CHAPTER-VIII

ICONOGRAPHY OF LOCAL GODS AND GODDESSES

Evidence of sculptural treasure bears witness for strong veneration of Hindu worship of local Gods and Goddesses in Goa. Many such sculptures beautifully carved in soapstone or basalt and found scattered in almost all the villages in Goa. Most of the sculptures are found without any shelter. Some of them were hidden under the bushes, some were found half buried in the open areas of unwanted places or agricultural field or in the forests. Some sculptures were found in the corners of the dilapidated temples of the medieval period. Only few sculptures of this medieval period were found with shelters for their external protection.

Though many of these sculptures might have been chiselled in the late 17th or 18th centuries (on the basis of workmanship ornamentation and iconographic representation) finding these sculptures in various places and scattered over almost all the villages in Goa is an interesting puzzle for art lovers. Some of these icons are very popular in Hindu religion. Though these icons are worshipped with local names, their main stream of origin is either from Durga or Kali (Parvati) and popular Hindu God Shiva. Most of the local Goddesses and Gods are folk deities and people believe that they are very powerful and protect the village and its people from unwanted evil spirits. In
addition to the main deity, there are number of affiliate deities. Each village in Goa had its Grama-devata, Kula-devata, Grama-purush and Kul-purush etc.

The origin of the local Gods or Grama-devatas may be the pre-Aryan cult of the Dravidians. Most of the people believe that they shelter the village, and save the villagers from diseases and calamities. Almost all the villages in India have a shrine of Grama-devata (local God). The spirit of the village boundary is called polimera (outskirts of the village). Generally the worship begins from here for the local god or hill or river or tree for the safety of the village. The gramadevata of the village was also generally placed in the main entrance of the village to protect the village and to stop demons, diseases and goblins entering it. Most of the village goddesses have fearful appearance and are fond of flesh, blood and wine. Some gramadevatas like aparana is described as the goddesses of Sabaras, Pulindas and Barbara tribes. Goddess tvarita was the goddess of Kiratas, but they were not found in Goa so far.

Devi Bhagvata gives a comprehensive list of one hundred and eight (108) Devipithas and the names of some of the Goddesses as Minakshi, Kamakshi, Brahmani, Satakhi. All these goddesses are the various forms of the goddess Durga. Devi bhagvata tells a mythological story regarding the origin of the local gods and saktipithas. Sati was the daughter of Daksha Prajapathi and the wife of Shiva. She went to attend the sacrifice performed by her father Daksha without invitation, and she died in the homakunda on account of insult of Shiva by Daksha. Shiva came to know of this incident, and rushed to the spot and destroyed the sacrifice and punished Daksha, with the help of Virabhadra. Later, he began to roam here and there with the body of sati. Vishnu in order
just to cure Shiva cut off sati's body into pieces with his chakra. There upon the limbs were scattered over at different places. Wherever the served limbs of sati fell that spot became a shaktipitha and Shiva assuming the forms of many Bhairavas settled there to keep watch over the parts of his consort's body. From then, the cult of God Bhairav and Virabhadra became prominent in tantric worship of Hinduism.

Another interesting version is connected with Renuka, a wife of Jamadagni and mother of Parasurama. Once Jamadagni felt that she had lost her chastity and hence asked his son Parsurama to kill his mother. When Parasurama took his mother to the wilderness to cut off her head, with the axe by force, the severed head flew off and fell in the quarters of the outcastes. After Parasurama's prayer for restoration of the life of his mother, Jamadagni granted boon. And Renuka regained life and her head was worshipped as Renuka or Bhudevi or Ekavira or Ellamma etc.

Another account says that while cutting the head of his mother Renuka who had met an untouchable woman and embraced her, Parusurama cut the head of other women too and went back to his father and requesting him that his mother might be restored to life. Then, Jamadagni granted his request and gave holy water from his kamandalu to sprinkle on her body. Parasurama in a hurry joined the head of the untouchable woman to the torso of his mother and his mother's head to the torso of untouchable woman whereby both were restored to life. Later, the Renuka's head with untouchable woman's body was worshipped as Mariyamma in some of the places (Tamil Nadu), and Renuka's body is worshipped as Ellamma. Most of the local gods and goddesses in Goa
are folk deities. Though they are worshipped with different names, their main stream of origin is either from Goddess Parvati (Durga) or Lakshmi, or God Shiva (Mahadev) or Vishnu (Narayana). Popular Hindu female deities who are under worship with great veneration in Goa are Sateri, Shantadurga, Gajalakshmi (Kelbai), Mahalasa, Kamakshi, Bhumika, Bhagvati, Kanakeswari, Chandreswari, Bhucadevi, Devi Kali, and Saptamatrikas. Iconographic features of these goddesses vary from place to place. Though the Shakti worship started in Goa quite long back in the form of mother goddess, the names like Mahalasa, Shantidevi appeared only in the Skandapurana, which is the work of the period, 6th century A.D. (with Gupta Character 7th A.D) 5. The worship in the shrines of local goddesses is generally carried out by non-Brahmins. Fishermen worship Gangamma (Sea or River Goddess), Fishermen also worship the cross in Goa. This might have been the influence of Christianity here. Some of the ceremonies are peculiar in the temples of village goddesses. Besides, the animal sacrifices, there are fire walks, swinging on the Sidi with a hook passed through the skin (in Andhra Pradesh it is called sidi manu in Poleramma festival) beating oneself with whip, piercing a metallic wire right through the tongue, slashing at the breast, forehead with swords until blood oozes out, carrying the lamps of ghee or earthen pots with blazing fire etc. In every village, they celebrate an annual festival for local goddesses called jatra. Ellamma jatra is very popular in many of the villages in South India.

Sateri: Goddess Sateri is a folk deity and is very popular local Goddess in Goa. Sateri is also called as Ela and Bhumika. The name Ela was mentioned in the
inscription of Nundem in Sanguem taluka, which is the earliest reference to Ela or Ellamma. The word Ela means all and Amma means mother. Ellamma means mother for all. In some places, Sateri is also called as Bhumika. E.g. Bhum means earth or hill. Hence she was also called as Santerichi Bhumika (e.g. Poriem in Sattari taluka). The word Sateri might have been derived from Kannada word *sapta teri* (*sapta* = seven, *teri* = layer or wave). It is also believed that ant-hills are made of seven layers.

