Bhawe, *Matoli: Ek Girest Dayaj* (Ponda: Shri. Ravi Sitaram Naik College, 2005) 15.

²¹ K.V. Singh, *Hindu Rites and Rituals: Origins and Meanings* (Haryana: Penguin Random House Company, 2015) 25.

²² Jaspal Singh, *Guru Granth Sahib: The Sikh Scripture* (New Delhi: K.K Publication, 2011) 183.

living creatures on this earth. The author has well explained about protection and preservation of living and Non-living creatures.²³

Sanskrutik Pratike by Dr. Pandurang Phaldesai In this book the author has written about the rich cultural diversity of Goa. He has written about various plants, trees, and animals which are essential and have cultural significance. Further, he has given importance to fire, and water. The author has given importance to culture and all the aspects related to our culture. He has extensively written about festivals, Trees, Animals, and the form in which they are celebrated.

Sanskruticha Gudya Pataka by Dr. Pandurang Phaldesai The entire book can be divided into two parts wherein in the first part the author tries to write about the Goan social life and the significant feast and festivals. In the second part The Goan festivals and the discussion of the deities. The author has also written about the cultural manifestation that happened on the land of Goa and their consultation.

Faces of Goa: A Journey Through the History and Cultural Evolution of Goa and Other Communities Influenced by the Portuguese by Karin Larsen in this book the author has written about the historical evolution of the land of Goa and major events that shaped cultural patterns and communities existing today in Goa. The book also tries to explain the difference between Goan Culture and Goan Cultural Identity.

The Outdoor Museums of Goa by Pantaleão Fernandes In this book he describes the Ethnography of Goa. It also describes the rituals, customs, and manners of various religions and castes. He has also mentioned all aspects of Goa and Goan society. The author has also written about prehistoric Goa. This book is an attempt to bring together a large number of artifacts and symbols so that collectively they can tell their own Stories, together they can draw

²³ Anand Singh, *Planet, plants and animals: Ecological Paradigms in Buddhism* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2019) 36.

attention to create awareness and ignite curiosity and concern among academics, researchers, students, and every single Goan.²⁴ Further, he has written about the outdoor treasure of Goa including artifacts, and deities that are shrouded over time. This treasure needs to be documented, conserved, and preserved for future generations to get insight into their roots and identity.

Divar: The Iconic Island of Goa Dourado by Jose F.F de Albuquerque. This book has a perspective of the rich historical, social, and cultural heritage of Divar Island. The author Has written about the socio-historical background of Divar Island and the festivals that are celebrated on Divar Island.²⁵ As divar Island has cultural diversity. The author also gives the Ethnography of Divar Island. The festivals celebrated have a cultural and religious importance which is important for the study.

Goa By Olivinho Gomes the book presents a holistic view of the physical environment, historical background, and Economic and social fabric of Goa. It also provides insight into cultural heritage, religious practices, literature, folklore, and other aspects of the province.²⁶ The author tries to write about the land of Goa covering all the socio-cultural aspects.

Goa Remembered by Pantaleão Fernandes writes about the vigorous celebrations of Goa and its Natural beauty with places and festivals. The book has a depiction of rich cultural heritage, which helps to understand our cultural diversity. The book presents magnificent images in a larger format. The book is a vigorous celebration of the real Goa. It has a description of the extrinsic natural beauty and spirit of its people.²⁷ The book consists of the history of Goa and

²⁴ Pantaleão Fernandes, *Outdoor Museums of Goa*. (Salcete: The Word Publication, 2021), 12.

²⁵ Jose F.F de Albuquerque, *Divar: The Iconic Island of Goa Dourado*. (Panjim: Broadway publishing house, 2012), 56.

²⁶ Olivinho Gomes, *Goa*. (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 2002), 45.

²⁷ Pantaleão Fernandes, *Goa Remembered*. (Salcete: The Word Publication, 2011), 31.

the major traditional occupations of people giving socio-economic cultural diversity related to the study.

Goa Folklore Studies by Pandurang Phaldesai. Talks about the rich culture of Goa and mentions various monsoon festivals of Goa which are celebrated with great joy and also writes about their Importance and ways of celebration further leading to our cultural diversity. The author has mentioned all the folk festivals and Celebrations related to our rich cultural heritage and traditions which preserves our Goan identity.

Feasts and Fests of Goa: the flavour of a unique culture written by Celina de Vieira Velho e Almeida who takes readers on a captivating journey into the vibrant traditions, culinary delight, and cultural celebrations of Goa. In this book, the author unveils the hidden treasure of Goa's feasts and festivals, showcasing the unique amalgamations of Indian, Portuguese, and local influences. Going beyond the religious and cultural significance of the Goan celebration, the book delves into their culinary aspects too. The author takes readers on a mouthwatering tour of traditional dishes and delicacies that are an integral part of these festivals. Through meticulous research and personal insights, Celina Almeida unravels the historical roots of these Feasts and Fest, shedding light on their evolution over time. She explores the customs, rituals, music, dance, and attire that contribute to the festive atmosphere, transporting readers to the heart of Goa's vibrant celebrations.²⁸

Kaleidoscope Goa: A Cultural Atlas by Pandurang Phaldesai the book talks about not only the forms of folk and formal worship but also about ancient forms of performing arts, folk arts, feasts, festivals, rituals, architecture as well as about literature and publication.²⁹ And also helps

²⁸ Celina de Vieira Velho e Almeida. *Feasts and Fest of Goa: The flavor of a unique culture*. (Panaji: Celina de Vieira velho e Almeida, 2023), 13.

²⁹ Pandurang Phaldesai, *Kaleidoscope Goa: A cultural Atlas*. (Panaji: Vasantao Dempo Education and Research Foundation, 2004), 30.

us to get a deeper acknowledgment of our culture and Heritage. And its glossary has helped to conduct research.

When Goa Celebrates by Apolinario Cardozo it's a book describing festivals of Christians, Hindus, and Muslims. It traces the origin behind the celebration of festivals. All the festivals are briefly explained in this book stating their importance. The author enriches the knowledge of myths, legends, folktales, and stories associated with the Goan feasts, and the impact they had and continue to have on the Goan community.³⁰ The author very well wrote about the geographical location of Goa which has contributed to the study of research.

Feasts Festivals and Observances of Goa by Maria de Lourdes bravo da costa Rodriguez. Wherein he has written about all the Hindu and catholic feasts and festivals of Goa in detail. And also gives us their cultural significance. The author wrote about the agricultural, socio-cultural, and religious importance. Through this ritualistic re-enacted of festivals, it informs man about its origin and identity.

Loksarita by Vishu Vinayak khedekar has written about the land of Goa. And about the rich culture and traditions of Goa including all the festivals in detail. It is also stating their importance in the lives of Goan society and people. The book compiles various folk forms and festivals throughout different parts of Goa. The book has a variety of articles related to the rich cultural heritage of Goa. It has diverse topics about the land of Goa.

Eco Culture Goa Paradigm by Vishnu Vinayak khedekar wherein he has written about Eco-culture which is based on the agricultural cycle, which is correlated to the local nature and environment and influenced by the cultural consciousness of society living in that area. The

³⁰ Apolinario Cardozo, *When Goa Celebrates*. (Panjim: Dalgado konkani akademi, 2022), 21.

Gomantak: Prakruti And Sanskruti by B.D Satoskar is a volume that deals with the evolution as well as features of Goan society. Written about the background of Goa, the author has also written Ethno history, which Also includes festivals, The Goan culture, practices and Traditions. And also gives a wider perspective of Goan society.³⁵ The author has written about all the aspects of Goan society including Caste, and religion. This book consists of an elaborate study of Goan diversity with its rich cultural heritage and traditions. Various folk practices are associated with the land of Goa. This book also puts forward a holistic view of the folk festivals of Goa.

Glimpses of Goa's Cultural Heritage Bhiva Parab has written that Goa's folk dances are a valuable treasure chest of knowledge passed on by ancestors. The writer tries to offer a glimpse of the cultural Heritage of Goa and mainly concentrates on some Hindu festivals and traditions. The author has covered some festivals like Dhalo, and Fugdi. The author tries to write about the Goan cultural diversity to influence more people about our rich cultural heritage through his writings. He also talks about the Portuguese colonial heritage and the diverse local population of Goa have cultivated a unique cultural landscape.³⁶

Nature, Culture, and Gender: Re-Reading the Folktale Written by Mary Vidya Porselvi has written about the book that introduces Eco-Feminist criticism and situates it within an innovative folktale typology to connect women and the environment through folklore. She has also discussed different theories given by various scholars.³⁷

³⁵ B.D Satoskar, *Gomantak: Prakruti and Sanskruti*. (Panaji: Shardiya Publishers, 1979), 225.

³⁶ Bhiva Parab, *Glimpse of Goa's Cultural Heritage* (Panjim: Broadway Publishing House, 2013), 23.

³⁷ Porselvi, Mary vidya. *Nature, Culture, and Gender: Re-reading the folktale* (New York: Routledge Publication, 2016) 5.

1.4 Scheme of chapters

Chapter I: Introduction

The first chapter Presents an introduction to the study and the purpose of the study. It also provides the scope and the research objectives, the Relevance of the research, the research Methodology, the source Consulted, and the Literature review of books About the study.

Chapter II: Religion and Nature Worship in India An Overview

The second chapter will consist of the correlation between Nature and Religion. What are the concepts of nature worship through religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism.

Chapter III: "Monsoon Festivals of Goa": An Introduction

The third chapter will consist of descriptions of Monsoon festivals celebrated in Goa. Including the origin of these Festivals, and their historical and cultural background. The Means and methods of these festivals, rituals, customs, and traditional practices.

Chapter IV: Nature Worship: Eco-theology Aspects

The fourth chapter will include how nature is worshipped through these festivals and the eco-cultural practices celebrated through those festivals.

Chapter V: Eco-Feminism: Relation of Women and Nature

The fifth chapter will include the different roles played by women in celebrating the monsoon festivals of Goa and the participation of women plays a major contribution.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

This chapter includes – a summarisation of the key findings and insights of the study. Implications for further research, Community initiatives.

Further, this chapter includes the main findings of this study. This thesis will include glossary, bibliography, photographs, supporting documents and additional data, case study details and other visual aids related to the festivals.

1.5 Research Design and Methodology

An attempt is made to assess the sources in the context of social and economic developments. The primary and secondary sources will be consulted and fieldwork will be conducted to verify the information found in these sources. The major sources for the study are documents, newspaper articles, books, and interviews. The study pertains to Goa. The research also contains qualitative sources which are appropriate for the Research study.

The research includes a qualitative methodology for understanding the cultural and historical history of the monsoon festivals of Goa, this will provide a comprehensive understanding of its rich heritage. This will include old records; the researcher also conducted oral history interviews to gather first-hand sources and narrative accounts from elder members of the community. Recording oral histories will serve to preserve personal experiences, Traditions, and memories. Oral sources provide information not found anywhere else. As they are eyewitness accounts from the past. Also, participant observation is the key element of the methodology to observe the rituals, practices, and beliefs providing in in-depth study of the lived experiences of the community. Cross-referencing information will be obtained through interviews and observation.

A combined Method is used here as the sources are gathered from subjects like History, Ecology, Environmental History, sociology, etc. The fieldwork will be conducted to learn about a few festivals and Celebrations. The research also includes the study of secondary sources, the works done by other scholars like books, newspaper articles, questionnaires, and interviews.

1.6 Scope and Relevance of the Study

The research aims to analyse the role of Eco-theological aspect in celebrating, Monsoon festivals. Also, the research will help to understand how nature is worshipped through these festivals in India and Goa. This study is an attempt to establish the co-relation of society with nature for co-existence and survival wherein the aim is to understand different ways in which nature is worshipped through these festivals. The research will also deal with Eco-Feminism and the role of women in celebrating the monsoon festivals of Goa. Analysing how Religion, nature, and Participation of women are co-valuable insights into sustainable practices. The researcher focuses on the Cultural Significance of the Monsoon festivals within the local Community. The Study also delves into the Traditional rituals, practices, customs, and Art forms, Related to these festivities and their evolution in contemporary times. Additionally, the environment measures which ensures Sustainability is the critical aspect of the research.

There are some works related to this topic. But there is no significant work done from the Theological Perspective. The present study will help you to understand the local monsoon festivals of Goa and what is the social, cultural and religious importance. The study will contribute to how and why these festivals are celebrated in Goa. The study attempts to find the evolution in celebrating these festivals.

CHAPTER 2

Religion and Nature Worship in India an Overview

So long as the earth is able to maintain mountains, forests and trees until then the human race and its progeny will be able to survive.

- Durga Saptashati.

2.1 Definition of Nature Worship

Nature worship is a system of belief with high respect for natural phenomena such as the earth, Sun, Moon, Plants, Animals, Mountains, and Rivers. It also mentioned that nature is sacred and divine and includes religions that worship nature. Just as nature is a part of society and not something separate from it, so too is part of human history.³⁸ Nature worship is an integral part of different cultures in India.

Nature is all the plants, animals, and other things in the world that are not made by people and all the events and processes that are not caused by the people it is an inherent character and has been practiced since ancient times which is based on beliefs and practices. Throughout the history of religions, Nature recognised as initiating a relationship with humankind and a relationship that is the foundation of human experience.³⁹

Nature is a broad term that has various concepts, the meaning of nature is a complex inter-relationship between human beings and the environment and nature also leads to concepts of eco-spirituality, eco-culture, eco-theology, which are gaining more importance in today's developed world.

³⁸ Theodore R. Schatzki, 'Nature and Technology in History', *History and Theory* 42, (2003): 82.

³⁹ Mircea Eliade, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987) 324.

