

Quadrant II – Notes

Programme: Bachelor of Arts

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Course Title: Appreciating Indigenous Heritage of Goa Theory and Practice

Unit: 3

Module Name: Folk stories and Folk Music

Module No: 4

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Notes :

Importance of Folk Stories

In the folk tradition, folk stories were passed by word of mouth from one generation to the other. There was almost no documentation of these stories on paper. Goan society in yesteryears and their concept of life was reflected through such stories. They also showed how Goa's culture and history developed over the years. Many make a reference to supernatural beliefs, deities, the Marathas and the Portuguese.

Some speak about the various flora and fauna existing in Goa's forest.

Although the stories are mostly fictional, their themes provide a good insight to a student of history to understand the psychological and cognitive progress of the Goan society.

Documentation of Folk Stories

Martha Warren Beckwith from Hawaii, a Research Professor of the Folklore Foundation was the earliest person to carry out a documentation of Goa's folk stories. She visited Goa in 1927 and collected many Konkani and Portuguese stories. These were published in the *Journal of American Folklore* of Jan-Mar 1937 edition under the title 'Folk Tales from New Goa, India'. Martha Warren Beckwith had visited Goa in the hope of finding old Portuguese contacts who had isolated from late European contacts.

Fr. George da Penha from Salcette published 'Folklore in Salcette' in the *Journal of Indian Antiquary* from 1887 to 1893. But this collection is no longer available.

Vaman Raghunath Varde Valaulikar or Shenoi Goembab's wife Shantabai had a rich collection of folklore in oral form. Shenoi Goembab made her narrate to him and noted all the valuable stories, idioms which were published in her name in various periodicals as '*Lokved*'. Lucio Rodrigues also collected many folk stories and were published as 'Of Soil and Soul and Konkani Folk Tales' in 1974. His book titled 'Abolim' was released in 2015 and portrays the Goan society through ages through the stories and legends.

The famous folk tale of 'Kundea-Kuskur' or the Goan Cinderella was retold by Shyam Verenkar in his book in 1979. Dr. Pandurang Phaldesai also collected many folk stories of Goa and published them under titles '*Atlaak Petlaak*' (1983); '*Kaani Kaani Kotva*' (1989). Dr. Jayanti Naik undertook extensive study of folk tales and was awarded a Ph.D. for 'Female Images in Konkani Folklore'.

Folk Stories through Songs

Many tribal pockets of South Goa have a tradition of narrating the tales of *Pandavs* and *Kauravs* through songs. The traditional singers sit in a group of two to four around a bonfire. The lead singer sings one line and the chorus follows him by humming a peculiar rhythm thus giving it a musical note. Eg- *Gudulyan Gaayan, Bandvad, Gosaayaam Gaayan, Malegan, Gadyaan Ramayan*

Gudulyaan Gaayan

They are sung by the Hindu tribes of South Goa in the Hindu month of *Bhadrapad*. Singers gather around the *Gharvai* (ancestral house) after dinner around the bonfire. The theme of the story is *Bal-Bhim* who is called as the second *Pandav* by them.

Bandvad

It is singing of narratives of *Pandavs*, especially *Pandu* and *Yudishtir*. The singer is accompanied by two musical instruments viz. *Ghumat* and the *Zaanj*. The *Bandvad* is sung for five to six hours.

Gosaayaam Gaayan

Sung by the *Gosavi* community by moving from door to door collecting alms. The singer sings stories of saints like *Namdev, Bodhraj* etc. The *Damru* and the gong is used as accompaniments.

Development of Goa's folk music

Goa's folk musical heritage comprises not only of musical instruments, but also various stories sung in different voice modulations for centuries together. The earliest form of communication in humans is humming. This is still used as a musical note for many folk songs in Goa. Regional influence played a major role in the development of folk instruments; the *Ghumat*, *Mhaadale* etc.

Ghumat

It is one of the earliest musical instruments of Goa. It is an earthen pot with two openings. One covered with monitor lizard's skin and the other is used to control the sound by covering it with hand.

Mhaadalem

It is believed to have given birth to modern day *Pakwaz*. It is a terracotta drum whose both the ends are covered with monitor lizard's skin. Normally used for *Jaagors* and *Musoll Khel* in Chandor.

Samel/Taaso

It accompanies the *Ghumat*, the *Dhol* and the cymbals. It has a wooden or a metal drum covered with a goatskin. It is played with two sticks. It bridges the sound of two instruments and hence called as *Samel*. *Taaso* is a bigger version.

Taal/Kasale

They are pair of cymbals made of brass or bronze. *Taal* is a smaller version which is played during *Bhajans* while the *Kasale* is a bigger version and is an accompaniment to *Dhol*

Dhol

Dhol is a cylindrical drum which has a wooden body and is covered with animal skin on both sides. It is beaten with two wooden sticks by keeping it horizontally. It is basically used in *Shigmo* and other temple festivals.

Shehnai

It was widely used during *Shigmo* and also in Goan temples. It is supposed to be a very auspicious instrument and comes under the category of wind instruments. Unfortunately, there are hardly any musicians who know to play the *Shehnai* today.

Zaghaant

It is a thick metal plate especially made of bronze. It is suspended by a string which passes through a hole on the top of the plate. It is suspended by the left hand and is struck by a wooden stick by the right hand. It is widely used in many folk festivals