

# CULTURAL LOCATION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE IN THE GOAN SOCIETY

By  
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**Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, **Biula** V. Pereira, hereby state that the present thesis entitled 'Cultural Location of Alcoholic Beverage in the Goan Society' is the outcome of my own study undertaken under the guidance of Dr. R. B. Patil, Reader in Sociology, M.E.S. College of Arts and Commerce, Zuarinagar, Goa. I further state that the study has not been submitted for any other Degree, Diploma or Certificate of any other University. To the best of my knowledge, the present study is the first comprehensive work of its kind from the area mentioned.



**Date: 28-03-2007**

**Biula V. Pereira**

# CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis 'Cultural Location of Alcoholic Beverage in the Goan Society' submitted by Biula V. Pereira for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology is the record of the original work carried out by her under my supervision. The thesis or any part thereof has not been previously submitted for the award of any Degree, Diploma or Certificate of this or any other University.

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alcoholic beverages are an important component in the Goan Catholic culture. It is associated with major events concerning the individual as well as the community. Its use is well defined by the occasion as well as by the social setting.

As a child growing up in a Catholic family I was aware of alcohol being consumed quite liberally at all celebrations. I grew up thinking that alcohol consumption was part of our lifestyle. Eventually, the absence of alcohol in Hindu celebrations struck me. It was amazing that the Hindus served no alcohol while for the Catholics it was an integral part of the celebrations.

This always made me wonder. There was in me a strong desire to find out how and why there was a difference in the lifestyles of two communities living in the same area, and sharing the same environment in Goa. At every celebration I participated, this question would keep recurring in my mind, and I was determined to study it.

Among the Catholics in Goa, drinking normally occurs at occasions and at home. Drinking along with food, at restaurants, with friends and others, is acceptable. In the villages, the bars are male-dominated local drinking houses. Regular visits to bars are condemned. Why is alcohol consumption at bars frowned upon even though it is permitted at occasions and parties? Even a teetotaler visiting a bar is tainted with the same brush. Why? Why do only men visit the bars? As many bars have gambling tables, these have become places to squander their free time. Deviants and addicts are labelled *bebde*'. How did this labelling come about? What is the dividing line between *bebde* and other regular consumers of alcohol?

**The gender-wise gulf in alcohol consumption also always intrigued me. Why did some women consume it while others did not? Why were young girls discouraged from consuming alcohol? These were questions to which I was seeking answers.**

**Later as I began my career as a teacher, I observed students consuming alcohol at picnics, camps, etc., as well as at occasions, but not openly as the adults did. Again the question came up: Why? Similarly, another peculiar feature was that at parties youngsters sat in a corner away from the crowd to consume alcohol. Why was it so?**

**Initially, when I decided to register for my Ph.D., the topic that had occurred to my mind was 'alcoholism among the youth', because I was concerned about the youth, with whom I was closely associated as a teacher.**

**However, in the course of time I found through extensive reading and discussion with my Guide Dr. R. B. Patil as well as other experts that such studies are available in large numbers and this is more a domain of social work. Therefore, I was looking for those aspects of alcohol consumption that were sociological in nature and not covered in earlier studies.**

**The subject taken up for study was a very challenging endeavour. Keeping in mind the fact that Goa is identified with alcohol consumption, there are a number of restrictions and social mechanisms that monitor the consumption patterns. Many people contributed towards making this difficult task relatively simple; and I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all those who have directly as well as indirectly contributed towards the completion of this thesis.**

**In the first place, my sincere and deep gratitude to my Research Guide, Dr. R. B. Patil, Reader in Sociology, M.E.S. College, Zuarinagar, Goa, for his supervision and**

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I express my heart felt thanks to Prof. Dilip Loundo, Dr. Manish Thakur, Department of Sociology, Goa University, Dr. V. Sujata (presently in the Sociology Department, Delhi University) for their valuable suggestions. Discussions held with them were extremely beneficial in gaining insight into the topic and their suggestions enabled me to resolve some issues.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Alcohol is the world's oldest and its most used and abused intoxicant. It gets a special place in society because of its particular intoxicant effect (Tyler 1986: 9).

The nature and severity of problems related to its use depend on the drinking customs prevalent in a particular society (Merton 1976: 197, Sargent 1976: 343). Differences exist in the alcohol level present in the beverage consumed, the pace of consumption and the condition of the consumer after consumption; but there can also be differences in the whole context of the drinking behaviour (Balboni 1963: 61). Moderate consumption of alcohol is considered to be a pleasure. Block (1965: 258) points out that the world consensus is that moderate drinking does no particular harm whereas those who drink excessively get ill.

As civilizations progressed, norms and patterns in alcohol consumption emerged. The present chapter traces the origin of the alcoholic beverage and its use, besides studying various norms determining alcohol consumption in different countries. It provides an overview of the socio-cultural relevance of alcohol to different communities, including Indian communities, and a general background to alcohol consumption in Goan society.

In order to place alcohol in its relevant socio-cultural context, we have also discussed a number of studies relating to alcoholism. Some of the questions raised in the discussion that follows are: How extensive is the use of alcohol within a culture? What social purpose does alcohol consumption serve for the individual and the community? What is the relationship between drinking practices and sociological variables of age, sex, and status?

## Concepts

When we refer to 'alcohol', we mean ethyl alcohol, the main constituent of all industrial alcoholic beverages. Usually people drink a beverage containing alcohol and not pure alcohol,

The alcohol content of various alcoholic beverages, ranging from wines and beers to rum, gin and vodka, differs. The potency of the drink depends upon the amount of alcohol present in it. There are innumerable brands available in this category.

Alcoholic beverages can be divided into fermented and distilled. Wines and beer are fermented alcoholic beverages, whereas whisky and brandy are distilled. In India, these are also categorised as I.M.F.L. (Indian Made Foreign Liquor).

The distilled local alcoholic drink, *Feni*, is categorised as 'country liquor'. Both cashew and palm *feni* are distilled. Even to distil this country liquor, licences are required. The licensing system ensures uniformity of the alcohol distilled, and checks adulteration. Most often, in Goa, these local alcoholic beverages are referred to as *soro*.

'Alcoholism' refers to addiction to the consumption of alcohol — or even the diseased condition that results from this. Accordingly, the 'alcoholic' is a person suffering from alcoholism.

## Origin of the Alcoholic Beverage

The origin of alcoholic beverages is lost in the darkness of history (Roueché 1963: 167). According to Chafetz and Demone (1962: 63) and Ke, M (1985: 216) alcoholic beverages were accidentally discovered in the pre-agricultural stage. Almost all historians agree that fermented alcoholic beverages existed before distilled alcoholic beverages. Among the fermented brews, wine is recorded as the earliest;

and the existence of mead and beer is also mentioned (Mckim 1997: 99, Morasker 2000: 31, Woodruff and Goodwin 1974: 101, Roueche 1963: 167-168, Richardson 1899: 4). Thus, in the ancient world, alcohol meant naturally fermented juice of grapes or some other fruits, grains and occasionally, even flowers (Lucia 1963: 151).

The early civilizations used alcoholic drinks not only for intoxication, but also in religious ceremonies. As wines and beers were offered to gods they became imbued with religious significance. Alcohol was known to the Egyptians, the ancient Hebrews, Greeks and Romans. In fact, both alcohol consumption and drunkenness are recurring themes in Greek and Roman mythologies. They even had a god of wine, Dionysus, whose object was to make people happy (Henry 1978: 336, Howe 1989: 3-4).

Historically, the fermentation process of alcoholic beverages was followed by the distillation process, which increased the drink's potency (Leake 1963: 8). This technical procedure was developed around 800 A.D. (Woodruff and Goodwin 1974: 103, Kissin 1982: 3, Leake 1963: 8). The distillation instruments used then were simple (Richardson 1899: 12) and the procedure later spread to other parts of the world. Depending on the natural availability of the raw material and the prevailing climatic conditions, different alcoholic beverages were produced in different parts of the world (Block 1965: 32).

In India, too, the use of fermented liquor and other intoxicants dates back to ancient times (Chunkapura 1988: 18). Ancient Indian books are replete with a number of references to intoxicants such as *somarasa*, *dev booty*, *madira*, etc. (Khan 1986: 3, Mamoria 1991: 723, Mascarenhas 1999: 185). *Somarasa*, a drink ceremoniously prepared from the *soma* plant, with the chanting of *mantras*, was known to the Aryan settlers (Trivedi 1931: 163).

Chopra et al. (1965: 124) mention that the Aryan invaders were well versed in the art of brewing, from whom the aboriginal races of India learnt it. *Sura*, a distilled spirit manufactured from rice, was also popular. Various bases were used to produce alcoholic beverages. Pulastya, the original author of the *Smriti*, gives a list of twelve principal varieties of liquor: *panasa* (jackfruit liquor), *draksha* (grape liquor), *madhuka* (honey liquor), *kharjura* (date liquor), *tala* (palm liquor), *aikshava* (cane liquor), *madhivik* (mhowra liquor), *saira* (long pepper liquor), *arishta* (soap berry liquor), *maireya* (rum), *narikela* (coconut liquor), *sura (arrack)* or *varuni*. All these liquors were the same; only their flavours were different. Issac (1998: 147) establishes that the Dravidians who lived in South India were familiar with toddy tapping and the consumption of toddy.

Similarly, the use of alcoholic beverages in Goa has a long history. Dhume (1985: 148) states that a woman having a difficult delivery used to fast and drink beer infused with herbs for a quick delivery. This practice existed around 2000 B.C. when the people from Sumer had settled in Goa. A piece of Roman amphora belonging to the first and second centuries A.D. was found at Pilar, Goa, which reveals that Goa used to import wine from the Mediterranean region (Costa 2002: 7).

A Jesuit account of the year 1548, as discussed by Gracias (1996: 44) and Mendonca (2002: 75-76) points out the use of alcohol even in a custom like *sail*, which existed in pre-Portuguese period. If the widow agreed to *sad*, there was a celebration accompanied with food and *urraca*, a local intoxicating drink. If the widow showed reluctance, she was intoxicated with opium and *urraca*. She was then dragged into the pit and burnt alive. Thus, this account brings out the fact that *urraca* was used in Goa long ago.

Food habits of the different caste groups in the pre-Portuguese Goan society also differed depending upon the group. The Brahmins avoided all meats and alcoholic drinks. However, the Saraswat Brahmins, who consumed fish, were an exception. People belonging to the lower caste consumed liquor, especially coconut *feni*. The Brahmins used *soma*, which was considered to be the drink of the gods. It was prepared from the juice of hallucinogenic mushrooms (Larsen 1998: 101). These references indicate that alcohol and wine were consumed in pre-Portuguese Goan society.

### **Socio-Cultural Attitudes towards Alcohol**

According to Howe (1989: 30) attitudes affect the way in which the person reacts to a subject or situation. In the case of alcohol, attitudes will determine whether or not the person consumes it, how often he drinks and the extent to which he drinks. Thus, attitudes are ways of thinking, believing and reacting to a subject. Values are what the individual considers to be important; and in the case of alcohol consumption, values would determine how alcohol is viewed.

According to Basch (1978: 133) culture is a shared group design for living. Every culture has an ethos and a decorum regarding the use and role of alcoholic beverages within its social structure. Hence, the society's attitude towards the use of alcoholic beverages forms a part of its culture (Pittman 1967: 4-5, Westermeyer 1982: 16, Willis 1974: 120). JR Collins (1981: 302) and Straus (1971: 227) reiterate the same findings and consider that the ethos may be conceptualised as cultural attitudes towards drinking and drunkenness existing in a society. These attitudes range from absolute prohibition of alcoholic beverages to permissiveness.

Deb (1977: 4-5), Pittman (1967: 5-6), Ghosh (1988: 66-68), and Clare (1975: 73) place all cultures on a scale ranging from one to four (1) *Abstinent culture, in*

which the basic tenet is abstinence from alcohol. This culture is found in Islam, Hinduism and Ascetic Protestantism. It exists in large parts of Finland, Sweden, Norway, Great Britain, Canada, and in America among the religious groups of Christian Scientists, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostal Churches, and some Baptists and Methodist religious groups. (2) *Ambivalent culture*, wherein an attitude of conflict prevails between the co-existing values. America and Ireland are examples of this culture. (3) *Permissive culture*, which has a permissive attitude towards imbibing alcohol but at the same time has a negative attitude towards drunkenness and other pathologies. Such cultures are found in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Japan. In America, this culture is found among the Chinese in New York and the Jews. (4) *Over-permissive culture*, in which consumption to the point of intoxication and other consumption pathologies are socially acceptable. Such over-permissive cultures are found only in certain non-literate societies, cultures undergoing considerable social change, and those in which there are strong economic vested interests in the production and distribution of alcoholic beverages. For example, in the Camba society of eastern Bolivia in South America, on festive occasions a highly concentrated alcoholic beverage is consumed and drunkenness is a norm and part of the social ritual.

Pittman (1967: 15) lists the following functions of alcoholic beverages for a cultural group: (1) *Religious* (2) *Ceremonial* (3) *Hedonistic* and (4) *Utilitarian*.

Alcohol is used in various religious ceremonies. The Roman Catholics (and some Protestant groups) use wine for transubstantiation — a theological word meaning the conversion of the Eucharistic elements wholly into the Body and Blood of Christ, only the appearance of bread and wine still remaining. The ceremonial uses of alcoholic beverages are found in many rites of passage celebrations ranging from

birth to death. The hedonistic or pleasurable usages of alcoholic beverages are well documented. One form is convivial, whereby the individual consumes alcohol with friends and kinship group or with another group to show his solidarity. Finally, alcohol consumption for relief or satisfaction of self-oriented, self-contained needs or to gain some personal advantage is classified as utilitarian drinking. Alcoholic beverages are also used for medicinal purposes. The Irish use them to treat a variety of illnesses such as cold, diarrhoea, cholera, and fever. In Czechoslovakia, despite laws prohibiting parents from giving alcohol to children under 18 years, children suffering from toothache and stomachache are treated with alcohol (Ibid.).

A number of sociologists have emphasized the social functions of drinking. Alcohol gained importance because of the belief that it stimulates the mind, eases fatigue and promotes a feeling of fellowship. Hence, the world over, alcohol and the way it is used, forms a part of that community's culture (Deb 1977: 1). According to Kumar (1986: 228) alcohol is often used as a symbol of hospitality, to enliven social occasions, and as a symbol of prestige and success. Jones (1963: 1) and Gold and Scarpitti (1967: 462) consider alcohol as socially useful and even necessary to celebrate events like Christmas, birthday or wedding celebrations, and even during holidays. Even everyday occasions like eating out or meeting a friend are converted into special occasions by consuming alcohol. Its consumption enlivens the atmosphere and gladdens the people, thereby making it a pleasurable and happy occasion. Alcohol thus becomes a convenient and very effective lubricant for social intercourse.

The Lowe et al. (1993: 42) study of the social functions of alcohol among adolescents concludes that alcohol facilitates group interaction. It helps peers gain social approval and enhances relations among the youth. Drinking reinforces feelings

of acceptance and facilitates the sharing of confidence. However, the study by (Lauer 1986: 118) establishes that integrating with a group that approves alcohol does not mean that the individual will abuse it, for many people use alcohol without becoming addicted.

Social anthropologists have theoretically categorized the psychosocial functions of alcohol consumption as '*integrative*', '*anxiety reducing*', or '*disintegrative*' (Pittman 1967: 4). Thus, anthropologists recognize it as being a part of social behaviour and culture; they have placed alcohol consumption in a cross-cultural perspective and have made important contributions to functional analysis (Bruun 1963: 220).

According to Issac (1998: 147), India has no cultural tradition of being clearly against the use of alcohol in any form. The country's attitude can be called ambivalent, as strong negative and prohibitive attitudes exist with those favouring consumption or intoxication. Menon (1975: 4) points out that Indian traditions and morality regarding the use of alcoholic beverages are very different from those in the West.

Being deeply religious, most Indians have inhibitions about alcohol consumption, as traditional Indian societies condemned the use of alcohol on religious grounds (Luthra 1983: 5). However, today, with the emergence of 'open societies', alcohol consumption is perceived as a status symbol. Thus, the habit of social drinking has gradually spread into the individual and the family life in India (Nischol 1975: 9-10).

In India, alcohol use was once upon a time more prevalent among tribal groups. According to Hardiman (1987: 99-100, 104) *adivasis* gave a lot of importance to alcohol. The tribal gods were believed to be fond of *daru* (alcohol

distilled from *mahua* flowers, *Madhuca indica*) and toddy; they were appeased by the offering of these drinks. Drunkenness during worship was and still is common among the *adivasis* who consider it to be possession by divine spirits. According to *adivasi* folklore, God gave the Brahmin *ghee* and the *Bhil*, liquor. Hence, they consume toddy and alcohol without any inhibition; they use it during their rites of passage. In fact, they put drops of alcohol in the newborn's mouth in the belief that it brings the child luck; and they celebrate their festivals with alcohol and nightlong parties. Alcohol consumption at Holi is a common feature amongst them. In tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and others, liquor is brewed at home and alcohol and tobacco are part of their traditional way of life. The tribals of Gujarat and Rajasthan drink toddy (Khan 1986: 4). A study by Lele (1987: 154-183) on the Warli tribe found in North Thana, Nasik district, parts of Gujarat, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli, reveals the use of toddy at various events celebrated by them. For their marriage, food is not as important as toddy, which occupies a prime place. Similarly, at the time of birth, divorce and even death, toddy is served to all those present.

In a study conducted by Peer (1996: 137-149) on the alcoholic patients discharged from the Prajna Counselling & De-addiction Centre, Mangalore, drinking is shown to be rampant among all sections of society — the rich, the middle class and the poor alike — and among them were engineers, doctors, government officials, businessmen, agriculturalist, manual workers and others. The study also reports that nowadays most people dislike attending 'dry parties'. Festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi, Diwali, Holi and Christmas have become excuses for indulging in alcohol, and for this they begin saving money well in advance.

Based on the studies in India, Varadappan (1975: 6) relates the consumption of alcohol amongst the poor and downtrodden to anxiety, worry, unemployment and

dehumanizing living conditions. On the other hand, while the affluent consume alcohol for fun, creative persons like writers, poets, etc. consume it to stimulate their imagination.

Consumption habits of people from the same country are often extremely diverse. For instance, some people do not drink alcohol at all, some do so only on rare occasions like Christmas or New Year, or at wedding celebrations; some consume alcohol on weekends, while others may consume it every day. Studies on drinking habits reveal that most people drink moderately and heavy drinkers are a minority (Report of Special Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists 1986: 105, Wechsler 1979: 39).

#### Alcohol Consumption Patterns

Grant et al. (1998: 1-4) explain alcohol consumption patterns in the context of the manner in which people drink, as preference for alcoholic beverages varies across cultures, depending on tradition and available choices. Where do people drink? Is consumption generally restricted to homes, pubs, restaurants or workplaces? When do people drink? Is drinking restricted to celebrations or is it done everyday with meals? With whom do people drink? Is drinking a segregated activity, where only people of a like group consume together, or is it generally done along with other people? These are some questions that help us to determine alcohol consumption patterns.

The place where alcohol is consumed is important, as it is believed to influence the style of drinking. In Finland, alcohol is consumed in private premises and less than a quarter in restaurants. The Swedes consume alcohol primarily when visiting friends or entertaining guests. In Denmark and Netherlands, use of alcohol at home is less frequent. In London, mostly the upper class consumes alcohol in restaurants; however, the middle and lower social classes patronize pubs. In France,

the café is an accepted meeting place for members of lower economic groups for alcohol consumption (Ahlstrom-Laakso 1976: 126-127).

In Italy, alcohol is consumed with meals as it is viewed positively and is considered nourishing (Plant 1967: 128, Chafetz and Demone 1962: 80-81, Jones 1963: 21). In this country children are given a few drops of wine added to water in early childhood. In adolescence, they are introduced to undiluted beverages. Drinking is primarily accompanied with solid food. In this way drinking is clearly defined and deviations are avoided (McCord et al. 1960: 37). Hence, every culture sets the expected attitudes and prohibited behaviour.

In Sweden, alcohol is used frequently during meals. In France, all alcoholic beverages consumed by the women are in accompaniment to lunch or dinner. In Italy, alcohol consumption is connected with eating even more closely *than* in France. Although Italians drink large amounts of alcohol, their drinking is marked by moderation rather than aimed at achieving a state of intoxication. In Poland, social drinking is frequent (Ahlstrom-Laakso 1976: 124-125).

Countries that do not accept alcohol consumption as a part of the meals often use it on special occasions. This pattern is observed in England, Netherlands and Finland where most of the alcohol consumption is done over the weekends (Ibid.). There are other social groups consuming wines, beers and distilled spirits at meals, festivals, social gatherings, religious obligations, business meetings and many other occasions. Sometimes, it is ingested primarily for medical reasons, like getting sound sleep or to relax (Lint 1976: 329).

Societies also vary as regards the type of drink, the intensity and the permissiveness of drinking attitudes (Clare 1975: 72-73). Drinking patterns are largely determined by the social structure. It is a culturally patterned behaviour,

which may or may not be associated with social deviance. This is because deviant behaviour varies from place to place. The custom of consumption is itself socially defined in terms of who drinks, what, when and where, how much, with what effects, and for what reasons. The indigenous cultural norms on alcohol use also strongly influence the manner in which alcohol is consumed (Heath 1993: 31, Trice 1966: 22-30).

Ritson (1985: 9) has studied alcohol consumption patterns in Mexico, Scotland and Zambia for the World Health Organization. In Mexico and Scotland alcohol was consumed for socializing and it was considered to be a way of being friendly. Both communities did not approve drunkenness. In Mexico, alcohol consumption was prohibited for women; in Scotland, it was neither prohibited nor encouraged. Respondents from higher socio-economic strata had a more permissive attitude towards alcohol consumption while the unskilled manual workers tended to be more tolerant of drunkenness. On the other hand, in Zambia, it was found that alcohol consumption was a traditional pastime and an integral part of village rituals and social life.

Similarly, alcohol consumption among the Mapuche community (Chile) is an eminent social act for the males who consume it in a group and never alone. Their every function, whether solemn or formal, uses alcohol and they use every occasion to have a celebration where alcohol could be consumed. They celebrate sowing, harvest, construction of house, house warming, recovery of the ailing, deaths, marriages, visits by friends and relatives and such other events with alcoholic drinks. These traditions have remained unchanged since the 16th century. 'People who drink together stay together' is the understanding of this community (Lomnitz 1976: 182-

**193). Among the Sikaina, in the Polynesian society, drinking is a public event. Usually people drink at places where others can see them (Donner 1994: 250).**

**Deb (1977: 9-59) studied alcohol consumption patterns in Punjab, focusing on Bhatinda. He found alcohol consumption widespread among the adolescent and adult males. Farmers and farm labourers had the maximum number of alcohol consumers; the most number of abstainers were from those in services or in business. On the other hand, a study conducted by Talesara (1983: 14) among certain tribes and communities in Rajasthan revealed that liquor acts as a lubricant at birth, death and marriage ceremonies and during colourful festivals.**

**Shulda (1987: 131) has studied alcohol consumption in Mawaiya village in Uttar Pradesh. He found two striking modes of alcohol consumption in the village. First, the consumption of alcohol at celebrations was ritualistic in nature; second, there was casual drinking. Alcohol drinking for some of the villagers was almost an everyday affair. However, the general practice was that alcohol consumption took place on a particular day of the week, with family or friends or colleagues. Hence, convivial use of alcohol in this village showed a wide range of variation in different social groups.**

**Although alcohol use has been prevalent in India from ancient times, its usage has differed from region to region. The Hindu scriptures and society did not approve of it. In fact, Manu, the Hindu lawmaker, considered alcohol as one of the greatest anti-social acts or sins and suggested abstention. In the medieval times, an increase in alcohol consumption is recorded and attributed to kings and their courtiers (Mamoria 1991: 725). Throughout the Hindu and Muslim period, the masses abstained from alcohol (Madan 1966:161-163).**

With the coming of the British, however, consumption of alcoholic beverages increased (Ibid.). Changes were seen in the type of beverages consumed, the patterns of drinking and the social attitudes towards alcohol use. Distilled beverages with higher alcohol content replaced the traditional beverages. For instance, in Uttarkhand liquor consumption spread slowly during the colonial times. Before the British occupation, only the *Tarai* and *Bhotiya* traders were habituated to alcohol consumption while others abstained. From the colonial times, alcohol has become an integral part of all life cycle ceremonies from marriage to cremation. People, and even the priests, consume alcohol, and liquor shops are found everywhere: near schools, colleges and at transport depots (Pathak 1985: 1360-65). This denotes permissiveness in the attitude of the British towards alcohol. Statistics indicate that over the years, alcohol consumption has in fact increased in India (Deb 1977: 80-81).