2.2 Nature Worship in India

Nature worship has been an integral part of Indian culture. Nature worship has been indicated in various forms reflecting the interconnectedness of human life on nature. For centuries, since the time of the Indus Valley Civilization, and even the Vedic period, and the advent of Aryans, the trees and animals have been worshiped and deified. The Aryans of the Vedic period was called as Pantheists, worshippers of Nature.⁴⁰ The reason is that the culture and economy of the subcontinent of India was and still is primarily agrarian. Therefore, the early settlers and invaders who later became settlers recognized the importance of the sun for the growth of crops for food, rain, and rivers for water. The Vedic gods such as *Agni* (fire), *Surya* (sun), *Vayu* (wind), *Bhumi* (earth), *Varuna* (water), and *Indra* (thunder and rain). The importance of these elements and environment is in Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, and the epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata.⁴¹

In Indian traditions, the proper balance of the *Pancha Bhutan* (five elements)- *Prithvi* (earth), *Vayu* (wind), *akasha* (sky or space), *Apa* (water), and *Agni* (fire or energy) is essential for harmony and balance of life on earth. All life forms contribute equally to the balance of these five elements.⁴² In India since the ages, the sacred groves, water bodies, jungles, and trees are considered to be sacred and form part of ecological Heritage. Food habits, the practice of rites and rituals, events and festivals, performances, and all acts are based on the topographical and environmental conditions in which human beings live.

The need to conserve and preserve biological diversity can be observed in the representation the habitat of God Shiva and his family. As the constant stream of Ganga's water from the hair of shiva indicates importance of water and purity. Nandi represents the world of animals and

⁴⁰ Krishna, Nanditha, M. Amirthalangam. *Sacred Plants of India*. (Haryana: Penguin Publication House, 2014) 15.

⁴¹ M.G Chitkara, *Encyclopaedia of Ecology, Environment and Pollution*. (New Delhi: Aph Publishing Corporation, 1998) 3.

⁴² Nanditha Krishna, *Sacred Animals of India*. (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010) 5.

the snake represent the presence of toxicity in nature. ⁴³ Consort of Parvati lion represents the wildlife and the mouse represents small underground animals. And the different types of birds and animals inhabit the abode of lord Shiva.

The Indus Valley civilization has stamped seals, one of them is the *Pashupati* seal and many of the animals depicted on the seals are drawn from nature. The animals depicted on *Pashupati* seals, such as elephants, tigers, buffalo, rhinoceros, zebu bulls and these animals were interpreted as symbols of nature and fertility. ⁴⁴ In addition to animals, the *Pashupati* seals also depict various symbols and motifs that are associated with fertility and regeneration and these seals reflect a deep connection between natural animals and human beings during Harappan civilization.

One of the prominent aspects of nature worship in India is the veneration of natural elements such as rivers, mountains, and trees. Rivers, in particular, holds a special importance in Indian culture, the Ganges, the holiest river which is worshipped as *Ganga Ma*, and it is believed to redeem one's sins. M.E Hankin, a British bacteriologist who analysed the water of all major rivers in India concluded that the water of Ganga was unique. ⁴⁵ The rivers such as *Yamuna* and *Saraswati* were also considered sacred. Mountains are also venerated in Indian culture, with the Himalayas being regarded as the abode of Gods.

The traditional agricultural practices and customs in India also reflect a deep connection to nature worship, festivals such as *Pongal* in south India and *Baisakhi* in north India are celebrated to express gratitude to the Earth, sun, and cattle for harvest. Apart from worshipping elements like earth, water, and the sun, Indian culture allow worship of almost all living beings and creatures in this world.

⁴³ Nanditha Krishna, *Hinduism and Nature*, (Haryana: Penguin Publication House, 2017) 7.

⁴⁴ Mircea Eliade, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987) 222.

⁴⁵ K.V Singh, *Hindu Rites and Rituals: Origins and Meanings* (Haryana: Penguin Random House Company, 2015) 10.

2.3 Nature Worship in Goa

2.3.1 Introduction

Goa is popularly known as Gowa or Gova, in Marathi Goven, in Konkani Goem.⁴⁶ Goa is a part of the West Coast region of India. The state of Goa has an area of 3,701 square kilometers. In the North, Goa shares its boundaries with Neighbouring regions of the Maharashtra and Karnataka States. Various communities in Goa worship nature and every region leaves its distinct mark on culture. The Dhangar are a tribal community of Goa and nature worship is a part of their culture wherein forests form an integral part of their environment. They are the worshippers of nature. Their principal deity, *Mhalchi Padhar* is worshipped. Mother Earth, which is responsible for giving birth to plants, animals, and all forms of life, is deified in the form of *Mhalchi Padhar*.⁴⁷ The kunbi woman of Goa performs the *Dhalo* and describes Goa's enchanting nature through folk songs.

The earth, forests, and trees are considered gods by the rural and tribal societies of Goa. The earth is regarded as *Dharitimata* or *Dhartarimay* in their folklore.⁴⁸ Bestowing Mother Nature signifies their closeness to the soil and land. People consider the earth, waterways, forests, and trees as gods and worship them. Nature is an important aspect of eco-culture. The admiration men always had for nature has been expressed in many ways and nature worship is one of them. In Goa, the worship of the deity called *Vandevi* is prominent in a few villages.⁴⁹ In Goa, Nature worship is practiced in most of the places, especially in villages.

⁴⁶ V.T Gune, *Gazetteer of the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu* (Panaji: Directorate of Archives and Archaeology, 1979) 3.

⁴⁷ Rajendra Kerkar, *Natural Heritage of Goa* (Panjim: Broadway Publishing House, 2016) 8.

⁴⁸ Vinayak Vishnu Khedekar, *Eco Culture Goa Paradigm*. (Panjim: Broadway Publishing House, 2013) 6.

⁴⁹ Khedekar, *Eco Culture*, 74.

2.4 Ways and forms of Nature worship in Goa

2.4.1 Introduction

In several styles of worship of forest gods and other divine entities, nature prevailed in Goa. There are various ways and forms of worship, some of them are worship by words which includes folklore which has a major contribution as the folksongs depict the earth, nature, and forest Goddess. *Gharhane* is also a way of worship or way of communication with supernatural deities. Different forms of nature worship include Sun worship, fire worship, mountain worship, animal worship, tree worship, forest worship, ancestor worship, pot worship, sacred groves, and sacred waters and all these worships are important and play a very significant role in preserving traditional beliefs and customs carried on from generation to generation to show their devotion towards nature and the environment.

2.4.2 Totemism

The theory of totemism was launched by McLennan and in his opinion, the guardian spirit is associated with the totem. Andrew Lang said that when animals and plants' names were given to the social groups, totemism arose.⁵⁰ Some people of different caste groups in Goa have totems such as *Kadamba*, *Mango*, *Savari*, and so on. And they take care of these plants and their ancestors were often related to these totem trees. Animals such as Snakes, crocodiles, Tortoise, and Tiger were also worshipped as totems in various parts of Goa.

2.5 Worship of trees

Trees are important for the survival of human beings as well as for wild animals since they are the sources of food, fruit, and medicine and an important part of our ecological heritage.

⁵⁰ A.A Goldenweiser, 'Totemism: An Analytical Study', *The Journal of American Folklore*, (1910): 179.

Trees are considered sacred and their worship goes back to the seals of the Indus Valley civilization.⁵¹ The seals and pottery discovered at various archaeological sites on the Indus Valley civilization display faunal and floral knowledge.⁵² Sacred trees form an important part of the ecological heritage of India. Most temples, towns, and villages, and sometimes Sikh temples and Dargah are associated with trees.⁵³ According to Buddhist and Hindu mythology, trees symbolize several cultural values. Sacred trees are associated with Hindu deities, Jain Tirthankara, and the Buddha. Tree worship was often linked with the Mother Goddess.

The Bishnoi community of Rajasthan is known for protecting trees at the cost of their lives and there are well known for the protection of *khejri* trees and further, this community led to *Bishnoi* movement. The Chipko movement was even started to protect *Cheri* trees from cutting and destroying their region as they know the importance of trees for their survival.

Goa for a long has been a center of trade on the west coast of India, before the Portuguese conquered it. Goa has a unique cultural ecology shaped by numerous events in its rich history. Among, some tribal and non-tribal communities of Goa, some trees are regarded as totem trees and are not allowed to be cut. In Goa, many villages are named after fauna and flora. Names Have evolved from the flora Such as *Ambaulim*, *Amthane* related with Mango trees. *Phansule*, *Pansare*, *Pansulimol* evolved from jackfruit. *Savarde*, *Savarse*, *Savrimol* from Savari trees. *Chinchone*, *Chinchini* emerged from tamarind trees. *Madapai*, *Donmad* from Coconut trees. In Goa, most of the villages have their village god or goddesses and holy spirits associated with the trees. In some places, there are shrines or temples constructed around the trees. In some places, the stone is kept under the tree and worshipped, to protect the nature. In Asnora of Bardez, the folk deity *Rashtrol* has abode on the jackfruit tree and hence the tree is protected and worshipped. In virnoda of Pernem *peepal* tree is considered as sacred tress dedicated to

⁵¹ Rajendra Kerkar, *Sacred Groves of Goa* (Saligaon: Goa State Biodiversity Board, 2021) 16.

⁵² Rajendra Kerkar, *Sacred Flora of Goa* (Sattari: Vivekanad Environment Awareness Brigade, 2022) 11.

⁵³ ⁵³ Nanditha Krishna, *Hinduism and Nature*, (Haryana: Penguin Publication House, 2017) 5.

local folk deity *Nagardeshwar*. In Mapusa the *Bodgeshwar*, the popular folk deity. There was also evergreen vegetation of *Pendamus* species of *Bodgini* that made him popular as *Bodgeshwar*. In Mauxi of Sattari, a *kazro* tree has been guarded by the villagers who makes offerings to the spirit of the tree.

2.5.1 Banyan (*ficus benghalensis*)

The Banyan tree locally known as *Vad* or *Vat Vriksha* symbolises longevity of generations and hence this tree is not to be cut, harm or burn. This tree is worshiped by ancestors of the village and believes that some supernatural entity has made this tree its abode. According to Nandkumar Kamat, Banyan trees is believed to be least 2000 years old and can encompass about thousand people in its shade.

2.5.2 Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*)

The Tulsi plant is considered as Sacred and worshipped as Goddess. In Goa, the *Tulsi Vrindavan* is usually set to one side of the front entrance to the *Mandap*. The plant has various properties such as reduction of stress, protects against radiations, and regulates health issues.

2.5.3 Mango

Mango trees are very important in Goa and are considered auspicious. The leaves of mango trees are used for religious purposes and to make *Toranas* for doors. The tree also has medicinal uses. Other important trees is, the coconut tree, bananas tree, *kumbyo* tree, *Peepal* tree, *Asoka* tree, *jambhul* tree, *kadamba* tree, *crocodile bark tree*, *devils' tree*, *Kosam tree*, *Savari*, *Ghoting* tree, *Harkinjal* all these trees have their importance.

2.6 Worship of Sacred Groves

2.6.1 Meaning and significance of sacred groves

The sacred groves are known by various names such as *Rai*, *Devrai*, *Vandevta*. Since ancient times, the sacred groves are there, they are important for birds and animals which otherwise become extinct.⁵⁴ Groves have different variety of biodiversity which often have rare plants and animals, birds, reptiles which conserves them. Sacred Groves probably represent the single most important ecological tradition of ancient Indian culture. Sacred groves may belong to village communities, state forests, and revenue departments, temples, tribal communities, gram panchayats, and even private individuals.⁵⁵ They are protected by local communities through taboos and sanctions that have cultural and ecological outcomes. The forests are considered as the property of Gods of the villages in which they are situated, and trees cannot be cut in their surrounding areas.

The names of Sacred groves vary according to the different regions and language in India. In Karnataka sacred groves are called as *Devarakadu*, in kerala known as *Kavu*, wherein in Sikhism known as *Gumpa* forests.⁵⁶ There are various sacred groves in India, which includes Aravali hills in Rajasthan which is a sacred grove. One of the well-known examples of sacred groves in India is the Mawphlang sacred grove situated in the northern state of Meghalaya and worshiped by khasi community by their customs and traditions.

The practice of dedicating groves to deities is a common practice in Goa. In Sacred Groves, all forms of living creatures are given protection through the grace of one deity. In goa sacred groves are known by *Devran*, *Devaran* or *Devachi Rai*. There are various sacred groves situated at sattari taluka, in caranzol village there are three sacred groves, *Holiyechi Rai*,

⁵⁴ Claude Alvares, *Fish Curry and Rice* (Mapusa: The Goa Foundation, 2002), 350.

⁵⁵ Madhav Gadgil and M. D Subash Chandran, 'Sacred Groves', *India International Centre* 19, (1992): 184.

⁵⁶ J. R. Freeman, 'Gods, Groves and the Culture of Nature in Kerala', *Modern Asian Studies* 33, (1999): 291.

Karalachi Rai, Honnulechi Rai. ⁵⁷ *Ajobachi Rai* of Keri- sattari is unique and considered the biggest known sacred grove in Goa. In Canacona the sacred grove of *Panh Dev* is considered sacred to the villagers of that region. There are various sacred groves in Pernem taluka and across Goa. Some of the sacred groves are not known to many people.

2.7 Worship of Animals

Animals have been traditionally considered sacred in different cultures, the symbolic significance of animals in India is as vehicles of God or deities themselves. ⁵⁸ The ancient religions of India, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism have never differentiated between the soul of human beings and the soul of an animal. The worship of animals probably began very early in human history, when human beings were struggling to survive in a hostile environment. Man and animal have coexisted since their creation, sometimes in harmony and at other times in hostility, as they fought over limited resources. Animals were revered for several reasons. The elephant was recognized as the remover of obstacles. Some animals often became *vahanas* or vehicles of gods. Some animals were part of social history and ended up as demons just like *Mahishasur*. And some animals like lions, became the mount of *Durga*. The *Bishnoi* communities of Rajasthan have sacrificed their lives to protect nature and wildlife and they are well known for the protection of Blackbucks. Animal sacrifice has been historically practiced in India. They are practiced as a part of rituals and festivals associated with agricultural practices, harvest, and fertility. There are various superstitions related to animal sacrifice. Animal sacrifices are not followed by various religions such as Buddhism and Jainism. Animal sacrifices are banned and various laws are implemented to save animal cruelty but in spite various regions still practice them.

