

## CHAPTER II

### S O C I E T Y

The role played by the society in shaping the civilisation and Culture of every region is of considerable importance. The contribution of the society towards the development of art, architecture, sculpture, religion, philosophy, literature and music cannot be underestimated. Therefore, a brief survey of the society of the region of Goa is necessary.

The society is divided into four varnās were mainly the Brahmins, the elite class, engaged in priestly duties. In social hierarchy Kshatriyas occupied the next position and this class was the mainly of the rulers and the warriors. The third varnā was of Vaishyas (mercantile community). The fourth and the lowest varna was of Shudras. This constituted mainly of servants.

The works of Indian History published during the early decades of this century suffered on account of two assumptions. Most of the writers assumed that the society in early India remained more or less static and occified. Secondly, it was believed that Varnā system was rigid and it registered only marginal change. However, recent studies have shown that there were social and economic conflicts between the Varnās.<sup>1</sup> On the basis of the available data an attempt is

made here to study the ancient and medieval society of Goa.

Brahmins of Goa.

The earliest reference to the Brahmins in Goa occurs in Siroda copper plate of Bhoja ruler Devaraja which is palaeographically dated to c. 400 A.D. This copper plate refers to Indraswami, Govindaswami of Bharadvaja gotra receiving donations from the King Devaraja.<sup>2</sup> In the copper plates of the 5th and 7th century A.D. a few more names of Brahmins are mentioned. But the copper plates are silent about region from which they are migrated. Another copper plate mentions that a Brahmin was well versed in Sāmaveda.<sup>3</sup> The evidences to the presence of the Brahmins in the ancient society of Goa is about two centuries earlier to that of Dakshina Kannada.<sup>4</sup>

Sahyādrīkhanda. (here after referred to as SKH) refers to the Banavāsī Kadamba ruler Mayuravarma bringing Brahmins from Ahichchatra and settling them in his kingdom.<sup>5</sup> The historicity of this event has been doubted earlier. However, some scholars considered it as a historical event.<sup>6</sup> Devaraja the Bhoja ruler was contemporary of Mayuravarma. Therefore, during this period Brahmins had already migrated to this coastal track. Some scholars argue that Indraswami and Govindaswami might have been Jains, as they wanted to retain their social status they did not leave the gotra tag of Brahmins.<sup>7</sup> But Jains clinging

to Brahmins gotra is only a later development of 10th century. Moreover, there are no evidences of Jainism in Goa belonging to the Bhoja and Konkan Maurya period.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, Indraswami and Govindaswami were Brahmins and not Jains. Even in later period the migration of the Brahmins continued.<sup>9</sup> The Brahmins of Goa are subdivided into Sāraswats, Karhādes, Pādhye Brahmins, Bhatt Prabhus and Kramavant Joshis. Though there is a separate chapter devoted to Chitapāvans in SKH, their settlements are found only in Sattari Taluka and they had hardly played any role in the social and cultural history of Goa.<sup>10</sup> Karhades, Padhyes and Chitapāvans are called by the people of Goa as Bhatt and Sāraswats as Bāmans. Whenever, a local Goan uses the word Bhatt, it should be presumed that he is referring to the aforesaid Brāhmins and not Sāraswats

a) Sāraswats Brahmin.

It would be appropriate to discuss Sāraswats and other three subsections of Brahmins namely Karhādes, Pādhyes and Bhatt Prabhus. The population of Sāraswats is more than other Brahmins communities. According to SKH and SKP, Saraswats are designated as Panchagaudas. The former Purāna further adds that the sage Parashurāma brought Saraswats to Goa.<sup>11</sup> Even if Parashurāma is considered as a historical figure, the regionalisation of Brahmins had not taken place during his age and he had brought only Brahmins and not specifically Sāraswats Brahmin.<sup>12</sup>

Now it would be pertinent to discuss the original home of Sāraswats, the probable route of migration and the period, of arrival and their settlements in Goa. According to SKH the original home of Sāraswats is Tirhut and this region comprised the district of Champāran, Darbhanga, Muruttapur and Sarāri in North Bihar.<sup>13</sup> The section in which the Tirhut is mentioned has been tentatively dated to c. 1400 A.D.<sup>14</sup> Even after settling down in Goa, they had retained in their memory that they had migrated from elsewhere.