Besides the historical, social and cultural factors that influence alcohol consumption in modern society, the media plays an important role in establishing consumption patterns. In present times, the television, which is watched by most people, provides a steady flow of images of alcohol and its consumption. The television, thus, becomes a pool of readily available values, norms, information and framework of understanding through which social reality can be interpreted. Most often, television associates alcohol with relaxation and enjoyment, social success, social functioning as well as sophistication. The types of alcohol consumed — wine, champagne, spirits, cocktails, etc., reveal the individual's status or social success or are used to indicate hospitality and generosity. Wine drinking is also associated with glamour and an affluent lifestyle while beer drinking has a masculine and down market quality to it. Alcohol advertising perpetuates these themes as they urge people

to drink one alcoholic brew or another (Howe 1989: 33-34, Voye 1979: 34, Wienberg 1970: 444).

Most societies observe cultural regularities in relation to the norms related to alcohol consumption. For instance, alcohol consumption is more suitable for men than women. Secondly, it is considered to be a social activity and not a solitary one. Thirdly, consumption takes place among age mates. Fourthly, drinking symbolizes durable social solidarity (Howe 1989: 32, Robinson 1975: 23-26). Thus, every community sets rules for the use of alcoholic beverages in order to control the amount of alcohol consumed and avoid its ill effects (Block 1965: 32, Rix and Rix 1983: 10-12). Therefore, the amount of alcohol consumed; the place, time and the way it is consumed are consequences of social attitudes. The use and limitations of alcohol is decided by the traditional social order (Jones 1963: 22-23).

### **Variations in Alcohol Consumption**

Variations in alcohol consumption are observed in most societies with regard to age and sex. These variables are used by all societies to define expected behaviour and role performance of their members and to determine alcohol consumption practices and behaviours. A cross-cultural examination of different cultures done by Pittman (1967: 16-18) reveals a wide variation with reference to the age at which an individual is allowed access to alcohol.

In Italy and France, a child is introduced to alcohol, especially wine, through the family at a very early age. In comparison to men, women drink more at home. Excessive and habitual drinking is infrequent and craving for alcohol is rare among women. Cultural prohibitions severely limit the opportunities for most women to drink as heavily as men drink (Turnbull 1989: 364).

Alcohol consumption is predominantly a male behaviour; women's consumption is restricted by conventions (Howe 1989: 32, Robinson 1975: 26, Grant et al. 1998: 7, Sullivan et al. 1980: 638). According to Saunders (1980: 69) pressures from parents and peers enable young females to resist consuming alcohol. These conservative attitudes towards alcohol consumption by women are very pervasive and could be seen even in young children. However, childcare was found to be a universal factor restricting alcohol consumption by women. The social position of many women as full-time wives and mothers along with social conditioning leads them to identify themselves through these roles.

A number of studies highlight the difference in alcohol consumption between the two genders. Women in Mexico, China, India, and sub-Saharan Africa consume less alcohol than the men. In most traditional sub-Saharan African cultures, women are involved in manufacturing palm wine. Consumption takes place at the end of the working day. Women and children are also allowed to drink, but under the guidance of elders (Grant et al. 1998: 27). In China, studies reveal that most women are abstainers. Similarly, in India, it is understood that the rate of alcohol consumption among males is eight times more than among females. In Mexico, female abstainers are 63 per cent in comparison with the male abstainers' percentage of 27. The difference is attributed to the effect of cultural norms, which indicate that women, if they do consume alcohol, should do so in moderation (Ibid 1998: 7)

Visible displays of intoxication in women are universally unacceptable. For instance, in Malaysia, alcohol consumption by women is considered to be an indication of a lack of virtue. Similarly, the drinking context of rural women in Mexico is culturally circumscribed; they are discouraged from drinking outside the home, in the company of men and before marriage. Nigerian women participating in

drinking occasions are prescribed to drink less than the men (Ibid.). Thus, double standards with regard to alcohol consumption by men and women exist in many countries and often reflect women's perceived place in the society. Drinking behaviour that is accepted, approved and condoned for men may be unacceptable or disapproved for women.

According to Howe (1989: 32) there are many reasons for these double standards. The woman's prime role of nurturing or caring for others is severely impaired by alcohol consumption. However, with progress and emancipation, standards relating to patterns of consumption by women are beginning to change and breweries have quickly modified the style of some of their establishments to attract the new clientele.

### **Religious Attitudes towards Alcohol Use**

In a given society, it is religion that **maintains** social and lifecycle events. Contemporary drinking patterns are shaped by religion as well as ancient cultural influences (Kane 1962: 228). Religion is a major variable that decides the use of alcoholic beverages. The Baptists or the Methodists are less likely to consume alcohol as compared with the Jews or Roman Catholics (Smart 1980: 24, Sullivan et al. 1980: 638). Strong religious and sub-cultural convictions keep some people away from alcoholic beverages (Fort 1973: 99). The use of alcoholic beverages in societies is traditionally governed by religious structure. As Islam forbids the use of alcoholic drinks, Muslims do not consume it (Westermeyer 1982: 17, Woodruff and Goodwin 1974: 104, Johnson 1973: 52).

On the other hand, Irish Catholics consider the use of alcoholic beverages as traditional and moral. Wine has a prominent place in Catholic and Jewish religious rituals. Drinking among the Jewish Americans takes place from childhood and all the

adults drink regularly. However, they use alcohol in a ritualistic manner (Trice 1966: 23, Synder and Pittman 1968: 271, Gold and Scarpitti 1967: 468). Similarly, among the Catholics, alcohol use reflects the tolerance of the Church (Maths 1984: 430).

Religious uses of alcohol are plentiful. For example, among the Aztecs, worshippers at every major religious occasion had to consume alcohol to the point of passing out; otherwise, it was believed, the gods would be displeased. In sharp contrast, some Protestant denominations hold that alcohol is spiritually repugnant and is not allowed even symbolically in the Communion rite (Robinson 1975: 24).

Heath (1976: 47) points out that the role of wine in religion was widespread. He further states that the fact that prescriptions and proscriptions are spelled out in considerable detail implies early recognition of the dangers of alcohol. In Islam, the prescription of abstinence postdates the Koran but sectarian variation has developed over the centuries with respect to alcohol consumption. In the Bible there are some rules but no negative statements about alcohol. The Old Testament prescribed the use of wine in religious rituals (Kissin 1982: 3).

Any religion, like most institutions, tends to change slowly and often take rigid stances. As a result, the established religions have not been able to cater to the needs of the industrial and atomic societies of the last century. A variety of religious movements, like the neo-Buddhist cults in Asia, youth cults in the United States, Charismatic movements among Christians, have sought to fill up this vacuum. Most recent movements and cults have taken strong stands on psychoactive compounds. Some like the Mormons and certain youth cults have forbidden the use of alcohol and all self-administered drugs. A few prescribe use of specific psychoactive substances as sacramental, like the Native American Church. While discouraging substances like

alcohol, some Protestant groups have facilitated self-help groups like the Alcoholic Anonymous (Westermeyer 1982: 28).

### **Family Socialisation and Alcohol Use**

In many cultures, children are exposed to alcohol by their parents or guardians and 'other significant' people in their lives much before the children begin to drink regularly. In Britain over 90 per cent of the adult population consumes alcohol. Given this environment, it is hardly surprising that children become aware of alcohol from a tender age (Fossey et al. 1996: 53). Further, it was noted that teenagers regarded alcohol consumption as a hallmark of sociability and maturity. Several studies reveal that one third of boys and girls in the United Kingdom regularly consume alcohol. Significantly, these studies indicate that alcohol consumption is normal behaviour among adolescents and teenagers. In terms of quantity, studies show that teenagers consume modest amounts of alcohol (Ibid.). Plant (1975: 34) mentions that in Britain the majority of adults drink alcohol at least occasionally. Consequently, it is a part of the family environment and a 'social fact' for most children.

The social learning them discussed by Lowe et al. (1993: 5-6) has identified imitation and modelling as two alcohol-specific family influences. It considers the parental and family models of alcohol use. It also states that social reinforcement towards alcohol use by teenagers is encouraged by parental attitudes. Similarly, the differential association theory maintains that human beings learn through the process of socialisation. The proponent of this theory, Edwin H. Sutherland points out that an individual learns to conform or violate societal norms due to the socialisation process. Applying this theory to alcohol consumption, he concludes that people begin alcohol consumption as social drinkers. Individuals on their own do not drink but learn to consume alcohol and social situations shape the person's behaviour (Stark 1975: 106-

107). Both these theories attribute the social environment to the consumption behaviour of a person.

Lowe et al. (1993: 76-80) further point out that social learning is shaped by direct or indirect observation of other peoples' behaviour. Indirect observation occurs through media like television, radio, newspaper, advertising, marketing, news report, etc. Direct observation is by watching the behaviour of 'significant others', especially peers and family members. These direct and indirect exposures lead to symbolic representations of observed behaviours. These subsequently serve as guides for an individual towards a particular behaviour or action. Thus, the social learning theory says that parents and other older family members provide salient role models for alcohol consumption. The knowledge of how, when, where and what these family members drink is assimilated by adolescents as guides for alcohol consumption. This, in turn, forms the base for their alcohol consumption patterns. Family-based social reinforcement of teenagers' alcohol use is manifested in parental norms and definitions, which are expressed in the form of parents' attitudes towards the use of alcohol by their children. The social learning theory, thus, expresses that adolescents internalise their parents' norms and definitions, which is later reflected in their drinking behaviour.

According to Straus (1976: 204-206), Chafetz and Demone (1962: 26), the process of socialisation plays an important role in the decision of an individual regarding alcohol consumption. Thus socialisation introduces children to culturally established attitudes, beliefs and practices towards alcohol consumption (Deb 1977: 6, Clare 1975: 72, Straus 1976: 210). Strickland (1983: 204) states that drinking, like most behaviours, is learned through this socialisation. In childhood, parents, family, ethnicity and church make the chief impact. The peer group and school fraternal

group are the reference groups in early adolescence, while in late adolescence it is the college fraternal group, the neighbourhood and the job associates (Straus 1971: 238).

In India, societal sanctions against alcohol consumption have considerably weakened. In fact, from the 'dry culture' that was the identity of India as far as alcohol consumption was concerned, today alcohol consumption is becoming a regular feature for most celebrations. A study of the working class in Ahmedabad discovered that families spent more on food, education and healthcare wherever bars were absent (Shah 1983: 10).

Even though alcohol consumption is quite prevalent in India today, it is not yet integrated into its social structure. In the absence of well-integrated patterns, alcohol consumption becomes disruptive. Hence, a number of anti-liquor agitations have been a feature of Indian society. Women have been in the forefront of these anti-liquor movements as they are the ones who suffer the most due to alcoholism. The anti-liquor movement at Sonapat and **Kurukshetra** districts of Harayana was a village-level movement spearheaded by women. In Uttar Pradesh, the **Mahila** Mandal campaigned against the consumption of liquor by men and demanded the removal of a liquor shop. Similar movements **against** liquor were seen in Madhya Pradesh (Dogra 1989: 39- 41). Women from Dobagunta village in Andhra Pradesh launched an anti-liquor movement. Women in **Behrampur** and **Kalahandi** districts of **Orrisa** also led similar movements. Anti-liquor movement by women's organizations was also witnessed at Yamel village of Bijapur district in Karnataka (Singh and Singh 1990: 35).

Goa is at variance with the rest of the country as far as alcohol consumption, norms and other related aspects are concerned. Here historical factors like the 450 years rule of the Portuguese have caused the Goans to develop a different perspective

towards alcohol consumption. The Goan Catholics have assimilated the use of alcohol in their quotidian life and celebrations.

On the other hand, Goan Hindus, who form a majority of the State's population, although in congruence with the rest of the country as regards the non-use of alcohol, do not condemn alcohol consumption by others, particularly the Catholic community. Incidentally, a growing number of Hindus, particularly the younger generation, consume alcohol for their personal satisfaction or as part of socialisation.

These differing attitudes towards alcohol consumption as held by the two major communities of Goa are discussed in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

## CHAPTER II

### RESEARCH SETTING AND METHODOLOGY

#### Goa

The State of Goa, admeasuring 3,702 square kilometres, is situated between 15°-47'-59" and 14°-53'--57" North Latitude and 73°-40'--54" and 74°-20'-11" Longitude East of Greenwich (Desai 2001: 4). It is bounded on the west by the Arabian Sea and on the east by the Sahyadri range of mountains. The Sawantwadi district of Maharashtra forms its northern border while the Karwar district of Karnataka is its southern border.

Goa became the 25th State of the Union of India on 30th May 1987. Goa has 359 villages and 44 towns. For administrative purposes the State is divided into two districts and 11 talukas. The talukas of Pemem, Satari, Bardez, Tiswadi, Bicholim and Ponda form the North. Goa District. The South Goa District comprises the talukas of Mormugao, Salcete, Quepem, Sanguem, and Canacona (Census Department, Panaji).

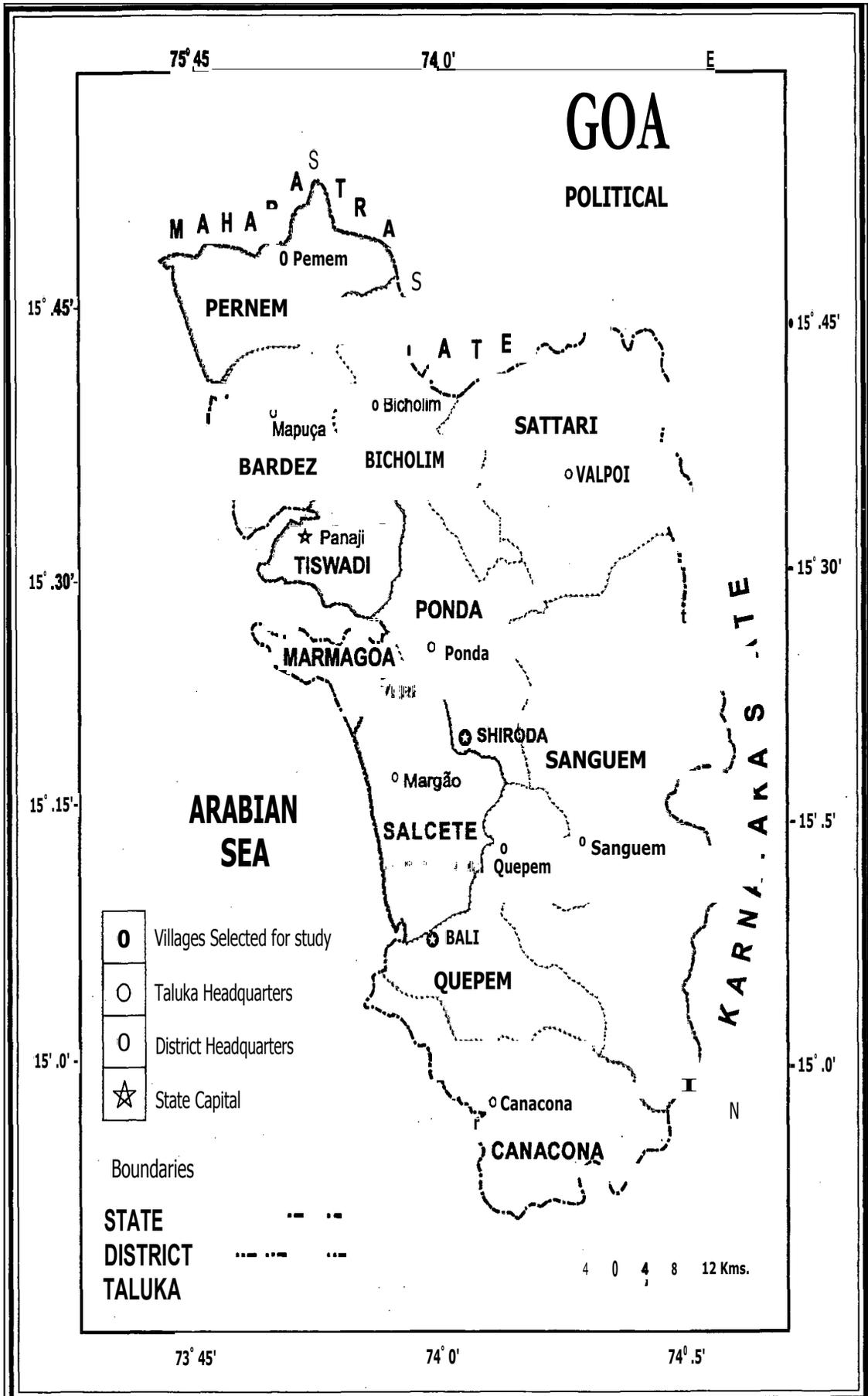
According to the Census of India 2001, Goa has a population of 13,47,668, comprising 6,87,248 males and 6,60,420 females. This population is distributed in 2,94,812 households. The literacy rate in Goa is 82 per cent. Male literacy stands at 88.4 per cent female literacy at 75.4 per cent. Hindus form the largest religious community, constituting 65.8 per cent of the total population while Christians account for 26.7 per cent and Muslims for 6.8 per cent of the total population. Other religious communities, like the Sikhs, bins, Buddhists, form the remaining miniscule part of the total population (Census Department, Panaji).

Goa has a 100-odd kilometre long coastline. Moving east from the Arabian Sea, after the beaches, one finds very fertile plains. On the eastern boundary of Goa lies the hilly terrain, which is rich in mineral ore. Along the coastline we find the jovial fisher-folk while hardworking farmers inhabit the plains and simple tribals populate the hilly regions. This type of staggered settlement gives Goa a kaleidoscopic image of a lifestyle in communion with nature. The sandy coastline holds a sturdy and lush growth of the coconut or palm trees. The hilly terrain, on the other hand, provides the ideal geographical requirements for the propagation of cashew plantations.

Goa has a warm and humid climate, with temperature varying between 20° C and 32° C, because of the proximity to the sea. On an average, it receives an annual rainfall ranging between 2500 to 4000 mm (Desai 2001: 5). These weather conditions are ideal for the flourishing of coconut trees and cashew plantations. The local alcoholic drink called *feni* is prepared from the coconut sap or cashew apple juice. The weather conditions are also ideal for the fermentation of the coconut sap and the cashew apple juice, which are necessary for distilling *feni*.

Although tiny in size, the State of Goa is a sociologist's delight due to the prevailing cultural practices. The 'New Conquest' areas are very Indian in their culture and lifestyle, being predominantly inhabited by Hindus. On the other hand, the 'Old Conquest' areas, which have a majority of Catholics, are westernised. Hence, in Goa, one finds a perfect blend of the Eastern and Western cultures, each clearly defined and existing in their own sphere.

Map of Goa with four study villages



## Locale of the Study

The geographical conditions and social setting, or say, the physical environment and the people's cultural requirements largely determine the thought processes and behaviour of a society. Thus, one finds that there is a sense of community or togetherness experienced by those living together, thereby creating the concept of a village. This sense of togetherness results in a sentimental attachment to the geographical landmarks of the area, and also a dependence on the physical properties of the area that would determine their way of living (Shukla 1987: 10). Therefore, it is important to discuss the physical setting and social characteristics of the area taken up for our study.

Detailed information about the sample villages — Benaulim, Verna, Bali and Shiroda — will provide us with a better understanding of the Goan society. It will also throw light on the **socio-occupational** structure of the villages under study.

**BENAULIM** is associated with the legend of Parshurama, the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The village derives its *name, Bannauli*, from *bann*, meaning 'arrow' and *halli*, 'village'. Thus, the name refers to the formation of the land as a result of the arrow shot by Lord Parashurama (Kamat 1999: 8).

This village is situated to the south west of Margao, which is the headquarters of the Salcete taluka. It is bounded on the east by the river Sal and on the west by the Arabian Sea. The villages of Colva and Seraulim bound it to the north, while at its southern border lies the village of Varca.

The village, administered by a Panchayat, consists of 11 wards, namely: Pedda with three sub-wards; Pequeno Pedda I with 10 sub-wards; Pequeno Pulvaddo II with six sub-wards; Grande Pulvaddo with four sub-wards; Ascona I with four sub-wards; Ascona II with 10 sub-wards; Mazilvaddo I with five sub-wards; Mazilvaddo II with

three sub-wards; Vasvaddo I with five sub-wards; Vasvaddo II with seven sub-wards, and Cana Benaullim with six sub-wards.

As it is located on the western coast, a large number of villagers are involved in occupations related to the sea and its bounty. Most of the traditional occupations, like fishing, toddy tapping, carpentry and agriculture, which are on the wane in other villages, continue to be practised in Benaullim. However, in recent times, with the tourism industry establishing itself along the coastal belt, a large number of inhabitants of the village, particularly from the younger generation, are involved in tourism-related **activities**, which have, in fact, become major occupations, with even school children participating in them after school hours. While some youngsters are employed in many of the hotels that have sprung up along the coastline, many others either work in or manage shacks on the beach. Quite a number of youth also work as tourist guides; others rent out vehicles like two- or four wheelers. Many families have renovated their houses to lease out rooms to tourists.

The fishermen have three operating systems: there are the trawlers, which go out into the deep sea for large catches; the *ramponnkar*, who use canoes fitted with outboard motors and venture out into the sea, not far from the coastline; and finally, the *magkar*, who use canoes and so cannot venture out very far.

Paddy is the only crop grown in Benaullim. Coconut plantations are found on most orchard lands, giving Benaullim the distinction of having the second largest number of palm*feni* distillation units in Goa.

A unique occupation in the village is the rearing of fighter bulls used for the popular sport called *dhirio* (bull-fights).

Brahmins or *Bamonn* (*Daivadnya/shet* and Saraswat), *Moddvoll* (washerman), *Mahar* (basket maker), are some of the castes found among the Hindus in this village.

Among the Catholics *Bamónn* (Brahmins), *Chaddhi* (Kshatriyas), and *Sudir* (Shudras) who comprise all occupational groups like toddy tappers, fishermen, tailors, carpenters, etc. were found in the village.

The village has only one privately owned hospital, with the Government's district hospital nearby at Margao. There are many doctors practising in the village. The village has two Government-run primary schools, two Government-aided high schools, one private primary school and one higher secondary school.

The village has only one temple, dedicated to goddess Laxmi, and two churches, one with St. John the Baptist as its patron and the other dedicated to the Holy Trinity. There are altogether eight chapels in the village.

Benaulim has 52 bars or public drinking houses, ranging from local bars to modern upmarket places, three of them owned by Hindus and forty-nine by Catholics. In addition there are 14 retail outlets one owned by a Hindu and 13 by Catholics. Besides, there are quite a number of shacks along the beach, where alcohol is served. The shacks are granted temporary licences, valid only for the tourist season.

The population of this village is 10,158 (4949 males and 5209 females), of which 7489 persons from Benaulim are literate, as per the 2001 census figures.

