CHAPTER III

LOCATION OF ALCOHOL IN GOAN CULTURE:
A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE

In this chapter we attempt to understand the Goan society and culture in the pre-Portuguese and Portuguese eras as well as the evolution of the present day society and culture. Further, we compare the social acceptance of alcohol by the Hindus and Catholics.

Pre-Portuguese Goan Society and Culture

Before the Portuguese conquered Goa, it was ruled by the Bhojas, Mauryas, Kadambas, the Muslim kingdoms of Bahamanis and Bijapur (D'Souza 1975: 20, Kamat 1990: 8-15, Xavier 1993: 4, Larsen 1998: 62-82). The culture was a fusion of Jain, Buddhist, Muslim and Hindu influences and the culture hardly a homogeneous and integrated one (Larsen 1998: 87-88).

The original inhabitants of Goa were the Kols, Mundaris, Kharvis and Shabars, whose descendants are the present-day Kunbi and Gauda (also called *Kunnbi* and *Gauddi*). The earlier settlers were followed by the Kharwas and toddy tappers (Souza 1994: 33, Larsen 1998: 89, Costa 2002: 5). The Kunbi and Gaudddi were tribals with their own animistic religious beliefs and rituals, practising hunting and a crude form of agriculture and worshipping natural elements. They considered themselves Hindus and practised child marriage, and their style of dressing and the ornaments they wore were distinctive (Xavier 1993: 43-44, Larsen 1998: 89).

Just like in the rest of India, the pre-Portuguese Goan society was caste-based. There were four castes — the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras — and one
group, the untouchables (Gracias 1996: 31, Xavier 1993: 34-36). The first three classes believed that they were "twice-born" and enjoyed special privileges in society. The Shudras were mainly agricultural labourers, toddy tappers, milkmen, fishermen, carpenters, washer men, potters, blacksmiths and other artisans (except goldsmiths); and the whole group served the upper castes. The Mahars, regarded as 'untouchables', undertaking 'dirty' services, like curing and tanning leather, clearing refuse and dead bodies, etc., were at the lowest rung of the social ladder (Larsen 1998: 91).

Every caste had its own code of conduct, distinctive social life, customs and traditions (D'Souza 1975: 62-63, Larsen 1998: 101). Any deviation from the code was punished by the caste panchayat or council, which controlled the people’s secular and spiritual life (D' Souza 1975: 62-65).

The dress code was distinctive. Except for the higher caste, synonymous with the wealthy, most men wore very little clothing in public. They were mostly bare-chested and sported only a loincloth. Gauddi women wore a red and white checked sari created by tying a knot in the fabric below the left shoulder. The Brahmins and the wealthy upper class wore a dhoti, dupatta (scarf) and turban in public (Larsen 1998: 101).


People observed a number of social practices and ceremonies during marriages which were fixed after consulting astrologers (Gracias 1996: 48-88, Priolkar 1961: 97-100). The institution was regarded as indissoluble and usually divorce was not
allowed. The joint family system was common. The dowry system also existed (Xavier 1993: 52-57, Larsen 1998: 102-105).

Religion was an important factor: it not only controlled social and political affairs but also helped bind the society (Mendonça 2002: 7). Almost all major religions that entered India also arrived in Goa. The Vedic religion brought by the Aryans was the most dominant and socially influential (Larsen 1998: 91). It consisted of simple and complex sacrifices (Xavier 1993: 39).


Formal as well as informal education existed before the arrival of the Portuguese. However, education was restricted only to the males, and girls were not given any formal education, nor were they taught to read and write. Toddy tapping, fishing, cooking and housekeeping were some of the occupations that were informally passed on to the next generation, simply by induction and imitation (Larsen 1998: 99).

Women were not considered to be equal to men; they would not mix freely. There were a number of rites connected with pollution and purification that were targeted specifically at women. They married at an early age. Marriage was understood to be a union of two families and clans (Pandit 2003: 20). People commonly followed customs like sotvi (observance of the sixth day after birth) and
sati (self-immolation on the husband’s funeral pyre). Child marriages and polygamy were also prevalent (Gracias 1996: 44, Larsen 1998: 97-98).