The earth is generous in giving bountiful crop to the human beings for their subsistence. This might have been one of the reasons the early farmers started worship of earth (Bhumi) or Earth Goddess. The Goddess Earth has not the same name all over India. There are many regional variations and equally numerous grama-devatas representing the mother earth. Worship of Sateri seems to be of local origin. Sateri is worshipped in Goa as Bhumika (Prithvi) and Ela (Ellamma). Her image is often worshipped before *varulas* (ant-hills). Hence the Goddess who is worshipped in the form of anthills is called Sateri in Goa. Many Sateri temples were found in Goa such as at Carambolim, Corlim, Calapur, Cumbharjua, Marcela, Talaulim, Taleigaon, Mapuca, Aldona, Anjuna, Arpora, Assagaon, Assanora, Calangute, Candolim, Guirim, Marna, Moira, Nerul, Olaulim, Oxel, Pallem, Pilerne, Naroa, Pimma, Pomburpa, Mulgaon, Sangolda, Siolim, Serula, Sirsaim, Verla, Madgaon, Assolna, Betalbatim, Calata, Cansaulim, Chicalim, Chicolna, Chinchinim, Cortalim, Dabolim, Dharmapur, Lotulim, Nagoa, Sancoale, Sarzora, Seraulim, Sernabatim, Vaddem, Verna, Velim, Bordem, Advalpale, Latambarmem, Agavaddo, Alorna, Ibrahimpur, Morzim, Bhoma, Querim, Valvai, Paroda, Assolda, Sigonem, etc.
The widespread distribution of Sateri temples in Goa shows its strong popularity as a local Goddess. Like Shakti associated with Shiva, Sateri is associated with Ravalnath in Goa. Sateri temples in Goa are very simple with garbhagriha and large sabhamandapa. Sabhamandapas of Sateri temples are more spacious to accommodate more congregations and to celebrate festivals and weddings. Providing a raised platform in front of the hall of the temple also means to provide a stage for special occasions.

**Gajalakshmi**: - Iconic representation of Lakshmi goes back to 2nd century B.C. Image of Lakshmi is clearly depicted in the icons of Maurya, Sunga, Kushanas and Guptas. Such icons were found at Kausambi, Ujjayani and Bhita. But the earliest known representation of Gajalakshmi is from Manmodi caves from Junnar in Pune district.

The word ‘Lakshmi’ signifies the sign of beauty, the mark of royal power, luck, prosperity, grace, happiness, royal domain and good fortune. Lakshmi is identified not only as the wife of Vishnu (Shakti energy) but also as consort of Surya (Sun god), Prajapathi (the Creator), Dharma (Virtue), Indra (symbol of royal prosperity), Kubera (the god of riches) and Bali (the pious and powerful monarch). Popular legends of her origin are from milky ocean – when Gods churned the ocean with the help of demons, alongwith ‘Amrit’, Lakshmi appeared. She was seated on a lotus, holding a lotus in her hand, and residing in the lotus. The Indian thought, the lotus flower is a symbol of purity, spiritual wealth, divine power and growth and fertility. Hence, Lakshmi is always decorated with lotus. Lakshmi also represents iconically as *Purna Kumbha* or
the brimming vessel in the temple. Lakshmi is also regarded as divine. She is Shakti (energy), Prakriti (nature), Grace (daya), Kirti (celebrity), Jaya (success) and Maya (creative).

Usually Lakshmi appears in eight forms named Adilakshmi with creative power, Vidya Lakshmi with power of learning, Santana Lakshmi with power of progeny, Shubha Lakshmi with power of well being and happiness, Dhana Lakshmi, the deity of wealth, Virya Lakshmi with valour and energy, Vijaya Lakshmi the deity of success and glory and Mahalakshmi bestowing glory with eighteen hands and its attributes. Lakshmi's presence is also recognized in some of the important plants like Tulasi, and trees like Bilva as well as in the lotus, cows, elephants, house-threshold and money.

Lakshmi is also associated with elephants. Elephant is a symbol of fertility, royal splendor and authority. Two elephants attending up on Lakshmi represent two treasurers known as 'Samkha' and Padma and these two figures suggest of immense treasure.

All the sculptures of Lakshmi that are found in Goa are with the association of elephants. If Lakshmi represents with elephants alongwith their pots she is known as Abhishekalakshmi. Though the people of Goa worshipped the image of Gajalakshmi, they never call it Gajalakshmi. They rather call it Gajantlakshmi. They also call it as Kelbai or Bhauka. Bhauka is worshipped as a gramadevata in the villages of Goa. That was the reason why, many number of Gajalakshmi panels appeared in the most of the villages in Goa. Some Goans aware it as Bhaukadevi since 15th-16th centuries or earlier like in
Kolhapur district of Maharashtra where the people worship Gajalakshmi as Bhauka or Bhaveshvari. 

The stone panels of Gajalakshmi of early medieval period of Goa are very simple. Lakshmi is seated in Sukhasanamudra and holds lotus buds in both the hands with kunjara dvayam (Elephants) on either side. Here elephants are display with water pots in their trunks to make it Abhishekalakshmi. (Eg Gajalakshmi panel exhibited in the ASI, Museum Old Goa and half buried panel in the Thane village in Sattari Taluka). The ornamentation in the sculptures of Gajalakshmi in Goa was more in the medieval period. Apart from kunjaradvayam, a lion motif, musicians, and samudramanthan, are also added to Lakshmi. Gajalakshmi panels of Chandor, Shiroda, Chinchinim etc, are the best examples of depiction of lion motifs in them. Gajalakshmi panel at Zarmem (behind Sateri temple) was the best example for depiction of samudramanthan in it. Gajalakshmi panels of the late medieval period Goa are very interesting. Here, Lakshmi is shown with four arms, sometimes with kiritimukut and chanwardharini on either side, and on top with kirthimukh (glorious face). On either side, elephants are also shown with ornaments, water pots or while pouring water on Lakshmi. Apart from this, the stone panels were filled with musicians, royal possession scenes, sailors on the boat, mithuna couples and even erotic figures as decorative motifs. Gajalakshmi panels at Zarmem, Mauxi, Thane, Keri, Gaonkarwada, Usgao, ASI Museum Old Goa, Surla, Devacheraan, Barabhumi etc, are the best examples for the above ornamentation in the sculptures. Gajalakshmi panel at rehabilitated colony of Keri dam site is the best specimen for depiction of erotic figures in it.
Gajalakshmi temples in Goa are very simple with one-room structure. Sometimes Gajalakshmi is found accommodated with other affiliated deities in a common hall.

**Mahishāsuramardini**: According to *Markandeya Purana*, Durga or Mahalakshmi had killed a demon called Mahishasur. So she was called as Mahishāsuramardini. *Vishnu Dharmottara Purana* describes her as Chandika with twenty hands and sitting on the back of a lion. *Padma Purana* mentions her as Nanda. *Svayambhava Manvantara* said that Vaishanavi killed Mahishāsura on the Mandara giri. *Matsya Purana*, *Silparatna*, and *Rupamandana* ascribed her with eighteen hands and *Devi Mahatmya* characterised her with a thousand arms.

Most of the stone pannels of Mahishāsuramardini found in Goa are of four arms (hands). The four handed stone panels are generally depicted with *trishul* in upper right hand, and a sword in lower right hand, dhal (shield) in upper left hand and holding a tail of buffalo with lower left hand. (e.g. Mahishāsuramardini sculpture at Lāmgao). This sculpture is a masterpiece for simplicity and facial expression. Simple ornamentation of necklace, kankanās (bangles) in the hands, kiritmukut, broad ears and chest, show the sculptural features of early medieval period. Some of the panels of Mahishāsuramardini are depicted while piercing a spear into buffalo’s (demon Mahisha) body. These sculptures are much ornamented than early sculptures, and Durga is shown here while pressing the buffalo’s body with her left leg. Mahishāsuramardini sculptures at Zarmem, Sanvardem and Caranzol are the best examples for these
features. Stone sculptures depicted with prabhāvali are much ornamented and are more elegant in skill work (e.g. Mahishāsuramardini at Vichundre and Surla). Four-armed Mahishāsuramardini sculpture of Sancoale, Goa has a unique feature in its sculptural art. Here Mahishāsur (demon) appeared with the human head, after chopping its head by Durga when it was in a buffalo form. Then Durga holds the hair of Demon and presses the buffalo’s body with her left leg. Both human head and buffalo’s head are clearly depicted in this sculpture and it was carved with prabhāvali, and Durga is shown with elongated ears, necklace and mundamala.