⁵⁷ Sangeeta Sonak, *Multiple dimensions of global environmental change* (New Delhi: Teri Press, 2006) 197.

⁵⁸ Richa Dwivedi, *Hinduism: Worship and Festivals* (Allahabad: Shabd Prakashan, 2016) 113.

The Anthill is worshipped in Goa as a symbol of Goddess *Santeri*, locally known as *Roin*. The termite mound symbolizes the cult of the earth worship; the goddess is also known as *Shantadurga* in some parts of Goa.⁵⁹ and Snakes are also worshipped along with anthill. Similarly, the tiger is also worshipped in Goa which is known as *Waghro Dev*. The Bull is considered as the vehicle of Shiva and is called as *Nandi* and therefore, in every temple of Shiva, statue of Nandi is found. The crow is also considered an important creature of our nature, they are considered as the messenger between the physical and spiritual world and they represent our ancestors. They are also offered small portions of boiled rice, as a kind of respect towards them. The rituals after death (*shradha*) are incomplete without crows. crows play a key role in cleaning up the environment. The horses are associated with folk deities such as *Paik Dev*, the warrior God which is found in places such as Canacona and Usgao.

In Goa the Crocodile has been worshipped for centuries on the *Amavasya* day of *Paush* and asked for blessing the harvest, this practice is known as *Mannge Thapnee* celebrations are held to mark the commencement of the paddy harvesting season and offerings are made to clay replicas of a crocodile. The slit from the paddy fields is scooped out and deposited on the bund and given the shape of a crocodile. The crocodile This decorated with flowers, and shells, and a live chick is offered. A community *Garhane* (prayers) is then followed, this ritual is practiced in *durbhat*, *bhom*, and *alshi Talaulim* in Ponda taluka.⁶⁰

The cow was considered as *Kamdhenu*,⁶¹ an animal who fulfills wishes and hence, worshipped. Cow worship is another significant form of animal worship which is known as *Sausar Padvo*. herein, the cattle are decorated with clothes and flowers. This ritual is practiced by those who own cattle, as earlier every household had cattle but later the people sold them for various

⁵⁹ Sangeeta Sonak, *Multiple dimensions of global environmental change* (New Delhi: Teri Press, 2006) 187.

⁶⁰ Claude Alvares, *Fish Curry and Rice* (Mapusa: The Goa Foundation, 2002), 300.

⁶¹ Kamat, Padmaja. "*Ponda: A History of Temples*". PhD Thesis, Goa University, 2011.

reasons, but those people who didn't have cattle in their houses still practiced this ritual. As it has become a custom that everyone follows. This ritual is practiced in the villages of Bicholim Taluka.

2.8 Religion and Nature Worship

2.8.1 The relationship between nature and religion

Religion and nature worship play significant roles in cultural and spiritual identity. Religion is a complex aspect of human culture and society which consists of beliefs, practices, and rituals and many religions have a deep meaning for nature and consider it to be a reflection of the divine. Religion can be organized around a specific deity (theism), the absence of deities (atheism), reverence for nature (animism).⁶² There are various religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, Islam and each of these religions has its own distinct perspective and practices related nature and environment and are often shaped by different factors, including theological teachings, and cultural practices.

2.8.2 Hinduism

Hinduism is not a monolithic religious faith but it is one of the world's oldest and major religions and has a deep-rooted tradition of nature worship, and nature is considered sacred and divine.⁶³ The day in the life of Hindu people starts with the ritual of *Namaskar* to Mother Earth before one puts one step on the ground from the bed. The earth is considered sacred by the Hindus and they worship earth, avoiding activities leading to its destruction. Many people perform '*Bhoomi-Pujan*' before digging the foundation for construction. As a way of seeking forgiveness from Mother Earth. *Vanaspati* is regarded as a benevolent mother and therefore worshipped by Hindus. The concept of conducting *Yagnas* was aimed at purifying the

⁶² Aaradhan Salpekar, *Encyclopaedia of Ecology and Environment* (New Delhi: Bhartiya Khadi Gramodyog Vikas Abhikaran, 2006) 260.

⁶³ K.V. Singh, *Hindu Rites and Rituals: Origins and Meanings* (Haryana: Penguin Random House Company, 2015) 33-40.

surrounding atmosphere. The concept of *Prakriti* (nature) in Hindu philosophy is often depicted as the creative power of the divine, from where all life emerged and the ancient scriptures of Hinduism, especially the Vedas, contain hymns and prayers for the elements of nature such as God, moon, earth, water, air and fire and these elements are worshipped in the Hindu mythology and worshipped as divine.⁶⁴ some rituals and ceremonies are performed to honour nature. The architectural design of traditional Hindu temples also reflects nature they are built in relation with the natural environment, marking important agricultural cyclers, and seasonal changes, and also has carvings and sculptures of animals, plants, or celestial beings.⁶⁵

2.8.3 Buddhism

Buddhism is one of the world's major religions which was founded by Siddhartha Gotama, The connection between Buddhism and nature is inseparable. The interconnectedness, compassion, and value of all living beings are traditions emphasized in this religion. Buddhism does not involve traditional worship of nature as deities or spirits, but it encourages a profound respect for the environment and all its inhabitants.⁶⁶ Buddhism believes in the principle of *ahimsa* or non-violence or non-injury, which belongs to all beings, including animals and this avoids causing harm to any living beings.

The concept of *pratityasamutpada* or dependent origination, teaches that all exists in dependence on other factors, creating a web of interconnection that includes human's animals, plants, and the environment.⁶⁷ Buddhist rituals and practices often include nature-related elements, many Buddhist teachings and parables relate to animals and plant life as well as natural elements which includes the sun, moon, the relation of waves and water, and the relation

⁶⁴ Swami Sri Lakshmanacharya, *Hindu Religion and Culture* (New Delhi: Jnanada Prakashan, 2017) 83.

⁶⁵ Ramesh Singh, *Hindu Ethics and Morality* (New Delhi: Deepansh Publication, 2020), 6.

⁶⁶ M.G Chitkara, *Encyclopaedia of Ecology, Environment and Pollution* (New Delhi: Aph Publishing Corporation, 1998)9.

⁶⁷ Anand Singh, *Planet, plants and animals: Ecological Paradigms in Buddhism* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2019) 128-145.

of river and ocean. Historically, Buddhist monastic communities are also actively involved in environmental conservation. Thus, Buddhism's approach to nature may differ from traditional nature worship but its teachings and practices reflect an extreme appreciation for conservation and wellbeing of the natural world.

In Buddhism, Gardens are described as a place of medication and healing, ⁶⁸and there were gardens in Taxila and Nalanda. Lord Buddha was also born under a tree in the Lumbini garden.

2.8.4 Jainism

Jainism is one of the ancient religions of India in which nature worship is deeply connected with the fundamental principles of the faith. Jainism is an integral part of Indian culture. Jain philosophy is the concept of *Ahimsa* is usually translated as no-harm or non-violence which includes no harm to human beings as well as animals, plants, and even earth itself. Jains believe that every living being whether visible or microscopic, possess a soul and deserves respect.

The principle of *Aparigraha* or non-possessiveness, encourages Jains to minimize their impact on the earth and to live in harmony with nature. Additionally, the Jain concept of *Anekantavada* or non-absolutism involves the connectedness with all aspects of life, including nature. ⁶⁹

There is a concept in Jainism wherein Jains clean the pathway with broom so that they don't harm the insects and micro-organisms on the floor. Jainism also don't believe in polluting the environment and nature.

2.8.5 Sikhism

Sikhism is a religion founded by Guru Nanak while Sikhism does not specifically advocate nature worship in the way that some other belief systems do, but it promotes the idea of seeing the divine presence in all of creation. Sikhs believe that the divine essence known as *Waheguru*, is present in everything and everyone in the world. The concept of *Ik Onkar* (one God) is central

⁶⁸ Nanditha Krishna, *Hinduism and Nature*. (Haryana: Penguin Random Publication House, 2017) 10.

⁶⁹ Christopher Key Chapple, *Jainism and Ecology: Nonviolence in the web of life* (USA: Harvard University Press, 2002) 140.

to Sikh philosophy which signifies the belief in singular, formless and divine force that exists in all things. Sikh scripture, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, contains hymns and verses that express devotion to nature and natural world.⁷⁰ Sikhs also give importance to *Seva* (selfless service) to human beings and also extends to preservation of the natural world. *Gurdwars* (places of worship) are often surrounded by pools of fish and marine life to represent a balance between man and nature.

Sikhs are also engaged on outdoor meditation; they also perform their daily prayers in the natural environment such as near forest, rivers, mountains. *Ardas*, the significant prayer in Sikhism, which seeks the wellbeing of all beings.

⁷⁰ Jaspal Singh, *Guru Granth Sahib: The Sikh Scripture* (New Delhi: K.K Publication, 2011) 183.

Fig. 2.1

People worshipping Tulsi plant

Picture Courtesy: www.plantbiospot.com

Fig. 2.2

People worshipping Animals

Picture Courtesy: www.quora.com

Fig. 2.3

Buddhism and Nature

Picture Courtesy: www.pinterest.com

CHAPTER 3

Monsoon Festivals of Goa- An introduction

“Your deepest roots are in nature. No matter who you are, where you live, or what kind of life you lead, you remain irrevocably linked with the rest of creation”

-Charlie Cook

3. 1 Introduction

Goa receives rain from southwest Monsoon from June to October. The word Monsoon owes its origin to an Arabic word *Maunsam*.⁷¹ A monsoon is a seasonal change in the direction of strongest, winds of the region and causes wet and dry seasons. Monsoons are most often associated with Indian Ocean. The Geographical location of Goa makes it a popular tourist destination, which is known for its rich cultural heritage. During the monsoon, Goa and other coastal regions receive heavy Rainfall and that is why the monsoon occupies a great significance in the heart of the Goan People. In the Indian Ocean Monsoon winds were used for Maritime trade as sailing ships headed for overseas Countries and trade was considered very important for the exchange of commodities. Monsoon season also plays a pivotal role in shaping Goa's agricultural practices. Goa gets 90% of its rains from the southwest monsoon (during wet seasons) as it lies along the coast and on the side of the Sahayadris. The average annual rainfall is between 2800 mm to 3500 mm, and about 36% of the annual rains in Goa in July. The winds are strong and are mainly southwest during the monsoon months. The amount of rain received during the Monsoons critically controls the way of life, culture, and economy.

Goa is a small part of India, rich in its cultural diversity and heritage which has its glory and legacy behind it. The age-old traditions and customs going on from generation to generation, left by ancestors which give us valuable information about the authentic culture and rituals

⁷¹ P.K Das, *The Monsoons* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1968), 1.

related to festivals. The customs and traditions are deeply rooted in its history, religion, and local practices. The state's culture is a blend of Indian, Portuguese, and indigenous influences, from the festivals, and celebrations to music, folksong, folk dance, cuisine, architecture, language, literature, and lifestyle. As festivals and culture are part of our society, they are closely interdependent.

3. 2 Lifestyle before Monsoons

In Goa, the lifestyle of the people changes before monsoons as they prepare for the rainy season. And every year people of Goa celebrate Purumentachem Fest at the onset of monsoons. It is celebrated at the end of May and before June. It is one of the important Feasts to be celebrated as it dates back to the pre-Portuguese period. The Feast was mostly celebrated in Margao and Mapusa. The people in earlier times would know about the climate and therefore, they started to prepare for it earlier.

3.2.1 Purumentachem Fest

The Purumentachem Fest also means 'Feast of Provisions'. The word Purumenth comes from the Portuguese word *Provisao*, which means supplies or provisions.⁷² The Purumenth is an old custom practiced, where people store different kind of Food products and stored them in manner that they lasted through the monsoon season. They would collect fruits, vegetables and other products that people required to survive during the harsh rainy season. The feast insights into the local life of the people of Goa. It helps the local people to stock food items for the rainy season as during the monsoons it is difficult for the people to go out and get things required to use every day. This feast is celebrated by the Christian community but practiced by

⁷² Apolinario Cardozo, *When Goa Celebrates*. (Panjim: Dalgado konkani akademi, 2022), 54.

all religions.⁷³ They store onions, dry fish, coconut, chillies, dry prawns, dried mangoes, sausages, spices, tamarind, garlic, salt, vinegar, oil for the season.

3.3 Monsoons and The People in Goa

As Monsoon season is a time of great beauty and the lush greenery that brings to the landscape. In the daily lives of Goans, monsoon plays a crucial role as in the past, the Goan economy depended on the monsoons and Monsoon is essential for maintaining agriculture and food famine. During monsoon vegetation grows. Rains are a vital natural resource for a place's flora, fauna, agriculture, and ecological balance. In Goa monsoon rainfall plays an important role in the renewal of water resources, sustaining agricultural activities, and supporting the biodiversity of the region. And we can get a variety of wildflowers and plants which otherwise cannot be seen, there are also medicinal plants which grow during this season.

In Goa, the farmers are heavily dependent on agriculture for livelihood, as most of the population are farmers including both Hindus and Catholics, they grow vegetables such as beans, Brinjals, cucumbers, tomato, and okra. As Goa receives a good amount of rainfall during the monsoons people store rainwater collected from rooftops and then divert it to storage tanks. Wells and ponds are filled with water during monsoons which further helps the people. Monsoon is very crucial for the people of Goa as their existence depends on the monsoon season for survival.

3.3.1 Food

Rice is a staple food of Goans and Goa is a heavy rainfall region, having a hot and humid climate. This type of climate condition is ideal for rice production and rice is cultivated both in the kharif and Rabi seasons in Goa.⁷⁴ The food pattern of the people also changes during the

⁷³ Bhushan Bhawe, *Matoli: Ek Girest Dayaj* (Ponda: Shri. Ravi Sitaram Naik College, 2005) 107.