VERNA is the second village from the Old Conquests selected for the purpose of the study. Legend has it that this village got its name from the *Rakshasha* Varanyasur, who used to terrorize people. Following prayers from the people, goddess Sateri took on the form of a beautiful lady, enticed the demon and killed him. It is believed that this village began to get populated only after Varanyasur's death. The village, earlier called *Varnapuri*, came to be named after the demon, which got changed to Verna during the Portuguese rule (Prabhudesai 2003).

Vema is bounded on the north and east by village Nagoa in **Mormugao** taluka, on the south by Nuvem and on the west by Loutulim, the latter two in Salcete taluka.

The village is administered by a Panchayat and has nine wards, viz. Cumborda, Poriebhatt I, Poriebhatt II, Dignem with two sub-wards, **Povoação** with three sub-wards, Ambuloor with five sub-wards, Senaulim with three sub-wards, Mato11 with two sub-wards and Bamborda with two sub-wards.

Vema has a total population of 6,000 (2,907 males; 3,093 females), of which only 3,942 persons (2,092 males; 1,850 females) are literate.

As the village is landlocked, agriculture is the main occupation. A large section of its inhabitants are the Catholic *Gauddi* (classified as Scheduled Tribes) who work as farm labourers. Thus, agriculture is the main source of income for a large number of residents. The village has a substantial number of toddy tappers, too, making palm *feni* distillation another major occupation of the village. Significantly, there is a ward called '*Kumbravaddo*', which is inhabited by potters. Pottery is also an important occupation here, with about 10 potters engaged in it. There are ten bakeries that make bread in the **traditional** manner. Stone quarrying is also a significant occupation.

Brahmins or *Bamonn* (daivadnya/shet), *Desai* (**kshatriyas**), *Mahar*, are some of the castes found among the Hindus in this village, while among the Catholics, *Bamônn* (Brahmins), *Sudir* (Shudras) which consist all the occupational groups like potters, toddy tappers etc., and *Gauddi*, were the three castes that exist in the village.

Verna has one Government-run primary health centre besides one private hospital at Poriebhatt.

Natural springs are a hallmark of this village. There are two springs: the one at Udd'ddear is very famous and attracts a big crowd of youngsters during the monsoon season.

The village has one temple, dedicated to goddess **Mahalsa**, who is supposed to be an avatar of goddess Sateri. It has one church, dedicated to the Holy Cross, and four chapels. A cross marks the site where the first mass was celebrated in Salcete taluka. Significantly, the cross is by the side of the **Mahalsa** temple.

The priests of St Francis Xavier (SFX) have turned the village into an educational hub by setting up an educational complex comprising a kindergarten; primary, high, and higher secondary school, an engineering college and an industrial training institute. Besides, the village has a parish-run high school, aided by the Government, and one private primary school. There are two Government primary schools in the village. Verna has two orphanages; one managed by the SFX priests and the other by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, who, in addition, manage a home for the aged.

The village has altogether 26 bars, only one of which is owned by a Hindu; the rest of them belong to Catholics. One of them is an upmarket open-air bar-and-restaurant situated on the National Highway 14, which cuts across this village. In addition, there are 3 retail outlets all owned by Catholics.

**BALI** is the first village from the 'New Conquest' area taken up for our study. This village was at first inhabited by the *Velip*, from whom it got its original name, *Velipvan* (meaning, forest of the **Velip**). This name changed to Baliapur (*pur* means village and *velipa* equals *balipa*, as in some Indian languages the alphabet V and B mean the same). Thus came the name '**Baliapur**', meaning 'village of **Velip**', which

got shortened to Bali. The Velip are thought to be the descendants of the original aboriginal tribes of Goa. In local parlance the *Velip* are called *Kunnbi*.

Bali, situated on the banks of the river Sal, was the capital of Goa during the Shilahara reign in the 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was then called Valipattam or Balipattam, with *pattam* meaning a port (Prabhudesai 2003). Cuncolim town of Salcete taluka bounds it on the north, while on the south lies Barcem village of Canacona taluka. The village of Ambaulim lies to its east, while on the west it is bordered by Fatorpa, both located in Quepem taluka.

The village is administered by a Panchayat; it comprises nine wards, namely, Cordem with two sub-wards; Bendurdem; Cotto Tiloil with three sub-wards, Mutt Bali I, Mutt Bali II and Mutt Bali III; Deulwada with three sub-wards; Adnem with seven sub-wards and Cupwada with three sub-wards. Specific caste groups predominantly occupy certain wards in this village. For instance, the *Velip* community inhabit Cordem and Bendurdem wards, while Catholic *Gauidi* overwhelmingly populate Pattern ward.

The main occupation of the villagers is agriculture. The village is dotted with fields watered by flowing rivers and gurgling springs. Paddy is the main crop of the village. *Kumeri* cultivation practised by the villagers has resulted in the setting up of a co-operative society, which functions as a marketing centre for the vegetable-growing farmers. Many villagers are also involved in agro-based occupations like dairy farming. Cashew *feni* distillation, though a seasonal occupation, is also very prominent.

Bali has a total population of 2,658 (1,355 males and 1,303 females), of which 1,824 are literate (1016 males and 808 females).

Interestingly, this village still lives quite undisturbed by modernisation, as the Velip living in the hilly terrain are found to be very close to nature. According to Prabhudesai (2003), the Velip first cleared the forests for *kumeri* cultivation of crops like *nachhne* (ragi), *pokoll*, *varai*, *misango* (chillies), *karantte*, *kattkonngam*, *zhaddkonngam* and *allum*, most of which they cultivate till date.

Residents of Bali are close to nature; this has resulted in an activity called *bhonvddi* (ceremonious hunting ritual), which is found only in this village. Once a year, the villagers gather in a large group and after taking *prasad paklli* from the goddess they leave all together to hunt a wild animal, and do not return till they get a catch. The hunted animal is then ceremoniously slaughtered at the village boundary and shared by all the participants of the *bhonvddi*. One share is cooked and offered to *Daretrai* (the *devchar* or spirit of the place) who is regarded as the guardian of the villagers' welfare.

Bali has another unique practice, called *ghanttvoll*, apparently aimed at maintaining caste purity, which involves newly married couples of the Desai community walking round a specific banyan tree. This is done to pray for a happy and long lasting married life. Any person marrying outside the caste is not allowed to participate in the *ghanttvoll*.

The government has set up a community hospital at Bali. However, the normal practice amongst most of the villagers is to first try home remedies before going to hospital. Very often, the villagers consult the village *bhatt*, as they still believe that an illness is a result of the evil eye or divine retribution.

Bali is predominantly Hindu. *Shri Shantadurga Balikarin* is the main deity worshipped by the villagers, at which temple the *bhatt* resides, although the village has eleven temples. The Kundeshvar temple is famous for the *soro-ronth* offering on

Sundays and Wednesdays. *Rontth* at this temple is baked in the traditional manner by the *kolhorkar* of the Desai community.

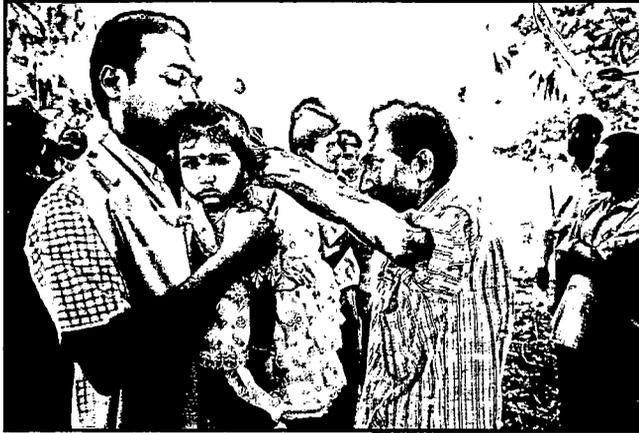
The *Velip* (classified as Scheduled Tribes) community forms the majority in this village. The other castes found in this village are Brahmins (*bhatt* who perform the *puja*), *Gurov* (also like *bhatt* in charge of religious duty at the temple) *Bamonn* (daivadnya/shet and **saraswat**), *Desai* (**kshatriyas**), *Chari* (carpenters), *Kshatriya Bhandari* (naik or shudras), *Moddvoll*, *Mahar*, *Mahale* (barbers), Gomant Maratha Samaj (*devili* and *kolvontam*), *Gosai* (religious mendicants), *Dhangar* (shepherds), etc., are some of the castes found among the Hindus in this village. Most surnames along with the place of residence of these Hindus indicate the caste they belong to.

The Catholics of Bali belong to two castes, namely, *Sudir* and *Gauddi*. The former are invariably *render* (toddy tappers) and agricultural labourers. The Catholic population in Bali is so small that the village does not even have a church. The church of the neighbouring village of Fatorpa caters to the spiritual needs of the Catholics here.

A number of Hindus still continue with their traditional occupations, even if symbolically. For instance, the *Mahale* perform their ceremonial roles of hair cutting at certain ceremonies. Their presence is mandatory at the *ghantvoll* ceremony and before the commencement of the *Xiddeo zatra* (temple festival). A member of the *mahale* community ceremonially cuts the hair of every child the first time.

On the other hand, most Catholics have given up their traditional occupation of toddy tapping and many youngsters have sought employment overseas, mostly in the Persian Gulf.

## Bali undisturbed by the forces of Westernization and Modernization



2.1 The child's first haircut at the hands of the village barber

2.2 Village barbers at work before the *Xiddeo Zatra*



2.3 Baking of the *ronthh* in a traditional manner

2.4 *Ghantivoll* ceremony at Bali



The village has eight primary schools, one high school and one higher secondary school. It has 24 bars, 5 of them owned by Catholics, and 19 are owned by Hindus. In addition, there is one retail outlet owned by a Hindu. Significantly, in some wards like Cordem where there are no licensed bars or *taverns*, arrangement for sale and consumption of alcohol is made in the household itself.

**SHIRODA** situated in Ponda taluka, falls in the 'New Conquest' area. It is the biggest village in the taluka, with a geographical area of 36.90 square kilometres. The state highway running through the village in east-west direction connects Shiroda to both the national highways of Goa, namely, NH-17B and NH-4A.

This village was earlier called *Voddem*. However, at a *Dassehra* celebration, one *aysor* (possessed person) proclaimed that the village's name was *Shir Vodde* and from then onwards the village came to be called *Shir Vodde*, which later became Shiroda'. A legend is associated with the name *Shir Vodde*. In the bygone years, it is said that three persons from the *Vir* community (*Naik Bhandari*) were beheaded and their heads were used as hearths to keep the pan in which other members of the community fried *vodde*. These *vodde* were offered to lord Rawalnath at the temple. Later on the heads would be joined to the torsos and following the chanting of *montra* the person would come back to life. One year, for reasons not known, the heads got interchanged, as a result of which the sacrificed persons could not return to life. This legend is kept alive through the sculptures of these heads, which are worshipped during the *Dassehra* celebrations. These *shir* (heads) are said to have given its name.

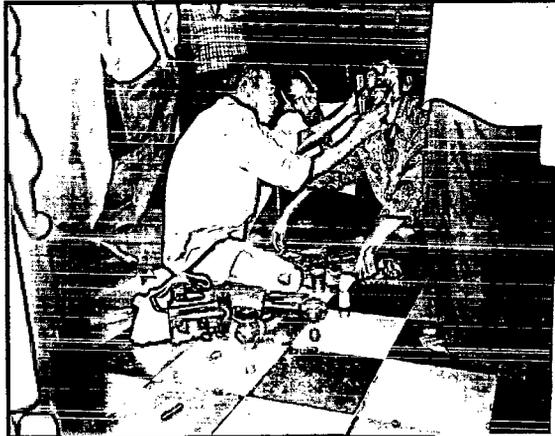
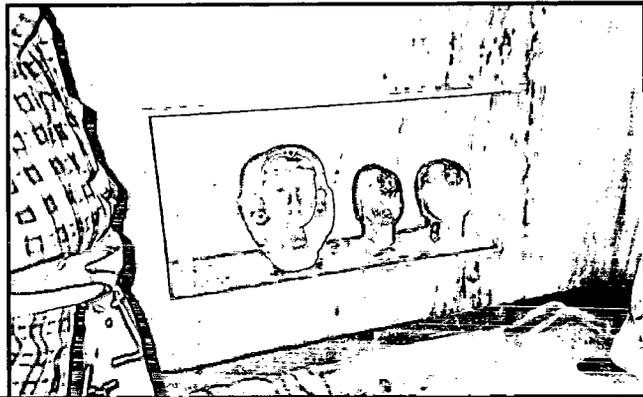
The river Zuari forms the western and southern boundary of Shiroda, while on the east it is bounded by village Panchwadi in Ponda Taluka and village Nirankal in Sanguem Taluka. The village of **Borim** in Ponda Taluka bounds it on the north.

Shiroda maintaining its age old traditions



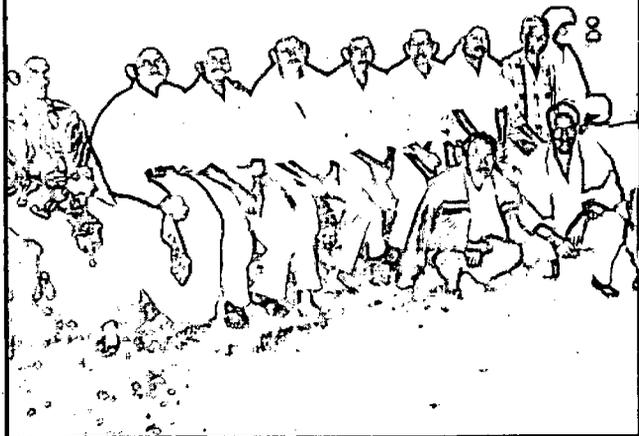
2.5 Animal sacrifices prior to Dassehra

2.6 Sculptures of the heads that gave Shiroda its name



2.7 Village barber providing services before Dassehra

2.8 Members of different caste groups representing in Dassehra



The village, administered by a Panchayat, comprises 11 wards, namely, Tarvalem with two sub-wards, Vazem, Karai, Panda al with two sub-wards, Bazar with two sub-wards, Thall with two sub-wards, Gaddiamoll, Paz which has four sub-wards, Soncrembag with four sub-wards, Borbhott with two sub-wards, and Dabolim with five sub-wards.

Earlier, Shiroda was divided into 12 wards based on the occupational structure of the village. These wards are: Bhattvaddo, Gurovvaddo, Mahaleavaddo, Moddvollvaddo, Maharvaddo, Chambramvaddo, Zolmeamvaddo, Shudramvaddo, Shenvivaddo, Mestavaddo, Shettivaddo and Vanniavaddo.

The Brahmins (*bhatt* who perform the *puja*), the *Gurov* (also like *bhatt* in charge of religious duty at the temple), the *Bamonn* (daivadnya and saraswat), the *Desai* (kshatriyas), the *Vanni* (vaishyas or traders), *Chari*, the *Kshatriya Bhandari* (naik or shudras), the *Vir* (naik bhandari), the *Kansar* (copper smiths), the *Moddvoll*, the *Mahar*, the *Mahale*, the *Devlli* and *Kolvontam* (Gomant Maratha Samaj), the *Gosai*, the *Ghaddi* (*zolmi* or oracles/mediums) etc., are some of the castes found among the Hindus in this village. Most surnames along with the place of residence of these Hindus indicate the caste they belong to. While among the Catholics *Sudir* and *Gauddi were* the two castes that were found in the village.

The total population of Shiroda is 14,112 (6,928 males; 7,184 females), out of which 10,212 are literate (5,597 male and 4,615 females).

The main occupation of this landlocked village is agriculture. Nearly half the number of villagers grow paddy. Lush green paddy fields are visible on the banks of the Zuari. Another important occupation is the cashew industry. There are large cashew plantations in the village; and the cashew nut processing unit in the village has given an impetus to this activity. Around 10% of the villagers have areca nut

plantations. The ferry connection with Raia in Salcete **taluka** has provided many jobs to youngsters from Shiroda, although the youth prefer to move overseas.

Four healthcare centres of the Directorate of Health Services, Government of Goa cater to the health needs of the villagers. There is also a private hospital run by a doctor couple. The village has thirteen primary schools, six high schools, two higher secondary schools, and boasts of a homoeopathic and ayurveda college, both having hospitals attached, and one engineering college. All these colleges have resulted in people either leasing out their premises to the students and staff of these colleges or keeping paying guests in their houses, which has become another major occupation for households.

The uniqueness of Shiroda lies in the fact that it has urban features but yet retains its rural ambience and culture. The village is now turning out to be a hub of alternative medicine in the State.

Shiroda has 20 temples, given the fact that the majority of the population comprises Hindus. The Rawalnath and Kamakshi temples are prominent. At both the temples animal sacrifices form an important part of the celebrations at **Dassehra**. Similarly it is customary for different caste groups to participate and unanimously consent to the celebration. St. Joseph church in Karai ward and 19 chapels tend to the Catholic population in Shiroda.

This village has 73 bars, forty-eight of them owned by Catholics and the rest by Hindus. In addition, there are 5 retail outlets, three of them owned by Catholics **and remaining by Hindus.**

### **Statement of the Problem**

We began with the assumption that, as in other societies of the world, alcohol consumption was prevalent in the Goan society, too, from ancient times. With the

advent of the Portuguese, alcohol consumption patterns changed. Today one finds specific parameters of alcohol consumption, which can be directly linked to the socio-cultural influence of the Portuguese, who not only introduced the Goans to Western wines but also taught them the art of distilling the local brew, now *known as feni*.

In course of time, alcohol consumption became a way of life with the Goan society, particularly for the Catholic community in the last several decades. The social changes have affected the patterns of alcohol consumption. This thesis studies how these changing patterns have resulted in new trends of alcohol consumption.

Alcohol use has resulted in a number of problems in present day Goa and has become a cause of concern. Alcoholism is now considered a problem facing the society rather than the individual. Hence, this thesis examines the social effects of excessive alcohol consumption.

Against this background, the study has attempted to understand the consumption of alcohol in the Goan socio-cultural context. It has tried to trace the cultural influences of the Portuguese rule, with reference to alcohol use and consumption, and examines the **socio-cultural** aspects of alcohol consumption in Goa today. These aspects included the various societal norms governing drinking practices, with reference to gender, class and caste; the acceptable time and place to drink, the type of drink consumed, etc.

### **Specific Objectives of the Study**

Our research aimed broadly at culturally locating the use of alcohol in Goa. A comparative study of alcohol use among the Catholics and Hindus has therefore been undertaken. To understand the **socio-cultural** influences of the Portuguese rule, with regard to alcohol consumption, historical factors like Conversion, Lusitanisation,

Inquisition, and their impact on alcohol consumption in the Goan society, were studied.

Alcohol plays an important role in the lives of most Goans as it is used as a social lubricant and is considered to be essential for hospitality. Alcohol is a necessary part at rites of passage, at community events as well as part of situational drinking. Serving alcoholic beverages is not a personal preference but a societal obligation at all the identified events, governed by a number of social norms.

Alcohol consumption is largely determined by religious affiliations; but even this has changed in recent times. A large number of men have given up alcohol consumption and others have stopped serving alcohol at functions. This is observed even among the Hindu men. The changes have occurred due to various religious movements, whose impact is also analysed here.

The study also focuses on the changes in production and consumption of alcohol. The impact of synthetically manufactured alcohol on the Goan society and the time and place of consuming alcohol are dwelt upon in this study.

Since palm and cashew *feni* constitute a traditional cottage industry in Goa the research work tried to understand the physical and technical aspects of *feni* production, the socio-economic life of those involved in the distillation, the status and future of this occupation as well as the rituals adhered to by those involved in distilling *feni*.

In the light of the above discussion the research study has identified specific objectives, which are listed below:

1. To trace the **socio-cultural** relationship of alcohol in Goa;
2. To study the **socio-cultural** aspects of traditional distillation of alcohol;
3. To examine the cultural location of alcohol in the Goan society.

## Research Questions

The broad objectives of the present research study have given rise to many sociologically relevant questions. Since the researcher is aware and familiar with the research problem, facts are assumed before the investigation. When the researcher raises 'fact-finding' questions in order to widen the correlation between different kinds of social variables, they accurately point out the direction to be taken for collecting facts systematically.

The research questions formulated for the purpose of our study are as below:

1. How did conversions and Lusitanisation, or say, the socio-cultural influence of the Portuguese, facilitate the process of assimilation of alcohol use in the social and cultural life of the Goan society?
2. How are the physical and technical aspects of the manufacturing process and sale socially and culturally determined?
3. How has society incorporated patterns, norms and attitudes related to alcohol consumption and set up social mechanisms to ensure adherence to the same?
4. What are the native notions associated with the use of alcohol, especially gender-wise?
5. What beliefs and practices are associated with alcohol use?
6. How have the changing socio-cultural trends affected drinking practices today?

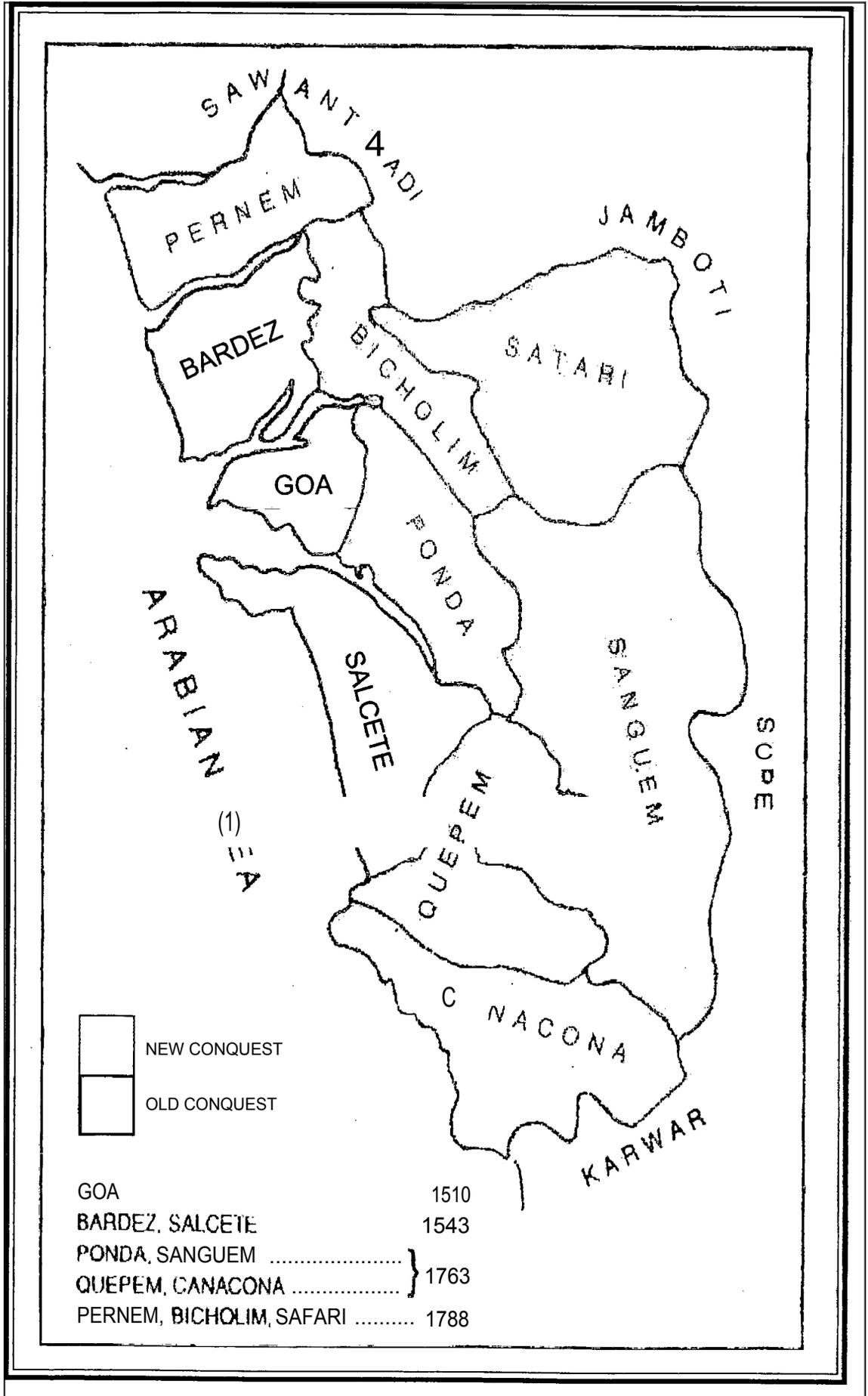
This socio-anthropological study seeks to answer the abovementioned questions regarding alcohol consumption in the Goan society. The study does not look at alcohol production and consumption as a problem but seeks to locate them in the Goan socio-cultural context and to expose their dysfunctional aspects.

