Chapter IV

SOCIAL LIFE
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Relevance of Social History in study of social life is of utmost importance. Social history deals with the institutions and problems related to men and society, his morals and manners, custom and habits, family and group life, and such other activities which are essential part of a corporate life.¹ It deals with the behavioural pattern of a particular society which brings before us a vivid picture of how society functioned in multifarious range of social activities. Toynbee has gone to the extent of saying that societies are the atoms of which history is composed of and that is not individuals or nations but societies that form the components of history. It is the daily life of inhabitants, the character of family and household life, the conditions of labour and leisure, the attitude of man towards his fellow-being and nature, the pattern of life as emerged from his group living, and the changing forms in his life as a result of religion, philosophy, literature and politics, administration, learning, thoughts or any other intellectual activity that forms real history.² Social processes and social caution give a new perspective to history, enlarging the people's vision away from political and dynastic history. One very conspicuous feature of Goan society is its keen desire to maintain its separate identity. The Goans display their distinct identity wherever they go and wherever they reside. This identity is reflected in their traits as well as in their taste, refinement, language, attitude to life and behaviour. Family life is perhaps nowhere so well-knit together as in Goa which is a very happy feature.

Traditions and customs were a strong force which moulded individual minds and, therefore, social attitudes over a long period. They continued to affect the people in the same direction, even when the people
accepted a different religion or caste. Within this framework, the process of social change continues, new things are accepted and old are modified, leading to new customs in the external way of life, in the forms of worship and devotion, in art and craft, in language and literature, in cultural traits and conventions and in festivities and food. The Goan society has, thus, undergrown a great synthesis of Hindu and Christian customs and manners. A synthesis of oriental and occidental is seen in the variety of rich life that exists in Goa.

Social life fabric is constituted by family, house, customs, traditions and other factors. Goan society is a phenomenon in itself. The study of Goan society gives a clear picture of the social life scenario prevalent on the test of time.

**Goan Society**

Goan society presents a remarkably harmonious character despite the religious and caste divisions that have dented as well as enlivened it. The social character of the community has been, as in the rest of the country, impressed with ubiquitous caste system, though without its strict and pervasive observance as in many parts of the country. It may be borne in mind that the term ‘Caste’ is itself a Portuguese appellation meanings ‘Chaste’ or ‘Pure’. It is the concept of purity that is at the base of the determination of caste hierarchy is general. The Portuguese in the 16th century on observing the social stratification of the population of Goa at that time, mixed up Varna, i.e. groups based on refinement and culture and originally associated with ‘colour’ with the Jati, i.e. groupings formed according to the concept of purity in its varying gradations, and called all of them indiscriminately by the label of ‘caste’.³
An Ethnological Study of Goan Society

Culture is a way of life and it covers all facets of human life, such as anthropology, ethnology, history, language, literature, costumes, habits, traditions, etc.

In this context, it is worth discussing some aspects of Goan traditions and life. Dr. Antonio de Braganca Pereira, a jurist and researcher in history has to his credit a book under the title ‘Ethnografia cia India Portuguesa’ in two volumes. Though it is written in Portuguese, it has immense historical value. In the second volume of this book, Dr. Braganca Pereira has dealt with extensively the history of the castes and communities in Goa. He says that there are 30 to 35 castes and sub-castes among Hindus of Goa, 17 amongst the Catholics and 20 amongst Muslims. In comparison with the castes and communities in Maharashtra and Karnataka, the neighbouring States of Goa, the majority of castes and communities in Maharashtra are to be found in Goa. Certainly they might have migrated to Goa from Maharashtra. The students of ancient history of India are well aware that in bygone days Goa formed a part of the province of Aparant, which stretched from the North, the southern boundary of Gujarat and to the South, the river Gangavati or Gangavali in the South Kanara district of Karnataka. The province of Aparant was the occidental or littoral part of Maharashtra along with Vidarbha and Ashmak.

The castes and communities cited by Dr. Braganca Pereira, in his book might have come down to Aparant from Vidarbha, the first homeland of Aryans, who crossed the Vindya ranges from the north. He has cited following castes and communities amongst Hindus of Goa; Brahmans: Chitpavan, Karade, Padhe Joshi, Goud Saraswat.
Goud Saraswat: Smarts (Shaivas), Sastikar, Pednekar, Kudalkar (Shaivas).

Other Castes: Maratha, Vaisya, Gurav, Sonar, Kansar, Sutar, Lohar, Olar or Kankankar or Bogar, Shimpi, Kharvi or Gabit, Gosavi, Zogui, Piddukkar, Bhandari, Komarpaico, Kumbhar, Agri, Gaude, Pant, Mahale or Hajam or Nhavi, Teli, Dhangar, Gouli, Lingayat, Gujir, Mhalsh, Perni, Bhavni and Deuli, Forgent or Chedde or Bande, Mahar and Chamar.⁴

All the above mentioned communities or Jatis exist in Goa from the time immemorial with a few exceptions, for example the Chitpavans or Konkanasthas. The arrival of Chitpavan Brahmins in India is a subject of speculation. It is known that they arrived in India very late. Some say they came from Iran; others say they are of the Nordic stock of Aryans; while according to a legend, they are not Aryans at all, but of Semitic race most probably Arabs of North Africa, who sailed to India from the coast of Barberia and landed at Guhagar on the Konkan coast, their original homeland. Dr. Braganca Pereira is of the view that Chitpavan Brahmins assumed the surname Konkanasthas in the year 1715. The original home of Saraswats is also a subject of speculation. Some say they came from Bengal. Bhau Daji, a Goan scholar of repute is of the opinion that they came from Trihotra, while C.V. Vaidya asserts that they migrated to Bengal and Goa from the region of Saraswati.

**Chitpavan Brahmin:** Chitpavan Brahmins are majority amongst Brahmin community in Bicholim. They have the surname Apte, Barve, Phadake, Mone, Jog, Paranjape, Kelkar, Bhave, Dandekar, Joshi, Marathe, Mhaiskar, Sahastrabudhhe, Gadgil, Behere, Vaze, Damale, Bhuskute, Ogale, Siddhaye, Gokhale, Sane etc.⁵
Karade Brahmins: The home country of Karade Brahmins is also a subject for discussion. But by the very name Karade it is presumed that they came to Goa from Karad. They were brought to Goa by the Silahar Kings of Western Maharashtra. They exist in Bicholim by the surname Pitre, Bhatwadekar, Bakre, Bhate, Petkar, Garde, Jawadekar, Manerikar, Bhatt Thakur, Kinjawadekar, Umarye, Bandekar, Aravkar etc.

Padhey Brahmins: They are a sub-caste of Karadc Brahmins but their assumption is that they are a separate community. In Maharashtra they are to be found in North Konkan and in Goa at Antruz or Ponda Taluka. In Bicholim they have the surnames Sawaikar, Naikdesai, Thakurdesai, Prabhudesai etc.

Joshi or Kramavant Joshi: This is a microscopic community found in Ratnagiri district and a few in Goa. It is said that they are of Dravid stock. They have the surname Joshi and they are very handfiew.

Daivadnya Brahmins or Sonars: This community belongs to Vishwakarma Panchal Brahmins. They are of Aryan race and descended to Dandakaranya from the North. Their Sanskrit surname is Shresthin from which the general surname Shet is derived. They are found in Maharashtra and might have migrated to Goa from Konkan. Some ethnologists are of the opinion that they migrated to Desh or upper Maharashtra from Konkan. While some contend that their homeland is Goa. This presumption is being upheld on the grounds that they are components or Gaonkars of some comunidades or village communities. They are also found in South up to Mangalore. Most probably they might have fled in those parts during religious persecutions in Goa. They have the surname Pawaskar, Mashelkar, Vernekar, Shirodkar etc. in Bicholim taluka. In Daivadnya
Brahmin community of Goa, sub-castes are not found. But in Maharashtra we do find, e.g. the sub-castes of Lad, Abhirs, Malvades, etc.