⁷⁴ Olavio Fernandes, *Major crops of Goa* (Panaji: Agriculture Officers Association, 2010) 2.

monsoons. As fish is short supply during rainy season, people eat varieties of *khare* or dried fish such as mackerels, sardines, small prawns. During this season variety of plants and vegetables grow such as *Taikulo*, *kuddu*, *tere*, *tender bamboo shoots*, *aaloo*, *hog plums*, which people eat during this season.

3.3.2 Clothes

In Goa, during the monsoon season, the clothing choices of local people are influenced by the heavy rains and high humidity. They wear lightweight and quick-drying fabrics such as nylon, polyester, and waterproof footwear. Men often wear loose trousers and traditional Dhotis for comfort.

3.3.3 Lifestyle

The monsoon season in Goa brings about changes in the lifestyles of its residents, influenced by heavy rainfall. As it impacts to travel and transportation and there are no outdoor activities and people engage in indoor activities, cultural festivals play a role in lifestyle, culinary practices, clothing choices, and health problems also increase during monsoons.

3.4 Monsoon and The Festivals Celebrated During These Times

Monsoon Festivals of Goa generally means festivals and celebrations that take place during the monsoon season, which generally occurs from June to September in many parts of the world and these are not only the festivals celebrated during monsoon season but also festivals wherein nature is worshipped through these festivals. The monsoons bring rain, which is crucial for agriculture and the well-being of the community as monsoons and nature are deeply interconnected to each other. There are festivals which are celebrated for the arrival of rain and for abundant harvest and these festivals serve as a way for the people to show their gratitude for the life-giving rain which maintains their livelihood.

Monsoon festivals provides opportunities for various communities to celebrate the rejuvenation of nature, flora and fauna. Often these festivals are deeply rooted in the cultural and religious traditions, they include various rituals, prayers and offerings please deities related with rain and fertility and they often reflect spiritual and mythological significance in local beliefs among communities and brings people to come together which promotes unity. The meaning of monsoon festivals lies in the celebration of nature's continuity, the interconnectedness of various communities, the spiritual and cultural traditions these festivals highlight the profound impact of monsoon on the people's lives and also celebrate the deep-rooted connection between human societies and the natural world.

Festivals have been present in people's life for ages, they are the reflection of human culture. Man, and nature for centuries have lived in a mutual relationship that has given rise to beliefs and rituals to reinforce this bond, especially in the form of festivals, songs and dances of the womenfolk. ⁷⁵ As festivals are not a recent phenomenon, they are going on through ages from centuries from one generation to another. Festivals understood as celebrations of social and religious rites and build up social groups. ⁷⁶ As festivals are series of acts and performances, they have significant cultural and religious importance.

3.5 Chikal Kalo

Chikal kalo is celebrated in Marcel village, situated twenty kilometres from Panjim city, celebrates annually a mud festival or mud bath festival called as *chikal kalo* in the courtyard of the Devki Krishna temple, the temple is believed to have been founded about 300 years ago and Raja of *Sonde* assisted the foundation,⁷⁷ on the eleventh day of the Hindu month of

⁷⁵ Prava Rai, *Parmal: The Eternal Fragrance of Goan Heritage* (Porvorim: Goa Heritage Action Group, 2005) 9.

⁷⁶ Waldemar Cudny, 'The Phenomenon of Festivals: their origin, evolution and classification', *Anthropos* 2, (2014):640.

⁷⁷ Celina de Viera Velho e Almeida, *Feasts and fests of Goa: the flavour of unique culture* (Panaji: Celina de Viera Velho e Almeida, 2023) 70.

Ashadha.⁷⁸ (Second or third week of July according to the Gregorian calendar). The *Devaki Krishna* temple is probably the only one of its kind in the whole of India to have an idol of lord Krishna as Bal Krishna. The festival celebrates the naughty nature of Bal Krishna. On this day, every adult male from a toddler to elderly citizen, plays like a little Krishna and jumps into the mud, and throws mud on each other to celebrate the birth of lord Krishna and they play games like *Dharchyani* (Dog and the Bone) *kabbaddi*, *kho-kho*, *Apalipa*, *Ghadi*, *bhar*, *lagori*.⁷⁹

3.5.1 Origin

There is no evidence of *Chikal Kalo* beyond three hundred years ago and according to Dhume the idol of *Devaki Krishna* was originally based in Chora in Ilhas. As during Portuguese rule, in an attempt to protect their deities, many people shifted their temples to Ponda as the region was ruled by a Hindu ruler, and some deities were brought to Marcel as well because of the fear of conversion. And the mud of the temple of *Devaki Krishna* has curative effects for some skin diseases and those who have been cured return to fulfill their promise.⁸⁰ Those women who don't have a child place the image of Krishna in their layers of sari or lap and if she gets a child, she comes back to fulfill her pledge this is also a part of *Navas* (vows) and women's also make *puran polli* every year on this festival.

3.5.2 Customs, rituals, traditions and preparations

The day before the festival the temple is decorated, on *Ashadi Ekadashi*, the singing of *Bhajans* begins at noon by lightening the lamp of the temple, as per temple traditions every household of the village was earlier allotted a time to sing, which continues through the night and ends at on the next Day. On the day of festival, the *Khelgadi*, the male devotees enter the temple with

⁷⁸ FR. Apolinario Cardozo S.J., *When Goa Celebrates* (Panaji: Dalgado Konknni Akademi, 2022) 186-190.

⁷⁹ Dr. Tanaji Halankar, *Encyclopedia of Konkani* (Benguluru: Konkani Bhas Ani Sanskruti Pratisthan, 2011) 397.

⁸⁰ Vinayak Vishnu Khedekar, *Eco-Culture Goa Paradigm* (Panjim: Broadway Publishing House, 2013) 98.

bare bodies and offer a prayer for the welfare of communities. People irrespective of caste, class and religion participate in the festival. The festival starts with sounds of drums, bells, they chant *Jai Hari Vittal*. Then they apply oil from the lamp to their bodies with the belief *Devaki* will protect them from all the dangers and infections.⁸¹ The *Khelgadi*'s play games which Krishna used to play in Mathura, the one of the interesting games is *Chakr* or the wheel. As the youngsters lie on the ground and make formation resembling a wheel by touching their feet and the leader gives comment to the game. Small kids also participate, the games last for three hours and at the end the *Lagin* game is played and at last the *Dahi Handi* is played to the honor of lord Krishna. After playing the games the participants bath in the river and return to the temple to take *Prasad* and after the *Aarti*, *Puja*, and *Garhane* the *chikal kalo* ends.

3.5.3 Social and Religious Importance

The *Chikal kalo* holds a very significant place for the people of Mashel, this festival helps to unite the whole community, people forget their grudges and celebrate the festival with unity and togetherness. The local educational institutions declare a holiday and people working in government and private offices apply for a leave in advance, this shows the importance of this festival. And people also have a very strong religious belief towards *Chikal Kalo* in Goa. The *Chikal Kalo* is also a symbol of fertility.

3.6 Sangod

Sangod means taking of two boats together with a platform erected on it is called *Sangod*.⁸² It is celebrated on the seventh day of *Chavath* or *Ganesh Chaturthi* and the ritual of immersing the idol is performed, the *Ganesh* idols of nearby villages are brought in a procession to the riverside at *Cumbharjuve* canal that links zuari with the Mandovi River which is a home for

⁸¹ FR. Apolinario Cardozo S.J, *When Goa Celebrates* (Panaji: Dalgado Konknni Akademi, 2022) 188.

⁸² Vinayak Vishnu, *Goa: Land life*, 461.

Crocodiles and Birds, it's an island near *Mashel*. The idols are taken to the water in a procession, accompanied by my music.⁸³ Before the immersion of the Ganesh idol various boats surrounds the river and takes seven rounds and depicts the mythological scenes from *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, man children and also takes participates. But now there are various changes which are taken place in celebrating *Sangod*.

3.6.1 History

The term *Sangod* can be explained as *Sangado* that is joining two boats together making it *Sangado* to carry the deity in it.⁸⁴ The festival of *Sangod* has started around 1920 and locals offer several explanations for this unique procession.⁸⁵ Some believe that the island of *Cumbharjuve* was conquered by Portuguese rulers forcing the Hindu residents of the island to flee to *Mashel*, a village just across the river which was under the rule of a Hindu king. And this migrant Hindus wanted to immerse their Ganesh idols in their original village hence, they started transporting their idols to the middle of river for immersion.

3.6.2 Customs, rituals, traditions and preparations

The cultural festival *Sangod* is celebrated over 400-500 years. *Sangod* has been significant in the last ten years due to the attractive *Dekhaves* depicted in two great epics such as *Ramayan* and *Mahabharata* and also includes characters from puranic, historical, and social issues. In the past, the Ganesh idols from four families *Karande*, *Madhu Sukhtankar*, *Anant Sukhtankar*, and *Sadha (Aaba) Sukhtankar* used to immerse in seven days through this festival called *Sangod*,⁸⁶ with them the Ganesh (red color) of *Cumbharjuvekarin* temple also immersed. The Ganesh is brought and placed in *Sangod* and after five rounds the idol is immersed in the water.

⁸⁴ Vinayak vishnu khedekar, *Goa: Land Life and Legacy* (Panaji: Directorate of Art and Culture, 2016) 459.

⁸⁵ Vinayak Vishnu Khedekar, *Eco-Culture Goa Paradigm* (Panjim: Broadway Publishing House, 2013) 120.

⁸⁶ Phadte Neema, Marcela: *A village in transition* (Diss Theses, Goa University) 2016, 56.

The boat is decorated with *Pathakas*, Bamboo, some leaves. In the *Sangod* the five people stand at the front side depicting characters such as *Riddhi-Siddhi*, *Putna*, *Betal* and, *Sankasur*. The *Sangod* starts when the Ganesh idol of Shantadurga temple is set inside the decorated *Palki*.

Another unique feature of *Sangod* is earlier people used to make small boat *Sangods* and decorated it with fashion and offensive and vulgar boards, which tell us about the modern world and the practices happening in the modern world, and they painted themselves with black and white colour so that nobody should know them and *Bangde* (kind of Dance) people of Marcel and Cumbharjua without embarrassment participate in it, Said by Mahendra Gaonkar a very old Participant of Chitrakala. People also do *Sangne* to fulfil their wishes. Festival holds social, historic and religiously importance.

3.6.3 Social and Religious Importance

Sangod festival is deeply rooted in the Marcel and Cumbharjua. People celebrate the festival with religious devotion. The Panchayat has also organized competitions for the *Chitrarath*. Now the government of Goa also supports the artists and provides funds to them. Children also participate in as a fancy-dress Competition. Communities from Marcel and Cumbharjua celebrate *Sangod* with unity.

3.7 Konnsachem Fest

Taleigao is a village in Goa bordered by the Arabian Sea. It has been a place of great significance for centuries. The Taleigao village was known as the granary of Tiswadi taluka, because of the vast land of the comunidade was under rice cultivation.⁸⁷ As Taleigao is part

⁸⁷ Nusha Bandodkar, *In the Arms of nature(Environment through Religion: An Environmental Concern)* (Diss Theses, Goa University) 2016, 50.

of Tiswadi, which means thirty villages, which is also referred to in an inscription of the Madhav Mantri, governor of Goa in 1391 and it is believed that the origin of the word Taleigao originated from “Tala” e “Gaum” which states that village was on plains or “*Thor-Gaum*” which means a large village.⁸⁸ In Goa, every village has its own church where annual feasts are celebrated. In each of the village, the first offerings were made to the church and prior to the establishment of Christianity or church in Goa, the offerings were made to *Gram-Devata* the temples in each village.⁸⁹

Taleigao is famous for its feast of konsachem which is also known as *Novidade* means *New* in Portuguese. This festival is also known as ‘*Festa de Espiga*’⁹⁰ *Kosam* is a Konkani word for the newly harvested stalks of corn or sheaves. *Konsachem fest* is a harvest festival which is a Christian festival celebrated during the second or third week of the month of August, a time when paddy crop in Goa is ripe for harvesting. It is believed that the fest is performed by the agrarian community, to show their gratitude for good harvest. The fest is also celebrated in different parts of Goa. Among the different villages in Ilhas, Taleigao enjoys the Privilege of cutting the First sheaves of paddy on 21st August, with rituals practiced for three days.

3.7.1 History

As the history of *Novidade* goes back to 500 years with the Portuguese arrival in the year 1510, wherein the main aim of king of Portuguese Dom Manuel I, who wanted Portugal to become a major player in maritime trade with Asian countries, so king appointed Afonso de Albuquerque to conquer Hormuz, Aden and Malacca. A Hindu admiral Timoja from Goa

⁸⁸ Moren De Souza, *Tisvaddecheo Igorzo* (Panijim: Thomas Stephens Konkanni Kendr, 1994) 113.

⁸⁹ Afonso Botelho, “Harvest festival and strains of Continuity”, *The Navhind Times*, 5 August, 2007, 9.