The institution of devdasi (literally, servants or slaves of the gods) was an intricate system that embraced two different classes of women — the kolvonts (dancing girls) and the bhavins (women servants engaged as keepers of temple wealth, sweepers and minders of the oil lamps). Besides performing during the annual festivals, these women were considered essential at village weddings (Ibid 1998.).

The village administration was based on the gaunkari system. Besides membership of the village assembly, the gaunkar enjoyed other privileges, one of which was the collection of Jon (the remaining portion of a harvest after it was distributed among others). Every village assembly had a chief gaunkar — incidentally, a purchasable position. The gaunkar would allot land to caste groups, depending on their occupations (Larsen 1998: 94). Thus, the caste groups lived in distinct areas called vaddo, a cluster of which formed the gaun or village (Larsen 1998: 94, Xavier 1993: 199-200). Houses belonging to various socio-cultural community members were grouped together and named accordingly, as Gauda vaddo (ward of Gauddi), Kumbhar vaddo (potters’ ward), Mesta vaddo (carpenters’ ward), Madval vaddo (washer men’s ward), etc. (Xavier 1993: 199-200, Pandit 2003: 17). Every village had Mahars, who usually lived on the village frontier, either because they were ‘untouchables’ or to ensure the safety of the important caste members in the village. The natural resources of the village decided the type of craft in a village. Thus, villages with palm groves had bhandari (toddy tappers), and teli (oil extractors), and so on. The traditional crafts organized in endogamous caste groups ensured the continuity of the craft and skill accumulation (Souza 1994: 40-41).
From the above discussion, it is clear that alcoholic beverages like *urack* were produced and consumed. The very fact that a caste group called *bhandari* existed establishes that toddy tapping was an occupation during those times.

**Conversions, Lusitanisation and Inquisition: Their Socio-Cultural Implications**

In this sub-topic an attempt is made to comprehend the changes that took place under the Portuguese in the Goan social milieu. Today, it is easy to distinguish the two major Goan communities — Catholic and Hindu.

The *Portuguese* conquered Goa in 1510 from Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur (Gaitonde 1987: 1, Xavier 1993: 6). They initially captured Tiswadi; in 1543, they added the territories of Salcete and Bardez. These are now grouped as 'Old Conquests'. Quepem, Sanguem, Canacona, Pernem, Bicholim, *Satari* and Ponda, collectively known as the 'New Conquests', were added to Portuguese Goa only in 1791 (Angle 1994: 8-10, Mendonca 2002: 84, Xavier 1993: 6-7, Gaitonde 1987: XI). This territorial division is significant while understanding the socio-cultural differences existing in Goa today. It may be noted that it took the Portuguese 278 years to annex the New Conquest region. This means that they ruled only a fifth of Goa’s geographical area for 450 years, while the rest of the area was under their regime for only about 150 years (Gaitonde 1987: XII, Angle 1986: 43).

The Portuguese came to Asia in search of spices and to convert the population to Roman Catholicism (Xavier 1993: 2, Bhandari 1999: 59, Gune 1993: 117, Shirodkar 1999: XV, Silva 1994: 46, Emma 2002: 262). According to Xavier (1988: 99), conversion of the natives was enjoined upon the King of Portugal by Pope Alexander N through the Papal Bull entitled *Ineffabilis et Summi*. The king of Portugal was entitled to have all the lands he conquered provided Roman Catholicism was established there. Conversions, therefore, became an important duty for the king.
of Portugal. In the 16th century it was held in Europe, Africa and Asia that the vassals had to follow the religion of the king \textit{(Mendonça} 2002: 8-11, 37). Hence, Christianity was declared the State religion by the government of Portugal and conversions began during the reign of D. Joao III of Portugal \textit{\citep[Emma 2002: 106-107, D’Costa 1982: 26-27]. It may be noted, however, that when the New Conquests were acquired, in the last quarter of the 18th century, the Portuguese policy had changed: they assured the local population that they would not interfere with their customs and religion \textit{(Mendonca 2002: 5, Gune 1993: 119). Accordingly, Christianity became widespread in the Old Conquests \textit{\citep[Ibid 1993: 117, Robinson 1998: 18, Angle 1986: 44-45]. Since the New Conquests had a different set of laws \textit{(Larsen 1998: 137), the Portuguese influence there was minimal.}