**Vaishya:** They are also called Vani. The etymology of this word is Vanic means businessman. In Rigveda, the word Vish occurs very often. Its meaning is also businessman. Vaishyas are of Aryan stock and descended to Vidarbh from the North. They might have settled down in Goa long back, for they are components or Gaonkars of many village communities or comunidades. The family deities of Vaishyas are mostly in Goa. But they are spread in many parts of Maharashtra as well as in Karnataka. Most probably they might have fled to Karwar region during religious persecutions in Goa. In Maharashtra, there are eight sub-castes amongst the Vaishyas. This community exists in Bicholim taluka and have surnames Verekar, Datye, Kanekar etc.

**Sutar:** Sutar community belongs to ‘Panchal Brahtnins’. In Goa, some families of this community do the profession of carpentry and iron work. The latter are &called Mesta. (Mestres in Portuguese) While in Maharashtra, the Sutars and Lohars i.e. Mestas are two sub-castes of the same community. Sutars are a small community in Goa. They are to be found sparsely in Cuncolim of Salcete taluka, Quepem, Canacona and Bicholim. Surnames Mesta & Chari belong to this class and exist in Bicholim.

**Kansar or Twastta Kansar:** This is also a Panchal Brahmin community. They follow the profession of brass and bangles work. As the family deities of Kansar community are in Maharashtra, they might have descended to Goa from Maharashtra. Thread ceremony is performed in this community as those of other Panchal Brahmns. Surnames Yende, Kansar are the Kasars in the Bicholim Taluka.
**Gurav:** This small community is found in Goa as well as in Maharashtra. Though they follow the profession of priests in the temples and wear thread, they are not treated as Brahmins. Besides they intermarry with Marathas. There are five sub-castes of Gurav community. They have also gotras. Bhagat, Gurav Sawant are some of the surnames of this community in Bicholim.

**Bhandari or Naik Bhandari:** This is the largest community of Goa after Gauda community. They are also found fairly in South Konkan but sparsely in Desh or upper Maharashtra. In Goa, in Bhandari community there are no sub-castes, but in Ratnagiri district there exist. These are called Hetkaris and Kittey Bhandaris. They however do not intermarry. Nowadays, Bhandaris call themselves Kshatria Marathas. They are good fighters. There were a fair amount of Bhandaris in Maratha army.

This class is second largest in Bicholim taluka and has surnames Naik, Gaonkar, Ghadi, Kumbharjuvekar, Dhavale, Satardekar, Posnaik, Pednekar etc.

**Gabits or Daryawardy Marathas:** This fisherfolk community is to be found mostly in Ratnagiri district and in Goa. Besides the profession of fishing, they were working as sailors in the Maratha navy. That is why they call themselves Daryawardy Marathas in Ratnagiri district.

In Goa as well as in Ratnagiri district, there is a sub-caste of fisherfolk community which is called Kharvi. In Goa, they are also called Vhadekars. All these sub-communities follow intermarriages.

They have the surnames Phadate, Tari and Sawant in Bicholim.

**Kunabi:** Majority of this community hails from Maharasthra and they are farmers by profession. Nowadays, in Maharashtra they have been
incorporated in Marathi community. But high class Marathas (96 Kuli) do not intermarry with them. The Kunabi community of Goa might have descended from Maharashtra and settled down on the slopes of Sahyadri ranges. They are found in Sattari, Sankhali and Sanguem. As already stated, they are farmers and toilers by profession. There are no sub-castes in Kunabi Maratha. The others like Kumbhars, Dhangars, Telis, Gaulis, etc. are microscopic communities in Goa. They are predominantly found in Maharashtra and also found in Bicholim taluka.

**Maratha Kshatrias:** Maratha Kshatria community is the main bulk of the inhabitants of Maharashtra. They have descended to Goa from Maharashtra. There are 96 Kulas among Maratha Kshatrias, who descended from the royal dynasties who ruled India in bygone days.

This is the dominant community in Bicholim taluka having surnames sawant, Gauns, Rane, Desai, Parab, Prabhu, Sinari, Fadate, Raut, Gad etc.

Many scholars of repute like C. V. Vaidya, V.K. Rajwade, V.V. Mirashi, A.S. Altekar, K.A. Nilkanth Sastri have dealt with this subject extensively. According to Rajwade, Marathas migrated to Deccan from Magadhdesh due to the persecutions of Boudhas, long before the Christian era.\(^4\) That they had cohesion with the Nagas in Maharashtra and by which three ‘Vanshas’ namely sun (Surya), Moon (Chandra) and Naga came into existence. Rajwade further adds that amongst the Maratha Kshatrias of Maharashtra great ruling dynasties like Chalukyas, Yadavas, Bhojas, Pallavas, etc, produced great warriors like Pulkeshi, Amoghvarsh, Vikramditya, Singhan, Aparark, etc.
Rajwade further elucidates that the Magadh Kshatrias brought along with them their family priests, who are no other than the present Deshasth Yajurvedi Brahmins.

Though the above theory is not acceptable to some of the historians, they agree that Marathas migrated to Deccan from the north and established their first settlement in Vidarbha. C.V. Vaidya has stated in his ‘History of Medieval Hindu India’ that the 96 Kulas of Marathas are no other than the ruling dynasties of Kshatrias, who ruled many parts of North India, Western India, Malva, Karnataka, etc.

Social Life

Hindus

Joint Family System - As is seen in the rest of the country, in Goa also was prevalent, a joint family system among Hindus. With the increase in population, a number of persons belonging to the younger generation started migrating to Bombay and to other parts of the neighbouring states for their education and for earning their livelihood. As a result, this joint family system is waning away. However, a joint family system is a must for one or two families under the law. In their case, no descendant can inherit any share from the ancestral property and the entire property is treated as a collective property of the family and the responsibility revolves on the head of the family.

Though the Portuguese in the initial stages of their rule usually tortured and harassed the Hindu population, they did not consider it necessary to make the Portuguese Civil Code applicable to non-Christians. The Civil laws in respect of Hindus were based on Manu Smriti, Parashara Smriti, Yajnyavalkya Smriti, etc. These usages and customs of non-
Christians of Goa including Hindus were codified in the Usages and Customs Code of Non-Christians of 1854. It was further amended in 1880. However, in general, the provisions of the Portuguese Civil Code (Codigo Civil) of 1867 were made applicable to Hindus to the extent they were not in conflict with the Usages and Customs Code of 1880. Under the Civil Code, Hindu marriage is not considered as a sacrament but is considered as a contract, a contract with economic bearings. After marriage, the hereditary as well as self-earned property of both husband and wife is considered together and both of them get an equal share in the property. However, there was a provision under which property, hereditary as well as self-earned could be treated independently if the couple has entered into an anti-nuptial agreement before marriage. It may be mentioned here that this provision was hardly taken advantage of in Goa.

Under the laws of inheritance, if any one of the couple died earlier, that particular share was equally distributed amongst the children or amongst the grand-children in case of premature death of children. If there were no descendants, the right used to pass on to ascendants. In such circumstances, the property used to be inherited by the father or the mother of the deceased and in their absence, by the brothers and sisters of the deceased. In the absence of both descendants as well as ascendants, the right of the inheritance used to go to the counter part. However, it may be mentioned here that the division of property was avoided and the property used to be inherited on the husband’s side only. Being co-owners, husband and wife could jointly sell out their property. Either of them was free to give one’s own share to any one or dispute one’s own share to one’s liking under a will.
Marriage Traditions

Partavan

On the fifth day of marriage the Hindu bride’s family invites the newly married couple to dinner to her house (Panchpartavan)\(^1\). The groom attends this function with a minimum of five friends locally known as ‘dhede’.\(^7\) The entourage is also made up of his family members, relatives, other villagers and neighbours. Everyone is welcomed with pomp and gaiety as firecrackers are lit. Colourful water called ‘raat’ splashed on to the couple at the gate or door of the house.

In the Gawda community, people from the bride’s village, ‘wadekars’ also attend this family function. They bring with them bouquets of flowers, fruits and other commodities as gifts. According to custom the newly wedded groom has to pay for these gifts while accepting them.

The bride’s family puts up a stall called maand or posro, where commodities like matchboxes, beedies, cigarettes, biscuits, chocolates, peppermints, laddus, kapam, bananas, fruits, flowers, etc, are kept for sale. The groom has to purchase the entire contents of the maand at the quoted price and then has to distribute the items to the people gathered there. In the olden times, the price of the posro was a maximum of rupees five but these days the price has increased and amounts to anything between rupees 500 to 5000.