Four armed Mahishāsuramardini sculptures of Pednem also have the long ears and kiritmukut with prabhāvali. But here, Durga was shown with ‘Shankh’ in her upper left hand instead of holding a shield as in the case of other panels in this region. In these panels Durga is found punching the buffalo’s body with trishul and sword in the head and on other side she is piercing a spear into buffalo’s mouth.

Mahishāsuramardini sculptures at Neturlim, Sanvardem and Keri were shown with eight arms. General attributes of this Goddess are:

Sword; (Khadga): It destroys ignorance; the sword of the goddess is called chandrahasa, a power of destruction.

Trishul: - It has three prongs representing three gunas- Satva, Raja Tamo.

Sankha: - It is the symbol of origin of existence, which is associated with the element of water. When it is blown it produces a sound associated with the primeval sound from which creation flourished. Unlike the temples of Gajalakshmi in Goa, the shrines of Mahishamardini also are very
simple with sanctum and a porch (e.g. Durga temple at Neturlim). At some places, Mahishasurmardini is also accommodated with other affiliated deities in a common hall.

**Saptamatrikas:** Seven sisters who were installed on the banks of the rivers and worshipped when sudden illness occurred were later incorporated as *saptamatrikas* in Shakti cult of Hindu religion. The number and the names of the goddesses vary in different contexts. They are usually seven. But more than seven also can be counted in puranas such as *Skandapurāṇa, Devipurāṇa, Brahmapurāṇa, Vaivarta purāṇa*. The *matrika* figures are prominent in the tantric ritual. In the *Suprabhedāgama*, it is said that Brahma created these seven *matrikas* for the purpose of killing *nirrita*. The number seven is given in one of the Chalukyan inscriptions but the names were not mentioned. According to *Matsyapurāṇa*, when Shiva shot *Pasupata* on Andhakāsura, the blood and the wound of those demons also similarly multiplied into hundreds of demons. Therefore, innumerable demons spread all over the field. Then Shiva had to create the hundreds of divine mothers to drink their blood, such as Maheshwari, Brahmi, Kaumari, Malini Sauparni, Vayavya Sakri, Nairitti Sauniya etc. According to *Varahapurana* the number of mother goddesses is eight along with Yogeshwari, Varāhi, Kaumari, Indrani, and Chamundi though some variations are found.

**Brahmini:** The sakti of Brahma, holding a rose and water pot, and riding on a *vimana* of swans.
Maheshwari: Sakti of Shiva, seated on a bull and holding a trident wearing serpent bracelet and adorned with a crescent moon.

Vaishanavi: Sakti of Vishnu, seated on a Garuda holding a conch, chakra, mace bow and sword.

Varāhi: Sakti of yama seated on lion and holds a sword and shankh.

Kaumāri: Ambika assumed the form of Kaumari, riding on a peacock and holding a spear in hand.

Indrāni: She had assumed all the characteristics of Narasimha. Hence she was called Narasimhi holding a thunderbolt and seated on an elephant. She appears like Indirayani with thousand eyes.

Chāmundi: She is most terrific and yelling like a hundred jackals together. Chandrika is also called Shivaduti, because she made Shiva as her messenger to Sumbha and Nisumbha before they were killed. She is called Chamunda because she killed Chanda and Munda demons.

Author discovered a half buried stone sculptures of saptamatrikas at Zarmem. All the seven sculptures found in an alignment behind the Sateri temple (here in the place of Sateri a kalsā is being worshipped) at Zarme near Valpoi. Though these sculptures are made out of basalt and prepared separately (not in single panel), but are kept in one order. Few among the Saptamatrika sculptures (not all seven) were also found in Thane, which is near Zarme. Author also found seven matrikas in the rehabilitated colony of Keri dam in the same Sattari Taluka. Saptamatrika panel discovered in Chandor and exhibited in Heras Institute Bombay belongs to the group of ten matrikas. Saptamantrika panel at Mandre have a representation of Shivalinga in it. Though we are not
getting the matrika panels with all described features in the texts and also not in
one place, widespread distribution of individual matrikas in different places
with little variation in Goa shows the strong veneration of tantric worship here.
One among the Saptamatrika’s, ‘Brahmini Mayadevi’ was found being
worshipped independently in some places in Goa such as Brahmini Maydevei at
Nagve near Honda, Devacheraan-Surla and Casconda area of Surla and Usgaon
near Ponda. All these sculptures depicted with two *nagas* in the both the hands
of Brahmini. This might have been one of the local styles of worship.

**Shantadurga:** The term Shantadurga may be the incorporation of the local
influence in the tantric worship. According to *Karanagama* Durga has nine
forms, such as Nilakanthi, Kshemankari, Harasiddhi, Rudramsa Durga, Vana
Durga, Agni Durga, Jaya Durga, Vindya Vasini and Ripumari Durga\(^\text{14}\).

According to *Varahapurana* and *Saivagama*, Durga appears in nine
forms (Navadurga). But they were given different names, such as Sailaputri,
Brahmacharini, Skanda Durga, Katyayani, Kalaratri, Siddi Dhatri, Chanda
Ghanta, Kushmanda Durga and Maha Gouri. All these Durga forms are black in
colour\(^\text{15}\). But nowhere Shanta Durga is mentioned. The name Durga is
generally applied to all goddesses with a terrible appearance and in a fighting
mood. She is very powerful Goddess. In *Skandapurana*, the name was
mentioned as Shantidevi not as Shanta Durga. It also describes a 16- handed
Bhadrakali. She wears red clothes and smears red sandal paste over her body.
She is very kind to her devotees and terrible to the demons.
Goddess Shantadurga is one of the tutelary deities for Goa. And Devi Santeri or Shantadurga is worshipped almost in every village of Goa. A version says that once Shiva and Parvati were playing dice on the Kailas Parvat. Parvati defeated Shiva in all the games. Shiva lost even his abode in the Kailas Parvat. While wandering here and there, he came to Sahyadri mountains and settled. When Parvati also came to this place while searching for Shiva, she also settled here. In the course of time, Shiva became popular as Manguesh and Parvati as Shantadurga.

Another account says that once a quarrel developed between Lord Shiva and Vishnu. Soon it turned into a fierce battle. When they started destroying the world order, Brahmadev beseeched Devi Adishakti (Parvati) to mediate between the two Gods. Then Devi accomplished her mission of peace and succeeded. Thereafter she became popular as Devi Shantadurga. Popular shrines of Shantadurga in Goa are at Queula, Marcela, Cuncoliem, Tiurem, Veling, Calapur, Cumbarjua, Candolim, Cuncolim, Amona, Bordem, Mulgaum, Narora, Pilgaum, Bali, Fatorpa, Colomba etc. Shrines of Santadurga are bigger shrines like the shrines of male deities in Goa (except the shrine of Kālika at Kasarpal which is still bigger). The components of the temple also are similar as in the temples of male deities (e.g. Shantadurga temple at Kavale and Fatorpa).