## Research Universe and Sample

Goa was under the domination of the Portuguese from 1510-1961. Tiswadi taluka was occupied in 1510. Later the rule was extended to Salcete and Bardez, in 1543. These are referred to as the *Velhas Conquistas* (Old Conquests). The policy of Christianisation and assimilation of the local population by the Portuguese happened here. The talukas of Pernem, Ponda, Bicholim, **Satari**, Sanguem, Quepem and Canacona, collectively known as *Novas Conquistas* (New Conquests), were added one by one to the Goan territory by 1788. Thus, they were under Portuguese rule for a shorter time, their socio-cultural influence therefore being minimal. The former Conquests have a large Catholic presence, whereas the latter Conquests are predominantly Hindu. This being an important distinction, the study has kept in mind all its corollaries and accordingly selected the villages for the study.

The culture and essence of any region is found in the villages, as it is here that one finds the continuity of traditional socio-cultural practices. Our study is based on four villages of Goa. Conversions and Lusitanisation have brought about decisive changes in the Catholic community of Goa. In spite of their change of religion, it is observed that Catholics still maintain certain aspects of their ancient culture, traditions and practices. Religion was a significant variable in the choice of the villages, as we needed to study whether the prevailing socio-cultural ethos in the immediate neighbourhood has affected alcohol use among people of different religious denominations. Hence the question of whether or not alcohol was used by Hindus living in the Catholic-dominated Old Conquests just as the Catholics living there did was part of our study. Similarly, whether there was any impact on the Catholics living in the Hindu-dominated New Conquests vis-à-vis alcohol use was also studied.

The Old and the New Conquests



In accordance with our objectives, we have studied specific **socio-cultural** aspects of alcohol consumption in the four villages: Bali and Shiroda, located in the New Conquests, have a predominantly Hindu population; Benaolim and Verna, in the Old Conquests, are Catholic strongholds. Thus, it was possible to study analytically and comparatively the attitudes towards alcohol by the two dominant religious communities of Goa. In this manner, we could meet the requirement of our study. As urban areas, because of their cosmopolitan culture, do not provide clear distinctions between the different communities, they have been left out of our study.

### **Selection of Sample Villages and Respondents**

The villages and the respondents were selected following a purposive sampling method, to enable us to cover relevant variables like caste and religion represented in these villages. In purposive sampling, the sample is 'hand picked'. As pointed out by Denscombe (1999: 15-16) this method is used when the researcher already knows something specific about the people or events and, therefore, deliberately selects specific ones because they are likely to provide the most valuable data. The research design being exploratory and descriptive it is supposed that the selection of the sample villages and respondents will allow the representation of all relevant strata. Hence, the sample has been selected with a specific purpose in mind.

Similarly, we proceeded through a process of reference from one person to the next. At the start, we involved just a few people: they were asked to recommend two or more persons to be included in the sample. This method is called 'snowballing' (Ibid.). This is an effective technique for building up a reasonably sized sample. One advantage of this is that the accumulation of numbers is quick by using the multiplier effect of one person nominating two or more. Besides, the researcher can approach

the new person by using the nominator as a reference to establish the credibility. The snowball technique is also totally compatible with purposive sampling.

These villages offered the typical characteristics required for the study: awareness of alcohol use, location of the village and convenience to the researcher. Before the actual fieldwork began, church leaders, temple priests, as well as other knowledgeable persons were contacted. Thus, a preliminary visit to probable field sites before the final registration enabled us to ascertain their suitability and also establish contacts with the local population. Final selection of the villages was done after getting to know some influential, popular and knowledgeable persons. Benaolim was selected as it has the second highest concentration of palm *feni* distilleries and about 90 per cent of its 10,158 inhabitants are Catholics. Secondly, as it is a coastal village, developing rapidly as a result of the tourism boom, alcohol use in such a milieu added a new dimension to the study.

The second village selected from the Old Conquests was Verna, as this village had proved to be rich reservoir of information regarding local customs and traditions.

Shiroda from the New Conquests was the third village decided upon, as it is famous for a number of temples, *zatra* and festivals. Preliminary survey of the village indicated a strong tradition of using alcohol in rituals and rites. Besides, 66 per cent of its about 14,112 residents are Hindus.

Bali was the fourth village chosen as it is situated in the hinterland and has not seen much development. In this village one can still find vestiges of age-old traditions. Besides, this village is famous for cashew *feni* distillation in a manner different from the rest of Goa. Lastly, about 86 per cent of its 2,658 residents are Hindus.

Caste, class, religion, gender and age were some of the variables that were examined. These variables also contributed to the selection of the villages. As this study was qualitative in nature, the sample size was not the determining factor. However, we interviewed 50 households from each of the four villages. Special care was taken to ensure that all the different socio-economic and religious groups were interviewed.

One of the objectives of this study was to understand *feni* distillation and its social organisation. Hence, socio-cultural aspects of alcohol production in Goa were researched through fieldwork. Distilling units were visited to understand the whole process of distillation. Besides, toddy tappers and cashew *feni* distillers were interviewed extensively for further relevant information.

As the data required was qualitative in nature, the focus was on collecting as much information as possible rather than visiting many distilleries. Accordingly, we have studied five palm *feni* distilleries in Benaulim and collected information from 10 cashew *feni* distilleries, five of them in Bali and the other five in Valpoi, since this latter is located in the highest cashew *feni* producing taluka of Goa. In-depth interviews were conducted with the help of an interview schedule. In such a schedule, it became possible to put the whole thing in a structured and organized form, which facilitated analysis.

As about 90 per cent of the population in Verna is Catholic, 45 Catholic households were selected for study. Only 05 Hindu households were included in the sample, as the Hindu population in this village constitutes only 10 per cent. In Benaulim, as Catholics constitute 90 per cent of the population, 45 Catholic households were **takn** for study. Since the Hindus form only 10 per cent of the population, 05 Hindu households were visited in Benaulim.

Hindus constitute 66 per cent of Shiroda's population; so 33 Hindu households were included in the sample. As Catholics comprise 34 per cent of the village population, 17 Catholic households were selected. On the other hand, at Bali, where 86 per cent of the population is Hindu, 43 Hindu households were chosen, and only 07 Catholic households were interviewed since Catholics constitute only 14 per cent of the village population.

**Table 2.1**

Information about the villages selected for study

<b>Old Conquests</b>	<b>New Conquests</b>
Village 1. <b>VERNA</b>	Village 3 <b>SHIRODA</b>
90% Catholic population (approx.)	34% Catholic population (approx.)
10% Hindu population (approx.)	66% Hindu population (approx.)
45 Catholic households selected	17 Catholic households selected
05 Hindu households selected	33 Hindu households selected
Village 2. <b>BENAULIM</b>	Village 4. <b>BALI</b>
90% Catholic population (approx.)	14% Catholic population (approx.)
10% Hindu population (approx.)	86% Hindu population (approx.)
45 Catholics households selected	07 Catholic households selected
05 Hindu households selected	43 Hindu households selected

## **Tools of Data Collection**

As mentioned earlier, for the last several decades, the Catholic community has socially and culturally accepted alcohol. Therefore, keeping in mind the research questions to be investigated appropriate research tools were employed in order to avoid technical error.

The present study attempted to understand the social functions of alcohol. The societal norms that govern drinking practices with reference to gender, the acceptable time and place to drink and the type of drink to be consumed were examined. The study further recognized the changes that have occurred in the drinking practices due to religious movements. The traditional distillation of the two *feni* was also a topic studied; and so were the forces of modernization that have introduced changes in the types of drinks and drinking patterns. The thesis also unfolds the antiquity of alcohol use and the existing traditions in the Goan quotidian life.

The objectives of the present study have necessitated the use of multiple methods to collect and collate relevant data. Since the research design is descriptive and exploratory, it has demanded qualitative data and analysis. As pointed out by Mullen (1990: 141) for qualitative research utilizing an interpretive framework, the aim is not to get the respondent to proffer rigid opinions, which can be measured and then taken as indicative of deeper, hidden attitudes, but rather to have the respondents express their ideas and feelings about a topic as clearly as possible until the respondent has exhausted what has to be said on the issue. This is exactly what the researcher has tried to do. By and large, the study is reliant on primary data from field. Hence, the tools needed for the present research are also designed for an empirical study. The main techniques used are: household interviews, observation, and informal discussion.

## **Pilot Study**

In addition, a pilot study was also conducted which helped to fine tune the questions, understand the topic properly and identify the gaps within it, besides revealing the mindset of the respondents. It also provided the researcher relevant precautions to conduct the main fieldwork. The pilot study was necessary as it probed in the sensitive aspects of alcohol consumption. It also helped to modify the design of the questionnaire so as to gather maximum information required.

The pilot study was conducted in a non-sample area before the main interview schedule was finalized. This was done in order to ensure the suitability of the questions, and to locate the ambiguity and redundancy of questions included in the schedule. The study included the interview of 40 villagers belonging to different castes, religion, gender and class, conducted in the villages of Nuvem and Chandor in Salcete taluka, and Goa **Velha** in Tiswadi taluka. The study helped the researcher make necessary corrections.

It proved very useful not only to pinpoint the irrelevant questions but also to include a few more questions that could help in collecting the necessary **data**. Thus, the **final** interview schedule was drawn up after making necessary corrections.

## **Household Interviews**

In sociological investigations the interview is accepted as a reliable field technique for the collection of data. The present investigation is based on primary data consisting of the responses received from the respondents to the schedule, collected through the personal interview method. The interviews were conducted at the respondents' residence. The normal duration of an interview was 2 hours. The researcher asked questions, in a free conversation, in the regional language (**Konkani**)

and English (for those who wished). Relevant responses were recorded in the schedule.

Through interview the research worker came closer to the informant, which facilitated the recording of maximum response. An important advantage of a face-to-face interview was that the researcher gathered detailed information. Besides, it also offered immediate means of validating the data as the researcher could sense if false information was being provided. The response rate was also better. Face-to-face contact also allowed the researcher to carefully select potential respondents so that relevant data could be collected from the required number of respondents.

### **Interview Schedule**

The tentatively prepared household interview schedule was **finalized** after making necessary corrections with the help of a pilot study. This final schedule contained largely open-ended questions. This schedule was used as the principal instrument for the collection of data. With the help of this interview schedule each of the respondents was interviewed in their respective houses.

Four other different interview schedules were also prepared and administered to the following categories of respondents: 1. Cashew and palm *feni* distillers 2. Bar owners 3. Senior citizens 4. Religious leaders. However, a pilot study was conducted only in case of the interview schedule administered to the villagers.

The main household interview schedule was broadly divided into the following eight sections.

#### 1. General information or background characteristics of the respondents:

In this section, information is obtained about the socio-economic background of the respondents. Information is collected about their age, religion, caste, occupation, education, income, and so on.

## 2. Alcohol consumption in the context of individual and group:

Here, the event, community and individual, where alcohol consumption takes place and is socially accepted, are identified. Social functions of alcohol and the types/brands of alcoholic beverages served at these events are explored. The impact of serving these brands on the individual status and the place *of feni* on these occasions was gathered. This section also tried to understand the correlation between the consumption of type of an alcoholic drink and the effects of seasons on drinking a particular type of alcoholic beverage.

## 3. Social organisation and drinking patterns:

Under this head, the procedure involved in serving alcoholic beverages at occasions and the members involved in the serving procedure is covered. This section also covers the gender preference towards the alcoholic beverage, the manner of drinking, the seating arrangement and its impact on drinking, the social mechanisms controlling over-drinking and the twists that take place after drinking are all recorded in detail.

## 4. Societal attitudes and norms towards drinking:

This section gathers information about the socially acceptable time for drinking, the existing restrictions on drinking with reference to gender and age, and the importance of alcohol at the celebrations. The notions on socially acceptable places of drinking, the attitudes towards a man drinking at public drinking places and the appropriate drinking practice, whether social or solitary, has been discovered. Further, the societal attitude towards the different occupational groups of people consuming alcohol, the impact of drinking on social status of an individual, the definition of a drunkard in the Goan context, and the effect of the stigma on a drunkard is gathered. This section also covered the societal attitude towards married

and unmarried women drinking on occasions or in a bar; the place of women drunkards in society, etc. are examined. Finally, the role of bars in the Goan society, and how the child picks the habit of drinking, is discussed.

5. Folk notions associated with the use of alcohol:

This section refers to the use of alcohol in medicines and food preparations.

6. Alcohol use in customs and traditions:

This section includes questions designed to collect information on the importance of alcohol in customs and traditions and the occasions where people gift alcohol to family members and friends.

7. Religious influence on **drinking**:

This section discusses the Catholic Church and its current views on alcohol consumption and the impact of religious movements of the Catholics as well as of the Hindus vis-a-vis alcohol consumption.

8. Changes effected towards drinking in recent times:

This last section discusses the change in the drinking trends, changes in alcohol production and preferences, and the effect of alcohol consumption of Goan society.

The interview schedule for the cashew and palm *feni* distillers was divided into the following 6 sections:

1. General information or background characteristics of the respondents
2. Information on distillation procedure
3. Information on the vessels/ instruments used in distillation
4. Information on gender role
5. Information on sale
6. Additional information

The interview schedule for bars and bar-and-restaurant owners was as follows:

In this section questions were asked to understand the drinking patterns among different categories of people; the purpose of a bar in a social setting where alcohol consumption takes place; the services provided by them and the manner in which different types of customers respond to those services (with reference to gender, religion, socio-economic status, geographical areas, seasons, etc.) and the nature of changes that their profession has witnessed.

The interview schedule for senior citizens covered information on pre-Liberation alcohol use: In this section questions regarding the importance given to alcohol in the Portuguese society, the availability of different varieties of alcoholic beverages (both imported and local), the etiquette associated with social drinking, etc. were asked. The time and type of drinks, the people, i.e. the religious groups that abstained; the drinking houses that existed in those times, and the gender and religious groups who managed these houses, the people who frequented these drinking places, the traditional notion of a *bebdo* and the changes that have taken place in the drinking patterns today are discussed.

The interview schedule for the religious leaders: This elicited answers regarding their views on alcohol consumption, comments on celebrations and the use of alcohol, practical measures taken by them to curb drunkenness and the distortions taking place in the drinking patterns today.

## **Observation**

The object of the study was to understand the **socio-cultural** aspects of alcohol production and consumption as well as alcohol use in customs and traditions. This necessitated the use of observation as a tool of data collection.

As pointed out by Thakur (1993: 149) and Das (2000: 75), observation in exploratory research helps to gain insights into problems which can later be tested by other techniques of data collection. It can be used to gather supplementary data to interpret previous findings obtained by other methods. It can also be used as a primary method to obtain description of a given phenomenon or to provide explanation of specific problem or events in terms of their causes, that is, to test a causal hypothesis.

Hence, the researcher resorted to non-participative observation of all rituals in which alcohol is used. Similarly, events and occasions where alcohol is used have also been observed systematically. The researcher also visited distilleries to understand the distillation process, and public drinking places ranging from the *taverna* to the upmarket bar-and-restaurant. The observations have enabled the researcher to analyse the intricacies of alcohol use. Observations were noted down in detail so that no aspect, however minor, would be overlooked. Photographs were taken for record. The researcher met the concerned people for additional information or clarifications. This has enabled the researcher to avoid permeation of her own ideas and has helped in correct interpretation and analysis for a thorough study of the subject.

### **Informal discussions**

Informal discussions also contribute immensely towards understanding the research topic. A number of informal discussions were held with knowledgeable people other than those included in the sample. Discussions were held with lecturers, former alcoholics, their wives as well as some youngsters.

### **Secondary Data**

This was culled from various authoritative books, journals and research articles. It was the main source that allowed the researcher an overview of the socio-

cultural relevance of alcohol in different countries, the norms involved, etc. Such knowledge became a base for designing a field-based study. Historically relevant material that was consulted helped to understand the socio-cultural linkages of alcohol in Goan society.

#### Data analysis

Since the data collected was qualitative in nature, and keeping in mind the purpose of the study the data had to be analysed through content analysis.

#### Field Experience

This highlights the realities involved in research activities. The experiences can serve as guidelines for later researchers. Hence, it is important for the researcher to share field experiences in the social sciences.

The fieldwork was concentrated in four different villages situated in different parts of Goa. Moreover, variables like caste, religion, class, and gender were also considered while selecting respondents. This was a demanding task, with the collection of primary data taking almost a year. Intensive fieldwork for the research started in the month of July 2004 and continued till June 2005.

Even though the topic seemed quite acceptable the researcher could sense the sensitive nature of the topic among the people in general and the Hindus in particular. The researcher faced a dual difficulty of being a lady and Catholic questioning men in general and Hindu men in particular, on alcohol consumption. Since alcohol consumption, among both Hindus and Catholics, is considered to be a male domain, it was initially difficult for a woman researcher to collect the necessary data.

As alcohol consumption is taboo for Hindus, they feared that the questions would tarnish the image of their community. They were even reluctant to recommend

people to be interviewed. Hence, the researcher had to take the help of some prominent and generally accepted persons in the New Conquests.

Many respondents viewed the researcher with suspicion and were eager to know whether their names would figure in the publication. A number of other insignificant remarks — for instance, 'You being a Catholic should know better the answers to the questions you are posing'; or, 'In what way will we benefit by answering?' etc. — had to be faced by the researcher. However, these difficulties were defeated by the researcher establishing a rapport with the respondents. Through regular meetings and pertinent questioning, the males recognized the seriousness of the exercise.

It was only when the researcher attended their activities that she was accepted by the villagers. The researcher tried to attend their rituals at temples and the ceremonies observed at homes, all of which helped to establish a rapport with the villagers.

Even though the researcher was not a resident of the villages under study, she did spend many days there, even when scheduled interviews were cancelled, she spent time meeting again those that had been interviewed earlier.

Since the overwhelming majority of villagers were engaged in some activity or other, the researcher always had to fix appointments at their convenience, usually on weekends or holidays or at hours odd for the researcher.

### **Significance of the Study**

Alcoholism is universally acknowledged as a public and individual health problem. Every country has its characteristic form of alcoholism, depending on the culture, historical background, geographical environment and availability of the raw product. Even in countries where the prevalent religions forbid the ingestion of alcoholic beverages, a percentage of the population is still afflicted with the illness.

Anthropologists were the first social scientists to contribute significantly to the study of alcoholism. They documented different cultural habits related to the use and consumption of alcohol. They also studied the **socio-cultural** variables in alcohol use and abuse (Roman 1987: 8). Today, the medical role of alcohol is limited and the public health issue involving its social use and abuse has gained importance. Alcohol for non-medical uses, like social drinking, drunkenness, and so on, had strongly affected the individual, the family and the community in more ways than one. Many reports reveal that the use of alcohol was precipitating down to the younger generation. As rightly pointed out by Khan (1986: 5-12) understanding the non-medical use from the cultural, psychological and sociological angles is important. This would mean that the social scientists gradually systematize information and apply it to prevent alcoholism through educational programmes, thus aiding in the repression of alcohol problems (Sargent 1976: 342).

Throughout history, human beings have used alcohol in various ways. The socio-cultural explanations of alcoholism emphasize the role of drinking customs (Gold and Scarpitti 1967: 467). It was unlikely that these customs would be wiped off either through fear or a misrepresentation of facts (Block 1965: 258). Hence, studying the socio-cultural variables would help in knowing more about this problem; it could help in imparting information through educational programmes and to change public attitudes towards alcohol consumption (Julian 1973: 139).

This study has practical relevance as it proposes to focus on the cultural location of alcoholic beverage in the Goan society. The dysfunctional aspects of alcohol consumption are also dealt with. The study proposes to make a contribution towards public education and law enforcement. Any legislation without a proper background is ineffective. Thus, this study can provide the relevant background for a

truly beneficial legislation. The ethnographic research findings of this study on the social and cultural roles of alcohol will have important implications for policy makers. In this context, it is essential for those concerned with policy and legislation on alcohol to have a clear understanding of the socio-cultural functions and meaning of drinking. This study can also help in the rehabilitation programmes for the family. Hence, this study is an important contribution to the knowledge of social sciences.

The thesis has generated a lot of information on alcohol use in quotidian life. It has also highlighted the variations existing in social living in the Old and the New Conquests and provided a true **picture** of the Goan society. In this sense this study is the first of its kind to empirically inquire into the subject, which will hopefully serve as a benchmark for future research studies.

This study can be a contribution to social anthropology as well as to the sociology of culture.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Fulfilling the researcher's ethical duty to identify the limitations of the study, it must be pointed out that this study focuses on four villages of Goa, two of them from the Old Conquests and the other two from the New Conquests. Since the study is totally based on qualitative information given by the respondents it is possible that their bias and ethnocentric attitudes have crept into it.

This study is limited to the socio-cultural aspects of alcohol consumption and as such it does not look at alcohol consumption from the problem perspective.

## Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into 10 chapters, as follows:

### Chapter I: Introduction

The first chapter or introduction documents alcohol use by different communities across the world and in India. The origin of the alcoholic beverage is traced and the socio-cultural meanings associated with its use in each culture dwelt upon. The varied social patterns of drinking and the functions played by alcohol in different societies are discussed. It also emphasizes the central importance of seeing the act of alcohol consumption as part of the larger pattern of social life. While alcohol use is not a cultural constituent in most parts of India, in Goa, due to historical reasons, the Goan Catholic community has assimilated the use of alcohol in several ways. This major difference between two main sections of the Goan culture is also traced.

### Chapter II: Research Setting and Methodology

The second chapter provides a background and the method in which the study was conducted. Goa as a whole and the four villages under study, in particular, are described, and their geographical, physical, administrative and **socio-cultural** characteristics explained. The statement of the problem and the objectives of the study are elaborated upon. The manner in which the study was undertaken and the importance and relevance of the study are also described. Subsequently, how the data was analysed is also stated. Finally, the chapterization scheme is explained.

### Chapter III: Location of Alcohol in the Goan Culture: A Historical and Contemporary Perspective

This chapter covers the impact of the Portuguese rule on alcohol consumption. To begin with, the culture prevalent in the Goan society before the arrival of the

Portuguese is studied. Secondly, how the Portuguese rule affected the local population is analysed. The impact of Portuguese policies of conversions, Inquisition and Lusitanisation on the Goan population forms a part of this analysis. Alcohol trade in Goa during the Portuguese regime, which resulted in the introduction of wines and its consumption in the Goan culture, is also documented. Details of *feni* production and consumption during the Portuguese rule are provided. Finally, a comparative analysis of the present Goan society with reference to alcohol use is made.

#### Chapter IV: Social Organization of *Feni* Distillation

This chapter attempts to study the anthropological and socio-cultural aspects of *feni* production. The basics of both palm and cashew *feni* distillation are described in detail. The focus is on the continuation of the occupation, allotment of duties based on gender, the techniques and instruments used for distillation, etc. The changes in various aspects of distillation effected over a period of time are also enumerated. The socio-economic life of the *render* and *kazkar*, and how these occupations have evolved into a cottage industry, is discussed next. As rituals and beliefs play a major role in the life of the *render* and *kazkar*, they are also explored, especially in relation to their occupation. Finally, the problems faced by the *render* and *kazkar* vis-à-vis marketing their produce are listed. A few suggestions have been offered to solve some of these problems.