Before dinner, the groom’s ‘dhede’ bathe. But before the bath, they are asked to apply coconut oil on their bodies. They go on bathing till the bride’s people get tired fetching water. When the bride’s family is tired out, they play tricks on the bathers. They add cow dung, chili powder, mud, khajkuli (nettles), etc, to the water. Or they make the water scalding hot to
deter the bathers. The discomfort caused by adding nettles to the water ends the bathing session.

Then they are asked to sit for dinner on mats where trunks of banana trees are kept. When people take their seats it makes a funny, hissing sound. At this the bride’s people laugh at them, saying that the groom’s ‘dhede’ are witless.

Dinner is served on full banana leaves and they are compelled to eat all that is served to them. It is a troublesome task for them to eat in this way. When they ask for water, they are served salty water. A few of the food items may also contain salt instead of sugar.

In the meanwhile, the bride’s family hides the groom’s Chappals (shoes). In order to regain his sandals, the groom is asked to pay a huge amount. The groom pays this loving tax and takes back his shoes.

But the majority of the poor were not acquainted with Chappals, as they could not afford leather footwear. At the same time, the common people made two types of footwear for daily use. In the kulmi community, Chappals are made from the bark of the kumbyo tree. In the kharvi community, women selling fish went door–to–door on foot and sometimes wore footwear made of coconut leaves. This was usable for just a day. Walking barefoot was common everywhere. For this reason there was a strict restriction on the use of chappals on or near the maand was considered a holy place.

Before saying farewell to groom’s family, the bride’s offer ‘otis’ to the married women. Gifts are given to the ‘dhede’ and special ‘aver’ – gifts, are presented to the bride and groom along with flowers, vido and gandh.
There exists a custom of stealing an item of daily use from the bride’s house. One of the ‘dhedo’ performs this duty very cleverly.

Before taking leave of the bride’s family, a member from the groom’s team snatches a coconut leaf (chudat) from the matow (Pendal). This rite is called ‘Matow Partovap’ and thus the marriage ceremony concludes.

The Houses

When the Aryans came, they had their artisans and courtesans with them. They built fairly big houses facing the main road but the houses of the courtesans were at the rear facing the narrow lanes. The courtyards were large and used for orchards. The pre-Portuguese houses are not extant in Goa except one or two like the Palace of the Adilshaha in Panaji. But even these were altered, plastered or rebuilt. The Hindu houses were constructed around a central courtyard which had the Tulsi mandapam at its centre and which was used by the women for husking the paddy, pounding the rice, etc. The houses had narrow windows and small doors with wooden shutters. This was the general pattern of houses throughout India. The wealthy, generally Vaishyas, had ornate doors. The houses seldom had more than one storey. There was a verandah running along the inner line of the houses around the periphery of the inner courtyard. The male members generally spent their leisure hours sitting and discussing there. The bedrooms were in a row wherein the sons and grandsons lived with their respective families. Each bedroom opened to the verandah. From outside, one entered through the main portal of a small corridor that opened to the verandah. Toilets were not permitted within or near the house. An enclosure was provided for women to have bath. It was often made outside the courtyard a little away from the kitchen. The males used to have their
daily ablutions near the well situated within the courtyard. With the Portuguese influence, a porch was added to the maintenance. Even the middle class had houses built in the same way around a small quadrangle. The houses of the poor and the untouchables were thatched houses or huts made out of split bamboos and coconut leaves. Generally there was only one door and a small window. Sometimes, no window was provided for. The roof was always thatched with coconut leaves. The huts were long and divided to suit their requirements.

The houses of the rich were plastered with lime and painted with ochre or vegetable dyes. The rooms were spacious and had ornate doors and windows. The windows were generally narrow and were provided with wooden shutters. Silk or velvet curtains were used to cover the open doors of the inner rooms. The varandahs had well decorated and carved pillars. The foundation was always of laterite stones and the floor was made of rubble pressed hard and plastered with cow-dung, whereas the superstructure was either of mud or of stone. Timber was used in plenty not only for roof structure, doors and windows but also for ceiling. There were stables for horses and quarters for servants and slaves. Ornamental plants adorned the houses in front and at the rear there were a number of fruit bearing trees and a small kitchen garden to grow the legumes.

Before the construction of a house, an astrologer used to be consulted. With his help, the site was selected and either in the site or on the stone selected for the foundation, they made some signs of swastika or padma. They also buried in one of the stones used for the foundation or in a corner of the construction five precious jewels (pancha ratnas) to appease the god of construction Vastupurusha. The construction was generally undertaken in the months of Chaitra (March-April), Vaishkha (April-May), Jestha (May-June), Kartika (October-November), Margasirsha (November-
December), Magha (January-February) or Falguna (February-March). The houses were always constructed facing north or facing a road. Sand and lime were mixed to keep the stones or mud well secured. The sand was from the bank of a river or from the seashore and not from the river. No glass but oyster shells which were made smooth and delicate were used to allow the light to pass. These shells were fixed on wooden frames of the window shutters.

With the advent of the Portuguese, big and large houses in the Iberian style were built. Ever since such houses occupying almost the entire area of the plot became an exclusive land mark of Goa. The foundation base or plinth level was raised to 2 or 3 feet above the ground on which came the superstructure. The windows and doors were large, allowing plenty of air to pass through. The fidalgos lived in stately buildings, graced with covered balconies. Many houses had two storey’s. The window panes were of oyster shells or were latticed. The Portuguese maintained a well groomed garden with many ornamental plants and fruit bearing trees. A horde of slaves attached to every fidalgo-household made it possible to maintain the house and its surroundings.

It was a custom in Goa to cover the walls of the houses as well as their entrances with palm leaves during the rainy season. In the villages, the houses of the chiefs were covered first, followed by those of others. Even among the wealthy Hindus, there was a general indifference to the appearance and comfort of their houses. There would be hardly any piece of furniture except one or two bedsteads. A chair was considered an item of luxury. Generally a stool was used to sit at the table. The people squatted down on a mat or thick cotton mattress as it was wont. Nobody ever wished to break the age old customs. Discipline and obedience to elders was the hallmark of the Indian society - a society blessed with sages and saints; a
society that considered wealth, luxury and comfort as vices. Materialism could not take deep roots in the Indian society where the Kings and National heroes were worshipped as divine incarnations.

**Furniture**

The Portuguese as well as the well to do native Christians who were imbued with western culture took pain to keep the house well furnished. Wine jugs imported from the West, porcelain articles from China, well designed flower pots, vases, etc. from Portugal adorned their houses. The tables and chairs with intricate and exquisite designs had carved out legs, spiral or straight, ending in various forms of animal heads. Brass lamps, branched candle sticks made out of alloy metals and silver were in use. There were brass and glass flower vases beautifully designed. Wine glasses and wine jugs of different shapes and sizes were used. Chinese crockery’s were in abundance. Iron stands were used to keep wine barrels.

Beautiful and exquisitely designed almirahs were used to keep clothes and dresses. Different types of cupboards, and shelves were used for books, household articles, kitchen utensils, etc. There were different types of cots used by fidalgos such as manchaca, palanga, canapd and zompillo. Palanga and khatt were used by non-Christians as well as converted Christians as they were plain bedsteads. Zopalo was a cot suspended from the ceiling by iron chains. Manchaka and canapo were well executed and designed cots with satin or muslin trappings. The bed-sheets, pillow cases and chair cushions had beautiful embroideries on them.
Utensils

The poor had their kitchen utensils made of clay. Generally the cooking-pans were made of clay. The rich used brass vessels for cooking. In reality there was a vast difference between the rich and the poor in every aspect of life. If the poor were satisfied with earthen vessels and plates for serving food, the rich had the finest variety of Chinese crockery’s to display. The ostentatious behaviour was seen in all aspects of life mainly due to Portuguese vanity.’ There should be no element of surprise when we perceive the rich converts meticulously aping the Portuguese in their everyday life. Only they could not succeed in whitening the colour of their skin.