A writer on the basis of the genealogy and chronology of Purānic sages has mentioned that Aryans reached Goa during 2500 B.C.<sup>15</sup> This is based on preconceived notion. that Aryans and Sāraswats were identical. Elsewhere in the same work the author has argued that Parashurāma had brought only Brahmins and not Sāraswats. Therefore, equating Aryans and Sāraswats seems to be far-fetched. Aryans were not called Sāraswats then. The early reference to Panchagauda do not go beyond C. 700 A.D.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the date of the migration of Saraswats to Goa suggested by the above scholar is not based on historical facts. However, it is more reasonable to suppose that the Saraswats of Goa migrated from North Western U. P. Punjab, Sindh, Kutch and Saurāstra they were recognised as local Brahmins from the remote past in the aforesaid region.<sup>17</sup> There is no agreement among scholars about the original home of Sāraswats.

The name by which these Brahmins have been designated clearly indicates that the river Saraswati had played an important role in the life of these Brahmins. Even after the disappearance of the river, the Brahmins who had once inhabited the banks of river Saraswati retained the name of the region. There are evidences in history about the migration of the population from one region to another regions account of foreign invasions and sudden climatic changes. The recent researches in Archaeology have shown that the river saraswati dried in about c 1000 B.C.<sup>18</sup>

For the study of the migration of the Saraswats north India to the Deccan, the linguistics provides a corroborative evidence. The Indo-Aryan speech was spreading towards the south along the west through Rajasthan Malwa and Gujrat. The main line of Indo-Aryan linguistic expansion began from north to south from c. 500 B.C.<sup>19</sup> The Sāraswats settled themselves in Rajasthan, Sindh and Gujrat. In ancient Gujrat there was a separate division called Sāraswat Mandal.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, there are many Konkani words which are found only in Gujrati. From this it is evident that Sāraswats had settled in Gujrat migrated to Goa.<sup>21</sup> Among the various Sāraswats communities only in Kutch the honorific 'Shenvi' is the title of respect. This also indicates that the Sāraswats from the Kutch regions might have migrated to Goa on account of Arab invasion in 8th century A.D.<sup>22</sup>

The earliest epigraph which refers to the colony of Panchagāudas is from Chinchani of Thane district and belongs to Rāstrakutā a period (C.900 A.D.)<sup>23</sup> Reference to Sāraswat name are found in Silahārāṣ as well as Kadamba inscriptions.<sup>24</sup> According to SKH account Sāraswats constituting sixty-six families were settled in eight villages ;of Goa, ten each of Kushasthali (Cortalim), Kalosi belonging to Kaushika-Vatsa, Kaundinya gotrās, six families at Mathagram (Madagaon) Veranya (Verne), Lotali and Kudatari (Curtorim), ten families at Chudāmani (Chorao) and twelve families at Dipavati (Diwadi). The two talukas namely Salcete (Sasassti) and Tiswadi were the group of sixty six and thirty villages respectively. In total, these two talukas formed 96 villages. Hence it is suggested that the honorific term 'Shenvi" has evolved out of 96 villages.<sup>25</sup>

The above account furnishes the first migration of Sāraswats which had taken place in c. 800 A.D. Mangesh Mahatmya furnishes the second migration of Saraswats. This might have taken place during Muslim conquest of Kanoj and Bihar. In this period, for the purpose of settling Saraswats Brahmins, the village of Lotali was bifurcated and new settlement was established at Kalosi. Parts of Nāgoa and Sancole were merged together and Kushasthali was founded The Sāraswats who had migrated during c 800 A.D. (first migration) were members of village comunidade.<sup>26</sup> There were regional

variations among the Sāraswats, like that of Bardez, Pedne, Kudal and Salcete (Sasesti). Konkanamahatmya of work of 17th century A.D. deals with the internal rivalry of the Saraswats and strained relations of Sāraswats (such as between Bārdeshkars, Pednekars and Sāstikars) Sāraswats were not recognised by the local Brahmins as well as other non-Brahmins for Shatkarma and they were called trikārmī Brahmins. Hence besides their sacrodataal duties, they took up administrative vocations under the ruling dynasties. Therefore, they gradually established as the landowning class and also as traders.<sup>27</sup>

After settling down in Konkan and Goa in c. 800 A.D. Sāraswats may have taken about a century to establish being patronised by the Silahārās and the Kadambas of Goa.<sup>28</sup> By 10th century they were competing with Karhāde Brahmins in Goa. Sāraswats started worshipping the folk deities like, Mangesh, Saptakoteshwar, Ravalnath and Mahālsa. Sāraswats were not the Mahājans in all the temples. Due to the political influence at the end of Kadamba period, they might have captured the mahājanship of Mangesh temple. Alongwith Saraswats they were Karhāde Mahājans in Mahālsa temple.