Thus, the colonial policy played an important role in bifurcating the Goan society: one with Western culture and the other with Indian culture \textit{(Rodrigues 2001: 197). However, the manners and mores assimilated by the Goans were not an instant transformation. It was a long drawn out process, which goes by the name ‘\textit{Lusitanisation}’: it involved changes in dress, food, marriage customs, family connections, language, political affiliation and often residence as a means of getting the people civilized \textit{(Alvares and Alvares 1994: 26-27). Thus, a new distinctive composite culture, different from what was seen in India and Portugal but composed of elements consisting of both, came into existence, which came to be called ‘\textit{Indo-Portuguese culture}’ \textit{(Azevedo 1988: 70-71).}

The introduction of Portuguese laws and ways of life brought about major changes in the Old Conquests. It marked the beginning of a new social system in Goa, with a new community of natives who identified themselves with the Portuguese
Religion and culture were inseparable for the Portuguese (Gaitonde 1987: IX).

Interestingly, the traditional Goan caste system continued through the Portuguese rule, even among the converts to Christianity. The lower castes in the Hindu hierarchy had accepted conversions for social and economic uplift. On the other hand, the Hindu elite accepted conversions in order to protect their lands, privileges and even status (Kamat 1999: 72). The conversions brought about a change not only in the worship but also the people’s way of life. Converts were not allowed intimate social interaction with the Hindus. Exchange of invitations at weddings or other occasions was not allowed. Visits at the deathbed or at the funeral of a Hindu were prohibited and so were dealings with Hindu craftsmen (Sinha 2002: 27). The aim was to recreate the image of Goa as a European city with Baroque architecture, Western attire and Portuguese language (Silva 1994: 47). Larsen (1998: 110) states that the Portuguese, especially the religious authorities felt that both spiritual and temporal conversion to the Portuguese ways of life was necessary to establish a colony faithful to the Portuguese interests.

A series of legislations were enacted to spread the Portuguese culture. According to D’Costa (1982: 27) it resulted in mass westernisation of the Goan Catholic community. The Catholic converts socialised in Western clubs and spoke Portuguese fluently. The Goan Catholic women dressed like the Portuguese women; they participated freely in various occasions, talked and danced merrily whereas the Hindus observed gender segregation in all walks of life (Xavier 1993: 168, Larsen 1998: 115).

The ecclesiastical tribunal, called the ‘Inquisition’, was an important influence on the socio-cultural and religious life of the people, both Portuguese and neo-
converts. It was a little lenient with the non-Christians as compared to the Christians. If Christians disobeyed the canons of the Church, they were punished. The worship of non-Christian deities and the wearing of non-Christian dress were regarded as 'pagan' lifestyle (Furtado 1981: 72). This institution effectively polarized the Christians and the Hindus with respect to social customs, beliefs and religious practices. Its Edict of 1736 indicates how the Portuguese administration sought to totally change the new converts' culture and lifestyle. This was done to preserve the orthodoxy of the Christian faith and the purity of Christian customs and beliefs in Goa. It often prohibited Christians from engaging in habits having a Hindu — not Indian — connotation. This was meant to prevent the converts from reverting to Hindu practices (Emma 2002: 108). Thus, although the institution lasted two centuries in Goa, the majority of Goans remained Indian in their way of life, in their customs, traditions and language (Braganca 1992: 28-42).

Among the many socio-cultural changes that came about as a result of the Portuguese policies, alcohol consumption became a part and parcel of life for the converts and a symbol of the new culture that had embraced.