Chinese jars were used to keep preserved food items. Glass jars were used to store wines, vinegar and water. The wine jugs were exquisitely done. The kitchen vessels were made out of clay, different metals and alloys. The Westerners used spoons, forks and knives while eating, whereas the natives used hands which was considered unhygienic in the West. But Della Valle had a different opinion about the Portuguese in India. The native students were trained to use spoons and forks at the higher educational institutions, The Portuguese used different types of plates while eating. There were soup plates, dessert plates, rice plates, quarter plates, etc. The native had one or two types of plates to serve the food and had no pretensions whatsoever.

Interior Decoration

The Portuguese were particular about interior decoration. The churches and convents built by them testify their taste for interior decoration. The walls of the houses were tastefully white washed with lime and dyes. Silk, satin and velvet were used as door and window curtains.
The delicate and beautiful satin, muslin and velvet cloths were used as coverlets on the bed stead. Pearls and diamonds were used by wealthy people to decorate the cushions on the chairs and stools. The Portuguese too took a fancy to stuffed animal heads which were hung from the walls of the verandah. The verandah or the hall was used for any family function or a celebration. If the hall was big enough, it was used as a ball room whenever such functions were held. The hall was tastefully decorated with some mounted paintings hung from the wall. A row of wooden chairs and sofas artistically done were kept around the hall touching the walls. There were also a few tables and one or two wooden stands for hanging overcoats, umbrellas, hats, etc. at the entrance of the hall.

Food

Man does not live to eat but he eats to live. He eats according to his taste and what he likes. Hence eating habits change from person to person, family to family, community to community, race to race and nation to nation. The eating habits and the various food stuffs of the natives of Goa and of the Portuguese were no exception.

Rice was the staple food of the Goans as it is today. Irrespective of caste and creed, they took rice thrice a day. By 10 O’clock in the morning, the people took gruel rice or kanji with fish, vegetables, pickles and chuatney a preparation out of coconut, chilly and coriander). Between 12 noon and 2, in the afternoon, they had the lunch comprising rice, fish, vegetables, pickles, papad, buttermilk, and butter. The Brahmins did not eat flesh of animals, whereas the others had meat except beef for the Hindus and pork for the Muslims. The supper was taken between 8 and 11 O’clock in the night. The same items followed as that of lunch. Rice and curry (prepared out of spices, chilly, coconut and water in which either fish or
pulses were cooked) made the main items of food for the common man. Fruits and sweets were also taken after food.’ The Brahmins belonging to the Chitpavan, the Karade and the Padhye sub-castes did not take non-vegetarian food. They strictly adhered to vegetarian diet. But the Saraswats ate fish and meat except that of cow, pork and sometimes chicken. The Brahmins generally abstained from garlic and onion as they were considered impure tubers. It was a custom to take bath before eating and to have the minimum clothing while taking meals. Before taking a morsel of food for himself, a Brahmin would sprinkle a little water on his plate. Then he would take 5 morsels of food and offer them to four gods present in the court of India. The gods were Chitra, Chitragupta, Yama and Yamadharma. And a fifth morsel was offered to demons. The Brahmin after the offering of these morsels took a little water and offered it to gods. Again he took 5 more morsels, offering each separately to 5 vayus (gases) with which the human body was composed. These 5 components of the body were prana, apana, viana, uddana, and somana. The oblations to these components were to appease Brahma. The ritual was called Chitraveli. At the end of his meal, he drank a mouthful of water and poured a little over the food that was left in the plate intended for the demons. A Brahmin never took food in the company of other castes. Nor did he consume food prepared by inferior castes; nor did he allow anyone to look at him while eating food.’ He would not allow his right hand to touch his mouth while eating with his hand. Generally, he would roll the food into balls and throw them into his mouth with his right hand, while the left hand was considered an outcaste as no food article was permitted to be touched by it. The women never sat with their male partners. It was always the Indian custom to serve food to the male members of the family first. It was the duty of the females to cook and serve them but not to enjoy their company while eating. The women sat together in the kitchen after their men folk had
finished their meals. No Hindu of whatever status ate at the table. They always had bath before the meal and squatted down on a rectangular wooden plank or on a mat spread on the floor. After eating, the place was immediately purified by cow-dung. The people of those regions had nothing else except rice which was their daily meal and they took rice with a little salt if nothing was available to eat rice with.

It was equally true that the people belonging to the high castes would starve on their journeys as they considered eating at any place impure. A Brahmin would not touch his food if another caste had eaten earlier in that place, unless the place was purified with cow-dung. The Hindu priest or pandit did not eat in the house of another Brahmin who consumed fish and meat. But the fish and meat eating Brahmins could eat at the house of the Hindu priest or pandit.

The higher castes among Hindus normally abstained from liquor. But the lower castes drank spirit, distilled from cashew apples, sugarcane, dates and coconut palms. In ancient India, soma and sura were considered the drinks of the Brahmins and non-Brahmins respectively. Soma was prepared out of the soma juice, milk, curd and grains. It was also considered to be the drink of gods. It was believed to bestow power, eloquence, immortality and purity. Sura was made out of fermented barley or paddy and distilled. It meant that the ancient society expected the Brahmins to be different from others and dictated certain norms as guidelines. They have not described another drink common to the people of India. It was tarry or toddy, taken from palm trees. He opined that the toddy taken in the night was the best compared to what was extracted in the day. The latter was sour and was used for vinegar. He saw in Goa toddy tappers climbing the palm trees and extracting the toddy Careri observed that sura
and nira were extracted from palm trees. There was yet another intoxicant extracted from date palms.

There was a common saying that a Brahmin and a Muslim theologian were both well known for their greedy appetite. It might be because both of them had access to the choicest food which were offered to gods. The Muslims had a different food habit compared to that of the Hindus. They were non-vegetarians. Though the Koran did not permit the use of liquor, the pages of Indian history reveal the wine addicted Muslim rulers and nobles. Unlike a Hindu, a Muslim could cook and eat food anywhere convenient to him. He could share his food with his fellowmen and eat together from the same plate. He could not, however, take pork-meat or the flesh of an animal not properly slaughtered. While the Hindus ate in the Portuguese and the native converted Christians used dining tables, chairs, Chinaware’s and glass jugs. Good water was available in different forts of Goa. The best and sweet water came from Bainguinim for Old Goa. Slaves and servants were engaged to bring water from there. Some slaves brought it in tins and sold them in the city. Most of the people drank water. The fidalgos took wine almost regularly whereas the casados took it only on occasions. The man of quality took a little without adding water. The women never drank wine. The drinks came from Portugal. The Portuguese and the Christian converts who were forced to adapt and adopt western habits, had their women folk at the dining table except when they had some guest. It was a custom that all family members together sat at the table and the head of the family recited a small prayer of thanksgiving before and after meals. The fish curry rice is still the lunch / dinner food of middle class people and the poor who cant afford the fish, remain satisfied with rice gruel locally called ‘Pez’ or Kanji’
**Dress**

We come across in the Vedic literature words like vasas, vasana and vastra which meant cloth. The Aryans wore three garments: Nivi, vasas and adivasa. Nivi was used to cover the lower part of the body below the girdle or groin. Vasa was used to cover the upper part of the body and adivasa to drape around the shoulders. All these garments were unstitched. Megasthenes noted that Indians cared for personal beauty and paid much attention to augment it. The Agni Purana contains a vivid description on herbal medicines and beauty care. The Hindu pundits drew no line of division between physical and spiritual health. They stressed the importance of personal cleanliness. The Arthasastra orders the king to bathe daily, smear his body with scented sandal paste, decorate himself with valuable ornaments and keep his hair and finger and toe nails trimmed.

Unlike the westerners, there was no uniformity in dressing among different social and religious groups in Goa. The only uniformity was found with lower castes and peasants who had the bare minimum clothing. Those but not the low castes, went about naked. The Hindus of the upper castes generally applied scents and scented powder to their hair. They always rubbed sandal paste on their body and had chaste marks before they went out. They wore a dhoti from their waist touching up to the ankles. They put on a shirt (camiz) or a dispatta and a turban.