⁹⁰ Alvarinho J Luis, “The Traditional Festa de espiga of Taleigao”, *The Navhind Times*, 21 August 2011, 11.

invited Albuquerque. As Timoja was admiral from Honavar, he got many appeals from the Goan Hindu population, as they were unhappy with the Muslim rule.⁹¹

In February 1510 Goa was taken over by Afonso de Albuquerque in the absence of Adil Shah who was then ruling Goa. However, when Adil Shah learnt about this move, on his return in May of the same year, he then attacked the Portuguese with a force of 60, 000 men. As the monsoons set in, there was no option for Albuquerque but to withdraw, the Aguada sand bar was closed and his soldiers went to hard times and there was scarcity of food. It was on this occasion that '*Gaunkars*' of Taleigao risked their lives and transported rice and other food products to the Portuguese army, and as a noble gesture, Afonso de Albuquerque acknowledged the privilege to the *Gaunkars* of taleigao, vide the '*Foral*' of Afonso Mexia, dated on September 16, 1526, article 54, of which says: Taleigao has the superiority over the others to harvest the paddy and the privilege of harvesting the paddy was given only to the *Gaunkars* of the first '*Vangor*' which consists of nine families namely: Mendoncas, Viegas, Mendoncas with Gonzagas, Martins, Luis, Gomes, Farias Almeidas with Falcoes and Abreus.⁹² As some of the *Gauncars* of the nine families are still practicing the festival, others are either shifted to other countries or some don't have a boy child to continue this practice.⁹³

3.7.2 Customs, rituals, traditions and preparations

On the eve of the feast, cannons (fosne) in the evening to know that everyone is ready for the harvest festival. At 21st August, the *Alvorada de Musica* is played. The first president walks to the church under a ceremonial umbrella (*Entourarhas*) accompanied by Dhol at 9am. The Parishioners gather in front of the church. The Confrariars carry the Patron of the Village –St

⁹¹ Joao Antonio Da Costa, *A History of Goa* (Mapusa: Joao Antonio Da Costa, 1982) 146.

⁹² Maria de Lourdes Bravo da Costa Rodrigues, "Harvest and Ritual" *Goa Today* (September 15, 1994): 12.

Michael on a *Charol*. The parish priest recites a short prayer and worship the field. President harvests the paddy with silver sickle, this paddy is then offered to almighty with high mass then songs and *Quermes* (games) football match is played.

On the following day, the cannons are fired again, accompanied by *Dhol*, trumpet. The feast president distributes *Fov*, to nearby villages same goes to the Third day. On the day of the festival, the locals avoid eating meat products and their diet consists of vegetarian delicacies. People eat *Fov* on this day. On 24th August, the group consisting the feast president and nine *Gauncars* and managing committee carry *Fov* and paddy sheaves to Se. Cathedral. In earlier times, Old Goa was the capital of Estado da Goa till 1843 and Se Cathedral was the main church which was seat of Archbishop in Goa.⁹⁴ The Golden bell of the church is tolled and people attend the mass from all over the Goa. And the *Fov* and sheaves is offered to archbishop and then go to *Cabo* (Dona Paulo) and offers the *Fov* and sheaves *Avel* to the Governor.

3.7.3 Social and Religious Importance

The 500 years old customs are still practiced during *Konnsanchem Fest*, Every Gauncar celebrates the fest, following the norms laid by the Comunidade. As During 450 years the Portuguese realized the importance of the agrarian economy and self-sustenance of the local community. People still practice it with religious importance in Taleigao and other parts of Goa.

3.8 Tousachem Fest

The *Tousachem Fest* which means 'Festival of Cucumbers' is a Christian festival where the devotees offer cucumbers to Saint Anne, which takes place on 26th July in the church situated in Talaulim in Tiswadi, a village situated 10 kms away from Panaji. People from all over Goa

⁹⁴ Dr Alvarinho Louis, Whatsapp message to author, March, 11, 2024.

Hindus and Christians participate in this festival. This festival is celebrated by both Hindus and Catholics newly couples, as Saint Anne is believed to be childless for forty years but at forty, she conceives a child and hence people come to pray for child.

3.8.1 History

According to Paulo Varela Gomes, “Santa Ana is the most important church in Goa because of its Architecture.”⁹⁵ This church is a World Heritage Site. The St. Anne church the festival is believed to be celebrated for the past 500 years. The Tousachem fest at the church is anticipated by unmarried women and men, and those who don’t have a child. They say their prayers in the Portuguese language as it was spoken in the church for almost five hundred years.⁹⁶ The locals of the village rely on legends such as the Hindu Goddess *Kellbaay*, the one among the seven sisters Goddess, was passing through the *Rajbid*, the long road built by Kadamb rulers, the Jesuits caught her and converted to Christianity, hence she became Saint Anne.⁹⁷ St. Anne of Talaulim is known as the incarnation of *Santeri*.⁹⁸

3.8.2 Customs, rituals, traditions and preparations

The prayers for blessings are in Portuguese, they offer cucumbers, *urid dal*, spoons, *Chudo* (bangles), flowers, coconuts, candles, and *Agarbati*. If a young boy doesn’t get a wife or bride to get married, he comes with a spoon to Santa Anna and recites a small prayer in Portuguese “*Senhora Tomai “colher” dai “mulher”*” and the couples without a child come with their offering and recite “*Senhora Tomai “Papino” Dai “Menino”*” (cucumbers)

⁹⁵ Celina de Viera Velho e Almeida, *Feasts and Fests of Goa: Th Flavor of Unique Culture* (Panaji: Celina de Viera Velho e Almeida, 2023) 77.

⁹⁶ Celina de Viera, *Feasts and Fests*, 79.

⁹⁷ Vinayak Vishnu Khedekar, *Goa: Land Life and Legacy* (Panaji: Directorate of Art and Culture, 2016) 468.

⁹⁸ P.P Shirodkar, *Purabhilekh Puratatva* (Panaji: Directorate of Archives, Archaeology and Museum, 1984) 22.

Perhaps it is the practice of offering a *Pepino* (cucumber or *Tavche* in Konkani) that has given the feast its name *Tousachem Fest*. One cucumber is offered to our last and the other is taken at home for the person's consumption. At the end of the cucumbers are distributed among the villagers and priests who have come to celebrate the feast. The mode of prayers, offerings, and petitions vary according to the needs of the devotees.

3.9 Sao Joao

It is a festival celebrated by the catholic community in Goa in June which is celebrated in different parts of Goa including Candolim, Calangute, Siolim. Among the Christian community of Goa, the feast of Saint John the Baptist holds more importance. As the part of celebrations of the feast all the members of the community members assemble at a designated church or chapel. Children and youth and craft the *Kopel* with flowers. And headband is made with fresh flowers and creepers. They also say prayers and sing hymns with music and dance.⁹⁹ The Main highlight is the *Sangod* or the boat parade, boats are decorated with flowers and some canoes are decorated with nature and environment preservation, pollution and people also sing *Mandos*, *Dulpods* to the tune of *Ghumat*, Violin on the boat.

In Siolim this festival is celebrated more than a century and the boat parade of seven to eight boats making their way through river to St. Anthony Church. The young and old traditionally jump into wells and ponds wearing crowns of flowers and leaves on their heads screaming *Viva Sao Jao* during the celebration as the well is associated with womb, and the leap signifies the happiness associated with the birth of Jesus Christ. *The Sao Joao* continues for the evening with songs sung by local artist and *tiatrists*. And this occasion also invites the newly married

⁹⁹ Sebastian D'Cruz, *History of St. Anthony's Church and the Villages of Siolim and Marna* (Siolim; Sebastian D'Cruz, 1994) 56.

daughters to their maiden home with their husbands and is celebrated also known as *Zanvoianchem Fest*.

3.9.1 History 3.10 Ganesh Chaturthi

Ganesh Chaturthi is the most religious festival of the Goan Hindu community. It is equally important in Konkan regions and neighbouring areas of Karnataka. According to the Gregorian calendar, this festival falls in the month of August or September celebrated on the fourth day of *Bhadrapad*. *Ganapati* is also known as *Vighneshwara* or the Deity of Obstacles. *Ganapati* is well known by various names such as *Ganesh*, *Gajanan*, *Vakratund*, *Sidhivinayak*, *Ekdanta*, *Lambodar* and so on. As Ganesh is seen as a symbol of success in life, good living, prosperity, and peace, hence his images and shrines are seen throughout India.¹⁰⁰

3.10.1 History

The story is that he was created by the body mud of *Parvati*, wife of lord *Shiva*, and gave it life. Then she tasked him to stand by the door of her palace as she bathed and ordered not to let anyone in. When her husband tried to enter the palace, the boy stopped Shiva and this made lord Shiva angry and he beheaded his head. When *Parvati Mata* shows that she got angry lord Shiva sent his men to bring back the head of the first creature they came across and they met an elephant who sacrificed his head and Shiva brought back Ganesh to life and this story is related to birth and regeneration. *Ganapati* is also known as the god of wisdom and he has said to have written the *Mahabharata* which was dictated by *Vyasa*. And there are various stories of Ganesh mentioned in *Puranas* and *Vedas*.

3.10.2 Customs, rituals, traditions and preparations

¹⁰⁰ S.M. Michael, 'The origin of the Ganapati Cult', *Asian Folklore Studies* 42, (1983) 91.

During the Portuguese rule in Goa, they restricted religious rituals and practices in the Hindu communities. One of them was restrictions on celebrating Ganesh festivals. the restriction was imposed on clay idols of Ganesh. Many advocated a unique way to overcome this problem people started worshipping Ganesh on paper. The Mhamai Kamat celebrated this festival at their house in Panjim. The Mhamai used to draw Ganesh on paper and store it in the box of food grains and offer fruits and flowers to it. ¹⁰¹

The preparation s of this festival begins a few days earlier. In Goa, Ganesh Chaturthi is known as *Chavath*. ¹⁰² In Goa, almost in every village, the artists who make clay idols of Ganesh start their work in advance as they bring suitable kind of clay Some make the idols by using moulds and paints them and the idol is draped in clothes according to various mythological legends. ¹⁰³ And the clay idols of mouse are there near the idol of Ganesh. Ganapati's parents *Mahadev* or Shiva and *Parvati* are worshipped on the previous day of Chaturthi that day is referred to as *Tai* in Goa. ¹⁰⁴ A coconut symbolizes Shiva and a bundle for f different kinds of herbs leaves pants of are wrapped and worshipped as *Parvati*.

This festival is celebrated as the rebirth of lord *Ganesh*. People worship *Ganesh* by making clay idols and offer various food items including *Modaks* and *Matoli* is prepared by various fruits and flowers. Ganapati is also offered *Patloleo*, cooked in turmeric leaves. And the *Puja* of Ganesh idol Aarti is sung including *Ghumat*, *Shamel* and *Zanj*, the Aarti includes Ganapati Aarti, Mahadev Aarti, Durga Aarti. And in the evening women gather before the idol of Ganesh and play traditional dance called *khel* and *Fugdi*.

¹⁰¹ Nusha Bandodkar, *In the Arms of Nature (Environment through Religion: An Environmental Concern)* (Diss Theses, Goa University) 2016, 46.

¹⁰² Pandurang Phaladesai, *Sanskriticha Gudy Pataka* (Salcete: Mitrashala Prakashan, 2016) 45.

¹⁰³ Vishnu Vinayak Khedekar, *Goa: Land life and Legacy* (Panaji: Directorate of Art and Culture, 2016) 445.

¹⁰⁴ Maria De Lourdes Bravo Da Costa Rodrigues, *Feasts, Festivals and Observances of Goa* (L and L Publication, 2010), 39.

On the second day of *Rushi Panchami* at evening after the *puja*, *Garhane* and *Uttar Puja* visarjan (immersion) of the Ganesh idol takes place at the lake, river, well and fire crackers are burned. And people do *Gauri visarjan* before *Ganesh visarjan*. People say *Morya, Morya, Ganpati Bappa Morya* and worship him for one and half day but some worship for five, seven, eleven or twenty-one days.

The author of 'A India Portuguesa' says that the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi lasts one and half day but sometimes is celebrated more days, as depending on the vows made the family, and the festival ends the idol is immersed in the sea and later puja is offered.¹⁰⁵

3.10.3 Social and religious Importance

Chavath is an important festival which brings all the people other irrespective of their class or caste. Families come together, worship, eat, and dance on this occasion. The Ganapati is worshiped with religious values and known as God of wisdom and prosperity and remover of obstacles in life. Through Ganesh Chaturthi people come together with unity and harmony. Every year people celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi.

¹⁰⁵ P.P Shirodkar, *Purabhilekh Puratatva* (Panaji: Directorate of Archives, Archaeology and Museum, 1984) 93.