Devi Shantadurga is also worshipped as Sateri and Kelbai in some places in Goa. A kalasa or pura kumbha and with human head at the top is also worship in some of the temples in Goa in the place of Shantadurga (Sateri and Kelbai).
Mahalsa: *Skandapurana* has furnished the details of Goddess Mahalsa. It also has given the list of 26 epithets of Mahalsa. It mentioned that once Parusurama consecrated Mahalsa to kill demon Chandrasur to save Varunpur, then she annihilated the demon. Mahalsa also is a terrific deity like Chamundi. When Chamundi killed Chanda and Munda demons, it sat on one of the bodies of the demons, but when Mahalsa killed the demon and she stood on a dead body and held the head of Chandrasur in her left hand. Mahalsa is also dreadful deity like other local goddesses. She is considered as Kshudra Devta. In Andhra Pradesh, Golla community worships goddess Mahalasa (Community which rear sheep and goat) as their *kuldevata*. Mahalasa worship prevails with different names all over the country, such as Malati in Maharashtra, Malavva in Karnataka. She is also known as *mahalay* or *malai* means parvat or mountain. In some places, she is also being worshipped as Goddess Parvati or hill like mountain. Mahalsa temple at Mardol, Ponda Taluka is the largest temple (ground plan) among the present day temples in Goa. Originally, this temple existed in Verna where large tank is still surviving. Some remains of this ancient temple are also found on the place where the temple is being rebuilt now. During Inquisition, the deity was shifted to Mardol where it is venerated with great devotion now.

Bhaucara: Goddess Bhaucara is being worshipped in Goa as a tribal deity (Goddess of Gaudas). The Gauda tribe in Goa venerate Bhaucara in the form of semi-circular stone in some places. Bhavai is the name of the tree (*cassia fistula*). Hence the people worship Bhaucara in the form of Bhavai tree.
According to *Dharmasindhu*, a work of 17th century, *Vaishakha Amavasya* is called *Bhauka Amavasya*. Therefore, the people worship Bhauc, on that particular day. *Sigmo* is the most important festival in Goa. In Salem (Bicholim) people are enrolled as Gadde and they gather near a tree known as *Madvo* (demon tree) and celebrate the festival with great pomp. Similarly, goddess Bhagavati also is being worshipped in Kerala during the Holi festival in March on the day of Karidinam of *Bhauca Amavasya*. Like Vetal, Bhauc is also a ferocious deity and is also associated with burial or cremation ground. Vetal is worshipped as Gramadevata in many of the villages in Goa. Since Vetal is associated with cemeteries like Bhauc, most of the shrines of both God and Goddess are found in one place within a distance of few metres.

Gajalakshmi is also worshipped as Bhauc in some places in Goa, since Lakshmi also appears in ferocious form like Alakshmi Jyeshta flanked by elephants whose trunks are known as Karmika, Gajalakshmi is also aware as Bhauc or Kelbai in Goa. Temples of Bhauc were found at Salem, Chopdem, Mandrem, Paliem and at several other villages.

**Bhumica:** The early farming communities realized that the earth was generous in giving bountiful crops for the subsistence. They thought if the mother earth is not worshipped, she might get angry and would take ferocious form and indulge in destruction. Hence the mother earth in the form of Bhumica became a *gramadevta* in some of the villages in Goa. Though the mother earth is venerated in different names all over India, she is worshipped in Goa as a folk deity. Bhumica is also known as popular deity *Sateri* (whose image is often
worshipped before anthill called, *Varul*). Worship of anthills means also the worship of Renuka or Yellamma. Ella means all and Amma means mother. Hence Yellamma means she is mother for all.

**Mahālakshmi:** Goddess Mahalakshmi is a very popular deity in Kolhapur in Maharashtra. Copper plates belonging to 1038 A.D. of Savai-Verem mentions the visit of Jayakeshi-I of Kadamba dynasty to Kolhapur. It seems that Kadambas were the worshippers of Mahālakshmi. Another inscription belonging to 1414 A.D. of Vijayanagara period reveals that Mai Shenoi, resident of Kunkali offered donations to the Mahalakshmi temple of Bandivade. Hence it is evident that right from 1038 A.D, Goddess Mahalakshmi is worshipped in Goa.

According to *Vishwakarma Silpasāstra*, Mahalakshmi is situated in Kolhapur and she was decorated with all ornaments. She has four hands and in her right hand she carries vessel and Kaumodaki and in the left hand Khetaka and Sriphala. According to Silpasatra, she killed a demon called Kolasura. Hence she is also called as Kolasura Bhayankari. Her vāhana is Garuda. The name Mahalakshmi is one of the names of Tulasi, who had many names such as Vidya, Vrinda, Visvapavani etc. According to *Skandapurāṇa*, Mahalsa has 26 epithets and Mahalakshmi is one among them. *Devi Bhagavata Purāṇa* discloses that Adya Sakti divided herself into Maha Lakshmi, Maha Saraswati and Maha Kāli. These three represent three gunas. But according to a well-known mythological story, Vishnu had three wives, Mahālakshmi, Maha
Saraswati and Maha Kali. When he was unable to maintain all the three wives, he gave Saraswati to Brahma and Kali to Shiva.23

Noted Mahalakshmi temples in Goa are at Bandoda, Panaji, Azossim, Merces, Nachinol, Serula, Sirsaim, Margao, Colva, Neturlim etc.,

**Kamakshi:** Goddess Kamakshi was very popular deity in Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu) and Kamarupa (Assam) and Raya in Salcete, Goa than at other places in India.

*Devi Bhagavata* gives a comprehensive list of one hundred and eight *Devi pithas*. They are all local goddesses and Kamakshi is one among them.

According to *Dhamapalavijay*, a bronze smith of Kalyan migrated to Kanchipuram on the advice of a mendicant to sell his wares. A daughter of Chola King of Kanchi purchased a mirror from his shop. Later, when the son of the bronze smith went to collect the payment, the guard attacked him. He had beaten them with his weighing rod and escaped unhurt to his house to alert his brothers and father. The second attack too proved a failure. Then the king sought the advice of a mendicant and learnt the secret that smith family does not handle weapons on Saturday, as it was the day of their worship and penance. The king taking the advantage of this called all the three sons to the palace and under the pretence of paying the cost beheaded them. Prior to the incident, all the three cursed the king with ruin to the dynasty. The grief stricken father was the great devotee of Kamakshi. He went to Kamakshi temple and prayed. The goddess appeared before him and asked him to put the three heads below her feet on her pedestal and to keep the bodies in line across the door of her shrine.
Then she endowed the bodies with new heads and lives and the father prayed to her to permit the heads below her feet to be in the same position and she granted the boon.

But this local goddess Kamakshi is not similar to Kāmākṣhi, which was installed at Kanchipuram. The local goddesses have different names and Kāmākṣhi is one among them. Due to the influence of tantric worship, she has four hands in which she hold the Kapola and Sula (Trishul) and remains in Abhaya and Varada mudras. A three heads lie below her feet.