The women in Goa were fond of good dress, jewellery, flowers, scented oil, etc. They danced and moved about and were better behaved than those of other parts of India. They used vermillion to mark the parting of the hair, applied antimony to eye lids, musk to breast and ate betel leaf and areca nut for reddening the lips. Henna plants were used to colour the hands and feet, a certain black powder for eye-brows and caste marks on
the fore-head, in addition to jewellery and flowers. But in the widowhood they abandoned all these and dressed modestly, wearing a white saree. It reached down their heels and covered the breast and arms. There was a practice among the Brahmins of Goa especially the Chitpavans, Karades and Padhyes to tattoo the forehead of their unmarried daughters. Even the Gaudes and Dhangars of Goa were fond of tattooing. The colour of the tattoo was either black or dark blue. Some converts, in spite of the ban, had a cross tattooed on their fore-head. The practice had not died down even today. Many are found with a cross tattooed on their wrist.

The rich dressed ostentatiously. In addition to dhoti, vest and shirt, they wore a coat. They also had a head cover generally a topi (barrette) made of wool or velvet and embroidered with gold and diamonds. The turban used as a head cover differed according to persons. A turban was known by different names according to the way the cloth used for head cover was rolled. It was called a mandil, pagdi, rumal, pagotem, mudashem or fento. The Desais and Ranes used mandil, fento or pagddi. The rich merchants and landlords used either a Topi or Pagddi. A ‘Mandil’ was a turban of silk cloth and ‘Feto’ and ‘Pagddi’ of velvet cloth.

The children generally had very little clothing to cover their shame. They freely moved in the house. But outside they dressed well. The male children used a long jacket and trousers. They too covered their heads with caps. The rich male children had bracelets, ear-rings, gold girdles and anklets. These ornaments were often inlaid with pearls and diamonds. The female children used to wear short ‘Gagras’ and ‘Chollis’ or blouses. They adorned the body with gold and diamond ornaments. They too had ear rings, nose rings, bracelets, anklets, girdles, etc. At home the children of both the sexes belonging to rich families had their sheets of gold or silver to cover their nakedness.'
The inferior class, as we noted earlier, used the minimum clothing. Their work demanded them to don the bare minimum. The peasants, servants and labourers had a casti or langoti or a dhoti coming down to the knee covering the thighs, a woollen blanket as dupatta and a head gear of cotton cloth or a cap. The turban used by the inferior class was known as rumal or pagottem. The high and middle classes used foot-wears such as zotem, chapall, moche, choddem (boat shaped with a high pointed curve), paduka (wooden sandals) and kaddavo. The choddem might have been the result of Muslim domination as it was their wont to wear choddem. The paduca was generally used in the house. But it does not mean that people used foot-wears within the house, they were left at the entrance to the house.

Jewellery

Jewellery was used by both the sexes. The presence of goldsmiths in Goa and their guild which was considered one of the most important and leading guilds of the city, would testify the demand of jewellery by all and sundry. Even men used to bore the ears and put on ear rings. Some men had even nose studs. The types of jewellery used by the people can be made out by minutely observing those temple sculptures of the times and of the earlier times.

The period of our study had added more varieties and intricacies to the existing types of ornaments. Jewellery in Goa was a part of stridhana and as such, it reflected the wealth of the girl’s family. It was considered a social prestige. The Hindus, Christians and Muslims used jewellery. The Hindus used more than the other communities did. A Hindu woman had a variety of ornaments to decorate from head to foot.
Pastimes and Amusements

The villagers had more leisure than the city dwellers. After harvest, they generally spent their time in various amusements and recreations. The temples in the villages became the centres of attraction. Kirtans were recited from the Puranas. There were dramatic acts depicting various scenes of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. The village musicians and dancing girls also entertained the village folks. Sometimes, the villagers themselves would take part in singing and dancing. The village festivals were also celebrated at specific times.

There was a common amusement among the village people in playing the tabulas or tabulfalem. It was a game played by the illiterate people with a tabula which was a quadrangular board divided into four rows of twelve magical shows. The spare time was also used for periodical pilgrimage to holy places.

The educated played chess, backgammon (chaupar) and cards within the four walls of their houses. The children might have played games of running and jumping such lagori, farttyo, koyannobal, langadi, and other indoor games of hide and seek with some variations.

Superstition

Goans in general believed in a number of superstitions. They believed that their life was controlled by the heavens. The sighting of a comet was considered a bad or a good omen. The Goans consulted astrologers and pundits to avoid calamities. They consulted them even for, wearing new clothes, and such other matters, leave alone important and serious issues. They consulted the priests before the marriage of their wards, buying a property or launching a new scheme. A child born on the
day of amavasya was considered inauspicious and was abandoned. On an
eclipse day, they would not cut anything with a sharp knife. They would
not look at the moon on the chaturthi day, They were so superstitious that
they would never stir out until they said their prayers and by chance if they
happened to see a black cat running across their path, they would
immediately return home and undertake no business of any consequence
that day. They always saluted or prostrated before a temple while they
passed by it. They worshipped the ancestors fearing that they would do
some harm otherwise. They worshipped heroes (viras) and good faithful
wives (satis) who died on the pyre. All these superstitions were practiced
by the people of Goa. The Hindus and the Christians of Goa threw nachane
or uncooked rice on their return after cremation or burial of a dead pregnant
woman. It was intended for the evil spirit of the deceased woman who was
bound to collect all the thrown nachane (ragi) or rice on its way to trouble
the inmates of the house. It was believed that while collecting these grains
the day would break in and the evil spirit would return to the crematorium
or cemetery. Many of these superstitions had no base and fell short of
human rationale.

The Portuguese, tried to eradicate these superstitious practices but
without much effect. The Hindus and the Christians believed in astrology,
sooth saying and in the powers of celestial bodies. A daughter after three
Sons was considered inauspicious but a boy after 3 girls was auspicious. If
a child crossed under the out-stretched legs of an adult, it was believed
that the child would not grow tall and to nullify that effect it was asked to
pass again in the opposite direction. After the night fall, no salt, coconut,
money, needle, rice, eggs, curd was given on credit; if given, some disaster
was expected to befall on the donor. These were indeed some deep rooted
beliefs which could not be just washed out with any type of persuasion.
Feast and Festivals

Every village in India was self sufficient, independent and had its own assembly of elders to administer. This self-sufficiency and independent nature were responsible for each village to plan its own feasts and festivals in addition to the main feasts of Hinduism. Each village had its own zatra. It was an occasion for the village people to come together to display their skill and craftsmanship. It went on for days together before the Portuguese put an end to Hindu celebrations. It was also the feast of the village deity and many people from the neighbouring villages also attended. The Hindu festivals generally fell on a comparative leisure period of the peasantry and the days were spent on dancing, singing and other entertainments. Dancing and music became an exclusive art of a particular caste as is mentioned at above and they were extremely popular with the people of those days.

Communidades

The village communities of Goa as we call them today, were known as gaunkari in ancient times. The Portuguese on their arrival christened them as comunidades. This institution is an age-old one whose date of origin is lost in the antiquity of time.

The Madras Revenue Board affirms that the gaunkari is as old as Manu. The Sanad of King Jayakeshi, the fifth ruler of the Kadamba dynasty, incidentally makes it clear that gaunkari existed on the Konkan coast. It comprised sections of Brahmins.

However, the exact origin is still elusive. But its motive was to promote agriculture and therefore we find that most of the land was brought under the plough by the gaunkari. Simultaneously it was vested
with several powers such as municipal, juridic, fiscal and those of public welfare. Hence it was almost autonomous, self-sufficient, powerful, dynamic and progressive.

In 1510 the Portuguese conquered Tiswadi and by 1543 Bardes and Salcete also fell into their hands. These three talukas were known as the Velhas Conquistas (Old Conquests). The other talukas like Pednem, Bicholim, Sanquelim, Ponda, Quepem, Sanquem and Canacona were known as the Novas Conquistas as the Portuguese conquered them subsequently during the second half of the 18th century.

To administer the talukas of the Velhas Conquistas, the Portuguese government promulgated a Charter namely, Codigo dos usos e costumes dos gauncares e lavradores desta Itha de Goa e outras aneixas a ella in 1526. Later on, when they conquered other talukas, they found the Charter of 1526 outdated and hence they could not implement it in the newly conquered territories. They however issued many regulations from time to time to govern the New Conquests.