#### Chapter V: Alcohol and the Quotidian Goan Life

This chapter records the various uses of alcohol in the day-to-day life of the Goans. Despite introduction of allopathic medicines, and subsequent changes thereafter, *feni* is used to treat, or in the preparation of home remedies for, varied common afflictions. Hence, the medicinal uses of *feni* are listed. One of the lasting Portuguese influences was on the Goan Catholic cuisine wherein alcohol is used as an

ingredient in cooking. The different food preparations employing alcohol, especially *feni*, *sur* and vinegar prepared from coconut sap, as an ingredient are listed along with the preservative properties of *feni* and vinegar. Finally, the various uses of *feni* and *sur* in the local customs and traditions are traced. The use of *feni* or *sur* to appease the *devchar*, in whom some Goans believe, is documented. The beliefs and practices involving use of *feni*, not only in the four villages under study but also in other villages where such practices and rituals, are covered.

#### Chapter VI: Social Functions of Alcohol

Alcohol plays an important role in the lives of Goans as it is used as a social lubricant and is considered to be essential for hospitality. Here, the various uses of alcohol as an aid for socialisation and as an essential part of hospitality are explored. Events, community and individual, where alcohol consumption takes place and is socially accepted are identified. Alcohol has a role to play at rites of passage, at community events and situational drinking. Society accepts certain places where alcohol consumption occurs. Hence, different types of public drinking places are described.

#### Chapter VII: Social Norms Governing Alcohol Consumption

In this chapter the social mechanisms deterring addiction are discussed. An analysis of the society's attitude towards alcohol is also made in the context of conventions like time, place and age for alcohol consumption. The various modes of serving alcohol at different functions are also studied. As alcohol consumption among most societies is a group activity, the group formations in Goa with regard to alcohol consumption are also discussed. Subsequently, society's conventions regarding who serves alcoholic drinks on the basis of gender are also discussed. Even though permissiveness towards alcohol consumption prevails in Goa, certain etiquette is to be

adhered to while consuming alcoholic beverages. These behavioural norms are identified next. Serving alcoholic beverages is not a personal preference but a societal obligation and, therefore, the tradition prevails at identified events. The repercussion of not abiding by societal expectations of alcohol serving is discussed.

#### Chapter VIII: Alcohol and Religion

Alcohol consumption is largely determined by religious affiliations. This chapter examines how religion monitors alcohol use. The role of the Roman Catholic Church in Goa vis-a-vis alcohol consumption by Catholics is analysed first. Even though it is taken for granted that alcohol consumption is part of the lifestyle of the Goan Catholic community, various changes have taken place in recent times. A large number of men have given up alcohol consumption and have stopped feasting with alcohol. This has happened among a number of Hindu men too. These changes have occurred due to various religious movements, whose impact is analysed.

#### Chapter IX: Changing Trends

No society is static. Along with changes in the Goan society, several facets of alcohol, including production, the time and place of consumption, and so on, are discussed. The impact of synthetically manufactured alcohol and the resultant change in preference of alcoholic beverage is also discussed. Although societal norms seek to prevent deviant behaviour as far as alcohol consumption is concerned, there are some exceptions. Hence, accepting that alcoholism is a social problem, the dysfunctional aspects of drinking with reference to individual and society are examined.

#### Chapter X: Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the conclusions based on the analyses presented in the preceding chapters. Even though alcohol consumption was prevalent in Goa even during the pre-Portuguese period, it was for personal consumption and associated with

the labour class and medicine. During the long rule of the Portuguese in Goa, new patterns of alcohol consumption were formed, which resulted in alcohol consumption becoming a social activity, particularly for the Catholics. The Hindus have not been much affected by the Catholic celebrations as far as the use of alcohol is concerned. Hindus in both the Old and the New Conquests have still not assimilated alcohol into their culture as they continue to consider it to be a taboo. However, the younger generation of Hindus has more liberal attitude to alcohol use. A number of customs and traditions followed by the Catholics have their origin in the Hindu culture. The difference is that Catholics use alcohol while Hindus do not use alcohol in any form in such customs and practices. Presently, *feni* does not find much favour with the Goan populace. Mostly migrant labourers consume it while local Goans prefer I.M.F.L (Indian Made Foreign Liquors). Goans, on improving their socio-economic status have forsaken *feni* for I.M.F.L. The Goan consumer has a varied choice in alcoholic drinks ranging from the local *feni* to the choicest foreign brands and the rarest of wines. These have resulted in changing the taste for alcoholic beverages and the greatest impact is felt on *feni* consumption, which is slowly but surely being eased out from the markets.

## CHAPTER III

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

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

#### Pre-Portuguese Goan Society and Culture

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

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

Just like in the rest of India, the pre-Portuguese Goan society was caste-based. There were four castes — the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras — and one

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

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

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

Thus, socially, economically, religiously and politically speaking, pre-Portuguese Goa was very much like the rest of the Indian sub-continent (Mendonca 2002: 67, Xavier 1993: 51) — caste-ridden, tradition-bound, conservative and extremely religious (Xavier 1993: 159, D'Souza 1975: 55-59, Shirodkar 1997: 25).

People observed a number of social practices and ceremonies during marriages which were fixed after consulting astrologers (Gracias 1996: 48-88, Priolkar 1961: 97-100). The institution was regarded as indissoluble and usually divorce was not

allowed. The joint family system was common. The dowry system also existed (Xavier 1993: 52-57, Larsen 1998: 102-105).

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

The village economy was self-sufficient (Xavier 1993: 13-14, Singh 1993: XIII, Larsen 1998: 94). The various occupations were assured a share in the produce of the land (Da Silva and Robinson 1994: 62, Souza 1990: 85-90). Agriculture was the main occupation of the people, followed by fishing and hunting (Xavier 1993: 28, Larsen 1998: 93). When a village found itself lacking in any particular trade, the *gaunkar* would invite a person from another village to relocate in their village, enticing him with land (Ibid 1998: 94). The barter system existed at first; later commodities began to be exchanged for money (Chauhan 1993: 158).

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

Women were not considered to be equal to men; they would not mix freely. There were a number of rites connected with pollution and purification that were targeted specifically at women. They married at an early age. Marriage was understood to be a union of two families and clans (Pandit 2003: 20). People commonly followed customs like *sotvi* (observance of the sixth day after birth) and

*sati* (self-immolation on the husband's funeral pyre). Child marriages and polygamy were also prevalent (Gracias 1996: 44, Larsen 1998: 97-98).

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

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

From the above discussion, it is clear that alcoholic beverages like *urrack* were produced and consumed. The very fact that a caste group called *bhandari* existed establishes that toddy tapping was an occupation during those times.

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

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

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

The Portuguese came to Asia in search of spices and to convert the population to Roman Catholicism (Xavier 1993: 2, Bhandari 1999: 59, Gune 1993: 117, Shirodkar 1999: XV, Silva 1994: 46, Emma 2002: 262). According to Xavier (1988: 99), conversion of the natives was enjoined upon the King of Portugal by Pope Alexander N through the Papal Bull entitled *Ineffabiliset Summi*. The king of Portugal was entitled to have all the lands he conquered provided Roman Catholicism was established there. Conversions, therefore, became an important duty for the king

of Portugal. In the 16th century it was held in Europe, Africa and Asia that the vassals had to follow the religion of the king (**Mendonça** 2002: 8-11, 37). Hence, Christianity was declared the State religion by the government of Portugal and conversions began during the reign of D. Joao III of Portugal (Emma 2002: 106-107, D'Costa 1982: 26-27). It may be noted, however, that when the New Conquests were acquired, in the last quarter of the 18th century, the Portuguese policy had changed: they assured the local population that they would not interfere with their customs and religion (Mendonca 2002: 5, Gune 1993: 119). Accordingly, Christianity became widespread in the Old Conquests (Ibid 1993: 117, Robinson 1998: 18, Angle 1986: 44-45). Since the New Conquests had a different set of laws (Larsen 1998: 137), the Portuguese influence there was minimal.

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

The introduction of Portuguese laws and ways of life brought about major changes in the Old Conquests. It marked the beginning of a new social system in Goa, with a new community of natives who identified themselves with the Portuguese

(Larsen 1998: 110-112). Religion and culture were inseparable for the Portuguese (Gaitonde 1987: IX).

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

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

The ecclesiastical tribunal, called the 'Inquisition', was an important influence on the **socio-cultural** and religious life of the people, both Portuguese and neo-

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

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

### **Alcohol Industry during the Portuguese Rule**

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

Portugal has a permissive attitude towards alcohol consumption. Significantly, it also has a culture with strong social sanctions against drunkenness (Clare 1975: 73). Portugal has always been a wine producing and exporting country (Azevedo 1987: VII, Braganca 1992: 28). However, though the Portuguese adjusted to the climate and

to some extent the food in Goa, they could not enjoy the local wine. Therefore, plenty of wine was imported from Portugal, and Portuguese wine became a favoured item in Goa (Chauhan 1993: 157). These imports were an integral part of the trade between Portugal and its colony (Dermejo 2000: 63-64). On the return journey, vinegar, Goan liquors like *feni* and *arrack*, among other things, were exported (Pinto 1990: 178, 189).

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

Pereira (1995: 38) gives us to understand that a large variety of wines like Muscatel, Tinto, Porto, Cinzano, and whisky too, were available in Goa. According to Lobo (1927: 35) by 1924 the import duty collected on wines and spirits in Portuguese India amounted to Rs 70,000. Most of these imported wines and spirits were consumed in Goa itself with an insignificant amount being utilized in Daman and Diu. Rich landlords served these wines and whisky along with *feni* at feasts and other occasions (Pereira 1995: 38). According to Gracias (2000: 77), at that time, a good

bottle of Scotch whisky was priced at Rs. 10. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a Portuguese gentleman, on an average, would drink one or two glasses of wine at dinner (Gracias 1994: 30).

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

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

The Royal Hospital catered to the Portuguese sea voyagers. The patients at this hospital were prescribed Portuguese wine as well as *feni* as medicine. The hospital used to receive 114 gallons of wine and one barrel of vinegar among other things, free of custom duties from Portugal (Gracias 1994: 120-129).

A number of rules and regulations prescribed the sale of Portuguese wines. The market was administered by the Municipality of Goa through market inspectors (Dicholkar 1993: 147), who fixed the selling price of Portuguese wines. Wine traders were not allowed to sell more than one barrel of either red or white wine in a single commercial establishment. Sale of red or white wine was strictly prohibited at *tavernas*. Portuguese wine traders had to furnish a security bond in order to obtain a municipal license (Chauhan 1988: 216-217). In 1520, the King of Portugal ordered the Municipality of Goa to fine those found trading in wine without a license. The Municipality earned a substantial amount of income through these **finés** (Dicholkar 1993: 144). The quality of the wine was also strictly monitored. The wine seller was not allowed to mix any other wine with the Portuguese wines, nor was he allowed to sell any other wines if he was selling Portuguese wines. Anyone found mixing crystallized sugar with Portuguese wine in order to reduce the potency was also fined (Chauhan 1988: 217).

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

The Portuguese authorities called the local liquors 'country liquors' or 'spirits' (Azevedo 1987: VII). Two types of liquor were distilled. One was *feni* and other, *urrack*. *Feni* contained 40-44% of alcohol while *urrack* had 25-30% alcohol. The price of *feni* was twice that of *urrack* since the quantity of juice that was used for

distillation was also double (Xavier 1990: 34). Borges (2000: 173) points out that in 1932 the local alcohol industry was very profitable. Legislations were enacted to protect and promote the indigenous industry (Pinto 1994: 93).

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

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

owned most of the *tavernas* in Goa (Xavier 1990: 34). According to Borges (2000: 174), in 1932 there were 417 *tavernas* in Goa.

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

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

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

punches and other hot drinks. Thus, even the upper strata of the society began getting acquainted with it.

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

Goa used to export foreign and local liquors to several places. Foreign liquors, such as brandy, gin, champagne, brought by vessels from Lisbon, would move to

Balaghat, Vengurla and Belgaum. Likewise, in the year 1800, Goan liquors were regularly exported to East Africa. *Arrack* was a major item exported to Mozambique (Pinto 1994: 225, 1996: 92, 1990: 194). In 1800, *arrack* and gin was imported from Goa to Kanara (Bhat 2000: 60).

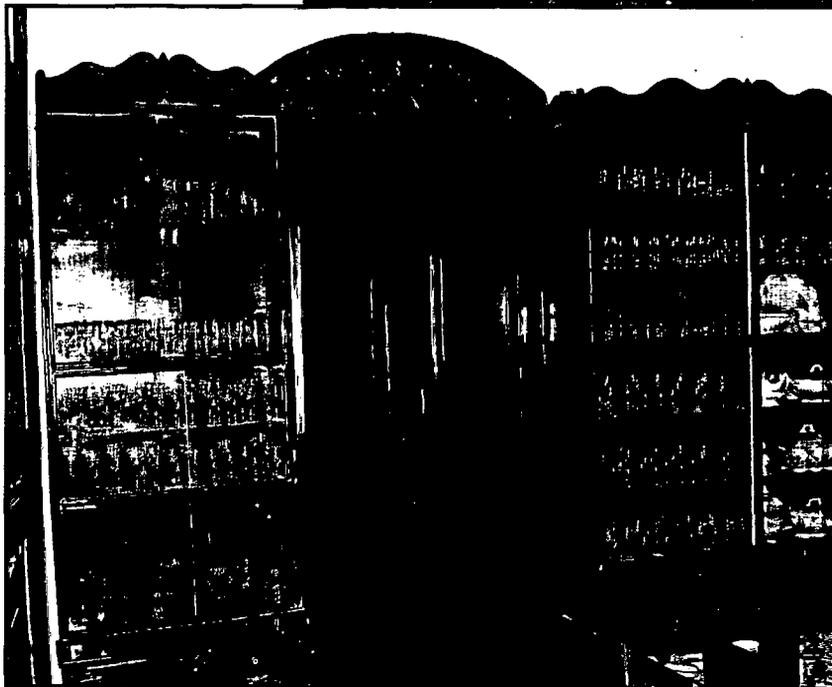
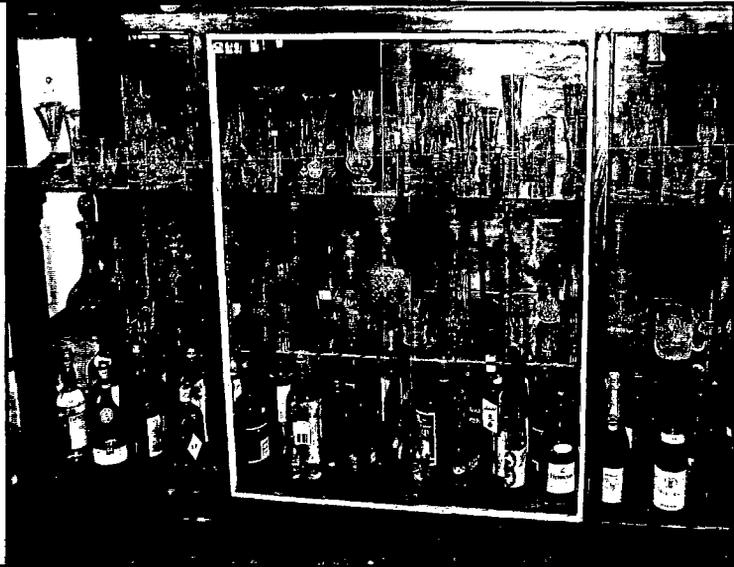
By 1920, foreign liquor worth Rs 300,000 was imported every year. The import duty collected on this alone contributed annually Rs 70,000 to the Exchequer (Xavier 1990: 34). According to Xavier (1990: 34) and Lobo (1927: 39), in the year 1920 the excise duty collected by the Government on the manufacture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

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

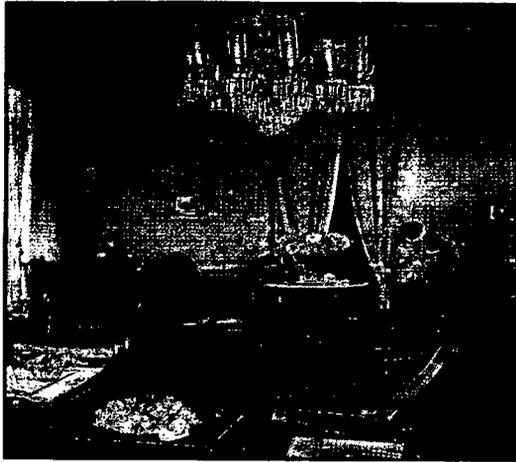


3.1 Wooden containers of the Portuguese period used to store toddy

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

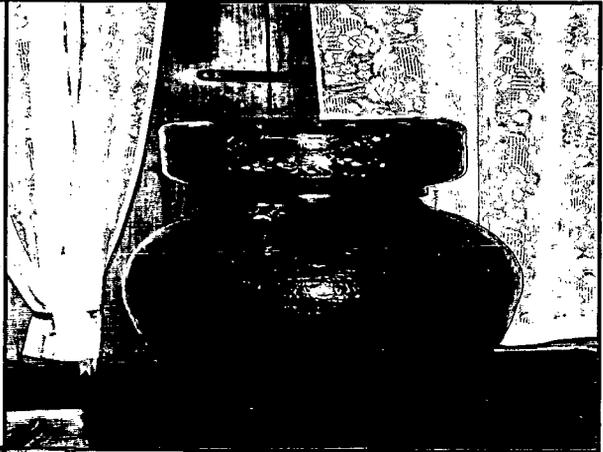


3.3 Crockery of the Portuguese period in an affluent Brahmin Catholic home

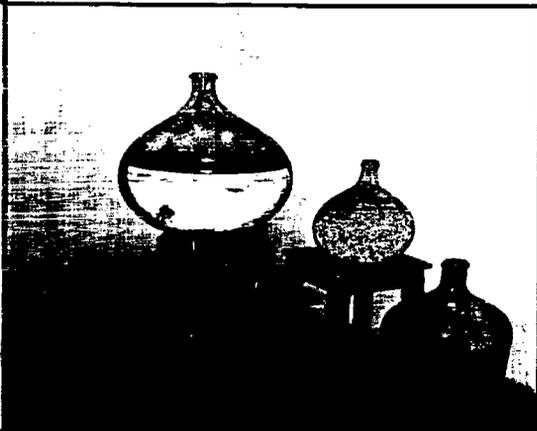


3.4 Interior of a Brahmin Catholic house

3.5 An exquisite clay jar of the Portuguese period



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



3.7 Glass containers of the Portuguese period used to store wine/feni

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

### **Contemporary Goan Society and Culture**

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

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

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

The economy of pre-Liberation Goa was predominantly import-oriented. With the exception of mining operations, the manufacturing sector was weak (Angle 2001: 36). The traditional occupations helped in sustaining families. The focus has presently shifted from agriculture and traditional occupations to jobs related with industries and other sectors. During the last decade and a half, Goa experienced great industrial development. In some way or other all talukas have been beneficiaries of this

industrial development. The number of industries set up in Goa has created employment opportunities for the Goans. The industrial sector presently contributes 25% of the State domestic product and has a share of 25% of the total employment (Angle 2001: 55).

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

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

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

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

Similarly the number of upmarket bars and restaurants is on the rise. They are patronized by a number of families in the Old Conquests, on weekends and to celebrate intimate occasions.

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

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

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

Similarly, the earlier alcohol-related taboos among the Hindus have considerably weakened. The younger generation does not perceive alcohol consumption as 'polluting'. In fact, alcohol consumption in a group and at social meetings and celebrations has become a social need for present day Hindus. Urban

residents are more liberal than their rural counterparts. Finally, it is more common to find Hindus and Catholics participating in each other's functions today as compared with the pre-Liberation period.

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

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

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

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

A higher socio-economic status has resulted in people changing their preferences. They generally opt for expensive brands; their tastes have also changed

as per their new status. This matches Pierre Bourdieu's findings, as quoted in Warde (1997: 87-88). Studying how the upper and lower classes in France shaped and formed their tastes, Bourdieu found that the higher class tastes tended towards light, refined and delicate while the lower class tastes were coarse. That is to say, the socio-economic status greatly influenced the nature of alcohol consumption.

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

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

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

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

## CHAPTER IV

### SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF *FENI* DISTILLATION

A community gets its identity from the occupations that are created by the prevailing social structure. This in turn, forms the fundamental component of that specific community. In fact, India's caste system was based on the then existing occupations.

*Feni* distillation in Goa is one occupation that supports a number of families. In fact, it has evolved into a social organization with its own specific characteristics.

This chapter attempts to understand the anthropological and socio-cultural aspects of *feni* distillation in Goa. The focus is on the continuation of this occupation in the family, the allotment of duties on the basis of gender, techniques and instruments used, changes that have eventually affected the distillation methods, the rituals involved and the difficulties faced by those involved in this occupation. The various aspects of *feni* distillation are also discussed and this collectively forms the social organization concerning this occupation.

Goa is identified with the local alcoholic drink *feni*, popularly called *soro* and jocularly, *kop*. A number of songs eulogizing *feni* have become popular and have even figured in Bollywood. *Bobby*, *Majboor* and *King Uncle* are some films in which *feni* has been referred to and even shown consumed.

In Goa there are two types of *feni*. The one prepared from toddy or coconut sap is called palm or coconut *feni*. The other, called cashew *feni*, is prepared from cashew apple juice. The community involved in distilling palm *feni* is a sub-caste called *render* (toddy tappers). Among the Catholics, the *render* have their own place

in the *Sudir* caste, while among the Hindus also they form a sub-caste of *Sudir*, called the *Bhandari* community or *poi kape*.

Palm *feni* predated the cashew counterpart in Goan society. The Portuguese introduced the cashew fruit in Goa. Even before the arrival of the Portuguese in Goa, certain traditions and rituals demanded the use of palm *feni*. Another indicator that palm *feni* is ancient is the existence of the sub-caste involved in this occupation whereas those involved in cashew distillation do not constitute a sub-caste. Earlier, *feni* may not have been distilled in the **refined** methods used today but there must have been some crude technique used. What is important, however, is that *feni* distillation has given an impetus to the development of a cottage industry in Goa. A number of families depend upon *feni* distillation for their livelihood, thus, making it an important economic activity.

The word *feni*, according to Azevedo (1987: VIII) and Sá (2001: 16) comes from the word *fenn* (foam or froth seen in the *sur* or toddy when it begins to ferment). However, according to some of our respondents, *feni* was a term originally used by toddy tappers to qualify the strength of the *soro* (alcohol) and not the produce itself. In the bygone era, when there was no *gray* (alcometer), alcohol quality was measured indigenously. Alcohol quality was checked by vigorously stirring the alcohol in the *kollso* (earthen pot) with a *it* (coconut palm **mid-rib**). The *fenno* (bubbles) produced by this indicated its strength: if small and slow to **fizzle**, it was presumed to have a strength ranging from 20 to 21 proof. *Feni* producing weak bubbles was known to be of inferior quality, measuring only 18 *gray* and below. **Accordingly, traders would decide on the price. Another method to produce these bubbles and check the quality was to take two glasses and** continuously pour some of the **alcohol from one glass into another. Here, too, the strength of the *feni* would be gauged on the type of *fenno* produced.**

The fermentation of the coconut sap must have been the early natives' intoxicant. The knowledge to tap coconut trees existed even before the Portuguese rule (Azevedo 1987: VI-VII, Sá 2001: 16). According to Sá (2001: 16) some warmed the fermented sap to attain higher strength.