*Kāmākṣhi Mahatmya* mentions that Goddess Kāmākṣhi came to Raia Salcete, Goa from Kavur. When Kadamba King Jayakeshi-I had good contacts with Cholas and Chalukyas, the worship of Kamakshi might have been started in Goa with the influence of Cholas during that period. Kamakshi at Shiroda, Goa has the features of Mahishasuramardini. This may be on account of the influence of Kāmākṣhi Mahatmya in which Kamakshi killed demon Mahishasura.

Like the worship of local goddesses the people in Goa also worship important local Gods with great veneration. The main Hindu Trinity (Tripurusha) viz., Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh are being worshipped in various forms. Apart from Tripurush, Ganesh, Kartikeya, Hanuman, are also under worship with great respect in Goa.

**Shiva:** God Shiva is popularly known as Mahadev in Goa. Shiva is also worshipped as Ishwar, Saptakoteswar, Saptalingeswar, Mallikarjun, Manguesh,
Naguesh, Sadasiv, and Uma Mahesh and in the forms of folk deities like Ravalnath, Bhairav, Dadeswar, Virabhadra, etc.,

Shiva is one of the most important Gods in India. Right from Indus Valley Civilization he was very popular God. *Amarakosa* has given a comprehensive list of forty-eight names of Shiva. *Shivapurana* reveals us his functions like creation, protection and destruction.

Shiva is also worshipped in phallic forms. Shiva is the formless or all formed into Shivalinga. The hemispherical top of the Shivalinga consists of thousands of heads, each of the size of a point. The sides of the cylindrical stone are his eyes, hands and faces. The circular bottom represents his feet. The Shivalinga is thus classed as the possible approximation to the cosmic *purusha*. Some changes were introduced in the shapes of Linga shrines after 6th century A.D. Linga started to appear in three *bhags* (parts). *Brahmabhaga* at the bottom was squarish, middle *Vishnu bhāga* was octagonal and top *Rudrabhāga* or *Pujāsma* was in circular form. The lingas found in Goa before 6th century A.D is belonged to Dvibhāga type in which bottom was square and top was circular (e.g. Cave no.3 at Harvalem).

Categorically Shiva’s forms were divided into three groups; Anugraha-Murtis, Samhara-Murtis, and Sundara-Murtis. Apart from other aspects of Shiva. He appeared in boon giving forms (Anugraha) such as 1) *Chandesanugraha murti* 2) *Vishnuvanugraha murti* 3) *Nandisanugraha murti* 4) *Vighneswaranugraha murti* 5) *Kiratarjuna murti* 6) *Ravananugraha murti*, Shiva also appears in terrific and destructive aspects (Samhara murtis). 1) *Kankala murti* 2) *Gajasursamhara murti* 3) *Tripurantaka murti* 4) *Sarbhesa*
murti 5) Kalari murti 6) Brahmashir-chedaka murti 7) Kamantaka murti 8) Andhakasuravadha murti. Shiva also appears in the form of Sundara murtis such as Kalyana sundara murti, Gangadhara, Ardhanarishwara, Hari Hara, Vrishabharudha murti, Vishapaharana murti. He also appears in 108 forms of Nritta murtis (all the poses of Nataraj can be seen in the Brihadeswara Temple at Tanjore). Shiva is also depicted in the form of Lingodbhava murtis, such as Dakshina murtis and in the form of Mahayogi, Chandrasekhara, Shiva-Sakti, Virabhadra etc. Although, Shiva (Mahadev) was popular male deity in Goa, the above forms of Shiva were not found in Goa. God Shiva was found in the name of Ishwar, Mallikarjun, Saptakoteswar, Manguesh, Naguesh etc, and is worshipped in respective abodes apart from other forms of folk deities in Goa.

**Ishwar:** Shiva was worshipped in the form of Ishwar at Bhoma, Nagoa, Pale, Queloshim, Rasai, Neura, Madgao, Dabolim, Malkarne, Chandor etc. and as Bhogeshwar at Arrosim, Bhaneshwar at Benaulim, Kapileshwar at Cavelossim and Chicalim, Rayeshwar at Raia, Sancoale, Vaddem, Rudresshwar at Harvalem, Kudneshwar at Cudnem, Siddeshwar at Surla, Lankeshwar at Canacona, Kamaleshwar at Korgaum, Dhareshwar at Dargalim, Sapteshwar at Mandrem, Vamaneshwar at Dhavali, Manguesh at Priol, Muddeshwar at Cusmane, Maheshwar at Quepem, Someshwar at Curdi, Chandreshwar at Vichundrem, Naguesh at Bandora, Umamaheshwar and Sadashiva at Old Goa, (Museum sculptures), Bodgeshwar at Mapusa etc. Saptakoteshwar is worshipped at Diwadi, Narva, Opa and Fatorpa etc.
Mallikarjuna: Shiva is worshipped as Mallikarjuna at Canacona, Pomburpa, Assagaon, Gaumdongrem, Caorem, Malcarnem, Bhati and Cumbari.

Except two images of Mukhalinga or Ishwar linga (both icon and unicon concept at Neturlim and Sarmal) other iconographic features of Shiva in Goa are in phallic form (Linga with Paṇavaṭṭa).

Shiva is also worshipped in the form of folk deities in Goa such as Virabhadra, Bhairav, Ravalnāth, and Daddeswar etc.

Virabhadra: Virabhadra is a form of Shiva. He was created by Shiva out of a lock of his matted hair, to destroy the sacrifice of his father-in-law, Daksha, with thousand heads, thousand hands, thousand eyes, powerful shoulders and resembling in brightness the fire that devours the universe, having side tusks, carrying the Shankh, Chakra, and a bow and besmeared with ashes. Virabhadra was absolutely irresistible. He destroyed the yajnya and played great havoc with the army of the gods.

Worship of Virabhadra is of different type in Goa in comparison with the worship in other parts of India. Except a lone image of Virabhadra, which was found in Chandor, no other icons were traced in Goa so far.

Virabhadra is worshipped as Shiva's son (and also elder brother Virabhadra Virabhadra anna handu in a folk dance performance in Goa). In this folk dance Virabhadra dances with two swords in his hand accompanied by the band of musicians and singers while singing kirtanas.
**Bhairav:** Bhairav is one of the aspects of Panchamukhi. Shiva is known as Aghora. Other aspects are Tatpurusha, Vamadev, Sadyojata and Isan. Usual Iconographic features of Bhairav is with four hands, holding *Damaru* and *Trishul* one each in upper and lower right hands and dagger and bowl in upper and lower left hands. A dog vahana of Bhairav always followed him. Like Vetal Bhairav is naked and he roams in the cemeteries. His story originates from Daksha Yajnya, which was destroyed by Shiva with his help. Shiva assumed many forms. Bhairav considered as fifth incarnation of Shiva. *Martanda-Bhairava* is also worshipped in the form of Ravalnath in Goa. Widespread distribution of Bhairav temples at Malar, Goa Velha, Candolim, Colvale, Pilerne, Ambelim, Colva, Dharmapur, Varca, Devsua, Verna, Chopdem, Korgaon, Carambolim, Colva etc. and depiction of Bhairav sculpture in the niches of the *hara* of the *Sikhara* of Mahadev temple at Tambdi Surla are the best examples for Bhairav worship in Goa. Bhairav is also venerated as Sri Siddha Bhairav, Kal Bhairav, Shankh Bhairav etc, in Goa.