Fig. 3.1

Konsachem Fest, cutting the sheaves of Rice

Picture Courtesy: Dr. Alvarinho Luis

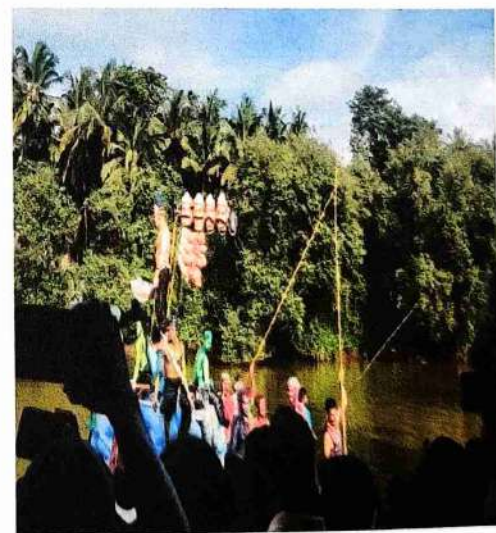
Fig. 3.2

The sheaves of rice are offered in the church for prayers

Picture Courtesy: Gautami Amonkar

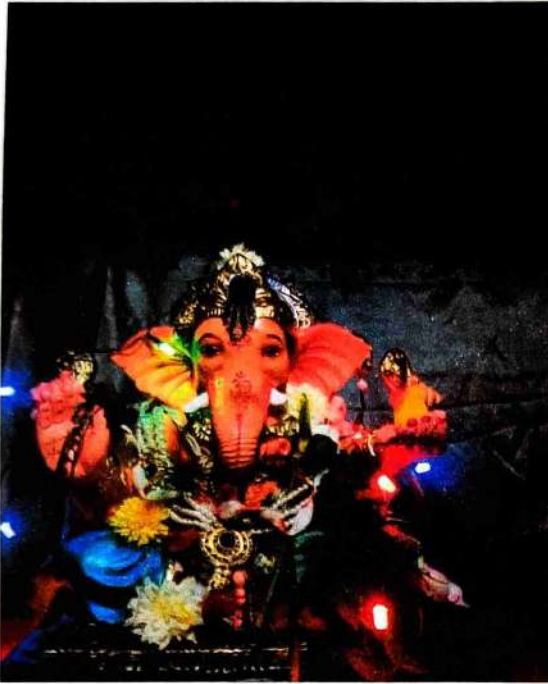
Fig. 3.3

Children playing in Chikal kalo

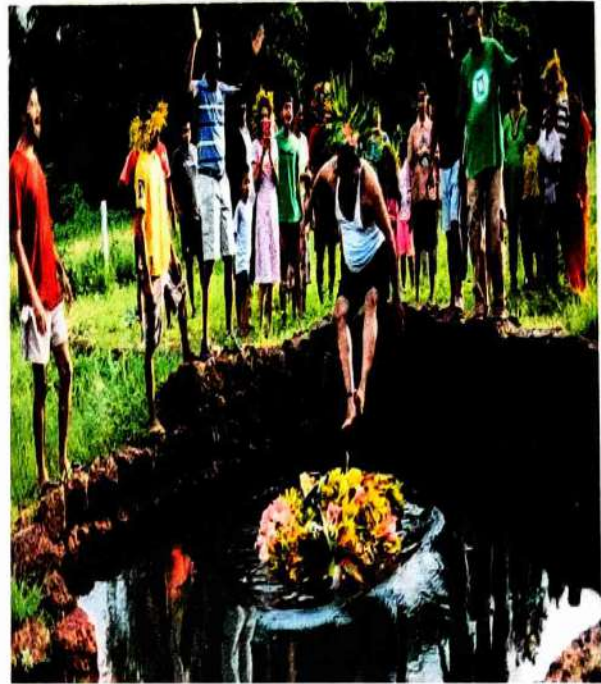
Picture Courtesy: www.pinterest.com**Fig. 3.4**

Sangod showing the Chitrarath

Picture Courtesy: Gautami Amonkar

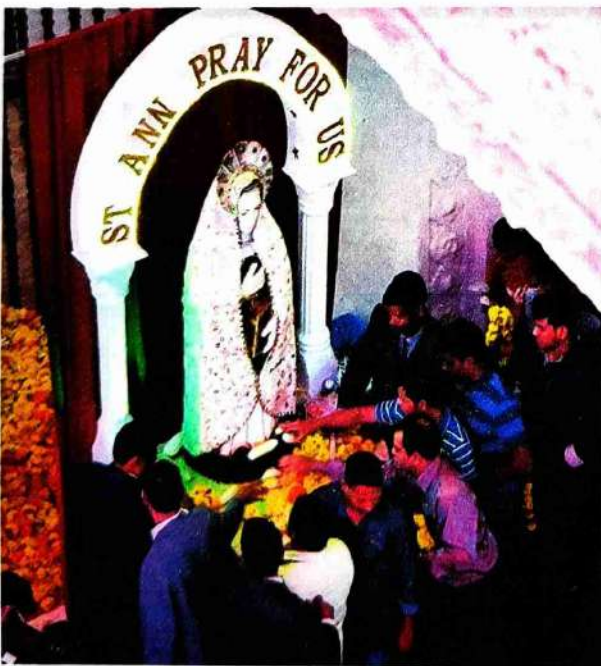
Fig. 3.5

Ganesh Chaturthi

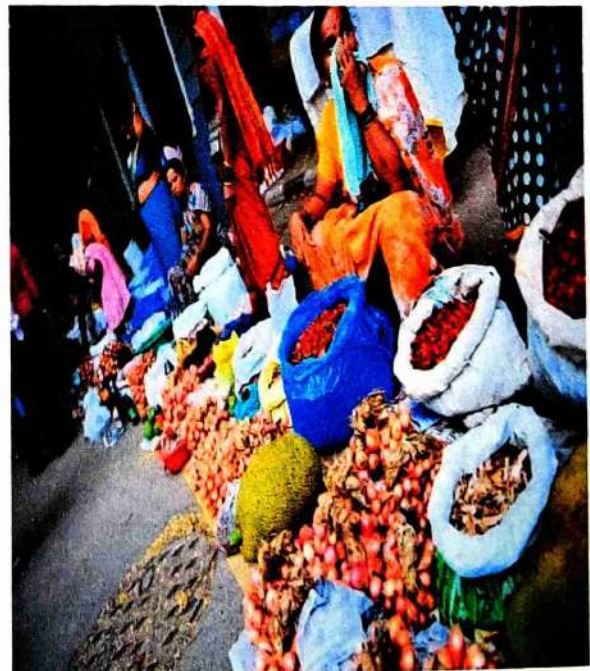
Picture Courtesy: www.goa365days.com**Fig. 3.6**

People jumping into the water celebrating Sao Joao

Picture Courtesy: Gautami Amonkar

Fig. 3.7

People offering cucumbers at Saint. Anne church

Picture Courtesy: www.Herald.com**Fig. 3.8**

Purumentachem Fest

Picture Courtesy: www.Herald.com

CHAPTER 4

Nature Worship Through Select Monsoon Festivals

‘Mother Earth, may whatever I dig from you grow back again quickly and may we not injure you by our labour’

-Atharva Veda

4.1 Introduction

Ecology is conceptualized with five basic elements of Indian philosophy; *Pruthvi* – earth, *Aap*-water, *Tej*- fire, *Vaayu*- air, and *Aakash*- Sky. And these five elements are fundamental for the existence of life and constitute the term ecology. Men adore nature so much that they worship it and have internalized it in their day-to-day lives. As Goa has a rich nature hence, its culture could be called environmental culture. ¹⁰⁶nature is celebrated through various local festivals by locals performing and visual arts that depict the bond between man and nature. Nature and monsoon festivals in Goa show the spirit of gratitude, community bonding, and a deep connection to the environment, and these festivals reflect the rich cultural heritage of the region and offer a glimpse into the traditional practices and beliefs that sustained the Goan communities for generations. Nature cannot be treated as a commodity, just used and profited from and nature should be respected.

Earth is the only place known to man where green plants exist. Natural vegetation is not evenly distributed on earth, there are areas of plenty and scarcity. Our ancestors recognized the importance of plants. They provided food, medicine, shelter, and clothing as they were life-giving and life-sustaining. Plants and their parts have always played very important roles in the life of the Goan community in general and religious life in particular. In Goa, various festivals

¹⁰⁶ Vinayak Vishnu Khedekar, *Goa: Land Life and Legacy* (Panaji: Directorate of Art and Culture, 2016) 469.

are closely connected to nature, especially during the monsoon season. Our festivals are closely related to nature.

4.2 Konsachem Fest

The *Konsachem Fest* is celebrated all over Goa, wherein the *Kanas* (sheaves of rice) play a most important role. Rice is the primary food source for more than half of the world's population of the world. It is the most stable food of Goa, like the rest of India. The state of Goa is deeply rooted in its agrarian traditions. The village of Taleigao celebrates *Konsachem Fest* every year wherein the Goan Catholics bring the new harvest of paddy and bring it in the church to show gratitude towards nature for providing sustenance and an abundance of Harvest.

One of the central aspects of *Konsachem Fest* is the traditional ritual that is performed to invoke the gratitude of the deities for a fruitful harvest in the coming year. The festival is a reflection of the deep-rooted connections that Goans have with the land and the environment. Another aspect of the festival is the sharing of the harvest with the community and this communal aspect of the festival shows the bond between people and the land, which fosters unity and harmony. This festival also highlights the importance of rice in our life and *konsa* is necessary for living and worshipping it is an important component of our lifestyle.

4.2.1 Rice

In this festival Rice which is an element of nature can be observed, it is an essential food item. Today, agriculture which was once a way of living life for the people and was a means of their livelihood is on the verge of extinction. The rice which is an element of nature, holds great value in the life of people and people worship it this festival is deeply rooted in the agrarian communities. The rice cultivation was most important for the survival of various communities.

Rice is not only a food item but has gained a place of significance in the life of the people of Goa.

4.3 Tausachem Fest

Tausachem fest which is every year in Talaulim village of Goa. As cucumbers are worshipped in the St. Anne church, people from all parts of Goa visit the church, and cucumbers are offered to the deity. The reason for offering cucumbers is the cucumbers were grown in large numbers at that place so people would sell and offer them as a means of worship. Cucumbers are an important rainy-season vegetable in most parts of Goa. Cucumber has an important place in various rituals of the Hindus and Catholics.

4.3.1 Cucumbers

The *Matoli* or the wooden framework tied over the head of the Ganesh idol has a decoration of flowers plants and vegetables often including cucumber, which is the most essential item. The special sweet dish is prepared with cucumbers called *Tavsoli*.

The cucumbers have great value not only during Tausache Fest but they represent fertility and growth. In Nature worship, they are symbolised as the earth and growth. Cucumbers are well known for their cooling properties.

4.4 Ganesh Chaturthi (Chavath)

The *chavath* is the most enchanting among all the festivals of Goan Hindus. As Goa lies in the western Ghats, agriculture has been there since the Neolithic age. The most important Pre-Portuguese Ganesh temples of Goa were mainly situated in the areas where agriculture prospered. The farming Communities worshipped Ganesh hard to express Gratitude to Mother Earth. *Parvati* is the earth holding *Parvat* or Hill and *Mahadev* means *Girish* which symbolizes

Hill.¹⁰⁷ During the rainy season, the slit from the hills comes down and settles to make the soil fertile, the tradition of worshipping Ganesh begins by making the clay idols of elephant-headed God. Ganesh Chaturthi comes as an example of man's respect for the environment and all forms of life.

4.4.1 Element of Nature

The celebrations of Ganesh Chaturthi indicate Goa's relation with the functions of the biosphere and cycles of nature. The *Bhadrapad*, the sixth month of the Hindu calendar exhibits Goa's rich bio-diversity. Some of the rare wildflowers, fruits, roots, and shoot leaves that are available in the forested areas are essential for worshipping these Gods who represent Mother Earth. The canopy over the head of Ganesh is decorated with the seasonal elements of biodiversity. The farming communities tie the paddy sheaves either to the entrance of the house or to the canopy since Ganesh is the deity related to agriculture and biodiversity. In the past wild elephants, were destroying the paddy fields. The rat also causes severe losses to the paddy. Thus, farming communities worship elephant elephant-headed God and rat as his mount to get protection for agriculture. Various customs, and taboos observed during the *Chavath* indicate the relationship of Ganesh with the cult of nature worship.

Dr. Nandkumar Kamat says, "During the 4-5th century Gupta period Ganapati worship reached shores of goa. Almost all the pre-Portuguese Ganapati temples and idols of Goa are found in rice-growing farming villages like Carambolim, Choraol, Ella, Olaulim, Pamburpa, Sangolda, Siolim, Betalbatim, Cuelim."¹⁰⁸ Ganesh Chaturthi festival is a symbol of the sacred relationship between man and nature. The eco-theological aspect of Chaturthi should be secularised. The

¹⁰⁸ Kamat, Padmaja. "*Ponda: A History of Temples*". PhD Thesis, Goa University, 2011.

tiny blades of grass, *Durva* that sprout during Chaturthi constitute an integral part of Ganesh worship. Ganesh Chaturthi in Goa brings our cultural and natural heritage.

4.4.2 Matoli- Seasonal Biodiversity

The *Matoli* is a decorative canopy suspended over the head of *Ganapati* in most of Goan Hindu houses during the festival of the *Chavath*. A traditional wooden square panel is hung over the Place where Ganesh idol is placed. Its display of fruits, flowers, and vegetables, represents the abundance of the harvest season. It symbolizes the connection between agriculture and spirituality, reminding people of the vital role that nature plays in sustaining life. It is an exhibition of the seasonal biodiversity that transmits the traditional knowledge of local flora from one generation to another. In the past, the Goans went into the forest areas to collect various types of wildflowers, fruits, creepers, roots, and shoots. The elders in the family were accompanying them to identify different elements of flora.

The tradition of *Matoli* is one of the most unique features of Goas *Chavath*, as the Hindu month of *Bhadrapad*, comes in the monsoon and witnesses' growth with flowering and fruiting. The *Matoli* is usually decorated on the previous night of Ganesh Chaturthi. All this is given by nature to human beings and hence offerings of all these on *Matoli* represent mother earth. In decorating the *Matoli* not only medically and economically useful fruits, flowers, and roots are used but also poisonous, through this tradition people were aware of ethnobotany, but today with commercialization old traditions and values are fading away. *Matoli* symbolizes the abundance and diversity of nature's offerings. These practices remind us of the sacredness of the natural world and the importance of cherishing and preserving our planet for future generations. The commonly used fruits for *Matoli* are *anas*, *ambade*, *asale*, *eedalimbu*, *karmala*, *anjir*, *ghosale*, *tavashe*, *satfal*, *safarchand*, *chiddo*, *chibud*, *dalimb*, *toring*, *dudi*,

neerpanas, etc. along with bunches of coconut, areca nut and bananas. This festival is most important form of nature worship.

4.5 Chikal Kalo

Chikal kalo is a festival wherein nature is worshipped and mud is one of the natural elements of nature. people play in the mud, celebrating Chikal Kalo at Marcela every year. One of the main objectives of the *Chikal Kalo* festival is to educate and inspire people to appreciate and protect the environment. This festival is closely associated with the basic elements of nature – primarily soil.

4.5.1 Mud

The *Pruthvi* means earth, the soil, this is the first element that has both energy and matter.¹⁰⁹ Man is more closely related to the Earth than other living organisms. Even in Goa, people are close to the land and the landscape around us. Even today, the people in the rural areas have a direct connection with the earth. No one used to wear footwear, the feet would touch the earth. Sleeping, eating, sitting everything was on the ground, as there were no chairs and beds in the houses. The houses had mud walls and tiled roofs. The food was cooked on earthen *Chulhas* with earthen pots. if someone had a minor injury a mudpack was applied, and mud was too used while taking a bath instead of soap. Mud has various medical properties.