Native Goans were taught to use toddy in a more effective manner by the priests. The priests taught the natives to construct alembics similar to the ones used in Portugal. *Aguardente* (literally, 'burning water') was distilled by Portuguese peasants in alembics. *Aguardente* was nothing but the distillate of fermented pulp of the rejected table fruits (Ibid.). Abram (1995: 36) also supports this view as he asserts that distillation was first introduced in Goa more than 400 years ago by Catholic missionaries. Portuguese peasants stewed grape skins. Goans replaced the grape skins with locally available material like coconut sap or cashew apple juice. Over the years, the distillation process has been refined. In all areas under their control, the Portuguese extensively promoted the cultivation of coconut tree (Azevedo 1987: VI). Eventually, those villages that had palm groves provided financial scope for the *Bhandari* or toddy tapping community (Souza, 1994: 40-41).

### **Collection and Distillation of *Feni***

In order to understand clearly the distillation process of the two types *offeni*, we shall discuss them separately here below:

#### **Coconut or Palm *Feni***

The coconut itself occupies an important place in a Goan household. The kernel is used for curries and dried into copra to extract oil. Coconut curries are an essential part of the Goan diet. Sweets in Goa are usually made of coconut, rice and jaggery mixtures. One variety of jaggery itself is prepared from the toddy.

**Apparatus Involved:** Palm *feni* distillation has been an age-old occupation in Goa. Over the years, the instruments used have undergone a gradual but noticeable change. Previously, the instruments used were made out of things available in nature. For instance, the *dudnnem* (a container used by toddy tappers to collect *sur*) was made from a gourd. The changes that affected the apparatus occurred basically due to two factors — availability of synthetically manufactured material and the need for safety. Another noteworthy factor is that earlier most of the occupations were interdependent. To a large extent the *render* depended on potters and blacksmiths for the instruments required for distillation.

Before we acquaint ourselves with the distillation procedure, we must know the apparatus used. Hence, a description and functioning of the apparatus is provided below. The description gives an insight into the improvements that the instruments have undergone. This also throws light on the changes that have taken place in occupations that were interconnected since times immemorial.

The following are the apparatus used in both collection of *sur* and distillation of palm feni.

**a. Kati:** It is a very sharp crescent-shaped blade used by the *render* to slice the *poi* (spadix of the coconut tree). The blacksmith beats a metal to make this instrument. Since the blacksmiths' profession is dying out it is becoming very difficult to procure a good *kati* nowadays.

**b. Damnnem:** It is a small earthen pot used by the *render* to collect the sap. This pot is carried up the coconut tree. Its mouth is fitted to the cut *poi*, from which the *sur* trickles into it. At regular intervals the *render* empties the *sur* collected in the *damnnem* into the *dudnnem*. With plastic utensils now a practical proposition, the *render* have begun to use plastic *damnnem*, which, however, due to their light weight

would get dislodged from the *poi* and in many cases even blown away by a heavy gust of wind. The synthetic *damnnem* generate heat, which affects the flow of *sur*, all of which makes the earthen *damnnem* the best choice.

**c. Dudnnem:** The *sur* from the *damnnem* is emptied into the *dudnnem*. Traditionally, this was made from *konkon dhuddi* (bottle gourd), specially cultivated for this purpose. An elaborate procedure was followed to ensure that the *dudnnem* could be used for its specified purpose. Later, these bottle gourd *dudnnim* were replaced by plastic ones; but they still keep the oblong shape of the *konkon dhuddi*. Presently, the *render* complain about the unavailability of the traditional as well as the plastic *dudnnem* in Goa. They have to fetch them from Kerala and other places outside Goa.

**d. Gope:** These are made from the frond of palm leaves. They are also called **vaie**. These strands are immersed for two hours in fuming *godo* (the residue in the *bhann*). Later, they are rinsed in water and dried to induce elasticity. These can then be stored for three months for future use. Once the *gope* are used to tie the *poi*, they cannot be used again as they lose their elasticity.

Presently, the *render* are facing problems in finding *gope*. Earlier, landlords in the coastal areas used to make seasonal *chuddtam paddo* (felling of coconut leaves) with the help of the *paddekar* (coconut plucker). Toddy tappers procured the *vale* from the *paddekar* by paying an agreed amount. As the *chuddtam paddo* is no longer made, *gope* have been replaced by *bett* (plastic strips) available in the market. It is learnt, however, that the synthetic nature of **bett** affects the freshness of the *poi* and consequently its productivity.

**e. Kollso: It** is a round earthen pot used by the *render* at the toddy tapping site to empty the *sur* from the *dudnnem*. He is usually seen either carrying this pot on his shoulder or tied to his bicycle. Nowadays, these earthen containers have been replaced

by plastic ones which are more durable, easier to handle and readily available in the market. At times he may be seen even with a 'gallon' tied to his bicycle.

*Kollso* is also used to collect the *feni* in the distillation process. The earthen *kollso* of the past used to facilitate cooling as the fresh *feni* is always warm. A typical *kollso* is understood to contain a standard amount of *feni* i.e. eighteen bottles or 13,500 mls. Thus, it also becomes a convenient unit to measure the quantity of *feni* from every distillation process. Most of the *render* have replaced the earthen pot with a plastic one.

1. ***Bhatti***: This is the furnace. Colloquially, *bhatti* often refers to the place where the apparatus used for distilling by the toddy tapper is installed. In the traditional method the furnace was made up of a set of three stones plastered with *rounnechi mati* (mud taken from anthills) on all sides. This furnace was fuelled with firewood. According to the *render*, the use of firewood not only increased the yield but also made it tastier as the flames of the furnace fuelled with firewood could be adjusted as required. However, today due to scarcity of firewood and consequent increase in prices, kerosene stoves have replaced the traditional furnace.

g. ***Bhann***: Conventionally, the *bhann* is a large earthen pot mounted on the furnace and has two openings. The larger one is the mouth through which the fermented *sur* is poured, the other is for the release of vapours. In numerous cases, the earthen *bhannam* have proved to be dangerous to the *render*. Quite a number of cases of the *render* dying or getting severely injured due to bursting of earthen *bhannam* have been reported. Gradually, due to the dearth of potters it became difficult to procure a *bhann*. For safety, hygiene and easy access, today the conventional earthen *bhann* has been replaced by a copper one. The *render* prefer the copper *bhann* to the earthen *bhann* as the latter develops cracks or breaks after two or three distillations while the

copper *bhann* can be used for years together. Besides, it is easier to clean the copper *bhann*.

**h. Dhanknem:** It is the lid that covers the mouth of the *bhann*. It is made of wood that can retain the vapours inside the *bhann*.

**i. Nollo:** It is a duct made of either a hollow bamboo stick or by scooping the *bonddkecho hat* (*Pandanus tectorius soland*). The *nollo* made from *bonddkecho hat* is now available in the market in a ready-to-use condition. The *nollo* serves as the connection between the *bhann* and the *lavnni* (the earthen pot used for condensation). This duct is around half a metre long. To withstand high temperatures, as a result of vaporization, the *nollo* is insulated with sackcloth and bounded by coir rope.

**j. Lavnni:** It is a pot used for condensation, and earlier it used to be an earthen vessel. It is connected to the *bhann* through the *nollo*. The function of the *lavnni* is to cool the alcohol vapours. In recent times, the *lavnni* is replaced with an aluminium spiral coil. Like the conventional *lavnni*, this coil is designed in such a way that every condensed drop comes out from the outlet.

**k. Kodem:** This apparatus plays a major role in the distillation process. It is a large earthen basin containing water and the *lavnni*. *Kodem* is meant to help in condensing the alcohol vapours. *Kodem* is known to have some disadvantages: it develops cracks and eventually breaks. Hence, the *kodem* has been replaced by a cemented tank, big enough to contain more water. An aluminium coil is used as a *lavnni* in these cemented tanks. The advantage of the tank is that it is long lasting and can hold water for a period of two or three months.

Many occupations were involved in supplying the needed apparatus for distilling *feni*. The toddy tapper depended on the potters as well as blacksmiths. Earlier, the potters used to supply all the earthen utensils at the toddy tapper's house.

Today with the change in the occupational structure, the number of potters is also diminishing, obliging the toddy tapper to go to distant places to procure his utensils.

We shall now see how *sur* is collected and the distillation conducted.

### **The Process of Collecting *Stir***

The *render's* profession is amongst is amongst the oldest in Goa (Guha 1983: 67). The *render* climb the coconut tree to extract *sur*, which is used for many purposes. Most coconut trees in Goa are five to eight metres tall. The *render*, who is usually an adult male, climbs the coconut tree by stepping on the *hampam* (grooves cut into the trunk). A traditional *render* is seen with a *kati*, a *dudnnem* and a *kollso*. Collection of *sur* or toddy tapping involves a well-defined set of sequenced activities. It is mandatory for the *render* to climb the tree thrice a day, i.e. in the morning, afternoon and evening.

Being his traditional occupation, a *render* has the necessary knowledge and skill to deal with the various aspects of toddy tapping. He has to discern if the *poi* is mature enough to yield toddy. Normally, when the third *poi* sprouts up, it is assumed that the first one can be tapped. The maturity of the *poi* is further confirmed by checking the swelling at its base. However, if the *poi* to be worked on is neglected or overlooked for more than five days, it becomes *zun* (over-mature) and cannot be tapped.

The *render* then has to treat the *poi* with *angaro* (a moderate hammering) using the butt of the *kati* for two consecutive afternoons. Then a zig-zag incision is made at the tip of the *poi*. On the third day, the *poi* is fastened with *gope*. From the next day onwards, the apex of the *poi* is meticulously sliced for four days. The *angaro* is continued to induce the flow of *sur*. From the fourth to the sixth day the *poi* is cut three times. Droplets of *sur* form, which trickle down the surface of the *poi*. This is

called *poi panae lagi*, meaning that the *poi* is ready to provide *sur*. Next, a *damnnem* is fixed on the *poi* in such a way that it can collect the *sur* produced for twelve hours — from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The quantity of *sur* increases by the day. Normally, *poi* is expected to exude *sur* for one month or a little more.

In order to increase the yield of the *sur*, the *render* uses yet another method called *matanne*. This is not done by all *render*, as it is quite tedious. In this procedure the *poi* is initially treated with a slight incision; and *kakonne* (twisted ring made of coconut leaves) is tied around it. The *render* then gives a very moderate hammering at the tip of the *poi* for three consecutive days. To be specific, the *render* gives fifty to fifty-five knocks on the *poi* with the butt of the *kati*. This is done very carefully ensuring that the *poi* does not crack. Many *render* complain of developing blisters on their palms following this hammering; as such most of them avoid this procedure. However, it is learnt that *matanne* induces the *poi* to produce more *sur*.

Every morning the *render* climbs the palm tree to empty the *sur* from the *damnnem* affixed the previous evening. The *sur* is emptied into the *dudnnem*. He again slices the *poi* with his *kati*. The sliced portion is half a centimetre thick as cutting thicker slices would end the *poi* faster. The *damnnem* is then refitted to the *poi*.

Later, in the afternoon, he executes the **xōv** *i.e.* cuts into the *poi* but does not collect *sur*. **Xōv** is done to ensure the continuity of the flow. In recent times, however, some *render* do not climb the trees in the afternoon. This may be attributed to factors like declining interest in the occupation, laziness and low returns for the produce. But he compensates for this by cutting an extra half-inch in order to maintain the freshness of the *poi*. If the *poi* is not cut regularly it shows signs of drying and less *sur* is produced. In the evening, the *render* climbs the tree once again to collect the *sur*

accumulated in the *damnnem* since morning. He once again cuts half a centimetre to dispose of the dried part of the *poi*. This incision exposes the wet surface like a fresh wound, thereby inducing a good flow.

The health of the tree determines the quantity of *sur* produced. Some trees are known to yield *sur* for months. Management of the *poi* also plays a major role in the quantity of *sur* produced by the tree. It is believed that the *sur* collected for the first few days is very sweet and is relished in the morning. Usually, the *sur* is sweet but by the end of the day it turns sour and cloudy as it begins to ferment. The output of *sur* is more during the months from June to January as compared to the output in the remaining months. This is attributed to the weather conditions. Thus, the production of *feni* is also greater during the months when the output of *sur* is higher.

It is extremely important that the *render* collects the *sur* before it spills out of the *damnnem*, as otherwise, it could imperil the tree. *Sur* from the *damnnem* spills into the tree's crown and is absorbed by the tender new leaves. This can create *kidd* (worms), which can destroy the tree. Whenever there is a spillage of *sur*, the *render* treats the *kidd* by pouring either water or human urine on the affected part. Sometimes, a paste of camphor and cashew nut shell liquid is also used. However, in present times pesticides are used to treat the same. This danger to the tree makes it mandatory for the *render* to tap the tree under all circumstances including inclement weather or his ill health. This continuous work is another reason why the younger generation does not opt for this occupation.

Significantly, Obayemi (1976: 202) refers to a similar procedure used by the Ijumu and Abinu groups for tapping palm tree in West Africa.

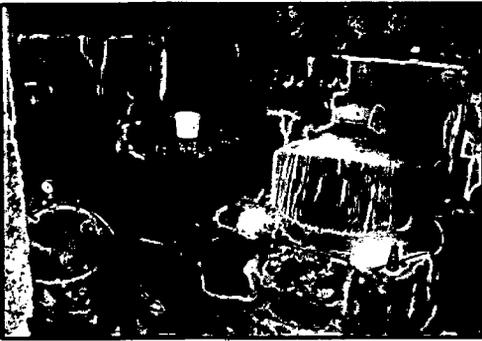
**The Distillation Process:** In order to distil, the *sur* has to be *ambott* (sour) or fermented. The froth seen in the fresh *sur* has to settle down. Usually this takes about

four days. The fermented *sur* is emptied into the *bhann* for boiling. Normally six *kollxe* of fermented *sur* are required to distil one *mollop* (residue after distillation), which is more or less eighteen bottles.

After emptying the *sur* into the *bhann* it is slightly heated. Then the *bhann* is closed with the *dhanknnem* (lid) ensuring that no opening, however minute remains. The edge between the *dhanknnem* and *bhann* is covered with *rounnechi mati* (mud taken from anthills). This mud is considered to be of the finest grade, helping as a sealant. This procedure is called *moranne*. It is a very important procedure and demands skill. If the *moranne* is not done properly, it can jeopardize the distillation and can even be fatal to the attendant.

The *bhann* is then heated with high intensity flames till vapours of the fermented *sur* exude. Later, the flames are lowered. The vapours pass to the *lavnni* through the *nollo*. This is an important stage in the distillation process. The attendant at the *bhatti* has to be experienced to know when and how to regulate the intensity of the flames. The management of the flames determines the quality and quantity of the output. It takes about five hours to complete one distillation.

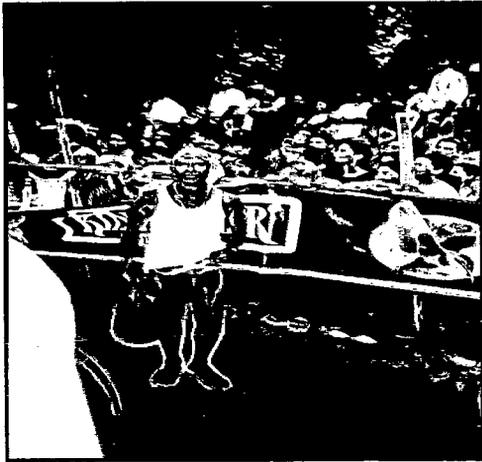
As mentioned earlier, the *lavnni* is immersed in a *kodem* filled with cold water. The water in the *kodem* helps condensing the vapours passing through the *lavnni*. The condensed vapours (now in liquid form) trickle down and are collected in the *kollso*. This liquid is called *mollop*. Normally, it contains 18 bottles or one *kollso*. Its degree is around 19-21 proof and is a crude form of *feni*.



4.1 Copper *bhann* used in distillation



4.2 Steel *bhann* used in distillation



4.3 Traditional attire of a *render ata* fancy dress competition  
Also visible is the advertisement of the Kingfisher beer at the Bonderam float parade.

4.4 Plastic *dudnnem*



4.5 Earthen *bhann*



4.6 Sur kept for fermentation

After the heating process is over what remains in the *bhann* is hot *godo*. This is emptied from the *bhann* with a *doi* (a big ladle made of coconut shell). *Godo* is normally used as a feed for pigs and in some cases even to cattle by diluting it with water. The fire is then extinguished and the *godo* is emptied after breaking the *moranne*. This has to be done fast in order to reduce the pressure on the *bhann*.

In order to get *feni*, two *mollpam* along with another six *kollxe* of *sur* is then poured into the *bhann*. To neutralize any sour odour from the fermented *sur* two *tambie* (tumblers) of water are added to it. The process of heating is repeated. The final output, which is attained now, is known as *feni*. The *feni* at first is potent. If the procedure is continued persistently, then the strength diminishes. When the degree shows 20 proof for the output, the fire is put off. Whatever comes out of the *lavnni* after this is called *pochok* (residue after palm *feni* distillation).

#### Cashew *Feni*

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Cashew plantations are found abundantly in the non-coastal areas of Goa. The laterite soil of the hillocks is highly suitable for cashew cultivations. The largest concentration of cashew plantations is found in Satari, Bicholim, Quepem and Sanguem talukas. The cultivation of cashew and the benefits attained thereby is credited to the Portuguese.

Originally, the cashew tree was found in the West Indies. Four centuries ago the Portuguese imported it to India from Brazil (Azevedo 1987: V, Sá 2001: 16, Abram 1995: 36, Directorate of Agriculture 1995: 19, Achaya 1998: 222, D'Souza 2001: 10). The cashew tree is a low, wide-spreading and fast-growing green plant, bushy, perennial, drought resistant and easy to cultivate. It can reach a maximum height of 12-15 metres and has a lifespan of around 40-50 years (Directorate of Agriculture 1995: 19).

Azevedo (1987: V) points out that the first systematic survey of Indian flora was made by Garcia de Orta. In his book *Colóquios dos Simples, Drogas e Coisas Medicinai da India* (1563), Garcia de Orta did not mention the cashew tree, although he devoted an entire chapter to the coconut tree. This proves that the cashew tree was not known to India in those days. According to Souza (1994: 41) the cashew industry did not begin till after the end of the 16th century. Later, by the end of the 17th century, Dr. Gemelli Careri describes the taste of the cashew apple juice and its medicinal properties but does not make any mention of the brew. Botanically, the nuts are the actual fruits and the apples are their succulent stems. In Latin the cashew tree is known as *Anacardium Occidentale*. ‘**Anacardium**’ means ‘**heart-shaped**’ and ‘**Occidentale**’ means ‘Western’. The term *caju*’ has been derived from the term ‘*acaju*’, used by the Tupi tribe of Brazil. The Portuguese, who also colonized Brazil, coined the word ‘*caju*’ (Achaya 1998: 222).

The cashew *feni* distilling industry also supports other related occupations. This **agro-industry** promotes the processing of fresh cashew kerlings, cashew nuts, cashew-nut shell liquid, *niro* (sweet cashew juice), *urrack* (the first distillate of *feni*) and *cashew feni*. *Cashewfeni* is a clear drink and has a distinct aroma. *Urrack*, which is the first distil of cashew, is considered to be a seasonal drink consumed during the hot summer months of March to May. It is never consumed directly but is always diluted with a lemon drink, which is mostly *Limca*, or with soda and **limejuice**. Local folklore has it that drinking *urrack* during the summer generates and preserves sufficient heat in the body to resist *the* wet monsoon season that follows.

Cashew *feni* distillation process is similar to palm *feni* distillation. The only difference is that cashew apple juice is replaced for the *sur*. The quantity distilled by the distiller depends on the capacity of the *bhann*. What is significant here is the

collection and the squashing procedures. Significantly, this is not a caste-based occupation, as the caste system had evolved much before the arrival of the Portuguese. As the Portuguese introduced the cashew fruit to Goa, initially those involved in the distillation took up this activity by merely replacing coconut sap with the cashew apple juice. However, earlier, only those from the *Sudir* caste were directly involved in this lowly occupation. Today, people from different castes are involved in cashew *feni* distillation, either directly or indirectly. Those involved in this industry are collectively called *kazkar*.

In the case of palm *feni* distillation, *any render* who wishes to distil *feni* can apply for a license from the Excise Department and commence distillation. However, in the case of cashew *feni* distillation, the government controls the distillation and its trade, as it is a seasonal activity involving innumerable cashew plantation owners. Much before the cashew trees bloom, the Excise Department of Goa Government organises a *pavnni* (auction) for the setting up of distillation units. The highest bidder gets the licence and assumes monopoly to set up the 'still' i.e. the distillation unit. He can then rent it to the distillers from the stipulated area for a period of three months. All the surrounding *kazkar* from that zone have to compulsorily distil *feni* only at this authorised unit. An Excise Guard is commissioned to maintain all records and to check the quality of the distilled *feni in* each zone. He is also assigned the task of maintaining details about the *feni* and *urrack* produced. This is done to enable the authorities to fix the amount for the following year's bidding as well as to exercise quality control. While this mechanism is in use all over Goa, the villagers of Bali have got together and they collectively control the bidding for their village. Thus, they have managed to do away with monopolistic malpractices.

Cashew*feni* distillation is a lengthy process. For our understanding this entire process is phased in two stages: 1. Collection and squashing of the fruit 2. Distillation of cashew*feni*.

**Collection of Fruits:** Cashew *feni* distillation starts by the end of February or early March. But, for those involved in cashew *feni* production, the work begins earlier. In the months of November-December *sankallop* (de-weeding and clearing the undergrowth) is done to ensure that the fruit collectors have easy access to the trees. Besides, the tree is provided with sufficient space and light to bloom well. Other than pruning the dead branches, the *kazkar* does nothing else to care for the cashew tree, not even its manuring. Even if the cashew tree has bloomed well, it may not produce cashew apples due to *murem* (mist), which occurs often towards the end of February, thereby destroying nascent flowers, and this in turn affects the yield.

By the end of February or early March, the fruits ripen. From now on, the remaining three months are a full time commitment to the distillation activity. The entire family including the children, who by then have finished their exams, are available for help. The women complete all household chores early so that they can also participate in the activity. We did observe a pattern of gender-based assignment of tasks. The women and children are usually engaged in picking the windfalls, while the men remain at *the ghuto* (place where the 'stills' are fixed). Jobs at the *ghuto* include procurement of firewood and storing and selling the produce. If there is no work at the *ghuto*, the men join the women and children in collecting the windfalls.

The *kazkar* family starts work early in the morning. They begin by moving over the entire plantation to pick the fruits that have fallen over the night. The fruits are not plucked from the tree because it is said to affect the other fruits that are yet to ripen.

Besides, the fallen fruits are more than sufficient for the day. Thus, considering all these factors, only the fallen fruit is picked.

Continuous picking of the fruit is a tedious job and moving up and down is also very tiring. However, what is important is the speed at which the fruit is picked. As these people are always involved in this work, they have become very proficient in collecting the fruit at a very rapid pace. In order to make the collection easier, the *kazkar* from Bali use a thin bamboo stick with an iron nail fixed to it. The *Kazkar* from Valpoi, on the other hand, use a twig. This twig is actually thorny, each thorn measuring about two inches. All the thorns are removed with the exception of just the one at the end. In both cases, the fruit is forked and put into a *ddobo* (large empty tin) or a bucket with much ease. After filling the *ddobo*, the fruit pickers proceed to the *kollombi*, which is a round or oval trench cut roughly into a rock. Sometime a dried hollow trunk of a *matt'tti* tree (*Terminilia crenulata*) is also used as a *kollombi*. The *kollombi* needs to be necessarily sloping at one end to enable the juice to flow out. The fruits are emptied at the side of the *kollombi*. If the *kollombi* is large, the fruits are directly emptied into it.

**Squashing the Fruits:** After deseeding, the fruits are heaped in the *kollombi* and squashed with the feet. Mostly, men undertake this laborious task; sometimes the women also join in. In *Bali*, *kazkar*'s use a heavy broad base stick to squash each and every fruit. This makes it easier to squash the already crushed fruit. Some men use gumboots to protect themselves from allergies. While squashing, some men also use bamboo sticks for support. These sticks are tied horizontally to lean on. However, when few fruits need to be crushed, the sticks are merely held in the hand.