**Ravalnāth:** Ravalnāth is a popular folk deity in Goa, and one of the folk deity forms of Shiva. Ravalnāth images are in standing posture (*Sthanak*). He has four arms and holds a sword in upper right hand and a bowl in upper left hand and *trishul* in lower right hand and *damaru* in lower left hand. He is a *kiritadhāri* and wears *dhoti* and boasts a moustache. Sometimes he was shown on riding a horse. He is also venerated as linga in some places. Ravalnath sculpture at Caskonda-Surla shows the similar iconographic features such as four -handed, and holding a sword, *trishul, damaru* and bowl. A Nandi vāhana
of Shiva is also depicted in this stone panel, and is found holding a bowl in his hand. It indicates that Ravalnath is also worshipped as Bhikshātanamurti.

Some scholars opined that Ravalnath is Rahul, son of Gautam Buddha. The followers of Buddha also worshipped Rahulnath. In the course of time, Rahulnāth became Ravalnath and he became very popular deity as Kshetrapal in Goa. Ravalnath is a family deity of Bhonsales of Sawantawadi (Sindhudurga District). 32.

Incarnation of Ravalnāth is furnished in the Karveer Khanda of Karveer mahatmya. He was born to sage Pogund and Vimalanubhuja. The purpose of his incarnation was to kill demon ‘Kolhasura’ who was powerful in the Western Ghats. Although it was the duty of Mahalakshmi, she did not kill the demons. Ravalnath with the help of Martanda Bhairava finally killed demon Kolhasura and raided his army 33.

One of the Nagari inscriptions of Veluz in Sattari taluka belongs to 1402 A.D, which is exhibited in the ASI Museum Old Goa refers to the construction of a shrine for Ravalnath at Veluz. Some earlier inscriptions had mentioned Ravalnath as Ravaluba and Ravaleswar. According to Veluz inscription, one Purush Senavaya son of Mai Senavaya made donations to the Ravalnath shrine 34. This was the first inscripational evidence about Ravalnāth worship in Goa. Ravalnāth is the God of masses. People believe that he is a God of farmers and cattle breeders. They believe that the marriage of God of farmers, Ravalnāth and mother Goddess, Sateri is essential for the security of the community. Hence they observe it in the Sahiyadri region. A widespread distribution of Ravalnāth shrines in Goa shows that folk deity is venerated with great dedication.
Several images of Ravalnāth carved out of basalt are traced in the ruins of old temples and other sculptural sheds in various parts of Goa apart from the independent shrines, such as at Savarde, Thane, Mauxi, Keri, Gotteli, etc. in Sattari taluka. It indicates that Ravalnāth was worshipped either independently or as parivara devata. Similarly images of Ravalnāth are found in the ruins of medieval temples at Casconda-Surla, Devacherann-Surla, etc. In Sanguem taluka also similar type of worship takes place. Ravalnāth temples are more in Tiswadi taluka such as at Corlim, Cumbarjua, Daujim, Navelim, Goltim, Malar, Durgavadi, Goali, Moula, Goa Velha, Jua, Batim, Bambolim, Calapur, Carambolim, Chorao, Neura, Talaulim, Taleigao, etc. And in Bardez taluka, temples are found at Aldona, Assagaon, Assanora, Candolim, Colvale, Marna, Moira, Nachinola, Nagoa, Nerul, Olaulim, Pilerne, Pomburpa, etc. In Bicholem taluka Ravalnāth temples are found at Advalepale, Mulgaon, Naroa, Bordem. In Ponda taluka they are at Khandola, Marcela and Queula. In Salcete, the temple is found in Colva and in Pernem at Mandrem and Alorna. As the people worship God Shiva as Bholanāth, Ravalnāth also is worshipped with different names such as Piso (mad) Ravalnāth and Shano (good) Ravalnāth in some parts of Goa. As people worship Sateri as gramadevata, Ravalnāth is also worshipped as grama dev in some parts of Goa.

Vetal: According to Kalikapurāna, both Bhairav and Vetal were the sons of Shiva. Vetal was born to Chandrashekhara (Shiva) and Taramati (Parvati). According to Mahanubhava literature, Vetal is associated with Narasimha. (Narasimha forms of Vishnu, such as Girija Narasimha, Sthauna Narasimha and
Yanaka Narasimha) Vetal forms were not related to Narasimha forms of Vishnu. Narasananayana mentioned in his *Shalyaparva* in Marathi that once Shakuni performed Narasimhasadhana by sitting stark naked in the cemetery and it was crowded with Dakinis, Yaksinis, Bhairays, Kshetrapalas and Vetal. Vetal was the god of masses. He holds trident and sword in upper and lower left hands respectively. Vetal is also called as Batuk Bhairay. Abode of the Vetal is the Arjuna tree. Vetal should not have a roof over his head (shelterless god).

Puranas associated Vetal with Rakshasas, Pishacchi, Shakini, Dakini, Bhuta, Bramha Rakshasa, etc., He wears garland of human skulls. His mouth is smeared with blood. His hair is dishevelled and he is nude. Vetal is considered as the chief of all spirits.

Bhairav and Vetal are both Shaivite deities. Dog is their vehicle, but according to one version, Vetal rides a green horse. *Silparatna* mentioned that Vetal himself is the mount of Virabhadra. Once Vetal became *vahana* for Kali also. However, exhibited image of Vetal at the Archaeological Museum, Old Goa is shown with scorpion on his chest. Hence it is believed that scorpion is the vehicle of Vetal. Though Vetal is described as shelterless god, many of the Vetal sculptures in Goa are with shelters and these sculptures are with two hands. Vetal also is worshipped as Betal at Calapur, Carambolim, Mercurim, Taleigaon, Anjuna, Arpora, Calangute, Camorlim, Marna, Nagoa, Nerul, Pilerne, Ponda, Revora, Saligao, Serula, Siolim, Sirsaim, Tivim, Arossim, Assolna, Betalbatim, Carmona, Chinchinim, Colva, Doncolim, Dharamapur, Loutulim, Sarzora, Talaulim, Utorda, Velim and Vetal Maharudra at Mulgaum, Alorna, Paliem, Adcolna and Priol and Vetaleshwar at Veling, Fatorpa,
Atbarcem, Sanvardem. The temples of Vetal are at Usgao, Neturlim, Barabhum-Surla, and Thane.