Besides the rivalry between Sāraswats and Karhādes, there was similar rivalry between Sāraswats and Guravās. The Sāraswats got abolished the tradition of Gurav priest in Mahālsa temple in 1959.<sup>29</sup>

Many Saraswats left Goa after the invasion of Malik Kafur to the neighboring regions and during the period of religious persecution of the Portuguese also Sāraswats migrated to Uttar Kannada, Dakshina Kannada and North Konkan.

Karhāde Brahmins:

In SKH the Karhade Brahmins are referred to as Brahmins of Karhātak. The region of Karhātak (Karad) is on the confluence of the river Krishna and Koyna in Satara district. The Silahārās of Kolhapur as well as the Southern Silahārās of and the Kadambas of Goa patronised Karhāde Brahmins. They are the natives of the above regions and hence they are called Karhādes. However, it has been suggested that as the family deities of Karhādes are in Goa, they are natives of Goa and not of Karad.<sup>30</sup> It may be mentioned that the mother tongue of Karhādes is not Konkani but Marathi. Many communities who migrated to different regions <sup>and</sup> retain <sup>ed</sup> the languages of the place of origin as their mother tongue.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the family deities of Karhades not necessarily make them the natives of Goa. The famous Venkateshwara of Tirupati or Tulajabhavāni of Osmanabad district in Maharashtra are the family deities of Kannadigās as well as Mahārastrians. But the devotees do not purely belong to Andhra or Maharashtra. Some belong to Karnataka or Maharashtra. Therefore, the family deity in any case is not the deciding factor to identify the region from which Karhādes had actually migrated to Goa. In

many village Comunidades Karhādes are the members. Therefore, this clearly indicates that they had migrated during the Southern Silahārās period and during rule of the Goa Kadambas. SKH as well as Brahmānda Purana are very harsh towards Karhāde Brahmins.<sup>32</sup> SKH mentions that they descended from the bone of camel and hence they were designated as Karhādes.<sup>33</sup>

The relations of Karhādes with Sāraswats were not cordial. The references to conflicts have been already referred to while dealing with the Sāraswats.

#### Pādhye Brahmins

The reference to Padhye Brahmins is found in the section of Karahastrabrahmanotpatti in SKH.<sup>34</sup> It is commonly believed that Padhye Brahmins are not different from Karhāde Brahmins and are a section of Karhāde Brahmins.<sup>35</sup> However, even now Padhye Brahmins have retained their identity. The main concentration of Padhye Brahmins is in the taluka of Ponda (Antruj). They looked after betel-nut and coconut plantations. They are similar to Havik Brahmins of Karnataka.<sup>36</sup> There is an opinion that the Padhye Brahmins have come from Sumer.<sup>37</sup> The basis of this theory and the sources are not known. Like Karhādes, Padhye Brahmins like speak Marathi at home. This indicates that they are not the natives of Goa but have come from Marathi speaking area. They are members of the village comunidade and hence it proves that they reached Goa perhaps

during the pre-southern Silahārā period.

There are no evidences of any royal patronage to Padhye. The southern Silahārā patronage to Karhades gave them much needed social status and to some extent it might have improved their economic conditions but history is silent about Padhye Brahmins. But it seems that <sup>they</sup> were recognised <sup>as</sup> Brahmins during Vijayanagara period by Shringeri Shankaracharya Swami who occupied the seat then.<sup>38</sup> The royal patronage as well as recognition of Padhye Brahmins as Brahmins by the Swami came during the later period. Hence, Pādhye Brahmins retained their individuality.

#### Bhattaprabhu Brahmins

This is a lesser known Brahmin community of Goa and is not found in the neighboring states. Bhattaprabhu community is smaller than even Padhye Brahmin community and originally belonged to Bori and Siroda of Ponda taluka.<sup>39</sup> There is considerable similarity in the social conditions Bhattaprabhu Brahmins and Padhye Brahmins. The only difference is the language spoken by these two communities. Bhattaprabhu speak Konkani.<sup>40</sup> The Bhattaprabhus do not eat fish and are strict vegetarians. On the basis of the available data it would be appropriate to call them sthānik Brahmins.<sup>41</sup>

#### Kramavant Joshi

The SKH states that Saraswats of Chodan Tiswadi and

Banawali (Salcete) entered into matrimonial relations with non-S̄araswat Brahmins and hence they were called Kramavant Joshi. They were the priests of the natives.<sup>42</sup> According to the Brahmins from Desh, the above marriage would be anuloma.