An attempt is made here to give the structure of the village communities of Goa which prevailed during the 19th century based on the Regulamento of 1886.

Every village community consisted of the following members:

1. Those who held personal jonos (shares) (per capita) and their male descendants through male lineage legitimate, legitimated or adopted as per law;

2. Those who had rights in the communities, i.e., the transferable shares of any kind which were registered in their names;
3. Those who, although did not share the profit or the loss but, nevertheless were entitled to vote in the deliberations and had a say in awarding the contract at the auction and could enjoy the service provided under the articles.

4. Therefore, the gaunkars, joneiros, accionistas, culcharins vantels and cultos fell under this category of members.

Their role in the working of the comunidades was as follows:

(a) Gaunkars are said to have been the first settlers and cultivators of the village lands. They were thus the full owners of the village property in common. They were the builders of the village communities. But some did not continue in these communities. They migrated to avoid the repressions and rigours of the Goa Inquisition. They migrated for other reasons also.

(b) Joneiros were the recipients of the jonos or shares. They were members of the communities by birth-right which was perpetual in nature and passed on to the male descendants through male lineage. Jonos were not alienable.

(c) Accionistas were also share-holders. They came as a result of some interest in the communities such as freely alienable shares. About 19 communities of the Ilhas had share-holders. Some shares had a fixed value while others varied according to the annual surplus to be shared by their members.

(d) Culcharins or Kulacharies were the residents of the communities without being gaunkars. There was a time when they were proprietors. In the 19th century they became the servants of the various
communities. They carried banners, showed light to the *gaunkars* during the night time and repaired the bunds.

(e) **Vantels:** They were share-holders like *accionistas*. They were not found in the llhas. They were there only in Bardez and Salcete, but that too in a very few communities like that of Calangute. In 1885 the community of Calangute had passed a resolution granting them the status of *gaunkars* of its community. We find Vantels in Lutulim, Raia and Curtorim, all in Salcete. The Vantels of Raia were designated gaunkars as early as 15 December,

(f) **Cultos** (Cult of Saints): Each of the village communities had its temple. They were maintained and patronised by the community. After Goa’s occupation by the Portuguese a large number of Goans were forced to adopt Christianity. Their temples were demolished and churches were built on those spots. Every village had a saint as a patron. The day to day expenditure of the churches as well as their maintenance were met by these communities through the jonos of saints.

In the Novas Conquistas new conquests the Hindu temples were not under the patronage of the communities, but the annual surplus of the innumerable pensions were paid to the temples for their maintenance.

The communities were administered by elected members forming a board of management called Junta. It was a triennial appointment. It followed the regulations of the government through the Administrator of the communities and by a prescribed code (Código das Comunidades).

The business of a village community depended upon the proposals brought before the administration which were processed in accordance with the provisions of the Regulamento of 1886.
The Administracoes das Communidades were public government offices for all intents and purposes. As per the regulation every day 5 hours of work was put in by the office of the Administrator, starting at 9 a.m. and closing at 2 p.m. on all the working days. Sometimes, the Administrator prolonged the timing of the office if required.

The Junta Administrativa (Administrative Board) was a representative body that administered the community concerned. It consisted of a President, four members, a procurator and an Escrivao (clerk) as per the Regulamento. This was a salient feature of the 19th century structure of the comunidades.

The Administrator of Communities: There was only one Administrator for each taluka. All the communities Of that taluka came under his jurisdiction. He had to reside compulsorily in the taluka headquarters. He could not remain absent without the permission of the Governor General. Whenever he was unable to discharge his duties his substitute was to officiate for him.

In the New Conquests the business of the community was carried on by the Administrador do’Concelho. The taluka Administrator in other words, was the ex-officio. Administrator of the its comunidades. During his absence the person in-charge of the Administracao do Concelho would officiate. The Administrador do of Concelho was empowered to manage and supervise the affairs of the communities. The swearing in ceremony of the Administrator was performed at the hands of the Governor General, who used to appoint the Administrators of all the talukas.

The Administrator had to see that the regulation was duly implemented. He supervised his subordinates in fulfilling their duties and obligations. He had to see that order prevailed and everything went on
according to the law. He could appoint escrivaes provisionally from one village community to another. He could appoint official de diligencia (bailiff), servants (peons) and porteiro (door-keeper). He took oath from the employees attached to the Agrarian Council, Torofos and Communidades and he was empowered to grant them 15 days’ leave in each year.

He could suspend any of the employees of the administration, including escrivaes, porteiros and peons; but had to report to the Governor General the reasons and the period of suspension. He could also recommend to the Governor General the dissolution of any agrarian council or replacement of any of its members. He could sanction the revenue and expenditure of the community and torofos and also the estimates and the conditions of the ordinary auctions of the community and Agrarian Council. He could hand over the leased lands of the community for a longer term. He had to attend the sessions of the Agrarian Council and of the Board of the Administrative Council if he deemed fit. He could sanction petty expenditures to the communities torofos and Agrarian Councils, provided that they did not exceed Rs.25 per year.

**The President Of A Community**

*(Presidente da Communidade)*

Among the potential candidates, the one who showed better capacity and integrity, was selected as President. He was appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Administrator. He was usually a gaunkar of the said community. He was appointed for a period of three years. He was the link between the Government and the gaunkars.
Powers, Rights and Duties of the President:

The President was to

(1) Summon the meetings in the manner provided in the Article, i.e., on his own or when he was asked to do so by the Junta;

(2) Open and close the sessions;

(3) Maintain law and order;

(4) Supervise the proceedings;

(5) Adjourn the sessions whenever there were disturbances, informing the Administrator about it in order to impose a fine on those who were responsible for the disturbance;

(6) Consider all written and verbal proposals conveyed to him by the members of the community;

(7) Seek the opinion of the members of the Junta whether a proposal was worth taking up for a decision; and

(8) Check the accuracy of the minutes of meetings which would be signed by him.

Procurator of the Community:

The Procurator was directly elected by the members for a period of three years and this election had to take place before 15th December. He was elected for a period of three years. The newly elected Junta used to take charge on 1st January.

The Procurator of a Communidade was the representative agent and supervisor of the community. His powers were as follows:
(1) A general supervision of everything concerning the common interest of the association;

(2) Representation of the community before any government office or court and undertakings of all the necessary proceedings in the interest of the community;

(3) Warning the government and the community about the corrupt behaviour of his employees and agents and also about the encroachment on the village lands;

(4) Supervision of the work of all the inspectors and attending the meetings of the Board of Administrative Council;

(5) Submission within 15 days to the office of the Land Registrar the terms of the auction and the surety for the payment.

(6) Supervising and preparing of the necessary documents for the registration of the mortgage; and

(7) Petitioning against the deliberations and remarks which he deemed against the interest of the community.

In the New Conquests, the Procurator and his substitute were supposed to know to read arid write Marathi.

**Members (Vogais):**

The Vogais were members of the Junta. They were elected in the same manner in which the Procurator was elected. There could be four members. In case there was a difficulty in getting four knowledgeable gaunkars, then only two or even one gaunkar was elected as Vogal.
The Vogais had to attend the regular session of the Junta summoned as per the Regulamento and also the special sessions provided therein. Besides this, they had to attend the general sessions of the community. They had to deliberate and vote on all matters proposed by the President and the Junta. They could bring proposals on all matters of common interest for the decision of the Junta.

The Vogai who mustered a greater number of votes would officiate for the President whenever the latter was unable to discharge his duties.

**Clerks (Escrivaes):**

Each community had a clerk appointed through a competitive examination. His salary was fixed according to a wage list. The escrivaes of the community had to stand surety for 5% of the revenues of the association before the Administrator.

The escrivaes das comunidades could draw only 2/3 of their salary and the remaining one third after the settlement of the account of the sacador (rent collector) and only after the clearance from the Administrator.

Those escrivaes who did not settle the bills of the sacador or of the debtors of the community within the stipulated period as stated in the Regulamento of 1886 that they were jointly responsible to the community together with the sacador and debtor.