**Alcohol Industry during the Portuguese Rule**

In this sub-topic we take a look at the alcohol industry that took roots and flourished in Goa during the Portuguese rule. This historical fact shows how the Portuguese culture was transplanted among the native Goans. Alcohol consumption as a socially acceptable practice is a case in point.

Portugal has a permissive attitude towards alcohol consumption. Significantly, it also has a culture with strong social sanctions against drunkenness (Clare 1975: 73). Portugal has always been a wine producing and exporting country (Azevedo 1987: VII, Braganca 1992: 28). However, though the Portuguese adjusted to the climate and
to some extent the food in Goa, they could not enjoy the local wine. Therefore, plenty of wine was imported from Portugal, and Portuguese wine became a favoured item in Goa (Chauhan 1993: 157). These imports were an integral part of the trade between Portugal and its colony (Dermejo 2000: 63-64). On the return journey, vinegar, Goan liquors like *feni* and *arrack*, among other things, were exported (Pinto 1990: 178, 189).

The same culture was absorbed by the natives, who learnt to distil alcohol from locally available material. Eventually, there was a demand for the locally prepared alcoholic beverages. In Goa’s trade with Bombay, imports included foreign liquors, crockery, cutlery, glassware, curios, etc., while exports consisted of local liquors, coconuts and coconut products, among other things (Pinto 1990: 193). Similarly, in the late-18th and 19th centuries, European wines and liquors were Ceylon’s outgoing consignment to Goa. In 1784-88, the Governor of Timor (island close to Indonesia) proposed that Goa could export palm liquor to Timor. Similarly, Goa’s imports from Daman and Diu included rice, wheat, etc. and exports comprised cashew and palm *feni*, coconut oil, vinegar, coconuts etc (Ibid. 1994: 37-39). Thus, a study of Goa’s trade with other countries in the 18Th and 19th centuries reveals that local liquors formed a significant part of the exports.

Pereira (1995: 38) gives us to understand that a large variety of wines like Muscatel, Tinto, Porto, Cinzano, and whisky too, were available in Goa. According to Lobo (1927: 35) by 1924 the import duty collected on wines and spirits in Portuguese India amounted to Rs 70,000. Most of these imported wines and spirits were consumed in Goa itself with an insignificant amount being utilized in Daman and Diu. Rich landlords served these wines and whisky along with *feni* at feasts and other occasions (Pereira 1995: 38). According to Gracias (2000: 77), at that time, a good
bottle of Scotch whisky was priced at Rs. 10. In the 17'h century, a Portuguese gentleman, on an average, would drink one or two glasses of wine at dinner (Gracias 1994: 30).

The wines imported from Portugal were expensive (Ibid.). Sweet wines like the Port became popular even with the middle classes. Madeira, Muscatel, Marsala wines, Sherries and champagnes were well known in Goa (Guha 1983: 73). Special iron stands were used to keep the wine barrels. Glass jars were imported from the West to store wine. The Portuguese as well as rich native Christians used them (Xavier 1993: 203).

During the period from 1510-1800, wine was listed among the routine expenses of the Church; foreign as well as local wines and liquors were used (Shastry 1993: 44). In fact, going through the accounts of the College of St. Paul, as recorded by Xavier (1993: 61-62), we observe that a major item of expenditure was food — rice, wheat, fish, eggs, beef, pork, chicken, cheese, wine, fruits, etc. We also observe that feasts and festivals were celebrated with sumptuous meals for all the inmates of the College. This lifestyle was later adopted by the gentry. The officialdom comprised *casados* (Portuguese men who married local women and settled in Goa). They were given certain privileges in view of their exalted position. The king of Portugal also exempted the *casados* from paying taxes on wine (Dicholkar 1993: 140-141).