The etymology of Kramavant is explained in two ways, Brahmins engaged in killing insects on the leaves found in the plantation. The second explanation is that these Brahmins performed mostly rituals after the death and hence they were called Kriyavant.<sup>43</sup> As regards the first explanation it would be appropriate to point out that in the district of Bijapur, there is a similar tradition of identifying a community as "insect-picker" Brahmin community. Other Brahmins used to look down them and thus they were considered as degraded Brahmins. Even the Brahmins who are performing only rites after death are not invited for auspicious occasions such as thread ceremony or wedding ceremony and other sacrifices. Even if the second explanation is correct, this may have been the cause of their degradation. The copper plate of Mādhavamantri mentions Kramavitaputra which perhaps means Kramavant Joshi. From this it is evident that by the Vijayanagara period they had settled down in Goa.<sup>44</sup>

#### Guravas

Like the above microscopic Brahmin communities of the Padhye Brahmins, the Bhattaprabhu and the Kramavant Joshis,

the Guravās is also a small community. There were Guravās in Pedne, Salcete, Bardez, Tiswadi, Ponda, Sanguem and Canacona<sup>45</sup>. The Guravās occupy the next position to the Brahmins. Among Guravas also the thread ceremony was performed. They used to learn some religious Sanskrit texts. In this respect, they resembled Jiyārs of Tamilnadu.<sup>46</sup> The Gurava family of Mardol had matrimonial relations with Jira family of Uttar Kannada and enjoyed equal social status.<sup>47</sup>

It seems that Guravās have origins in Kālamukhas and the latter were worshippers of Siva.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, the Guravās also took up the worship in Saiva temples. The references to Guravās are found in the inscriptions from the beginning of the 9th century in Kannada speaking regions.<sup>49</sup> In Goa there were Gurav priests in the temples of Chandreshwar - Bhutnath, Mahālsa and Saptakoteshwar. Commonly Guravās were the priests, in the shrines, the grāma-devatās scattered all over of Goa.

It seems that during the initial stage the term Guravā was applied to Saiva Brahmins of priestly order. The Guravā priests were supposed to maintain strict celibacy. In the course of about four centuries, the distinction between the Guravās and the Brahmins priests became marked and this can be seen in the inscriptions.<sup>50</sup> From this it is evident that even non-Brahmins were the priests of Saiva shrines. After the advent of Virasaivism, the worship of sthavar-linga was forbidden and it seems that many Guravā priests abandoned Siva

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temples. These temples were taken over by the people from the lower castes.<sup>51</sup>

In addition to the above groups of Guravās, there were different types of Guravās called Hugars (florists mostly found in Karnataka) Konkani Guravās and Jaina Guravās. The latter two types of Guravās were found in Goa.<sup>52</sup> As regards the Jaina Guravās found in Goa and in north Konkani, that they were earlier Jainas. After the decline of Jainism during the 10th and 11th century, they embraced Hinduism and once again started the worship of Hindu deities. In many temples of Goa there are subsidiary deity (parivār devata) called Jaina purusha.<sup>53</sup> After the decline of Jainism it seems Jaina tirthankarās were worshipped by Hindus. In Kothambi of Bicholim the tirthankara image is worshipped as Brahman purusha.<sup>54</sup>

As stated earlier even in the temple of Mahālsa, Gurav was assisting other priests in the worship of the goddess Mahālsa. Gurav was supposed to remove the flowers offered to the deity on the previous day and this was called nirmalya visarjan. After the deity was given ceremonial ablutions, (abhishekha) he dressed the goddess with sāri and put on the ornaments. He brought the offerings (naivedya) of the temple establishment from the funds provided by devasthān mahājans and the devotees of the deity. He performed ārati (offering of lamps). He prayed the deity on behalf of the devotees

(uttering garāne) for the mistakes committed <sup>un</sup> knowingly in the course of performing rituals. He prayed the goddess to bless the devotees with favours in their pursuits in day to day life. He kept all the ingredients required for the worship, such as flowers, sandal paste, etc. ready and assisted the priest. He offered the naivedya to the deity according to the instructions of the mahājans. He kept the ornaments required for the deity on festive occasions and the daily ornaments in the safe custody. He was available in the temple through out the day. Even at night he was supposed to sleep in the premises of the temple. He gave prasād and tirtha to the devotees who visited the temple. In the month of Mārgashirshya (November-December) Poushya (December-January ) he prepared gudyās and flags. He lit oil lamp of the sanctum and put oil as and when required.<sup>55</sup>

Guravas did not dine with Sāraswats. They considered themselves as superior to the latter. However they did not mind in inter-dining with Karhādes and Padhyes. Infact a Padhye family has adopted a boy who is originally a Gurav.<sup>56</sup> Guravas are have still remained as priests in many Ravalnāth and Vctāla temples of Goa