It was binding upon the escrivaes to (a) maintain the cash book; (b) maintain the archives; and (c) notify the members residing inside and outside the village whenever he was enjoined to do so by the Administrator.
By way of conclusion, it may be stated that the structure of the village communities of Goa went on changing due to the implementation of fresh regulations from time to time by the Portuguese Government which often interfered with the working of the old comunidade system.

Many gaunkars who were solely dependent on the community for their livelihood were no more well off. The moradores (residents) occupied most of the lands of the community and thus the gaunkars lost their moorings. Nowadays most of the gaunkars do not get their shares (Jonos) which they used to get all through the 19th century. Only a few communities distribute the jonos presently. Some of the present day gaunkars do not even bother to collect their jonos since it is a very meagre amount while in the 19th century they were very regular and punctual in receiving them.

The Bicholim taluka, occupying a total area of about 23,633 Ha (hectares) provides about 19,732 Ha for cultivation, which represents about 83% of the total area.

The major part of this arable area i.e about 20% is covered by the ‘borod’ lands and about 28% by the cashew tree groves. The paddy cultivating are occupies about 2999 Ha, which represents about 13% of the arable land. The fallow land occupy about 3,147 Ha constituting about 16% of the arable land. Analysing this arable land form the ownership point of view, it is verified that the major point of view, it is verified that the major part i.e. about 80% belongs to private owners, the comunidades occupying only about 2,960 Ha, which represents about 15% of that arable land.

As stated above, the paddy fields occupy about 2,599 Ha, majority of which (2,043 Ha) belongs to private owners. Similarly a greater
part of other plantations also belongs to private owners who hold about 80% of the arable land.

There are, in all 21 comunidades spread over the taluka, carrying a total area of about 2,96 Ha, through the area held by some of these comunidades is not known, but presumably, it must be used for certain miscellaneous plantations. The total area used for the paddy cultivation is about 407 Ha, of which a greater part (279 Ha) is in the monsoon crop season. All this paddy, cultivating are fields an average production of 15 khandis per Ha and it remains divided into 800 plots (lotes), of which 417 cover an area above 4,000 sq.m. each, and in the year 1963, was leased out to 641 tenants of whom a little above half their number were members’ Jonoeiros’.

The comunidade do not have members share holders, but only jonoeiros, who in a major part, are residing in the same village.

There are also ‘Vangores’ which although, in 1959, numbered to 237, in 1963, the same decreased to 225.

The distribution of Jones is made by ‘Stirpes’, it being impossible, therefore, to know the amount of ‘Jono’ paid per each ‘Jonoeiro’.

The total receiving amount to about Rs. 173,600 in the year 1954, reduced to about Rs. 10,200 in 1963. The total expenditure which was about Rs. 103,400 in 1954, in assessed in the year 1963, amounting to about Rs. 125,500.

The most important comunidade of this taluka, are those of Amona and Navelim, mainly because of their vast extensions of paddy fields but also due to their bigger receipts. 10
Amona

It covers a total area of about 201 Ha, of which 154 Ha are utilized in the village (freguesia) of the surname, which has a total area of about 574 Ha. These paddy fields which are of ‘Khazan’ type are cultivated only in the monsoon crop season and production have an average production of 10 Khandis per Ha. The same are divided into 185 plots (lotes). Of which 173 cover an area of above 4,000 sq.m each and in 1963 were leased out to 137 tenants.

In the same year, there were 197 members jono eiros enrolled and since 1959, here were 5 Vangers. Due to lack of funds, the ‘toxima’ of Vangores were never paid and the ‘junos’ paid previously were stopped since 1959.

Advalpale

It covers a total area of about 129 Ha. of which 22 Ha. are occupied by paddy fields and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 634 Ha. Its paddy cultivating area which is entirely of ‘Khazan’ type is cultivated in the monsoon crop season (8 Ha) in the dry crop season (5 Ha) and in both the seasons (9 Ha) and has an average production for 4 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into 52 plots of which 19 have an area of 4000 sq.m each and since 1962, were leased out to 7 tenants.

In 1962, there were 69 members jono eiros enrolled out of whom 58 were residing in the same village. The number of Vangores which were 73 in the year 1954, reduced in subsequent years, totaling to 69 in 1963. Receipts were from Paddy cultivation & coconut.
Arvalem

It covers an area of about 7000 sq.m which is utilized for paddy cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 710 Ha. Its paddy cultivating area which is entirely of ‘Kher’ type is cultivated only in the dry crop season & has an average production of 6 khandis per Ha. It is divided into 4 plots (lotes) of which 2 have an area varying between 2000 and 2999 sq mtrs and was leased to 4 tenants, since 1959.

Since 1960, there were 4 vangores and 32 members jonoeiros of whom, 29 were residing in the same village.

Bicholim

It was a total area of 6 Ha almost entirely utilized for the paddy crop cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name; which has a total area of about 377 Ha. This paddy cultivating area is of ‘Kher’ type is cultivated mostly (5 Ha) in the monsoon crop season and has an average production of 17 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into 14 plots of which 9 have an area varying between 1000 & 1999 sq mtrs each & was leased out to 14 tenants of whom 5 were its masers jonoeiros.

In 1963, there were 42 members jonoeiros enrolled of whom 37 were residing in the same village. The no. of registered vangores was 5 (five). Kulkarnim, Gaonkars & Parob.

Bordem

It covers a total area of 26 Ha of which 15 Ha are utilized for the paddy crop cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name which has a total area of about 841 Ha. Its area covered by the
Paddy fields which is entirely of ‘Kher’ type is cultured mainly in the monsoon crop season (10 Ha) and has an average production of 14 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into 49 plots (lotes), of which 14 have each an area of above 4000 sq.mtrs and was leased out to 49 tenants, of whom 18 were its members jonociros.

In 1963, there were 70 members jonoeiros enrolled, of whom 59 were residing in the same village. Therefore also 4 Vangoeiros registered since 1959. Toxinmos paid were to ‘Kulkarnim, Rovalnathkar, Mahamaikar and santerkar’.

**Cudnem**

It covers a total area about 10 Ha, almost exactly covered by the paddy fields and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 993 Ha. This paddy cultivating area which is classified as of a special ‘type’ is cultivated in the dry crop season (8 Ha) and in both the seasons (2 Ha) and has an average production of 22 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into 26 plots (lotes) of which 17 have an area varying between 3000 and 3999 sq mtrs each and since 1959, was leased out to 24 tenants.

In 1961, there were 70 jonoceiros enrolled, of whom 60 were residing in the same village, the being no registration in the year 1962 & 1763 The No: of Vangors is of 2, since 1959.

**Cotombi**

It is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name having a total are of 250Ha. Since, 1961, there were 13’ number jonoceiros’ enrolled. There were 2 (two) Vangores since 1959.
**Dumacem**

It covers a total area of about 1600 sq. mtr. entirely covered by a paddy fields and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 329 Ha. This paddy cultivating area which is of a special type is cultivated mainly in the monsoon crop season and has a average production of 19 khandis per Ha, there being information obtained as to the no of tenants to whom it was leased out.

Since 1959, there were 5 member jonoceiros’ enrolled and 5 Vangores.

**Latambarcem**

It is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 3641 Ha. The area covered by this comunidade is not known:

Since 1962, there were 75 members jonocinos’ and 75 Vangores.

**Mencurem**

The area covered by the comunidade is not known. It is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of 362 Ha.

Since, 1962, there were 24 members, jonceiros enrolled and 24 Vangores.

**Mulgao**

It covers a total area of about 30 Ha, almost entirely occupied by paddy fields and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name,
which has a total area of about 758 sq.metres. A greater part (25 Ha) of this is Paddy cultivating and is classified as of ‘Khazan’ type and it is cultivated mostly (21 Ha) in the dry crop season having an average production of 15 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into 86 plots (lotes) of which 46 have an area. Varying between 3000 and 3999 sq mts each and since 1962, was leased out to 90 tenants.

In 1963, there were 108 members jonioiros enrolled of whom 88 were residing in the same village. The number of Vangores was of 4 since 1959. Toximas, distributed to ‘Gad’, Porobo (Parab)’ “Rauto” (Raut).