The Royal Hospital catered to the Portuguese sea voyagers. The patients at this hospital were prescribed Portuguese wine as well as *feni* as medicine. The hospital used to receive 114 gallons of wine and one barrel of vinegar among other things, free of custom duties from Portugal (Gracias 1994: 120-129).
A number of rules and regulations prescribed the sale of Portuguese wines. The market was administered by the Municipality of Goa through market inspectors (Dicholkar 1993: 147), who fixed the selling price of Portuguese wines. Wine traders were not allowed to sell more than one barrel of either red or white wine in a single commercial establishment. Sale of red or white wine was strictly prohibited at *tavernas*. Portuguese wine traders had to furnish a security bond in order to obtain a municipal license (Chauhan 1988: 216-217). In 1520, the King of Portugal ordered the Municipality of Goa to fine those found trading in wine without a license. The Municipality earned a substantial amount of income through these *fines* (Dicholkar 1993: 144). The quality of the wine was also strictly monitored. The wine seller was not allowed to mix any other wine with the Portuguese wines, nor was he allowed to sell any other wines if he was selling Portuguese wines. Anyone found mixing crystallized sugar with Portuguese wine in order to reduce the potency was also fined (Chauhan 1988: 217).

Local toddy tapping and liquor production was one of the main sources of income for the Portuguese State (Pinto 1994: 93). In fact, for the then famous College of St. Paul, renting space for *tavernas*, leasing wooden barrels to store toddy and granting permission to tap its coconut trees for toddy, was one of the main sources of income. The College also undertook timely repairs of the *tavernas* they rented out (Xavier 1993: 59, 74). By the year 1940, the government collected an excise duty of Rs. 10,00,000 per annum on the manufacture and sale of local liquor (Ibid. 1990: 34).

The Portuguese authorities called the local liquors ‘country liquors’ or ‘spirits’ (Azevedo 1987: VII). Two types of liquor were distilled. One was *feni* and other, *urrack*. *Feni* contained 40-44% of alcohol while *urrack* had 25-30% alcohol. The price of *feni* was twice that of *urrack* since the quantity of juice that was used for
distillation was also double (Xavier 1990: 34). Borges (2000: 173) points out that in 1932 the local alcohol industry was very profitable. Legislations were enacted to protect and promote the indigenous industry (Pinto 1994: 93).

Liquor made from palm trees was categorized, for the purpose of taxation, as sura, which was fermented palm juice. Arrack was wine that was boiled once and xarao was wine boiled twice or thrice. Xarao was very potent (Chauhan 1993: 162). The Portuguese also supplied barrels and wooden containers made of only Pico wood and coconut to toddy tappers for storing toddy (Xavier 1993: 58). These references highlight the professional approach to production and trading of alcohol during the Portuguese regime. The business appears to have had its own brand of ethics and regulations, which guaranteed good quality liquor to the consumers.

The cashew fruit was extensively cultivated for liquor distillation. Till 1925, the government maintained distilleries at different places. Anybody wishing to distil could easily obtain a license for a nominal fee, which included the distilling apparatus. In 1927, the government introduced the auction system whereby the right to collect the excise duty was given to private individuals (highest bidder) for a term of three years. He was permitted to set the distil at any convenient place. However, the bidder was restrained from selling more than 3 gallons at a time to the consumer. Sale to taverna owners could be unlimited (Xavier 1990: 34). Toddy tapping was the most prevalent traditional occupation and the poorer sections depended entirely on supplying feni. Most of the toddy tappers distilled liquor on a small scale. The landlord who owned the trees was paid annually and also given a jar of vinegar. The distilled liquor was sold on a large scale to bar keepers (D’Costa 1982: 82). Cashew and palm feni were allowed to be served only in what the Portuguese termed ‘Tavernas Licenciadas’ (Azevedo 1987: VII, Guha 1983: 73-74). In 1920, casados
owned most of the *tavernas* in Goa (Xavier 1990: 34). According to Borges (2000: 174), in 1932 there were 417 *tavernas* in Goa.

D’ Souza (1974: 13) distinguishes between a bar and a *taverna*. He states that a bar is a sophisticated place where one is proud to be seen sipping a whisky, gimlet, rum or a chilled beer. A bar is a place where socially mobile people can meet without any inhibitions. On the other hand, only males visit a *taverna*. It caters to the indigenous taste of *feni*.