Mechanisation has also crept into this traditional occupation. The Salesian priests at Sulcorna in Quepem taluka and some *kazkar* at Valpoi use machines to

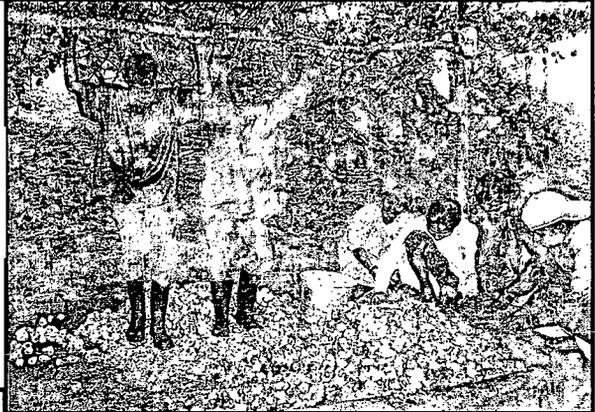
crush the fruits. After crushing the fruit it is transferred into the presser for more juice. The first squashing unit was devised by Catholic priests at the SVD Ashram **Raia**, in Salcete taluka. The *Kazkar* from Bali are aware of these mechanical crushers but have not invested in crushing machines due to small-scale production and uncertainty of the yield. Another dissuading factor is that the distillation is done at the plantations. Besides, the security of the machine is an issue: after the season, the mechanical crushers and pressers have to be greased and polished to prevent them from rusting. But, above all, the easy availability of labour force in Bali precludes the use of machines.

The juice is normally extracted in the late evening. After the fruits are crushed the juice drips from the end of the *kollombi*. This *kollombi* has a small duct from which the juice is allowed to flow into the plastic *kollso* or *ddobo* kept there. This juice is thick and used for distillation of cashew *feni*. The pulp that remains is then gathered in mounds and loosely fastened with vines or *sumb* (thin coir rope). A heavy stone is placed on each mound. The juice that flows from this pulp is the *niro*, which is sweet and is a speciality of the cashew season. This is drunk directly or after refrigeration. *Niro* is believed to have medicinal properties. It is also considered to be a refreshing drink in the hot summer months. However, *niro* loses its sweetness after six hours as it then begins to ferment. After the extraction of the *niro*, the pulp is sun-dried to be used as fuel. But presently, many distillers reuse this pulp by letting it ferment after adding sugar. The resultant fermented produce is also used for distillation.



4.7 Picking cashew apples with a nail-fixed stick

4.8 Men holding onto a stick, wearing gumboots to squash cashew apples



4.9 Squashing cashew apples with the feet

4.10 Machine used for crushing cashew apples

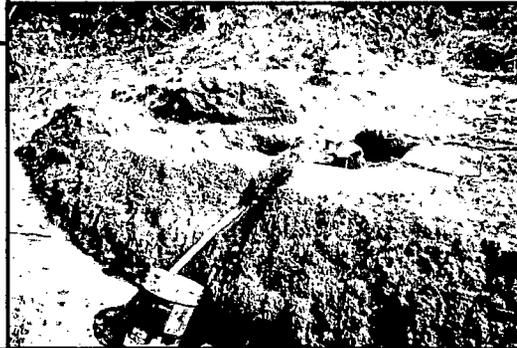


4.11 Cashew apple squeezer



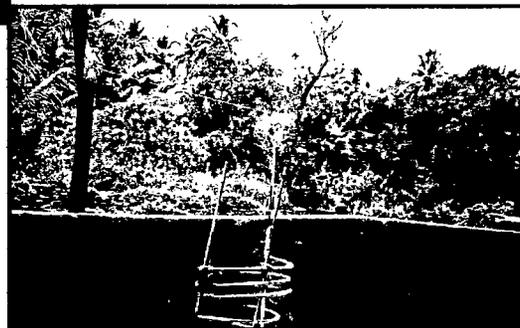
4.12 Stone placed on the pulp for *niro*

4.13 Rock carved *Kollombi*



4.14 Barrels filled with cashew juice kept for fermentation

4.15 Aluminium coil as *lavvni*



4.16 Pouring fermented cashew juice in the barrel mounted on an iron bracket for distilling *urrack*



4.17 Copper *bhann* used for cashew distillation

4.18 Breaking the *morrane* after the distillation, at Bali.



4.19 Furnace fuelled with wooden logs



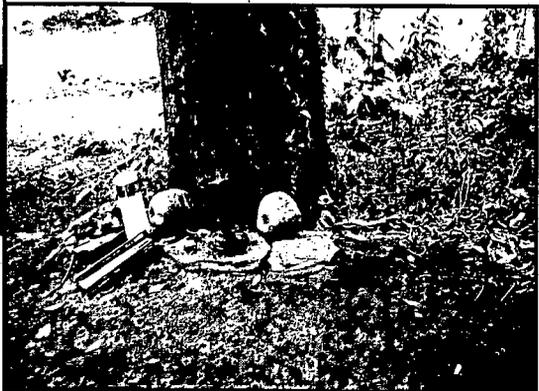
4.20 Crowd at SVD Ashram to buy *niro*. Pressing machine also seen



4.21 Gray used to test the strength of *feni*



4.22 Offerings kept for *Devchar* at cashewfeni distillation site



The juice collected from the *kollombi* is stored into big plastic barrels to ferment. The small *kazkar* who do not have sufficient juice for distillation sell their juice. This juice has to be sold only to the authorized distiller who gets the *pavnni* in that area depending on the existing rate. Usually, it takes 3-4 days for fermentation to be completed. Most mark the date on the barrel when the juice was poured for fermenting on the barrel itself. This is done because, if the juice is kept for more than five days, sourness sets in thereby, affecting the taste of the *feni*. Fermentation also depends on the temperature.

**Apparatus:** The apparatus used in cashew *feni* distillation is the same as in *palm feni* distillation. As this has been discussed earlier, we shall not repeat the description of the apparatus used in cashew *feni* distillation; we shall only concentrate on a different apparatus, which is used in Bali.

The place where the cashew distillation is undertaken is colloquially called *ghuto*. While earlier a big earthen pot was used, most of the distillers have now switched over to the copper cauldron called *bhann*, for reasons already discussed earlier. In Bali, instead of a copper *bhann*, they prefer to use an empty tin barrel. These barrels are neatly cut in the middle and connected to another barrel with the *bonddkecho hat*. The *lavnni* is placed in the second barrel. The *bonddkecho hat* is insulated with *numb* and cloth and amalgamated with a paste of *rounnechi mati*. The barrel is mounted horizontally on an iron bracket affixed to the ground. This barrel has two openings. The opening nearer to the ground is plied with a nut, which is opened to discharge the hot *godo*. In comparison to the copper *bhann*, these barrels bought collectively by some distillers are relatively cheaper and easier to dispose of at the end of the season.

In Bali, unlike other places in Goa, the villagers enforce their monopoly at the auction. The villagers unite on the basis of their wards and bid. As the villagers unitedly undertake the bidding, the distillation unit is also installed collectively and distillers take their turns for distillation. Families sharing a distillation unit develop strong personal bonds with each other. Another interesting feature in Bali is that the distillers arrange their *ghuto* near the river to get easy access to the continuously flowing streamlets. Water from the streamlets is directed into a tilted barrel containing the *lavnni*. The flowing water helps to maintain the coolness required for condensation. Even though barrels are used in Bali for the distillation process, we prefer to use the term *bhann* for a proper understanding of the process.

**Distillation Process:** Once the *kazkar* gets sufficient juice for the first distil, he commences distillation. After pouring the juice into the *bhann* it is closed with a *dhanknem* in the same manner as is done for palm *feni* distillation. The *bhann* is closed to prevent the vapours from escaping. If the vapours escape, they can become uncontrollable and dangerous. A cloth dipped in *rounnechi mati* is used to make an air-tight packing i.e. the *moranne* for the *dhanknem*. The *bhann* is then heated for several hours with intense and constant fire till the vapours are formed. The flames are reduced on the formation of vapours. Tending the fire requires knowledge and expertise and is considered to be a man's job. It is believed that a woman in her traditional attire is at risk near the intense flames. However, in exceptional cases, a woman tends the fire.

It takes nearly five hours for one distillation. The vapours from the *bhann* move through the *bonddkecho hat* to the *lavnni* where they get condensed. The condensed liquid trickles down into the container kept at the outlet of the *lavnni*. This first distil is the *urrack*. Its strength ranges between 18-20 *gray*.

At many places in Goa, including Valpoi many distillers have shifted to the more convenient cement tank to submerge the *lavnni*. It should be noted that the cooler the condensing unit the better the *urrack/feni*. Usually, six *ddobe* of fermented cashew juice are boiled along with one tumbler of water to produce one-and-a-half *kollxe* of *urrack*. Every barrel can contain six *ddobe* of juice. One *ddobo* is equivalent to twenty litres.

In order to distil *feni*, two and half *kollxe* of *urrack* along with one *ddobo* of cashew *ros* (juice) and two tumblers of water are emptied into the barrel. Water is added to this distillation process to eliminate the strong odour of the fermented juice. The same procedure of *moranne* and boiling is repeated. This results in one gallon of *feni*, which amounts to forty-five to fifty litres of cashew *feni*. As two *kollxe* of *urrack* are used to distil *feni*, the price of the *feni* is twice that of *urrack*.

### **Socio-Economic Life of the *Rendêr***

The occupation of the *render* demands a rigid regimen of work throughout the day. Physical strength and good health are most essential in this occupation. Illness or change in seasons does not matter, as he has to tend to the trees. Even if there is a death in the family, he has to arrange for another person to do his job.

Though a *render* is traditionally visualized dressed in a *kaxhiti* (loin cloth), it is rare to find a *render in kaxhiti* today; he now wears shorts and a vest or a T-shirt. It is observed that even in areas where toddy tapping was the main occupation it is slowly losing its attraction. This is due to various factors, including social stigma. Since the toddy tappers figure low in *the* caste hierarchy, the social stigma attached to this occupation dissuades newcomers from joining the occupation. Even the younger generation is not inclined to continue with this family occupation. Most youth find it more lucrative to work in the Gulf or other foreign countries or in the hotel industry or

the foreign cruise. Such jobs are less laborious and provide steady income and leisure. Our study revealed that most toddy tappers are not so well placed, socio-economically speaking.

A frantic effort is being made to keep this occupation alive, by using hired workers. The *render* community has started employing youngsters from the *Gaуди* community. To manage twenty trees and to collect *sur* from them, a hired *render* is paid Rs. 3,000/- per month. Besides, they are provided meals.

The following table provides information of the decline in toddy tappers occupation.

Table No; 4.1

**TALUKA-WISE LIST OF TODDY TAPPERS**

TALUKA	2004		2005		2006		
	No. of Villages	No. of Tappers	No. of Trees	No. of Tappers	No. of Trees	No. of Trees	
<b>Pernem</b>	19	203	2030	200	2000	168	1680
<b>Bardez</b>	16	58	580	50	557	49	516
<b>Bicholim</b>	9	5	50	5	56	3	32
<b>Satari</b>	9	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Tiswadi</b>	12	80	896	72	845	64	688
<b>Ponda</b>	18	76	854	69	766	60	661
<b>Mormugão</b>	12	89	1187	86	1318	76	990
<b>Salcete</b>	38	222	3179	211	3042	188	3112
<b>Sanguem</b>	25	163	1914	154	1863	139	1633
<b>Quepem</b>	15	176	2538	167	2372	169	2264
<b>Canacona</b>	8	101	1233	92	1120	84	995

When not engaged in tending the trees or stoking the fires at the *bhatti*, the *render* keeps busy with the maintenance of the tools and instruments of his trade. For instance, he sharpens the *kati*, and washes the *damnnem*. The *damnnem* has to be kept filled with water for two days, properly rinsed and sun-dried. During the winter season, the *render* plasters the outside portion of the *damnnem* with *xenn* (cow dung). This prevents it from developing cracks. He also keeps himself occupied by chopping logs of wood to fuel the furnace.

The *render's* wife assists her spouse in more than one way. After every distillation she washes and replenishes the *bhann* with fermented *sur*. She washes the *dudnnem* twice a day. She tends to the fire and later empties the *godo* from the *bhann*. She knows to check the strength of *feni*. Previously, she used to also sell the *feni*. However, in present times, it is the *render* himself who sells his produce. The children normally help by filling water in the *kodem* or tank.

There is a rare case still remembered in the village of **Benaulim**, where an unmarried woman who was left financially helpless after the death of her father continued his occupation. A woman taking up the job of climbing the tree and tapping the tree had such an impact that she is remembered even today with some people even recalling the clothes she used to wear. She *used* to wear a long loose skirt, and the hem was taken between the legs and tucked in at the waist behind, like the *koli* women wear their saris. In fact, the *render* community *maintains* that the occupation is exclusively a male domain and this particular case is cited as an exception.

In the past the father used to initiate his grown-up sons in the occupation. It took four to six months for the son to learn the trade. They would climb a young and yielding coconut tree together to know the intricacies of tapping. At home, the son would take his father's *kati* and practice by making incisions into the *poi*. Our

interviews revealed that the majority of respondents interviewed have very little formal education, and their job was passed on to them informally

However, as nowadays the *render's* children have got educated, they prefer salaried jobs. The most important reason is that it elevates their status since toddy tappers are placed on the lower rungs of the social hierarchy. The *render* also dissuades his children from taking up the profession because he does not wish to see his progeny doing the same routine and hard work that he did. He also feels that since he has invested in the children's education, they should take up jobs in keeping with their educational qualifications.

**Perils of the Occupation:** Among the risks involved in this profession, the most significant one is that of climbing the coconut tree during the heavy monsoon season. The moss growing on the trunk makes it slippery and the *render* runs the risk of slipping down from the tree. Besides, the tree swings dangerously during the heavy gusts of wind. Courage and strength are what the *render* armours himself with. Thus, it is assumed that the toddy tapping profession is exclusively gender-based.

The *render face* many clangers during the distillation process, too. In Benaolim, five fatalities have occurred due to the explosion of the earthen *bhann*, which happens for two major reasons. Firstly, if the sealing process is not done properly, it results in the fermented *sur* trickling out and coming in contact with the flame, thereby causing an explosion. Secondly, if the *bhann* develops a crack, the fermented *sur* trickles out, which causes the explosion. The distillation process becomes riskier when the distiller tries to adulterate his produce by using sugar or jaggery. The melted sugar or jaggery can seep through the porous *bhann* and thus come in contact with the flames, resulting in an explosion.

Besides, the *render* cannot carry on with his occupation for many years. In course of time, he develops many health problems. His knees begin to trouble him thereby, making it painful and ultimately impossible for him to climb the coconut tree. The constant climbing of trees puts tremendous stress on the knees and the cartilage in the knee joint, which wears out due to the constant friction, causing orthopaedic problems.

Unfortunately, the *render* does not enjoy any social security. There are innumerable cases where *render* have either died or been crippled after falling down from a tree. The family then goes through severe socio-economic crises as it loses the bread earner. The toddy tappers welfare fund board provides some compensation. In order to avail of this he has to be registered with the toddy tappers' association and has to tap minimum ten coconut trees. *He* also has to pay some amount for such indemnity.

### **Socio-Economic Life of the *kazkar***

As compared to the palm *feni* distillation, which is a perennial affair, cashew *feni* distillation is only a three-month activity. Every season provides an opportunity for the younger members of the family to learn the necessary tasks. For instance, the son of the *kazkar*, with every passing *cashew* season, will catapult from a mere fruit picker to a crusher of fruits and later on, into a person knowledgeable enough to distil *feni*.

In some cases, cashew *feni* distillers also hire labourers. The labourer is paid Rs. 2,500/- per month along with food and drinks, if *he* consumes alcohol. The hired men pick the fruit, squash it and even distil the *feni*. However, a lady employed has a different job profile and is paid on a daily basis. Her work includes picking of cashews and carrying the juice and firewood to the *ghuto*. These hired labourers,

whether men or women, are people living in the vicinity of the *kazkar's* residence or his *ghuto* or the cashew plantation.

We have found that most cashew *feni* distillers are Hindus. Earlier, it was the *Bhandari/toddy* tappers (belonging to the *Sudir* caste) community that was involved in the distillation of cashew *feni* in Valpoi. Most of the present distillers in Bali belong to the Velip community. Earlier the Desai (Kshatriyas) and the Naik (Shudras) used to distil cashew *feni*. The concept of a particular caste carrying out this occupation has currently been eroded by the lucrative nature of this seasonal occupation since cashew apple juice and firewood, which are readily available, are the only requirements. Besides, the labour force is available in the household itself. The collective ownership of the apparatus also gave an impetus to people taking up this occupation. As a result, caste assignment no longer decides distillation. People of different castes, including Brahmins, are now involved, either directly or indirectly, in cashew *feni* distillation as it brings in money at a faster pace and that too with hardly any investment.

*Cashew feni* distillation has united the Bali villagers and hence, sociologically, it is an important area of study. The unity is manifested in the form of an informal co-operative society through which the *kazkar* collectively get involved in the distillation process. This unity was forged in order to do away with the middleman who used to successfully bid at the auction. As mentioned earlier, the *kazkar* jointly participate in the auction. The 'still' is owned jointly by a group of families. The barrel and other requirements like the funnel used to pour the juice into the *barrel*, the tumbler, the iron bracket used to mount the barrel, the *lavnni*, the *gray* etc. are purchased collectively. At the end of the season, they are stored for use in the following year, in the house of the person who was the front man (leader) for all of them. As the barrel

cannot be used the following year, it is sold and the money is utilized to buy a new barrel. Even the money needed for the *pavnni* is collectively raised. Since distillation is a collective occupation of a group of families the order of using the 'still' is amicably decided. We could also see families helping each other at the *ghuto*. Every *ghuto contains* at least three to four 'stills'.

Primary data reveal that earlier the Velip and other small *kazkar* used to sell the juice to the person who was successful at the auction and owned the 'still'. The Velip did not know the distillation process nor were they interested in learning it, as they had kept away from consuming alcoholic drinks. But in the last 12 years, they have actively taken up distillation. This is because investments are low and the returns high. Besides, unemployed people get seasonal employment and those involved in this activity also consume it. This motivation may have got them together to keep the *pavnni* under their collective control.

As this is a seasonal activity lasting a few months of the year, the distiller has to work hard to earn his reputation for providing good quality *feni*. Once the reputation is established, marketing the produce is *easier* as bar owners and others soon begin to visit the distiller at his house to purchase the *feni*.

*There* is no association or organization of cashew *feni* distillers. There could be two reasons for this; the first being that it is a seasonal activity lasting for only three months and the second being the quick sale of the produce.

Though cashew *feni* distillation is a three-month activity, the earnings enable the *kazkar* to subsidise his other agricultural activities. Many Velip families in Bali survive only on their income from *feni*. The rest of the year they are busy with their local vegetable cultivation, while other communities involved in distillation take up sundry other jobs. Earlier generations were uneducated, as their jobs did not demand

any formal education. But presently most children are educated and the job reservation policy has enabled many of them to get government jobs.

Other Indian states regard cashew as a cash crop only for the revenue earned due to high demand for cashew nuts. The *Kazkar* from villages bordering Maharashtra and Karnataka, knowing that *feni* distillation is not allowed in those States, thought it would be profitable to get the fruits from there to distil *feni* in Goa. However, plantation owners from the neighbouring states increased the selling price for cashew apples. This price hike along with the high transportation costs makes the exercise economically unviable.

Cashew *feni* distillation generates income for the State. It provides employment to a number of people.

**Rituals and Beliefs associated with Distillation:** The *render's* occupation, as mentioned earlier, is risky. Therefore, certain fears confound the community. Irrespective of their religious bearing, superstitious beliefs invariably exist in the *render's* social milieu. The *render* follow many ritualistic practices during the collection and distillation process. After completing the tapping for the day, they pour a little *sur* near the last coconut tree. This is *Devak* (for God), who protects them from mishaps. Similarly, after every distillation he throws a little *feni* on the flames. But today since many toddy tappers have replaced the wood furnaces with stoves, the *feni* is thrown on the *bhann*. Both these practices can be traced to the original Goan practice of appeasing the *devchar* or *zageavoilo*. Even Catholic *render* continue with this practice.

Similarly, among the *kazkar* cultural ethos are involved in the distillation process and have become a part and parcel of the seasonal activity. Distillers in Bali perform many ritualistic practices at almost all the stages of distillation. Before setting

the 'still', distillers keep two or three stones at different places. Then they visit the temple for *prasad pakli* (divine sign) to ascertain whether or not the site selected for distillation is appropriate. After receiving the *prasad pakli*, the *Zolmi* (community leader) of the place is taken to the place where the 'still' is to be set and asked to have the *garannem* (prayers) to the *zageavoilo*. He appeases the *zageavoilo* by giving *ronth*, comprising leavened bread, dry fish, *iddio* (country made cigarettes), a lit incense stick and palm *feni*. It is significant that the *zageavoilo* is 'appeased', first with palm *feni* even though cashew *feni* is distilled in the area. This establishes the fact that palm *feni* existed long before cashew *feni*. Construction of the distillation unit begins only after this ritual is over.

After every distillation, the *kazkar* keeps a little cashew *feni* in a coconut shell or in a *dhonno* (cone made of leaf) for the *zageavoilo*. This is to express gratitude for the protection given and also to pray for further protection. A little *feni* is also thrown on the flames. However, the *kazkar*, not knowing why this is done, wonder if it is meant to appease the *Agni Deva* (Lord of Fire). A similar procedure is followed while dismantling the distillation unit. Before the setting up of the unit, the ritual is done to ask for protection, but while dismantling, it is done for thanksgiving.

The *kazkar* in Valpoi also invite the *gaunkar* before the distillation process. The *gaunkar* puts the *garannem* at the site where the 'still' is to be set up. The *zageavoilo* is appeased with *feni* that is kept for him a little away from the *bhann*. At the end of the distillation season, the village temple god receives a cash offering.

Both at Bali and Valpoi, it is only the *zolmi/gaunkar* (member who enjoy social rights) who initiates the distillation process. Even though he actually does not set up the 'still' he is required just to 'touch' the unit to be assembled. The distillers

dare not commence their risky activity without first carrying out this ritual. The distillers pay him for this service.

**Difficulties faced by the *Render* and *Kazkar*:** Over the last few years, the demand for both palm and cashew *feni* has declined for various reasons, particularly because of its odour and the social stigma attached to the 'poor man's drink'. It has also lost ground to I.M.F.L.

Presently, *feni* is available in three categories at the Toddy Tappers' Association: *Feni* of 15 gray for Rs. 300 per *kollso*; 16 gray for Rs. 350 per *kollso*, and 17 gray for Rs. 400 per *kollso*. But the toddy tapper does not secure these prices, as his stock is sold to any person who successfully bids for the entire stock of *feni* in that particular year and pays the Association a fixed fee.

This pricing pattern raises the question of economic viability. The *render* distilling *feni* from toddy complain that, all factors considered, their *feni* should have fetched them at least Rs. 900/- per *kollso*. The present sale price makes one suspect that the *feni* of the first category above is either distilled only once or is made with additives, a suspicion corroborated by some toddy tappers. To add to the *render's* woes, local bars purchase *feni* from them on credit. This makes selling *sur* for vinegar a more profitable venture.

On the other hand, the Toddy Tappers' Association does very little to protect the *render* from the onslaught of distillers who use irregular methods of distilling *feni* — either by fermenting sugar, fermenting a mixture of sugar and jaggery or fermenting a mixture of sugar and toddy, and the use of *novsagor (alum)* — which turns the produce impure and harmful to health. We have further learnt that an essence is also available, which is dissolved in a mixture in the proportion of one bottle of palm *feni* to two bottles of water. This soluble content gets the disposition of *feni* both in

intensity and taste; but it has to be consumed within eight days, after which it loses the flavour of *feni*.