The day began with a prayer to the earth before one stepped onto it for people. The farmers also pray before the annual farming routine. The prayers were offered before the ploughing started and later the harvest was gathered. Even the *Chool*, the earthen stove was offered *haldi-kumkum* every day, as a way to symbolize gratitude. The village deity *Santeri*, in the form of a big anthill a mound of earth.

¹⁰⁹ Vinayak Khedekar, "Fragrance of Earth" *The Navhind Times* (July 20,1998): 10.

Goan people, soil and nature are connected to each other and celebrate various festivals and celebrations and thus people are related to Chikal Kalo festival. The Goan soil has unique natural properties and has healing properties.¹¹⁰

4.6 Nag Panchami

The fifth day of the month known as Shravan in the Hindu calendar is observed by several communities in Goa as the day of worshipping the snake- *Nag*. On this day, soil is collected from a termite hill and an image of the snake is made and installed on a *Paat* and worshipped and milk is offered as *Nived*. Common people strongly believe that by these worship family members will be safe from snake attacks. The farming community treats this day as a holiday from working in the field. No plough or any other weapon or tool should be touched to the earth on this day.¹¹¹

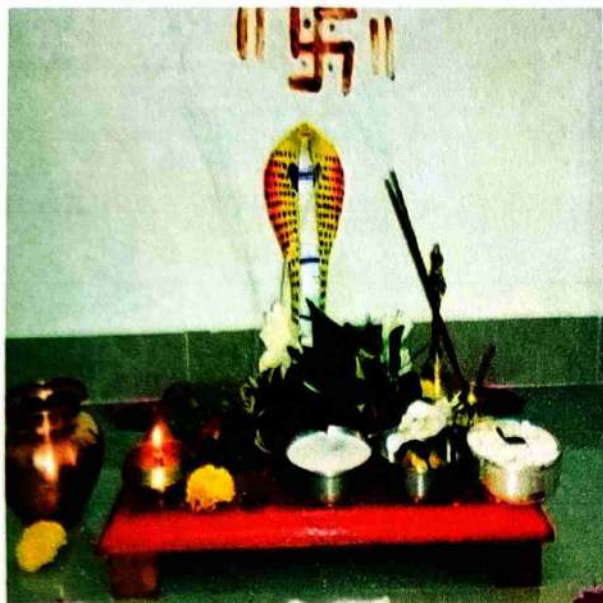
Nag Panchami is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the worship of snakes, particularly the serpent deity known as Naga. This festival holds significant importance in nature worship as it symbolizes worship of the natural world, especially snakes, which are considered sacred in Indian mythology and culture. In Hindu mythology, snakes are associated with fertility, protection, and divine energy, by worshipping snakes on Nag Panchami, devotees honour the natural world and its diverse inhabitants.

As snakes, play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance by controlling rodent populations and preventing crop damage, this festival highlights the importance of preserving the natural ecosystem and respecting all creatures, including those often misunderstood or feared like snakes and the significance of biodiversity and the need to protect and conserve all the species. By worshipping and offering prayers and rituals to snakes devotees express their

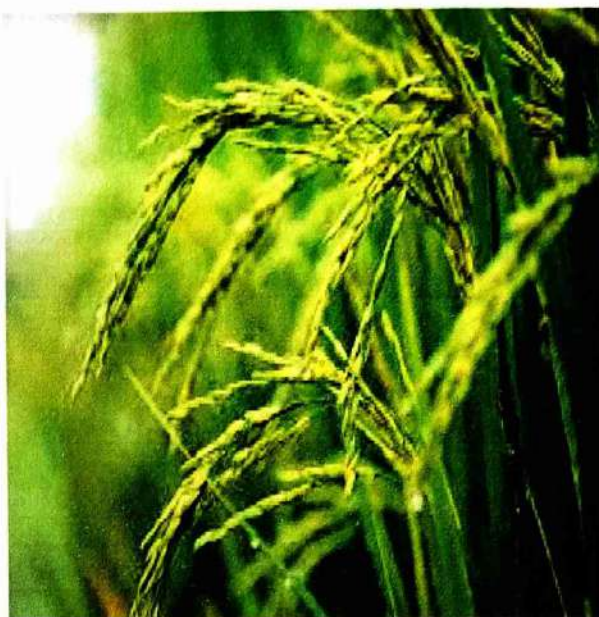
¹¹⁰ Mangesh Gaonkar, "Mud Batcha Jamanat: Marcel cha Paramparik Chikal Kala". *Gomantak*, (1st June, 2023): 6.

¹¹¹ Vinayak Vishnu Khedekar, *Eco-culture Goa Paradigm* (Panjim: Broadway Publishing House, 2013) 92.

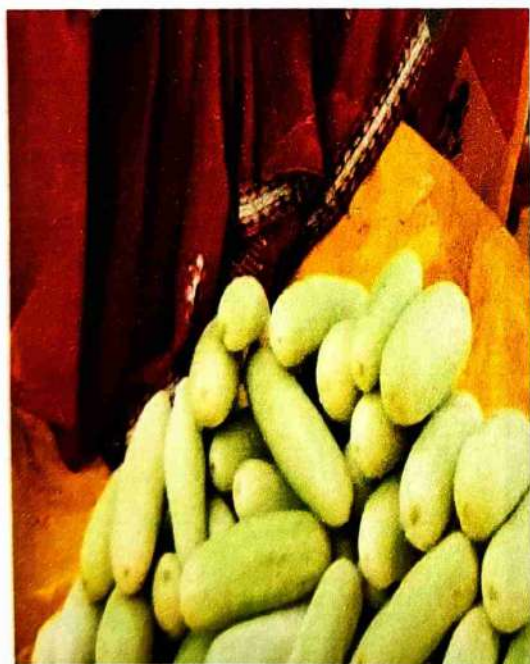
gratitude to the nature elements of the natural world. As this tradition has been passed down through generations as a way to honour tradition, folklore and ancient belief related to nature worship. These practices serve as our cultural heritage with the deep-rooted connection between humans and the environment. People pray to *Nag Devta* for protection from harm, obstacles, and negative energies. On this day the *Patolio* is made, from the turmeric leaves which are only available during rainy season.

Fig. 4.1

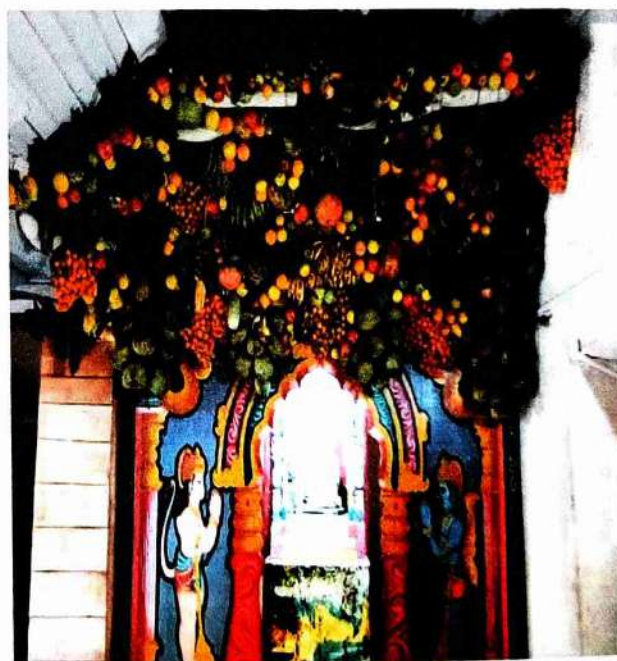
Nag Panchami

Picture Courtesy: www.Bhaskar.com**Fig. 4.2**

Rice

Picture Courtesy: www.Britannica.com**Fig. 4.3**

Cucumbers

Picture Courtesy: www.goanfestivals.com**Fig. 4.4**

Matoli

Picture Courtesy: www.timesofgoa.com

CHAPTER 5

Eco-Feminism: Relation Between Women and Nature

“We are either going to have a future where women lead the way to make peace with the Earth or we are not going to have a human future at all”

-Vandana Shiva

5.1 Eco-Feminism

Eco-Feminism is an important topic of study, it often deals with the conservation and preservation of environment with women. *Eco-feminism* can be defined as belief system that emphasizes concern for mother Earth, and worship of all life forms and interdependence of living and non-living beings on the earth.¹¹² The term *Eco-Feminism* was coined by the French writer Francios d' Eaulonne in the year 1975. Various scholars have defined the term Eco-Feminism, Christopher key Chapple, in his work *Ecological Perspective: scientific, Religious and Aesthetic Perspectives* defines Eco-Feminism represents the radical ecology movement and it is called deep ecology and feminism.

Karren Warren in her ecofeminist work explores the relationship between women, culture and nature. As she distinguishes different ways of understanding the connection between women - nature. she talks about the historical connection, which says the Patriarchal domination of women and nature as early as 4500 Bc. And the symbolic connection of women nature relationship is also studied by warren.¹¹³ According to Sturgeon, by the belief that, biologically,

¹¹² P. Mary Vidya Porselvi, *Nature, Culture and Gender: Re-Reading the folklore* (New York: Routledge, 2016) 3.

¹¹³ Karen Warren, *Eco-Feminism: Women, Culture and Nature* (United States: Indiana University Press, 1997) 12.

women are closely connected to nature with Reproductive Characteristics, this strengthened the women's nature relationship, and women are personified as goddesses of nature because of their nature and nurture theory.¹¹⁴

Women who live close to nature celebrate the human dependence on Mother Earth. There are various movements associated with the protection of environmental aspects on earth such as Chipko movement started in India to the wildlife including forests, trees, and animals, and these movements focus on relation of women and nature. Women has been dominated by men since ages, and women are considered as inferior in the society. As women is associated with fertility and creation she contributes towards the reproduction on earth. Eco-Feminism also highlights the link between the gender and development.¹¹⁵ religion brought women close to the nature in terms of the rituals and practices. As nature is a supreme teacher, which teaches us everything day to day. The relation between nature and women is connected to each other in several ways. In last few decades Eco-feminism had received a worldwide frame as a socialist theory due to participation of women in various activities. The diverse concepts of Eco- feminism by various scholars have also led to understanding of the concept of Eco-Feminism.

5.2 Introduction

In Goa, monsoon festivals hold cultural and religious significance, with women playing a vital role in their celebration, women contribute to these festivals in various ways, adding colour and emotions to the celebrations. One of the significant roles of women in these monsoon festivals is the preparation of traditional Goan delicacies as women are the centre of festivities and they make *Patolio* and various sweets and snacks. These delicacies are not only a treat for

¹¹⁴ Noel Sturgeon, *Eco-Feminist Natures* (London: Routledge Publication, 1997) 34.

¹¹⁵ Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, *Eco-feminism* (Canada: Fernwood Publication, 1993) 23.

the taste buds but also carry a rich cultural heritage that is passed down from generation to generation.

Women also play a key role in decorating their homes and community spaces for the festivals. From floral decoration to *Rangoli* designs, women bring creativity. Women actively participate in the rituals and ceremonies associated with these festivals, whether it is offering prayers, performing traditional dances, or taking part in processions, women contribute to the spiritual essence of this festival and their devotion and worship make the festivals deeply meaningful.

Women also take the role of storytellers during these festivals, often sharing folklore, legends, and myths that are integral to Goan culture. Through these narratives, they preserve the oral traditions of the region and pass on valuable information about their heritage to the younger generations, by keeping these stories alive, women contribute to the continuity and richness of Goan cultural heritage. It is also important to acknowledge the role of women as caregivers and nurturers during the monsoon festival. They ensure that their families are well-dressed, well-fed, and well-prepared to participate in the festival and their roles extend beyond the celebrations as they also provide emotional support, guidance, and strength.

Woman also takes the lead in organizing community events and activities, from coordinating performances to managing, they define leadership skills. The role of women in celebrating monsoon festivals of Goa, from culinary expertise to spiritual devotion to cultural preservation, women enrich these festivals. As they are the custodians of tradition and pioneers of progress, women play a pivotal role in shaping the identity of traditional monsoon festivals in Goa.

5.3 Festivals Celebrated by Women

5.3.1 Aitar Puja

The month of *Shravan* is the fifth month of the Hindu calendar. The star '*Shravan*' rules the sky, during this month thus the month is called *Shravan*.¹¹⁶ And all the days of *Shravan* are considered auspicious by the Hindus and they often eat vegetarian food during this time. During *Shravan*, four or five Sundays are considered auspicious by the women in Goa, and a tradition of *Aitar Puja* (Sunday worship) is followed. *Aitar Puja* is wherein the sun is worshipped as he is the protector of Mother Earth and people worship the sun to show the gratitude towards him and therefore the festival is unique. Surya is one of the worshipped in the *Panchayatana*.¹¹⁷ he is also worshipped as the personification of the Sun and the worship of Sun existed since the Vedic times as Surya was known as the Golden orb.¹¹⁸ Aaitar puja is celebrated in Goa and some parts of Maharashtra.

5.3.2 Plants as Elements of nature

Due to the arrival of monsoons during these times, plants such as *Chiddo* are grown, the leaves of *Dhobi* plants (*Mussaendra Feondosa*) are also used in some parts of Goa. The little tree plant (*Biophytum Sensitivium*) is locally called *Maad*, as they are similar to a coconut tree. Maiden hair fern is a locally used wild fern during the Puja, the wild fern locally called *Ramachi Bota* is another which is frequently used during the Aaitar Puja. Women also use commonly used leaves such as Banana, betal, coconut, Haldi leaves with wildflowers and plants. Plants such as *Ghodyachi Pavla*, *Soshache Kaan*, and so on.

5.3.2 Role of Women

Women play a very important role in this festival, and this is one of the festival which is only celebrated by women. Aaitar Puja holds a significant place in the lives of married women. In

¹¹⁶ Bhiva Parab, *Glimpses of Goa's Cultural Heritage* (Panjim: Broadway Publication House, 2013) 24.