According to de Sousa (1983: 65), the *taverna* was an institution with the character and history of the Goan writ large on it. Labourers as well as others assembled at the *tavernas*, which served as clubs or meeting places. Very often, they took on the role of news agencies, as all the village gossip including politics, the *batkar* (landlord), crops, scandals, etc. were discussed here. The tavernas closed by 8.30 p.m at the Angelus bell (Pereira 1995: 23). During the Portuguese regime, all shops were closed on Sundays, except for bars and restaurants (Telkar 1962: 49-59).

Sá (2001: 16) states that during the Portuguese regime, *feni* was never a high society drink. However, *feni* was stored in Goan homes in huge earthen pots called *colloso* or in exquisite Chinese clay jars or in oak barrels. This *feni* was used to pay the farm workers as part of their wages. The ladies of the house also drank *feni* by adding a little sugar. This consumption was for medicinal reason to protect them from cough, cold, constipation, dyspepsia and dysmenorrhea. However, men drank *feni* before a meal as a digestive. While the labourers drowned their worries and body aches with *feni* or *urrack* at the *taverna*, the *batkar* relaxing in the armchair in the evening also enjoyed the *feni* at home. According to Azevedo (1987: VII)*feni* became popular only after Goa’s liberation. *Feni* was used for the preparation of the liqueurs, cocktails,
punches and other hot drinks. Thus, even the upper strata of the society began getting acquainted with it.

In the middle of the 17th century, 2000 *milks* (Portuguese word for *coloso*, each consisting of 18 bottles) of *feni* were produced per day. Three-fourths of it probably found its way into neighbouring British India. However, all this changed in 1878, when custom barriers were removed, in keeping with the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty. Under this Treaty, Portugal was subjected to the Bombay *Abkari* Act (1878), which prohibited, under severe penalties, the manufacture, sale and consumption of alcohol and possession of stills for distillation. Moreover, the Portuguese were forced to accept the rates decided by the Bombay government. As such, the Portuguese had to implement the tariffs fixed for the two neighbouring districts of Goa namely, Kanara and Ratnagiri (Pinto 1996: 117). This development resulted in further destroying the local alcohol industry and trade as under the *Abkari* system, the Portuguese Government hiked taxes related to toddy tapping and distillation. Similarly, other taxes, like the fee for sale of country liquors or wholesale foreign liquors and retail foreign liquors, were also hiked. Although these hikes brought in considerable revenue to the State, it resulted in a decline of consumption and ultimately production of local alcohol. In the long run it also resulted in depleting revenue (Ibid 1996: 118). The *Abkari* system while successfully curbing the outflow of local Goan alcohol into British India resulted in a catastrophic rise in alcohol prices, which reduced consumption. As a result, *feni* production of 2000 *calões* a day fell drastically to only 1000 *calões* a day. This resulted in a loss of around 2,500 *xerafins* (Portuguese coinage) per day or around Rs. 450,000 per annum (Ibid.).

Goa used to export foreign and local liquors to several places. Foreign liquors, such as brandy, gin, champagne, brought by vessels from Lisbon, would move to
Balaghat, Vengurla and Belgaum. Likewise, in the year 1800, Goan liquors were regularly exported to East Africa. *Arrack* was a major item exported to Mozambique (Pinto 1994: 225, 1996: 92, 1990: 194). In 1800, *arrack* and gin was imported from Goa to *Kanara* (Bhat 2000: 60).

By 1920, foreign liquor worth Rs 300,000 was imported every year. The import duty collected on this alone contributed annually Rs 70,000 to the Exchequer (Xavier 1990: 34). According to Xavier (1990: 34) and Lobo (1927: 39), in the year 1920 the excise duty collected by the Government on the manufacture and sale of country liquor totalled Rs.10,00,000. Cunha (1961: 28) states the industry in Goa contributed Rs. 8,34,800 in 1939, which was second only to the Customs with Rs. 25,73,000. The Congress Committee (1939: 17) gave precisely opposite rankings to customs and the alcohol industry. Cunha (1961: 28) states that the 'Prohibition League' of India found the Congress Committee's report 'shocking'. As a result, the next edition of the Government's statistical yearbook eliminated all previously existing information on the alcohol industry.