**Vishnu:** God Vishnu is a protector. Vishnu’s supreme task is that of preservation. His incarnations (avatars) were necessitated to carry out the supreme work of preservation of the human race. He is very humane and so he is the most popular God. The wheel (chakra) in his hand is compared to the sun. The eagle (Garuda), the king of the birds, is his vehicle (vahana). Zenith is Vishnu's place. Vishnu is conceived in his five main aspects. Para the highest, Vysha the emanatory, Vibhava the incarnatory, Antaryamin, the inner controller of all beings and Arocha, the iconic representation of the God. Vishnupurana, Rupamandana and other texts give the details of his Avatars. Whenever the forces of evil began to rule the world of men, Vishnu, the great preserver left the heaven descended on the world of men and rescued men from evil. Sometimes he assumed different forms of life. Evolution of these incarnations showing from lower to higher forms of life such as Matsya (Fish), Kurma (Tortoise) Varaha (Boar), Narasimha (Half man- half lion), Vamana (Dwarf), Parasurama (Rama with battle axe), Ramachandra (King Rama), Krishna, Buddha and Kalki which is yet to come. Stone sculpture in the Old Goa Museum and Narayana sculpture at Vichndrem are the best examples in Goa for the Dasavatara of Vishnu.

Vishnu is also worshipped as Adimurti, Dattatreya, Dhanvantari, Hayagriva, Lakshmi-Narayana, Manmatha, Mohini, Vaikuntha, Varadaraja, Venkatesa etc. General iconographical features of Vishnu are in four forms 1).
Yoga – meditation
2) Bhoga – enjoyment
3) Vira – expressive of valour
4) Abhicharika – the terrific aspects

God Vishnu is worshipped in Goa in various forms such as Damodar at Margao, Loliem and Zambaulim, Keshav at Loliem, Dattatreya at Amona, Sanquelim, Lakshmi Narayana at Mapuca, Siolim, Naroa, Navelim, Cola and Velinga. Venkatesha at Narva, Cunkolim, Ananta at Verem, Vitthal at Madgaon, Calapur, Vilede, Cotarli and Sanguem, Gautam at Colvale, Gautameshwar at Consua, Narayana at Batim, Chodan, Malar, Talaulim, Aldona, Bastora, Canca, Candolim, Guirim, Nagoa, Olaulim, Sangolda, Serula, Margao, Chicalim, Colva, Cortalim, Cuncolim, Dharmapur, Guirdolim, Loutulim, Macazana, Orlim, Quelossim, Rasai, Raia, Sancoale, Vaddem, Bhoma, Vichundrem, Neturlim, etc., Ramachandra at Mandur, Guimonem, etc., Krishna at Cuncolim, Pandurang at Camorim and Shri Rama at Colvale and Cuncolim. Similar architectural features were maintained for the shrines of Vishnu as in the case of shrines of other Gods in Goa. Only the deepa stambha which stands in front of the temple would be called as Garuda stambha in the temples of Vishnu.

Brahma: In Hindu mythology, Brahma is the creator, Vishnu preserver and Shiva is a destroyer. Once Shiva cursed Brahma to the extent of not being worshipped. Hence independent cult of Brahma is rarely found in India. Few well-known places of worship of Brahma are ‘Pushkar’ in M.P, Vasantgadh (Rajasthan), Khed, and Sopara, etc.,
His four heads symbolize four Vedas. Brahma is always depicted with three heads with bearded faces. His four hands hold the Akshamala, Dandi (ladle), Kamandalu and Pustak. Sometimes one hand shows Varada mudra. Brahma mount (vahana) is swan. God Brahma temples are found at various places in Goa such as Brahma Karmali, Colomba, Parse, Virnoda, Mulgaum, (in the stone sculpture of Narayana), Tambdi-Surla (niches in the sikhara of prathamathala). Brahma is also venerated as Brahma Purusha and Brahmanatha in Goa. Similar architectural features are adapted to the shrines of Brahma as in the temples of other Gods in Goa.

**Sun:** Sun is worshipped as Surya. Worship of Surya is incorporated in Hinduism since ancient times (e.g. engraved Sun motifs found in some of the rock cut caves in India), and primitive gods like Surya, Agni, and Prithvi are common for both India and Greek prior to the Indus Valley Civilization. Temples like Mudera in Gujarat and Konark in Orissa are very popular for Sun worship in India. Surya also is worshipped as Āditya (Ādinath) and Martand Bhairav in Goa. Ādinath temple at Usgao and a sculpture of Martand Bhairav acquired from Usgao and displayed in Goa State Museum are the best examples for Surya worship in Goa. The available temple and sculptures of Surya at Cudne, which is nearer to rock cut caves at Harvalim, and appearance of one line inscription 'Sambalur vasi Ravi' on disc shape linga in Harvalem caves also support the veneration of Surya in this region. Depiction of Sun motif in Sanguem cave and a broken image acquired from Margao and displayed in Goa State Museum and a Surya sculpture acquired from Diwadi and displayed in
Old Goa Museum also support the strong veneration of Sun God in Goa. The architectural features of the shrines of Surya are similar to the temples of other Gods in Goa.

**Ganesh:** The word ‘Ganapati’ is mentioned in *Rigveda, Brahmans and Upanishads. Samhitas* too mention Ganesh as *Ekdanta, Vakratunda, Danti, Vighna Vinayaka, Hastimukha, Lambodara,* etc. He is son of Shiva and Parvati. He is chief of *Ganas* of Shiva. The education of a Hindu child begins with ‘Shri Ganesha yanamah’. General iconographic feature of Ganesh is being with four hands and holding parasu, modaka patra (laddus), tooth and lotus. Good number of four -handed Ganesh sculptures are found in Goa, such as at Neturlim, Vichundrem, Shiroda, Korgaon. Two armed Ganesh sculptures are also traced in Goa, which belong to the early period. Ganesh festival is celebrated with great pomp in all Hindu houses in the States of Goa, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

Many Ganesh temples are found in various places in Goa such as Carambolim, Chorao, Diwar, Naroa, Ella, Colvale, Oalulim, Pomburpa, Punola, Sangolda, Betalbatim, Coelim, Quelossim etc. The shrines of Ganesh are also simple in Goa with sanctum and porch or sanctum with *sabhamandapa.*

**Nath Cult:** There is no evidence of certain place and date of the origin of Nath cult in India. Scholars like Gururaja Bhatt are of the opinion that Nathism developed from Vajrayana system of Mahayana sect of Buddhism which was
originally a Tantric Buddhism and later on it transformed into Tantric Saivism. The follower of the Nath cult believes that ‘Nāth’ or a spiritual leader is the only pure soul and all others are mere human beings. The leaders are also known as Yogi, Jogi and Siddha. Spiritual leader Goraknāth is responsible for spread of this cult all over India with his nine disciples namely Matsyendranāth, Gahinīnāth, Jalandharanāth, Kaniphnāth, Charpatināth, Naganāth, Revannāth, Bartranāth and Gopichandranāth.

There is no place for caste system in this cult. This was the reason for its rapid spread and popularity in this country as well as in Goa. The Naths were known to be healers and wizards. They knew respiratory and other bodily functions besides several other abilities such as clairvoyance, surviving without food etc. A powerful spiritual leader Sohiroba Ambiye (1714-1792) had written five famous books such as Akshayabodh, Mahadanubhaveshwari, Purnakshari, Advayanand and Siddhantasanhita are well known treaties on Vedanta and Yogadharana. These are extremely popular and well known to Goa and Konkan region as well as in Maharashtra.

Nath cult perhaps entered Goa, during the period of Kadambas around 12th century A.D. Construction of a Saptanāth (Saptakoteshwar) temple, which was destroyed later by Malik Kafur and existing rock cut cave which was occupied by the Nath panthis during that period or later in Diwar island are the best examples for its extraction in Goa.