### Pānchāla Brahmins

The artisans such as gold-smiths, black-smiths carpenters, sculptors working on stone (shilpis and Sthapatis)

and copper-smiths were called Pāñchāla Brahmins. It is believed that alongwith Saraswats these Pāñchālas were brought by the sage Parashurāma in c 2500 B.C. to assist the priests in performing sacrifices.<sup>57</sup>

a) Gold-smiths (Daivadnyas)

It has been pointed out earlier that the date of the migration of Sāraswats was much later in 8000 A.D.<sup>58</sup> The Sāraswats as well as other artisans may have come to Konkan in 800 A.D. There are references to the sacrifices performed from Satvāhana period. Gold has been found in many neolithic as well as chalcolithic sites of the Deccan indicating the presence of gold-smith.<sup>59</sup> The wheel-turned pottery has been in use from neolithic period. Therefore, the artisans like gold-smiths, carpenters and black-smiths were already there in south India, before the arrival of Sāraswats to Konkan. The above artisans of the south were practicing their trade in this region. Some artisans might have come alongwith Sāraswats to Konkan. But the settlement of the artisans may perhaps go back to the early centuries of Christian era. The Bhojas were well known sculptors and they migrated to the various region of India. Therefore, the sthapatis who themselves claim to be Brahmins may have been descendants of the Bhojas. The gold-smiths claimed themselves as Daivadnya Brahmins. The descendency of Daivadnya Brahmins from Magha and Bhoja Brahmins is also suggested on the basis of the interest shown

by the former in performing arts such as dance and drama. Maghas and the Bhojas were experts in the performing arts. Hence it is argued that Daivadnyas had inherited these arts from the Bhojas.<sup>60</sup>

Some gold-smiths and sculptors may have been well versed in Vastu-silpa texts. Infact in some regions of South India of gold-smith and carpenters are called Chāri and the gold-smiths are called āchari (the term is used either for teacher or the priest). In Uttar Kannada district even carpenters are called āchari. The claim of the above artisans to the status of Brahmins is evident from this usage.<sup>61</sup> It is discernible from the Brāhminical texts that they occupied lower rank in the society.<sup>62</sup> These texts maintain that they were of mixed origin. Their claim of Brahmins status may have been advanced after sthapathis and gold-smiths got royal patronage. They were not primarily engaged in preparing gold ornaments. The skill of the gold-smiths was diversified and they were making silver images and masks of the deities. They could assist the government minting gold or silver coins. The above factors may have improved the economic condition of Sthapathis and gold smiths who were well versed in Shilpa texts and had knowledge of Sanskrit. Hence the artisans may have felt the necessity of claiming higher status in the early medieval period.

Reference has been already made to the conflict between the Sāraswats visa-vis the Karhādes. It would be pertinent to

refer to the conflict between the gold-smiths and the Vānis (Vaishyās) of Khandepar in Ponda taluka. This conflict between the above communities is mentioned in the copper plate of Khandepar 1348 A.D. But it makes no references to the antecedents of the fight. This copper plate clearly mentions that Vānis and gold-smiths actually came to blows. The Vānis of Savai-Vere came to the rescue of their fellow Vānis of Khandepar. The gold-smiths and the Vānis met in Gananāth temple of Khandepar and reached an amicable settlement. The gold-smiths of Khandepar acknowledged the assistance rendered by the Vanis of Savai-Vere and promised to honour them during the various sacraments such as marriage and naming ceremony of the new born child.<sup>63</sup> Many gold-smith daivadnya Brahmins were members of the comunidade (village communities). This clearly indicates that they had settled in Goa from the ancient period.<sup>64</sup>

#### Carpenters and Black-smiths and Gudikaras.

In some regions of India the above occupations are not combined. Carpenters and black-smiths practice their trade independently. In ancient Goa perhaps both the communities might have been independent. But during recent times carpentry and smithy were combined. The profession being hereditary, usually one member of the family is engaged in carpentry and the other looks after smithy. The carpenters in Goa were called thavaya or thovi and it has origins in

Sanskrit word sthapati (architect).<sup>65</sup> Goa being thickly forested region, there was no dearth of wood. The carpenters of Goa were experts in wood carving. They carved wooden pillars of the temple and decorative wood-ceiling of temples. Therefore, taking into consideration of the role played by carpenters in temple building activity in this region, he was appropriately called thovi (sthapati). However, the word which is current is chari and it is the surname of many carpenter families in Goa.<sup>66</sup> The different words used for the carpenters and black smith indicate their claim of Panchāla Brahmin status. Carpenters have gotras such as Kāshyyapa, Bharadvāj and Jamadagni. Marriages within the same gotra (sagotra) are prohibited according to the tradition followed by these communities. Tounser of the widows was also prevalent and there was no remarriage of the widows among the carpenter.<sup>67</sup>