From 1955 to 1961, the Government of India imposed the 'Economic Blockade' on the Portuguese territory of Goa. As a result, foodstuffs and other wares were hard to find. Hence, Goa's *Junta do Comércio Externo* (Board of External Trade) tried to procure essential commodities from West European countries, like England, Germany and Belgium. These imported items were available at a cheap rate and were plentiful. This led to changes in the habits of the Goans. Consumption of liquor in particular increased tremendously. Communities that were traditionally teetotallers also developed the habit of consuming alcohol and passed on the habit to the next generations (Gomes 1989: 84-85).
3.1 Wooden containers of the Portuguese period used to store toddy

3.2 Display of wine glasses, decanters and alcoholic drinks in an affluent Catholic home

3.3 Crockery of the Portuguese period in an affluent Brahmin Catholic home
3.4 Interior of a Brahmin Catholic house

3.5 An exquisite clay jar of the Portuguese period

3.6 A typical *taverna* as it existed in the bygone days

3.7 Glass containers of the Portuguese period used to store wine/feni
Thus, we can see that the Portuguese not only promoted the local alcohol industry but also introduced imported wines and their consumption to the Goan culture. Consumption of alcohol and particularly, wine became a status symbol and the rich aped the Portuguese in their manners and customs.

**Contemporary Goan Society and Culture**

Since the Liberation of Goa, significant changes have taken place in the Goan social structure. Goa has achieved a very high level of development in just four and a half decades after Liberation. Even though Goa is a tiny state by Indian standards, it is one of India's most affluent. A number of factors are responsible for this affluence.

Agrarian reforms introduced by the Government made tenants the owners of the plots of land on which they lived and worked. This brought about a social revolution. It emancipated the lower castes from their bondage to the landlords and brought about economic transformation.

These years saw large-scale migration of employment-seeking Goans to countries in the Persian Gulf. This brought tremendous wealth to the average Goan home. A number of Goans are now working abroad, not only in the Middle East but in Europe and the United States, too, thereby supporting the economy with their remittances. Thus, they play a crucial role towards the economic development of the State.

The economy of pre-Liberation Goa was predominantly import-oriented. With the exception of mining operations, the manufacturing sector was weak (Angle 2001: 36). The traditional occupations helped in sustaining families. The focus has presently shifted from agriculture and traditional occupations to jobs related with industries and other sectors. During the last decade and a half, Goa experienced great industrial development. In some way or other all talukas have been beneficiaries of this
industrial development. The number of industries set up in Goa has created employment opportunities for the Goans. The industrial sector presently contributes 25% of the State domestic product and has a share of 25% of the total employment (Angle 2001: 55).

Due to these job opportunities in Goa migrants from other states are attracted to Goa; they help to continue with the agricultural as well as traditional occupations.

The educational system has undergone a change. Schools, higher secondary schools and colleges are now seen in a number of villages, thereby making education accessible to the rural youth at their doorstep. The advent of the Goa University has made it possible for graduates to avail of post-graduate education. Besides, a number of technical institutes and engineering colleges have helped expand the educational scenario.

Tourism plays an important role in the economy. The tourism industry that has taken firm roots in Goa has also impacted the Goan society, with the effects seen most dramatically along the coastal belt. Most of the tourist facilities are provided by the private sector. A number of families provide services, which include accommodation. Tourism has created many ancillary jobs and upgraded the standard of a number of families in the coastal belt.

Beach shacks, discotheques, gaming rooms, upmarket bars and restaurants with live performances by bands and karaoke sessions for their customers, many of them upper class Goans, are a common sight in the Old Conquests. On the other hand, our respondents from the New Conquest areas did not even know about some of these novelties.
Similarly the number of upmarket bars and restaurants is on the rise. They are patronized by a number of families in the Old Conquests, on weekends and to celebrate intimate occasions.