**Naroa (Narve)**

The total area of the Communidade is not known. It is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 700 Ha.

Since, 1961, there were 18 members jonoceiros’ enrolled and the number of Vangores was of 2 (two) since 1959.

**Navelim**

It covers about 76 Ha, almost entirely occupied by the paddy fields and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of 978 Ha. This paddy cultivating area which is of ‘Khazan’ (14 Ha) and ‘Kher’ (62 Ha), types is cultivated in the monsoon crop season (2a Ha) in dry crop season (30 Ha) and in both the seasons (17Ha), and has an average production of 17 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into 120 plots (lotes) of which 105 have each an area above 4000 sq mts and since 1962, was leased out to 95 amounts.
The nosof registered members joneiros in 1963 was of 108 of whom 103 were residing in the same village. The number of Vangores is of 41 since 1959.

This communidade has greater income from cashew plantatina and some from rituals.

**Pale (Pali)**

It covers a total area of about 4 Ha, almost entirely utilized for the paddy cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 1277 Ha. Its paddy cultivating area which is of a ‘special’ type is cultivated, mostly in the double crop season, and has an average production of 26 khandis per Ha. It is divided into 7 plots (lotes) of which are (1) has an area above 4000 sq mtrs and in 1963, was leased out to 9 tenants.

In the same year, there were 60 members jonoceiros enrolled and the number of Vangores was of 2, since 1959.

**Piligao**

It covers a total area of about 81 Ha, of which 32 Ha are utilized for the paddy crop cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 633 Ha. Its paddy cultivating area which, in a major part (24 Ha) is of ‘Khazan’ type is cultivated mainly in the monsoon crop season and has an average production of 18 Khandi, per Ha. It is divided into 59 plots (lotes), of which 43 have each an area of above 4000 sq.mtrs and in 1963, was leased out to 38 tenants.
Since 1961, there were 22 numbers jonoeiros’ enrolled and the no: of Vangores was of 2 since 1959.

**Sarvana**

It covers a total area of about 185 Ha, of which about 12 Ha are utilized for paddy crop cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 767 Ha. Its paddy cultivating area which is entirely of ‘Khazan’ type is cultivated only in the monsoon crop season and has an average crop, production of 2 khandis per Ha. It is divided into 23 plots (lotes) of which 19 have each, an area of above 4000 sq mtrs and in 1963 was leased out to 19 tenants.

The number of enrolled, jonoeiros, since 1961, was of 56 and there were 3 Vangores, since 1959 toximos distributed to kulkarniom and Sautos’(Sawants).

**Sirigao**

It covers a area of about 26 Ha almost entirely utilized for paddy crop cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 282 Ha. Its area, covered by the paddy field which is entirely of ‘Khazan’ type is cultivated in the monsoon crop season (15 Ha) and in both the season (11 Ha) and has an average production of 33 Khandis per Ha which is the highest productivity among all the comunidades of Bicholim Taluka. It is divided into 112 plots (lotes) of which 67, have each, an area between 2000 and 2999m2 and in 1963 was leased out to 84 tenants.

In the year 1963, there were 112 members jonoeiros enrolled of whom 90 were residing in the same village and the no; of vangores were of 2, since 1959.
Toximos, were paid to ‘Brahmines’ ‘Sirgaocares’ and Sudras Gaoncares

**Surla**

It covers an area of about 5 Ha, almost entirely utilized for paddy crop cultivation and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 1,597 Ha. The area covered by the paddy fields which is of ‘Special’ type is cultivated mostly in both the seasons and has an average production of 20 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into 8 plots (lotes) of which have each, an area above 4000 sq.mtrs, and since 1962, was leased out to 15 tenants. In 1962, there were 15 members jonoers enrolled but there was none in 1963. The number of Vangores, is of 2 since 1959.

**Velguem**

The area covered by Velguem Communidade is not known. It is situated in the village Velguem which occupies a total area of about 322 Ha.

Since 1962 there were 12 members jonoeiroes enrolled and the number of Vangores was of 4 from the year 1959.

**Vainguinim**

It covers a total area of about 16 Ha of which about 12 Ha are occupied by Paddy fields and is situated in the village (freguesia) of the same name, which has a total area of about 65 Ha.

Its paddy cultivating area which is entirely of ‘Khazan’ type is cultivated in the monsoon crop season (8 Ha) and in the both the seasons (4 Ha) and has an average production of 30 Khandis per Ha. It is divided into
55 plots (lotes) of which 28 have an area varying between 1000 and 1999 sq meters each and since 1962 was leased out to 46 tenants. The number of enrolled jonoeiros in 1963 was of 14, of whom 103 were residing in the same village and there were 3 vangores, since 1959.

**The Custom of Sati**

The custom of sati prevailed in Goa in the 16th century. Self-immolation on the funeral pyre of one’s deceased husband, was practiced in Goa. As per prevailing social conditions the act of woman of burning themselves with their dead husband was considered as sacred.

A woman understood that Sati was the ideal act of a woman following her husband’s death and that this act of love, loyalty and sacrifice would gain her family great honors. According to the belief, Sati ensured the safe passage of both men, women and family into a higher incarnation in the next life. As a consequence sometimes unwilling widows were driven to follow it owing to strong public opinion. The refusal to commit Sati resulted life time of virtual slavery and abuse at the hands of her in-laws. The practice of Sati fulfilled the Hindu woman’s ideals of self-sacrifice, Piety and undying love. The Society of the time had become so callous that even child widows were burnt to prevent their going astray and bringing disgrace to their families. This practice was also prevalent among child widows, though at times those who escaped could find recluse in temple and spend their lives in its service as Devdasis, i.e. temple dancer.

The practice of Sati appeared during the epic period as the Puranas refer to a few cases of Sati. Madri, wife of King Pandu and mother of two Pandavas, Nakul and Sahdeva had immolated herself on the death of her husband Pandu.
Sati is the abbreviation of the phrase Sati-Saha-Gamana which means the going (Journey) of the wife along with her dead husband. Those who plunged into the pyre that consumed the body of the husband, were considered to be following Sahagamana rite; but those who plunged into the pyre, after receiving the news of their husbands death, are described to have followed anugamana rite.

The satis are remembered by evicting Sati-stones or Satikal and by placing lighted lamps where they committed Sati. Satistones or Satikal constitutes a special of memorial stone which is put up to commemorate the act of immolation of the wife on the death of her husband. It may be an act of voluntary suicide or it was brought about by force. In the later case, it may be dictated by custom or it may be due to the fact that the bereaved wife could not face the social stigma of wanting to live after husband.

It was Afonso de Albuquerque who banned Sati in the Goa islands as early as 1510. But Sati was practiced in Bardez and Salcete till 1560. The Bicholim taluka which was under Adilshahi rules and subsequently till 1781 under Sawant Bhonsle’s of Sawantwadis a Hindu majority populace and the influences of neighbours was not an exception.

On the border of Surla and Cotombi (Kothambi) Village, there is a laterite memorial which is called as ‘Satiyankaden’ in konkani which means near the ‘Sati’, It is worshipped and venerated with respect by the people. A lamp is also lighted at the spot. As per the local legend, some 300-350 years back there was a boundary dispute between the villages of surla and Cotombi (Kothambi) for some reason. One fateful day, a fight broke out between the villagers of these villages which resulted in death of one person from Gauda Community from Surla village who happened to be
the father of one Ninin Gaude. Hearing the news of the death of her husband, the mother of Ninin Gaude committed Sati.\textsuperscript{18} The villagers of surla erected a laterite memorial at the place to commemorate the sati and the place is identified as a memorial.
Fig. 4.1

Plate No. 35

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Notes and References


5. Personal communication with Shri. Sachin Apte, Chitpavan Brahmin from Amona – Goa.

6. Personal Communication with Shri Rajendra Saterdekar from Arvalem, Goa.

7. Personal Communication with Shri Sadashiv Karapurkar, Resident of Nanoda (Latambarcem), Goa.


18. Personal communication with Shri Vinayak Gajanan Vernekar, resident of Ghodkatod, Surla village. The local legend has been passed on to him by almost 6 (Six) generations in the family of Shri. Vernekar.