There was a concentration of carpenters at Mayde in Bardez, Cuncolim of Quepem and Paigunim of Canacona taluka. The carpenters do not have family deity, as such and they worshipped the deity of the village. The carpenters of Mayde and Pilgaon worship Ramachandra. The Matha of the carpenters is located in Majali village of Uttar Kannada district.<sup>68</sup> During the Inquisition the carpenters from the old conquest (Tiswadi, Bardez, and Salcete) left Goa settled in Sirsi Honnavar and Bhatkal of Karwar district.<sup>69</sup> They have

continued their trade and their craftsmanship is well known. This was a permanent loss to Goa and a gain to Karnataka. In the Karnataka region this community is known as Gudikāras (temple builders).

c) Kāsār and Bangle makers.

The Konkani word for copper-smith is kāsār and it has originated from Sanskrit word Kāsyakār. The copper-smiths made utensils, copper lamps <sup>of</sup> brass as well as bronze. It seems that they were also making bangles of copper. During the Bahamani period, when glass bangles became common <sup>and</sup> they may have switched over to the manufacture of glassbangles. Kāsārs of Keri village in Ponda taluka were experts in making glass bangles and these bangles were famous throughout Goa <sup>70</sup>.

In the copper plate of Nagadeva dated 1352 A.D. (Saka 1294), references to Kāsārs (copper-smith) is made. The copper-smiths were mahajans of Kalika temple of Kasarpal village of Bicholim taluka.<sup>71</sup> The village itself has been named after them. The copper ore might have come from the mines of Narasingpur, Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Dharwad.<sup>72</sup> It seems after the division of Bahamani empire, the supply of copper might have been erratic, this might have forced them to switch over to the manufacturing the glass bangles. These factors might have adversely affected the economic conditions the Kāsārs. The economically weak Kāsārs lost control of

Kāsarpāl temple during the 15th or 16th century. The powerful gold-smiths usurped the mahajanship of Kalikā temple.

d) Sculptors (sthapatis)

Some sculptors were well versed in Sanskrit texts like samarangana sutra dhara and hence they were called Sthapatis (architects) Sculpture and architecture went in hand in hand as most of the sculpture is integrated with architecture. Only three structural ancient temples have survived after the destruction of the temples in 16th century. These temples have no inscriptions mentioning name of the sculptors. After the establishment of the Portuguese power in Goa these three talukas the sculptors had migrated to Uttar Kannada and other regions of South India.<sup>73</sup>.

Kshatriyas

There are evidences migration of Kshatriya families from North Western India to the Deccan in the early Christian era. The families like Kaikeyas who were inhabitants of the land between Sutlaj and Bias, migrated to Dharwad district of Karnataka. They had matrimonial relations with Isvakus,<sup>74</sup> another Kshatriya tribe. Therefore, migration of some Kshatriyas to the Deccan South India can not be ruled out completely. But it is extremely difficult to categorically state that all the kings who have ruled Goa and the neighboring regions were Kshatriya.<sup>75</sup> During the medieval period, certain dynasties

glorified genealogy in their copper plates in order to gain Kshatriya status.<sup>76</sup> The armies of the ancient rulers were also not primarily of Kshatriyas. In these armies there were soldiers from the lower strata of the society and tribes like Bedars<sup>77</sup> and Paiks.

Attempts have been made by scholars to identify Marathas with Kshatriyas and these Marathas may have reached Goa during the period of Badami Chalukyas. It is mentioned that Rāstrakutās and Silāhārās were Marathas. Therefore, Marathas were Kshatriyas. The surname Kadamb and Silaharē have evolved from the names of ancient dynasties namely Kadambas and Silahārās.<sup>78</sup> Some scholars consider Chardos of Goa as Kshatriyas. It is not known why instead of accepting the usual spelling for Kshatriyas as Xatriyas in Portuguese the word Chardo was accepted.<sup>79</sup> In view of the above, it is extremely difficult to say whether all the kings were Kshatriyas and their army was also <sup>of</sup> primarily of Kshatriya soldiers.  
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#### Vaishyas (Vānis)

References to the vānis has already been made while dealing with the Daivadnya Brahmins (gold-smiths). The Bhojas were the first rulers to establish an administrative machinery. They also controlled the piracy in the region of Goa. This might have given an impetus to increased commercial

activity. There is a reference to Aditya Shresti in Siroda copper plate of Devaraja.<sup>80</sup>

From this is evident that merchants were engaged in trade and commerce in Goa from c. 400 A.D. There may have been settlements of merchants in Goa on the banks of the rivers and trade routes.