¹¹⁷ PrabhuShashtri, Indra Prakash. "*Images Worship of the Puranic Deities in Goa: A Critical Study*". PhD Thesis, Goa University, 2022.

¹¹⁸ PrabhuShashtri, Indra, *Images worship*, 198.

the morning women collect Patri, and this Patri are found nearby and some of the Patri consist of some medicinal properties. It is believed that in older times women were not allowed to go out and as during Aaitar Puja women needed to collect the *Patri* from outside so this Aaitar Puja was a medium which them the privilege to go out.¹¹⁹ Women often visit other neighbouring houses during this puja and *Haldi- Kumkum, Fugdi* created togetherness among women.

Except for women from the caste *Kulmi, Gavali, and Bhat*, all other caste women practice Aaitar Puja.¹²⁰ Some women worship all Sundays wherein some worship only two. It is believed that the reason women worship on Sundays is for the long life of their husbands. Through every village and caste, *Aaitar Puja* differs but everywhere *Patri, Fula, and Durva* have been given more importance.

At the place where women worship *Aaitar* there (*shen sarta*), they put *Rangoli*, and a *Pat* is kept wherein they practice the Puja. On the *Tambyo* (Kalash) is worshipped with *Haldi- Kumkum* and coconut is placed on it and then kept and *Dav* means a white cloth and *Supari*, piece of Turmeric, *Gandh*, and then tied with flowers and coins and kept in the *Done*. The *Supari* is considered as '*Varun Dev*' and the coin is considered as '*Lakshmi*'.¹²¹ And the *done* is changed every Sunday. On the first Sunday *Parijatchi* flowers are used, then *Haldi*, and then *Khavpachi Pana* (betal nut), and last *Shervadichi Pana*. Women make jackfruit (*hole*) *Done*. And this *Done* is considered as *Navro - Vakal*. In some villages, *Dadlo Patri* such as (*Rambota, Ramapat, Mad, and Ghodyapavla*) and *Bayal Patri* such as (*Shervad, Dai, Madri, and Shitechamal*) and different *Prasad* are shown, as on first *Aaitar Mutli* is prepared then second

¹¹⁹ Bhushan Bhawe, *Matoli: Ek Girest Dayaj* (Ponda: Shri. Ravi Sitaram Naik College, 2005) 136.

¹²⁰ Naik, Jayanti. "Konkani Lokvedantli Baylechi Pratima: Ek Samajik Sankrutik Abhyas". PhD Thesis, Goa University, 2005.

¹²¹ Tanaji Halarnkar, *Vishwa Konkani Parichay Kosh* (Karnataka- Konkani Bhas ani Konkani Sanskruti Prathisthan, 2011) 129.

Patolio and third *Khichdi*. At last, in the evening the Patri is immersed under Tulsi plant and this is called *Aaitar Pavovap*. And women also fast on that night.

As the Aaitar Puja is also associated with the fertility, women pray for the wellbeing of their societies and this Puja is a form of Goan cultural heritage and traditions, only women's preserve this tradition and practicing it every year, and passing it to future generations. The various plants and flowers which are the elements of nature are used shows a deeper connection with ecology. The role of women in this festival is important with the nature. As there is a connection of the nature and women.

5.4 Vada Punav (Vat Purnima)

Vada Purnima is celebrated by married women to seek blessings for long life of their husbands by tying threats around the Banyan tree. In Goa it is called *Vada Punav*. It is celebrated in the month of *Jyeshtha*. Banyan tree is an integral part of *Vada Punav*. According to the mythology Savitri had brought back to life her husband Satyavan from the hands of Yamraj by worshipping the banyan tree.¹²² Women fast during this day and pray to the banyan tree to grant a long life to their husbands and listen to the Vat Savitri Katha, As the banyan tree has lived for many years hence it is considered as the symbol of long life. In various parts of India, branches of the banyan trees are worshipped and considered during ancient times many sages or *Munis* meditated under the banyan tree.¹²³ Earlier only Brahmin women had the right to practice these rituals but in recent times, women who belong to any other caste practice this ritual.¹²⁴

¹²² A.H salunkhe, *Hindu Sanskrutee ani Stree* (Mumbai: Lokmanya Gruh, 1989) 10.

¹²³ Rajendra Kerkar, "Vat- Pournima: Worship of the banyan tree" *The Times of India* (June 07, 2009): 06.

¹²⁴ Naik, Jayanti. "*Konkani Lokvedantli Baylechi Pratima: Ek Samajik Sankrutik Abhyas*". PhD Thesis, Goa University, 2005.

This festival is observed in Goa and various parts of Maharashtra, Gujarat and other parts of India. Women's keep the fast for three days, and women greet each other with '*Janma Savitri Ho*'¹²⁵ B.A Gupte provides a Puranic extract that suggest that the mythology behind the Vat Purnima is a symbol of natural phenomena. He also denotes the annual marriage of the earth and nature is represented by Satyavan and Savitri. He points out that the vat tree has mythological aspects connected to nature.¹²⁶ and this festival is associated with fertility and veneration of Nature and the environment.

5.4.1 Role of Women

The ritual of tying threads around the banyan tree during the Vat Purnima symbolizes the interconnectedness of nature and spirituality. The banyan tree holds various significance of fertility and thus women worship it. This festival is served with the co-existence of human living in nature. And thus, women celebrate the festival and bond between the natural world and humans. The roots, and branches of the tree are symbolised with wisdom and strength.

The married women's, fast during Vada punav. There are also other ways of worship the Banyan tree, some also women who worship branches of banyan tree, and some also draw on a paper or wall and worship it using *Gandh* and *Chandan* (Sandalwood). And women's gather and offer *Vayan* to each other, which has flowers, fruits. Such as piece of coconut, mango, pineapple, cashew, jackfruit, jamun, so on. By honouring the banyan tree during Vat Purnima, women worship nature as a source of life, creation, fertility, togetherness. Women play a crucial role in uploading and passing down the traditions associated with Vat Purnima to future generations and practice and rituals and customs annually with great devotion. Women act as a guardian of preserving the rituals, traditions, customs and practice related to these festivals.

¹²⁵ N.B Ravisingh, *Hindu San ani Parambik ani Vatsavik Swaroop Kolhapur*: Abhinandan Publication, 2008) 47.

¹²⁶ B.A Gupte, *Hindu Holidays and Ceremonials with Dissertations on origin Folklore and Symbols* (New Delhi: Asian Educational service, 1994) 203.

5.5 Hartalika (Ganesh Chaturthi)

The festival is celebrated during *Bhadrapadh*. Parvati the mother of Ganesh is known as *Hartalika*¹²⁷ it is celebrated one day before the Ganesh Chaturthi. Women's keep a Fast during this day. Some women don't even eat anything which is prepared in the field by using plough. And Brahmin women worship clay idols of *Hartalika* means Parvati and her Sakhi (friends). Some unmarried women's also keeps the Vrat (fast).

One of the key rituals of Hartalika festival is creating and worshiping of a Hartalika idols. The idol is made using natural materials like clay, leaves and flowers. Women often sing and dance in celebration of divine union of Parvati and Shiva. This puja is practiced by the womens from a long period of time in different parts of india and Goa. This festival also holds importance in promoting the empowerment of women.

In Goan culture Today existing fasts are observed celebrated by women. fasts and festivals are created in this world for women and to give them identity. In these festivals, women are the central place, and she has an important place. Goa is a state created with different cultures and castes and this caste makes people separate they celebrate their festivals separately, but later they communicate with each other and they inherit others festivals and celebrations. Some people celebrate various festivals whereas there are festivals celebrated only by a few communities.

¹²⁷ N.b Ravisingh, *Hindu San ani Parambik ani Vatsavik Swaroop* (Kolhapur: Abhinandan Publication,2008) 101.

Fig. 5.1

Aitar Puja celebrated by women

Picture Courtesy: www.herald.com**Fig. 5.2**

Vat Purnima celebrated by women

Picture Courtesy: www.TimesofGoa.com**Fig. 5.3**

Hartalika Puja

Picture Courtesy: www.lokmat.com

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

As the monsoon festivals and nature worship play a necessary role in connecting nature and the environment with the community and through the celebrations, rituals, and traditions, the Goan people honour this season as a time of new harvest and creation. This dissertation analyses the connection between human societies and the natural world. In this dissertation, the emphasis is on religious beliefs and practices and their impact on human relations with ecology and the environment. The main aim of this dissertation is to analyse the contributions of religions to the protection and conservation of nature. Religion has been an important aspect of human life in India. This study has explored the complex relationship between monsoon festivals and nature worship, interpreting the connection between human societies and the natural world. From the early centuries of Indian History, the broad belief had considerably influenced the attitude of human beings towards objects of nature like rivers, animals, trees, hills, ponds, and so on.

The eco-theological concepts in the evolution of worship in Goa have played a key role. The primitive myth of ecological wisdom has encouraged people in Goa to live in harmony with nature and environmentalist thinking was encouraged by religions. From nature worship which is connected to totemism and eco-theology of *roin* (Santeri), there are various stages of evolution.

This Dissertation is divided into four chapters. The first chapter deals with introductory details and the next three chapters mainly constitute the main themes of the research topic wherein the various dimensions are discussed.

The first chapter provides an introduction to the topic, it discusses the various aspects of religion and nature. Ancient India saw the close interaction of humans with nature. Religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism had their concerns about the nature and environment and protecting them. Many civilizations in the world venerated nature and considered it divine. there is various evidence which is found in the form of seals, stones, sculptures, paintings, and so on. Few rulers incorporated elements of nature in art, in the form of seals depicting plants and animals such as the Pashupati seal of the Harappan civilization, another is the miniature paintings created by Mughal emperors Babur, Jahangir of nature is a classic example.

The concern for the preservation of nature and ecology was very prevalent in India. The extensive belief system that existed in India facilitated the use of natural resources. This study focused on the various ways and practices adopted by the religions to venerate the importance of nature. there are also various ways and forms of worshipping nature included in this study. They include animals, trees, sacred groves, plants, the mother goddess, and so on. Monsoon festivals are celebrated all over the world but at different times of year and with numerous local names. Such as the Teej festival of India, this dissertation is an attempt to cherish and preserve these festivals which have socio-cultural, religious, and historical importance. The concept of sacred groves has provided habitat to various living beings and created a unique bond between humans and nature.

The next chapter on festivals and celebrations of monsoon festivals highlights the aspects of rituals and practices. Rituals and rites include various elements of nature like flowers, leaves, paddy, fruits, water, soil, etc. From birth to death human beings are connected to nature and the use of natural resources is an essential part of religious practices and rituals they are incomplete without the use of natural elements. Nature supports human beings in every other way. And thus, the depending on nature is relevant and necessary for every human being. All

these festivals have an element of nature related to them and have brought various communities together and brought socio-cultural amalgamations. Festivals are a central part of humans and religion. Often festivals became a source of enjoyment and veneration which led the way to concepts such as eco-relevant festivals, which have great significance.

And this Dissertation through the concept of Eco-Feminism, will highlight the relationship between women and nature. The definition of Eco-Feminism has been given by various scholars and researchers in recent times, the participation of women in various environmental activities has led to the concept of Eco-Feminism. As women were closely associated with nature, since ancient times they were involved in cultivating and gathering food and fodder for the family members and later they became the symbol of productivity. And men were not involved in this. The Eco-feminine practices brought women very close to nature as the earth is regarded as the mother and has feminine qualities, and then gave rise to the concept of mother Goddess. Women came close to nature due to the Eco- Feminist practices of celebrations and festivals. Women have often been seen as closer to nature and therefore inferior to men. Women have been at the forefront of environmental and social injustice movements to protect the nature and environment and sometimes the voices of women were suppressed. The way nature was suppressed and exploited by humans; women were also exploited under the patriarchal society. Women protect and worship nature every day through their daily practices. Certain festivals are meant to be celebrated by the women in our society, and women celebrate them annually thus preserving the culture and identity of those festivals and passing on through the next generations.

From this work, it is evident that religions and their beliefs and practices have led to the preservation and conservation of nature and environment. Nature has been destroyed by human beings, there are protectors of nature and destroyers. Human beings have realized the

importance of nature and ecology in their lives. Living and non-living beings are essential parts of nature and creation, both of them hold equal importance and support the life system on earth. Through different religions, we know about various theories of preservation and conservation. The monsoon festivals and the element of nature worship are widely connected in many ways. Through those festivals, one understands our Goan culture and identity and the role our nature plays in our lives. The Eco-Theological festivals that are celebrated in various parts of Goa and their importance have largely contributed to defining the real traditions and cultures. The constant role of women in celebrating festivals and preserving the culture has significantly contributed to our traditional ritualistic practices in Goa.

In conclusion, this dissertation contributes to our understanding of the complex interaction between culture, religion, and the environment. In conclusion, this dissertation has explored the intricate relationship between monsoon festivals and nature worship, shedding light on the profound connection between human societies and the natural world. Through an extensive review of literature and analysis of various cultural practices across different regions, it becomes evident that monsoon festivals serve as a significant platform for expressing high respect towards nature.

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Appendix - I

Questionnaire

1. What is your name?
2. How long have you been living in this village?
3. What is the significance of this festival?
4. Can you tell me how it started? What is the background of this festival? Why is it celebrated?
5. Is there any history related to this festival?
6. Is there any scientific reason for this festival?
7. What is the socio-cultural and religious importance of this festival?
8. What are your views about this festivals?

Appendix - II

Table of Festivals and celebrated according to Gregorian Calendar

<u>Festivals</u>	<u>Date/ Month</u>
Tousachem Fest	26 th July - 31 st July
Konsachem Fest	21 August
Nag Panchmi	July- August
Chikal Kalo	28 th - 30 th June
Ganesh Chaturthi	22 August- 20 September Every Year
Sangod	7 th day of Ganesh Festival
Vatpurnima	May-June
Aaitar Puja	Month of Shravan During August