Attitudes towards public drinking places have also undergone a change. The consumers prefer to visit upgraded taverns with facilities like television, food items.

Thus a host of factors have impacted on the Goan society with regard to drinking. Expansion of education, the development of industries and the growth of capitalism have resulted in effective social transformation of the mores and customs of the people. This impact is felt on the traditional occupations as well as the people’s lifestyle. Most of the traditional occupations are on the decline. The educationally qualified younger generation finds no interest in these occupations; and as most of them are also caste-related, they do not seem attractive. In fact, the Goan society is slowly changing from a caste-based to a class related society.

Associated with every technical and material change is a corresponding change in attitudes, thoughts, values, beliefs and behaviour of the people who are affected by the material change. The earlier taboos associated with dietary habits have weakened due to these changes. No longer is a one-to-one correspondence drawn between alcohol consumption and alcoholism; the former is now viewed as ‘social drinking’. The earlier attitude of labourers visiting taverns for their late evening drink is waning; instead we find these drinking houses upgraded, providing the drinker comfort, to celebrate occasions, to have business meetings and so on.

Similarly, the earlier alcohol-related taboos among the Hindus have considerably weakened. The younger generation does not perceive alcohol consumption as ‘polluting’. In fact, alcohol consumption in a group and at social meetings and celebrations has become a social need for present day Hindus. Urban
residents are more liberal than their rural counterparts. Finally, it is more common to find Hindus and Catholics participating in each other’s functions today as compared with the pre-Liberation period.

Materialism is a determining factor today; it has overtaken the attitude of ‘caste pollution’. Upper caste Hindus have ventured today into business that gives good returns. They are involved in alcohol business; they own and/or manage bars and restaurants. Our study reveals that upper caste Hindus today participate not only in retail and wholesale of alcohol but even in *feni* distillation, the only exception being the Hindu Brahmins, who, having the onus of performing religious rites, remain strict vegetarians.

The industrialisation policy of the government resulted in the setting up of many I.M.F.L. manufacturing units. The local population thus has a choice of alcoholic beverages as per their spending capacity.

The impact of education, jobs with regular income, and change in social status are noticeable in alcohol consumption. For example, it has resulted in people preferring costlier beverages; those used to consuming *feni* have changed over to I.M.F.L. The socio-economic change has also impacted on the status of *feni*. What was once a popular drink for all seasons, almost identified with the Goan culture, before the introduction of I.M.F.L in Goa, is now a stigmatised, ‘poor man’s’ drink.

Further, lower caste members who have now moved up the social ladder have developed a similar complex. With education and a white-collar job they would not like to be equated with *feni*. Many even avoid visiting the local bar; they prefer upmarket places.

A higher socio-economic status has resulted in people changing their preferences. They generally opt for expensive brands; their tastes have also changed
as per their new status. This matches Pierre Bourdieu's findings, as quoted in Warde (1997: 87-88). Studying how the upper and lower classes in France shaped and formed their tastes, Bourdieu found that the higher class tastes tended towards light, refined and delicate while the lower class tastes were coarse. That is to say, the socio-economic status greatly influenced the nature of alcohol consumption.

Our findings reveal that the lower classes in Goa consume cheaper and more potent varieties of I.M.F.L., while the upper classes opt for more refined drinks. This indicates that social status, which determines the purchasing power and spending capacity of an individual, also plays an important role in the people's alcohol consumption.

In most nuclear families with working parents, youngsters experience great freedom. Many of them have excess pocket money, which provides them opportunities to participate in beat shows and other fun-related activities.

Working women in many nuclear families experience freedom never enjoyed by the earlier generations of women. They participate with men in consuming alcoholic beverages at social events and at upmarket bar and restaurants as well.

In conclusion, we may state that sociological impact of the changing Goan society is visible in three broad areas: age, sex, and community. We have seen that alcohol is now consumed at younger ages; that women have begun consuming alcohol in public places; that the old alcohol-related taboos among the Hindus have weakened considerably; and that the new socio-economic configuration of the State has impacted, sometimes favourably, sometimes not, on the local drink, feni.