Vanis were called Shrestis. In Goa there are families bearing surname Shirsāt and this word may have originated from Shresti. During the Goa Kadamba period there were Banajigās (merchants) engaged in trade. The reference to these Banajigās from Savai Vere, Narve, Khandepar, Kapilagram, Bandivade and Taligram are mentioned in Khandepar copper plate of 1358 A.D.<sup>81</sup> The mention to the social-conflict between the Vānis and the Goldsmiths has been already made earlier.

Vaishya come next to Kshatriyas in four-fold division of the society (Chāturvarna) and thus they are considered as twice-born (dvija). The thread ceremony is performed among Vaishyas. They are mostly Saivites and their chief pontif is Shankaracharya of Shringeri. They have their own gotraa. There is no remarriage of widowas among the Vaishayas.<sup>82</sup>

### Kunbis

Kunbi is considered as sub-caste of Marathas, they are primarily engaged in farming. The word Kunbi has originated

from Sanskrit word Kutumbin that is one who is possessing a family or house.<sup>83</sup> The Kunbis being a small community it is integrated with Marathas. Kunbis are found in Sattari and Sanguem talukas. In the talukas of Tiswadi, Salcete, Bardez and Murgaon there is meager population of Kunbis. Among the Kunbis of Goa, the individual families have totems like fig (audumbar) and Kadamba. The marriage among Kunbi families having the same totems are forbidden. They do not have family deities but they worship the goddess Sattari, Mahāmāya and Ravalnath.<sup>84</sup>

#### The geographical factors and the occupation.

The above discussion is based on the four fold division of Hindu society, and these are found all over India. However, the geographical factors had also played an important role in shaping the society from the ancient times period. On the coastal belts there are certain common castes like toddy tappers and the community engaged in salt manufacturing. Toddy tappers in Goa were called Naik Bhandāri the word Bhandāri, it may be stated that it has originated from Sanskrit word Mandhārak which means one who draws toddy.<sup>85</sup> Nayak Bhandāris constituted one integrated community. Besides drawing toddy, the Nayak Bhandaris were expert navigators and some were engaged in farming. Therefore, there were toddy tappers, navigators and the farmers from this community. It seems a section on this community which was primarily engaged

only in navigation took up farming later.

The main difference between the Nayaks and the Bhandāris is that the latter do not have totem. Among the Nayaks chenduful (Parkia Biglandalosa) are the totem and the women from the Nayak community do not put on chenduful on the hair. Khapar Ravalanath of Narve in Bicholim taluka is the family deity of Nayaks. Their totem is chenduful. Layrayi of Shirgaon is also the family deity of Nayakas as well as Bhandaris. Marriage does not take place between the families having the same totem. The Nayakas as well as Bhandaris are the Saivites.<sup>86</sup>

Fisherman in Goa are called gabit and the boatman are called Khārvi. Fisherman in upper Konkan are called the Kolis but in South Konkan (Goa and Karwar region) they are called Gābits. The fisherman and boat-man follow different profession but in social status they are clubbed together and belong to the same caste.<sup>87</sup>

#### Mithagavdas

In north Konkan the community which was engaged in salt manufacturing on the coast was called Agris. The salt-pans are called Mithāgar. Hence they may have been designated as Agris. In Goa Gavdas are working on the salt-pans and hence, they are called Mitha-gavdas.<sup>88</sup>

### Caste based on professions

In the ancient and medieval society of Goa, there were other professional castes like barbers, washerman (madival), oilman, tailors, potters and cobblers. Madival is a Kannada word for washerman and the same word is used in Goa. In most regions India, there was a barter system till the early decades of this century. The aforesaid professionals were paid the fixed amount of paddy during the harvest season from comunidade land.<sup>89</sup>

### The early settlers

The variety of food available to man during the neolithic period was not sufficient to make the coastal belt of Goa a permanent settlement.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, during the middle half of the first millennium B.C., the early settlers may have settled in Goa.