Though the old Shrines were destroyed the people in Goa had not given up the faith in the traditional deities. Spiritual leader Gorakhnāth worshipped at Betalbatim and Old Goa, Somnāth at Aga,caim, Pomburpa, Serula, Tivim,
Adnem and Dabal, Brahmanath at Calangute, Govindanath at Borim, Siddhanath at Carambolim, Corlim, Aquem, Loutulim, Sernabatim, Viliena, etc., Mallinath at Chodan, Jua Marcella, etc., Manganath (also known as Manguesh) at Cortalim, Ramnath at Cugira, Siridaon, Taleigaon, Nachnola, Pilerna, Cuncolim, Loutulim, Bandora, Talvorda, etc., Saptanath at Malar, Calangute, Vaganath at Marmugaon, Chandranath at Cortalim, Gopinath at Cortalim, Neturlim, Fulnath at Aldona, Adinath at Usgaon, Pernem, Kindolem, Bhavanath at Neura, Gancim, Shivanath at Shiorda, Hemanath at Pilerne, Chinchinath at Deusua, Vishvanath at Cavorim, Kalnath at Calem, Govanath (Goveshwar) at Goa Velha, Loknath at Deusua, Bhutnath at Aldona, Nadora, Revora, Paroda, and Naganath at Verla Cansaulim, Cavorim, Sarzora, Naikini, etc.

Purush Cult: In general concept purush means 'respectable person' in all aspects. Lord Sri Rama is a purushottam; it means he is uttam-purusha. Worshipping a great person (Purush) is prevalent in our country in various forms and in various regions. The heroic man of the family idolized as 'Kulupurush', the member of the family believes that, the dead person will have some spiritual powers even after his death, that will protect them from unwanted evils. With this belief people might have started their ancestor worship (Kulapurush). In some places, we find the worship of 'Grāmapurush'. A person or head of the particular village sacrifices his life for the benefit of the particular village. The worship starts in the village in the honour of the great person (Gramapurush). Worship of Grāmapurush can be seen in many of the
places in Goa such as Carambolim, Goltim, Malar, Jua, Neura, Talaulim, Nachinola, Pomburpa, Serula, Aquem, Arossim, Betalbatim, Chicalim, Dabolim, Dharmapur, Loutulim, Nagoa, Pale, Sancoa, etc.

In some places we find the worship of Adipurush or Mulapurush. This is also a kind of ancestor worship. Adi means first. He may be the founder of the dynasty or clan. This type of worship we can see in some of the communities like Andhakas, Chedis, Kurus and Bhojas in ancient India, and we can see the worship of Adipurush at Pale, Bicholim taluka in Goa.

Purush means a great man and he worshipped as Santapurush at Chorao, Daugim, Siridao and as ‘Ramarpurush’ at Moira, Marcain, Parra, Satpurush at Cuncolim, Moira and as Kali purush at Sarzora and Varca. In addition to above purushas, Kandipurusha, Sutarpurush, Gavovamsh, etc., are common in Goa and sometimes the people worshipped them as Parivar devatas in the temples of Goa.

**Paik workshop:** Paiks are tiger worshippers. They use sword and shields for hunting. They were engaged as soldiers and messengers upto late medieval period. Bagil Paik, Kumar Paik, Gode Paik, Razon Paik are famous among paiks. Gode Paiks were engaged as messengers with horses while Kumar Paiks were engaged as soldiers because of their bravery. Paiks who sacrificed their lives for the benefit of village or community were deified and worshipped. Paiks were also worshipped as Parivar devatas in some of the temples in Goa (eg Ramnath temple in Sanguem).
**Barazan:** *Bara* means twelve *Zan* means persons. *Barazan* means twelve important persons or great *purushas*. These important people might have been doing some great jobs for that region or locality or sacrificed their lives for the benefit of that locality or they may be the earliest 12 settler families in the particular locality. Barazan is a common feature in many Goan localities. Poona in Maharashtra is believed to have been first inhabited by *Barazan*. Worship of memorials in the form of 12 Menhirs (12 upright stones for 12 individuals) also can be seen in many places in Goa. This group (12 individuals or families) implies that the 12 earliest settler families in that particular locality or the owners of that particular land. System of land ownership shared by 12 villages (*Barazan*) also can be seen in the present day village society. This tradition might have been continued in some of the Goan villages. Hence the people in the village believe that the place called *Barazan* is a sacred place. Many such places are found in Goa too, they are Chodan, Daugim, Panelim, Cunchelim, Betalbatim, Chicalim, Dabolim, Davorlim, Dicarpale, Issorsim, Mormugao, Nagoa, Pale and Vaddem.  

**Ancestor Worship:** The worship of Kulapurush, Mulapurush, Grāmapurush, Adipurush are types of ancestor worship prevailed in many communities in India. The heroic man of the family was idolized as Kulapurush and members of the family believed that such heroic man would have some spiritual power even after his death and that will protect them from unwanted evils. Blessings of the elderly person according to them are required to protect and safeguard their lives. The worship of ancestors takes place in the form of a small plaque or
stone in some places in Goa and the ancestors like Grāmapurusha, Ādipurush. Kanadipurush, Sutarpurush occupied the position of Parivaradevata in some of the temples in Goa.  

Mharu or Maringan: Maringan belongs to lower caste in Goa. People believe that he is a guardian of the village. Normally his shrines are located in the outskirts of the village. In some villages like Keri in Sattari taluka, a small shrine of Maringan is located in one among the groups of the temples near Keridam. People in the Goan villages offer terracota horses to Mharu or Maringan at the time of their traditional worship and it seems to be a well popular tradition in Goa.

Vanadevta: Vana means forest and Devta means God. Vanadevta means Goddess of Forest. Forest became a part and parcel of human life prior to Palaeolithic period. When man started getting easily available material from the forest, he also feared about the security of his natural property and his own life. He needed some protection for his survival. Hence he started believing in supernatural powers and started worship of Goddess of forest. Worship of Vanadevta can be found in many of the villages in Goa too, such as at Carambolim, Morombim, Arpora, Assnora, Guirim, Pomburpa, Punola, Serula, Mulgaum. The mother Goddess of Curdi appears to be the Goddess of Forest, Korrvai Devi.
References and Notes:


2. Ibid, p.80.

3. Idem.

4. Idem.


7. n.5, p.141.

8. n.1, p.19.


11. n.5, p.140.


13. n.1, p.53.

14. n.1, pp.51-52.

15. Idem.

16. n.5, p.144.

17. Idem.

18. n.5, p.139.

20. n.5, p.141.


22. n.1.p.22.

23. Ibid. p.23.


25. n.5, p.147.


29. Temples visited personally by the researcher.

30. n.26, p.47.


32. n.5, p.168

33. Ibid, p.166.

34. Ibid, p.167.


36. n.26, p.28.

37. Ibid, p.29.

38. Ibid, pp.34-35.


41. Ibid. p.9.

42. Ibid. p.11
43. Ibid, and also see the, *Goa Hindu Temples and Deities* by Gui Gomes Periera.

44. Idem.

45. n.5, pp.181-182.


47. n.5, p.183.

48. n.19, pp.42 - 77.