### The Gavdas

The Gavdas, the early settlers were inhabitants Ponda (Antruz) and Tiswadi. The Gavdas may have migrated from north eastern India about 400 B.C. The Gavdas belong to the proto-Austroloid stock. As regards the etymology of the word Gavda, it is not associated in any form with the Sanskrit word go which means cow. They were not a pastoral community but were farmers. They are credited with founding of the settlements or

the villages in Goa. The Gavdas brought with them their traditions from eastern India. One of such important legacies which they brought from their place of origin was village organisation. Panchāyat of the village allotted land to each family depending upon the number of male members in a particular family for cultivation. The agricultural production of the village belonged to the entire community. Only homogeneous ethnic group constituted the village community. The members who were allotted land for cultivation paid tribute to the chief of the Panchāyat.<sup>91</sup>

The Gavdas were the worshippers of the linga of Mangesh, the mother goddess Sāteri and the goddess Bhavuka. During the important occasions, the story of Bali is narrated for the whole week. The dramas based on the story of Bali were staged by them on festive occasions. The songs are accompanied by a percussion musical instrument is prepared on pot called ghumat. The skin of the reptile is fixed to the pot and the other end is open. They are expert in playing this instrument. The Gavdas women perform dance called dhālo during the month of Poushya (Jan. - Feb) <sup>92</sup>

### Velips

The Velip community is found in only in the talukas of Canacona and Quepem. In complexion they are fair and they are handsome in comparison with Gavdas, The Velips are credited

with the discovering the linga of Mallikarjuna. Hence the Velip acts as a priest of the Mallikarjuna for three months in every year during the remaining nine months Brahman acts as the priest.<sup>93</sup> Both the Gavdas and the Velips have been completely assimilated into Hindu Society.

### Kumār Paiks

Kumār Paiks are also called as Kumār Panths. Paik means a messenger.<sup>94</sup> They were hunters and soldiers from ancient period. Many were recruited as soldiers in the army of Vijayanagara.<sup>95</sup> According to the traditions among them, they originally belonged to Gulburga region of Karnataka. They were Lingāyats, however, later they renounced Virasaivism and became Hindus. Virasaivas are also Hindus hence the account furnished about the faith of Kumar Paiks by Enthoven is confusing.<sup>96</sup>

Kumar Paiks used sword and Shield for hunting. Kumar Paiks believe that elephant, lion and tigers have divinity in them Once in a year they worship tiger. On Mahānavami of Āshwina (September-October), they worship weapons (āyudha puḷā) and offered cock to the weapons.<sup>97</sup> Kumār Paiks are found in Canacona and Uttar Kannada district.

The communities like cobblers (chamārs) and Mahārs constituted part of ancient and medieval society of Goa. Their position was similar to that other of regions of India and

they were treated as untouchables.<sup>98</sup>.

### Arabs and Muslims

From the beginning of 8th century, Arabs (Muslims) began to establish their settlements on the West Coast. During the reign of Chalukya ruler Vikramaditya II the Tajaks or Arabs invaded Lata (Gujarat) province of Chalukyan empire. The copper plates of Navsari (739 A.D.) refers to Avinisharya. Pulakesin of the Gujarat branch and he faced the formidable Arabs and repulsed their attacks. The copper plates of Chinchani mentions the settlements of Arabs in Sajan villages.<sup>99</sup>

The copper plate of Jayakesi I refers to the Muslim Minister named Chadma. While Kadamba ruler Gullhadeva I was sailing towards Somanath, his ship got involved in a naval accident and the mast of his ship broke. His grandson Jayakesi I gave Chadma, the privilege of levying the taxes on small and big boats. The amount collected by way of Taxes was utilised for the maintenance of the mosques built in Goa. This copper plate goes to the extent of saying that Jayakesi I made him the Chief Minister.<sup>100</sup>

After Malik Kafur invasion and subsequently during the rule of Sultanate, there were Muslim Officers in Goa like Malik Bahadur. After the downfall of the Goa Kadamba, some Muslims might have migrated to Bhatkal and Honavar. The Navayats of Bhatkal are the descendent of Muslim community and

once lived in Goa. 101

The coastal society of Goa was more elastic and less rigid than the Deccan. The Brahmins of the Deccan plateau looked down on the people of the coastal areas. The Deshasthas of the Deccan were reluctant to migrate to the coast. Only the Habbus who were the Deshasthas, migrated to Uttara Kannada district and Canacona taluka of Goa. 102

The rivalry between the Saraswats and Guravas the gold smiths and Kasar clearly indicates that the society was not devoid of conflicts. Infact conflicts between the gold-smiths and the Vanis went to the extent of exchanging blows between the members of the above community. However, by and large, the above communities retained the customs and traditions of Hindu society.

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27. Konkan Mahātmya Rivalry between Pednekar and Kudaldeshkar pp 21-24 Bardeskar pp 24-27. chapters 1-5 in Uttarardha pp 21-34.
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29. Panchal Chinu: "Strife in the Gods world" In the Illustrated Weekly of India 21st March, 1982 pp 22-29.
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