The market for toddy-based *feni* distilled in the traditional manner seems to be diminishing. But there is a small section of Goan aficionados abroad and landlords who, yearning for genuine toddy-based *feni*, do not mind paying a higher price for pure toddy-based *feni*. The Goan Diaspora appreciates its medicinal value, as seen from the success of the Madame Rosa export brand; but barring this exception nothing is really being done to exploit this avenue.

On their part, the *kazkar* have their own problems, which make it difficult for them to continue their traditional occupation: Cashew *feni* distillation being a seasonal occupation, unlike palm *feni* distillation, which is done through the year, the *kazkar* has to take up a second occupation outside the cashew season. Secondly, the poor holding capacity of the *kazkar* makes them sell their produce at the earliest. Thus the price of cashew *feni* is not determined by the *kazkar* but by the purchaser, which leaves the producer always frustrated. Thirdly, the *kazkar* cannot hoard cashew *feni* because, believed to be a heat-generating beverage, most consumers prefer it in the monsoons.

Although *the niro* is a much relished summer drink, most *kazkar* cannot exploit this demand, because the fruits are squashed late in the evening, in the interior of villages, and without proper transport facilities. Further, the *kazkar* do not have any organization to protect their interests.

In conclusion, it can be said that toddy tapping is a full-time and laborious occupation, demanding time, stamina and discipline. The *render* cannot work after the age of fifty years because of the characteristic occupational diseases. Besides, the

insecurity, lack of government support and **declining** sales, is slowly killing the occupation.

On the other hand, the Toddy Tappers' Association merely keeps a record of the number of toddy tappers. Its office is just a selling point for palm *feni*, with the purchaser deciding the price; it does not have any quality control or price monitoring mechanism. Selling *feni* depends on the individual distiller's ability to market it with no help whatsoever coming from any other quarter, be it the Government or the Association.

Competition with \_\_\_\_\_ has become a losing battle for the *feni* distillers. Those involved in plantation do not engage in research and development to protect their crop or increase the production; they rest solely on the know-how they have received from their elders. The use of modern technology is conspicuous by its absence, and the plantations, particularly the cashew plantations, are left to the mercy of Nature.

Many respondents opined that having a co-operative movement of *feni* producers would help the community immensely. They suggested that the Association should become a marketing agency for the *render*. Even the *kazkar* feel the need for a co-operative society to help them market their produce effectively. Given that Goa is a tourist destination, a co-operative society could market both palm and cashew *feni* as a Goan drink par excellence.

## CHAPTER V

### ALCOHOL AND THE QUOTIDIAN GOAN LIFE

Every country has specific customs and traditions, whose origins and meaning are sometimes difficult to trace. They are basically social habits or folkways that through repetition, over a relatively long period of time and passed down from generation to generation, have become a formally recognized order of social behaviour; they are a repository of social heritage interrelated with the culture to define the identity of that country (Singh and Nath 2000: 1-2, 4).

Like other societies, the Goan society, too, has its own traditions and beliefs, especially when it comes to treating illnesses. We observe the use of local *feni* in preparing home remedies for many common ailments. Similarly, every culture is distinct in its food habits. These are partly a result of religious ideas. In Goa, the Portuguese culture and the new religion introduced by them have influenced Catholic cuisine.

For the purpose of our study, in this chapter we trace the use of alcohol in the day-to-day Goan life. To enumerate the various uses of alcohol, we have divided this chapter into three sub-topics: alcohol as a medicine; alcohol as an ingredient of Goan cuisine, and, finally, customs and traditions involving the use of alcohol.

#### Alcohol as a Medicine

Despite the all-encompassing influence of the Portuguese culture in Goa, it is interesting to see that Western or allopathic medicine took a very long time to take root in Goa. To begin with, medical facilities were available only in urban areas; they were out of reach for the rural residents. Secondly, the villagers had practically no

purchasing power. Thirdly, age-old family remedies handed over diligently from one generation to another generally took care of medical ailments, and so there was no pressing need to try out the new medicines.

In Goa a number of ailments are still treated with palm and cashew *feni*. Its uses are manifold, as seen below:

***Feni as an Antiseptic:*** *Feni* used in the absence of methyl spirit to disinfect the area before an injection prick. In most Goan households, irrespective of caste, class and creed, cuts or bruises are routinely treated with palm or cashew *feni*. The stinging sensation experienced when *feni* is poured on a wound is said to hasten the healing, helping as it does in blood coagulation. Vinegar is a substitute for *feni*.

***Feni in deliveries and childcare:*** *Feni* was widely used at deliveries held at home. The *voiginn* (mid-wife) would ensure that a bottle of *feni* was at hand to treat the umbilical cord. The instrument used to cut the cord was also kept dipped in *feni*. After delivery, the nursing mother was advised to pour some of it on the homemade sanitary pads then in use. A little-known practice is that *voiginneo* would sometimes take a mouthful of *feni* and blow it on the vagina immediately after the delivery, which, they believed, helped heal the vaginal lacerations at delivery. At a time when antiseptic lotions were unheard of, *feni* was the only antiseptic at deliveries.

Even today, in some families a few drops of *feni* are added to the baby's bath water as a protection against common cold. After bath, the person bathing the baby dips a finger in *feni* and gently rubs it on the baby's tongue to cleanse it and to protect the baby from a cold.

***Feni as an Appetizer:*** In Goa they say palm *feni* keeps the doctor away. Senior citizens are often medically advised some *feni* as an appetizer before dinner, and as a sedative too. This happens overwhelmingly among the Catholics. Among upper caste

Hindus it is common practise for the nursing mother to have some grape wine for a period of three months or during lactation. This helps as an appetiser and to produce milk. It also helps the mother to recover from the trauma of delivery, including blood loss. Port wine is preferred; if unaffordable, feni is opted for.

**Feni as an Anti-Flatulant:** *Feni* is used to treat stomach disorders: its ingestion and rubbing on the belly of a person help loose motions to subside. In some cases, cotton dipped in *feni* is placed on the navel and tied with a cloth. This is done particularly when the loose motions are accompanied with stomach gripes. Another prescription for gripes is a brew prepared by boiling cashew *feni* with a little sugar and *pudina* (mint) leaves. *Feni* is also used to treat constipation: the patient consumes some and gets it massaged on the belly and the back where the large intestines are situated.

**Feni for deworming:** Children are often de-wormed with *feni*. It is not ingested but applied on the head and stomach. Sometimes a small *pottli* (bundle) of herbs and condiments soaked and crushed in *feni* is hung round the child's neck and/or rubbed on the neck and joints. The patient also has to inhale the strong odour of the concoction.

Different pastes are used to treat the worms. Some recommend the mixing of crushed onion, garlic flakes and *jirem* (cumin seeds) in *cashew feni*. A *pottli* of the mixture is then hung around the child's neck, whose continuous whiff is said to be a cure against worms. At other times, *palm feni* is mixed with camphor, petrol and stale ghee, to be rubbed against the joints. Yet another paste is made by grinding *poingiro* (*Erythrina indica*), bark of *anter* (custard apple: *Annona squamosa*), *khajro* (*Stryegnos nuxvomica*), *kayo* (*Melia tomosita*) and *sontonn* (Indian devil tree: *Alstonia scholaris*) with palm *feni* for application with a piece of cloth wound tight round the head. A variation of this is a mixture of *koddu voum* (Aijwan : *Trachystermum spp.*),

sunflower leaves, guava leaves, tender leaves of drumsticks ground in palm *feni*, which is applied to the patient's head.

*Feni* is also a preventive against worms: either *koddu voum* or *kiranttem* (*Androgaphis panniculata*) is soaked in cashew *feni* for a week. The child above one year of age is administered a spoonful of the concoction once a week. Another concoction is prepared by keeping *koddu voum in pochok* (residue after palm *feni* distillation) for months together, of which a teaspoonful is administered to the child every week.

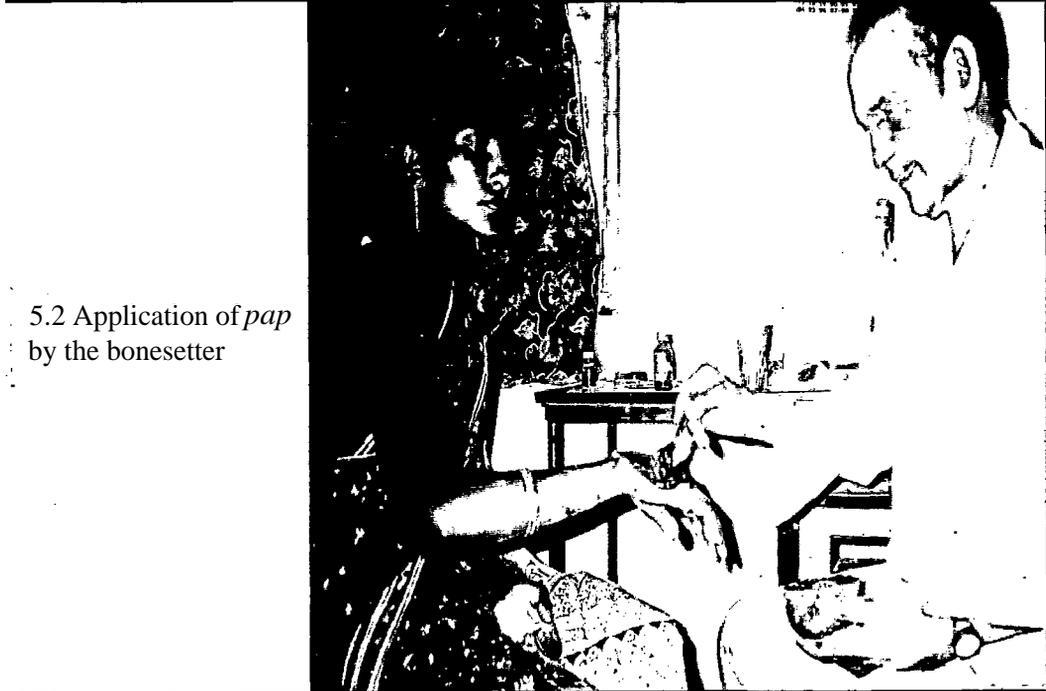
*Feni to treat* colds and fevers: Particularly during the monsoons, sugar dissolved in cashew *feni* is set on fire for ingestion soon thereafter. If jaggery is used instead, the mixture is drunk without being set on fire. A burnt concoction of sugar, cinnamon and cloves with cashew *feni* is yet another common prescription. To cure sore throats, *alem* (ginger) is ground with cashew *feni* and consumed with honey. *Palm feni* mixed with nutmeg paste is also recommended in case of common cold. To treat chest congestions, egg yolk is flipped with sugar, with brandy or rum added later.

The treatment for fever consists of rubbing *feni* all over the body, especially the head if the fever rises rapidly. Besides, *feni* compresses are also used on the forehead, to prevent the fever from affecting the brain; and sometimes, bark of *karo* (*Melia tomosita*), *kiranttem*, *alem*, *jirem* and *kando* are ground in palm *feni* to form a paste, for application on the head.

*Feni as an Analgesic*: Some Goan villages have 'bonesetters', who treat all kinds of orthopaedic problems, including fractures, by using a *pap* (paste) of local herbs and spices. These are ground in either cashew or palm *feni*. Whether it is a simple dislocation or a fracture, the *pap* is applied to the skin, which is then bandaged. The patient is advised to soak the bandage regularly either in cashew or palm *feni*.



5.1 Mixing *pap*



5.2 Application of *pap*  
by the bonesetter



5.3 Application  
of *pap* on the  
ribs

In case of pain due to a fall, or a sprain, there are indigenous medicines with *feni* as the base. In some cases, *vol'lmachi sal* (bark of *Mitragyna parviflora*), *jirem* and Epsom salt are ground with palm *feni*. The paste is applied to the affected portion, which is normally covered with a piece of paper, which has to be constantly moistened with *feni*. Rheumatism is treated by rubbing the affected joints with a mixture of pepper powder and *feni*.

*Feni* is also used to treat dizziness. *Feni* and salt are rubbed hard on the patient's feet and palms. He is also made to inhale a whiff of the *feni*.

Another common ailment, toothache, is also treated with *feni*. The patient rinses the mouth with *feni*. In case of a cavity, a cotton swab dipped in palm *feni* and crushed cloves is pressed into the cavity to ease the pain.

**Urrack as a Tonic:** Many Goans consume *urrack* as a tonic during summer months. This is said to provide the person with sufficient body heat against the cold in the ensuing monsoons.

At Valpoi, the oxen used for ploughing fields are forcefully fed a bottle of *cashew feni* every year. It is believed that the beverage protects the animal from illness and generates energy during the monsoon season.

However, in the present times, these home remedies are on the wane. *Eau de Cologne* compresses have replaced *Feni* compresses, especially since pure *feni* became a rare commodity. Besides, prompt availability of modern substitutes, easy access to health facilities, and improved economic conditions have contributed to the decline of traditional home remedies.

***Feni* as a Plant Nutrient:** Palm or cashew *feni* is used as a plant nutrient along with effective microorganisms. *Feni* enhances the ability of the microorganisms to provide

nutrients to the plant, according to a farmer-priest from Pilar. This technique is slowly gaining popularity, though not officially accepted.

### **Alcohol as a Food Ingredient**

As Rodrigues (2000: 13) points out, the 450-year-long Portuguese rule produced a symbiosis not only in the food habits but also in the overall lifestyle of the people. As mentioned earlier, Hindus and Catholics present two different facets in the matter of food and lifestyle. Goan Catholic cuisine is a unique fusion of Portuguese and the local cuisine; that is to say, it is neither purely Eastern nor entirely Western (Sá 1986: 9). The traditional Hindu cuisine presents a striking variation.

Wine is an important ingredient of Portuguese cuisine. In Goa, the Portuguese substituted it with the locally available *feni* (Rodrigues 2000: 29). According to Guha (1983: 67), realizing the culinary value of *sur*, they introduced vinegar prepared from *sur* in the Goan Catholic cuisine. Vinegar gives the food a slightly sour flavour; it also acts as a preservative for meat, fish, vegetable and pickle recipes. *Sur* is also used instead of yeast to prepare *pão* (bread) (Gracias 2004: 40).

Vinegar is used not only for taste but also as a preservative. In Goa, it is prepared from fermented toddy. Though a synthetic substitute is available, Goan Catholics prefer vinegar made from toddy. This and palm *feni*, *wine*, and palm jaggery are frequently used in the Catholic cuisine.

According to Gracias (1997: 46), Goan cuisine is one lasting influence of the Portuguese. Some Goan dishes were designed to suit the European taste buds and the availability of ingredients. Beef and pork were introduced in the diet of the middle and the upper class Catholic converts, who evolved their own cuisine over the years.

As compared to other regions in India, Goa follows few dietary restrictions. For example, people from all religions consume fish, while in other parts of the

country Hindus are largely vegetarians. One reason for the Goans' consuming fish is its coastal location. The major difference between the two communities — Hindus and Catholics — is the consumption of meat, especially beef and pork. Among the Portuguese, wine used to be a standard accompaniment to the meal (Larsen 1998: 126).

Hindus normally observe certain *var* (days) and festivals, when they avoid non-vegetarian food. Many Catholics abstain from meat during Lent. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are the only two days when fasting and abstinence is required of Catholics.

**Feni/Vinegar in Meat Preparations:** Palm *feni* is used to prepare the famous Goan *sorpotel* (a dish prepared from the organs of a pig), salted tongue, salted pork, and in beef and pork *assado* (roast). Some respondents revealed that beer is alternatively used to prepare pork roast. Local condiments ground with vinegar are used to prepare *sorpotel* and other pork preparations like *cabidela*, *balchão*, *vindalho*, and *feijoada* (a preparation of beans, sausages and salted pork).

**Feni/Vinegar as a Preservative:** Palm *feni* is used to prepare *gallmo* (fine shrimps). Shrimps ground with *feni*, turmeric, cumin seeds, etc. are exposed in the blazing sun till they dry to powder. *Gallmo* can be preserved for more than a year and used for a variety of fish preparations. Feni/vinegar prevents the formation of maggots.

Most Goan pickles — vegetable pickles like *tendlli* (gherkins), aubergine, mango, chilly, lime, etc., and even meat and fish pickles, called *para* or *mól* — use vinegar as a preservative.

**Feni/Vinegar in Goan Sausages:** The famous Goan sausage, though tedious to make, is a lucrative business. Sausages are prepared by marinating tiny pork pieces for a day or two in a vinegar-based *masala* of dried chillies, ginger, turmeric, cloves,

Onion, pepper and garlic. The mixture is then stuffed in dried guts of cow or pig. After they are smoked and dried. Thus protected against maggots, sausages can be preserved for months together.

According to (Rodrigues 2000: 35) like most other Portuguese food items seen in our daily diet, the sausage has been adapted to our taste. Homemade sausages use *palm feni*, and sometimes brandy, for better taste, whereas the traditional Portuguese sausage uses salt, *cloral* (a preservative) and a colouring agent, and is prepared in *ne*. The Portuguese make it long in size, while Goans make a string of small sausages.

Besides being an accompaniment to rice, it is a popular snack in bars. Sausage *o* (bread with a sausage filling) is a delicacy in the Old Conquest areas.

**Vinegar in Fish Preparations:** *Recheado* is a popular *masala* for the Catholics in Goa. It is a paste of chillies and other spices ground in vinegar, used to stuff fish like mackerels and pomfrets. Some people add a little *palm feni* to this masala. Fish *recheado* is a popular dish in most Goan restaurants. Slices of big fish, such as big fish, are also dipped in the *masala* prior to frying. Interestingly, most Hindu families do not use vinegar while preparing *recheado masala*.

Among the Catholics, *ambott-tik* (a hot and sour curry) is a famous curry prepared with catfish, shark fish, and ray fish, and sometimes sardines, too. This curry does not dispense with coconut, an ingredient in all other Goan curries, but has to be necessarily prepared with vinegar.

**Wine in Cakes:** Rum, brandy and wine are used in preparing cakes. Normally, dried fruits to be added to the cake are soaked in wine, rum or brandy, sometimes for several months. This enhances the taste and increases its shelf life.

Some Goans improvise by adding wine to Chinese preparations. Our field study has revealed that particularly many Catholic households are adept at making wines at home, using local fruits and berries.

*Sur* for Leavening: *San 'nam* are steamed rice muffins, made from soaked boiled rice and coconut ground together in *sur* and fermented for a couple of hours. The batter is placed in small plates and steamed.

To conclude, we can say that Vasco da Gama's journey to India caused considerable changes to happen in the local cuisine. Between the years 1510-1961 many local habits were discarded and new ones adopted. The lifestyle of the Goan society changed with the introduction of new food products and customs (Gracias 2004: 38). It can well be said that palm *feni* and vinegar has given the Catholic cuisine its identity whereas the Hindu cuisine derives its own from the tamarind pulp or lime that it employs liberally.

#### Alcohol in Customs and Traditions

The Goan life comprises a number of practices observed at different times and in different contexts, at the individual and family levels. The lower socio-economic groups attach greater importance to them even without knowing their origin or rationale.

Although conversions to Christianity took place five centuries ago, some Hindu practices are still extant among them. A number of Catholic families consult the *bhatt* (Hindu priest) and visit temples for *prasad paklli* (divine signs). At one temple (in the New Conquests), a specific time is allotted for Catholics seeking *prasad paklli*. They also make ritualistic offerings to Hindu deities, either annually or on auspicious occasions.

The data in this sub-topic is based solely on oral sources and our observations.

We have also consulted knowledgeable elders on related beliefs and practices. Since the data collected indicates that many beliefs and practices are connected with the *devchar* (local supernatural spirit), we would like to briefly clarify a few concepts. Documented here are only those that involve the use of alcohol.

*Devchar*: Many Goans have a strong belief in the supernatural power or a spirit, often called *devchar*. He is known by different names at different places. The Velip in Bali refer to him as *nas*. In Shiroda, he is known by names like *Vallpikar*, *Apoikar*, *Satkar*, etc.

Fearing the name, the *devchar* is often referred to, euphemistically, as *zageavoilo*, *bandavoilo*, etc., which is a reference to its presumed dwelling place. In Goan folk culture the *devchar* is venerated publicly, especially by the Hindus, who unquestionably believe in the spirit, who is thought to be benevolent, although never given the place of the deity; but like other gods in the Hindu pantheon, the *devchar* is remembered on particular days, viz. Sundays and Wednesdays. As God's envoy, he is believed to help an individual realise his intentions or wishes and to protect him and his property. At the community level, he is believed to protect the fields, hedges and waterways, and promote the welfare of the villagers.

The place where he is believed to reside is considered holy and so kept. A number of places in Bali and Shiroda are known for *devchar* dwellings. A red flag is placed beside a *ghumtti* (a little stone structure) erected for him. In Cordem ward of Bali there is a famous place of the *nas* near a stream. The villagers do not have proper drinking facilities and depend on this stream for their water supply. There is no structure constructed for the *nas*; yet the people very faithfully follow the rules of keeping the place clean. In this way, through the perception of *nas*, some norms

appear to have been imposed for the welfare of the people, just as the source of the water for the villagers in Cordem is kept clean by invoking the *nas*.

On the other hand, in the Old Conquests one cannot see *devchar* appeased openly, because Hindus form a miniscule percentage *here*; they visit places in the New Conquests to appease the *devchar*.

Besides, it is important to note that the Catholic concept of *devchar* is diametrically opposite. For the Catholics, *devchar* refers to Satan, the devil; he is God and man's enemy and is never regarded as a benign presence.

**Soro-Rontth:** For all favours granted and to be granted, the *devchar* is appeased with offerings, particularly *sur/soro*, considered his favourite. Offerings are made for good health, at wedding time, before starting a new business, when a new house is built, when a person is sick or in trouble, and so on. Originally, it was *sur-rontth* (toddy and leavened bread) that was offered; but as *sur* has become scarce, it has been replaced by *soro*. *Rontth* is made from a mixture of rice flour and grated coconut baked on a banana leaf. However, in present times, *rontth* is replaced by bread, as the procedure involved in preparing *rontth* is tedious.

However, not all offerings to the *devchar* contain *soro*. Cordem ward of Bali is an illustration of this, where bananas, betel leaves, areca nuts, etc., are offered instead. The reason could be that in the past the *Velip* community kept away from alcoholic drinks. That explains the unique manner in which they made their offering at the Kundeshvar temple. That is to say, members of the *Velip* community always ensured that they would not personally touch *the feni* bottle; hence the bottle would be tied to a stick that they carried.

**Community Offerings to *Devchar*:** 'Community offerings' refer to those made collectively on behalf of the village, as against individual offerings, made by a person for his personal benefit.

Offerings at the Dassehra festival in Shiroda are an excellent example of community offerings to the *devchar* at temples. All the twelve *vangddi* (members of different castes) of Shiroda consult Rawalnath and **Betal** *once* a year and pray for the welfare of the village. On this occasion, it is mandatory to appease the *devchar*, to preclude his annoyance and obstruction of the celebrations.

Here, *feni* is compulsorily used on three different occasions. On the tenth day of the festival, the *purov* (stone) situated in front of the Rawalnath temple is washed with palm *feni*, *late* in the night, after all other rituals are held. Only members of the *Vir* community are authorized to do so, having been soldiers who guarded the village in the past. The ceremony begins late at night after all the other rituals are over.

Animal sacrifices of a *bokddo* (goat) and *kombé* (roosters) are carried out, in that order. The *Mahar's kombo* is offered last, given their last place in the social hierarchy and the fact that their sacrifices are considered 'polluting'. Cooked rice mixed with the blood of the sacrificial animal is then spread on the *purov* called *choru*.

A similar procedure is followed early next evening at the *purov* of the Beta! temple. The only difference here is that only rooster blood is used for the *choru*.



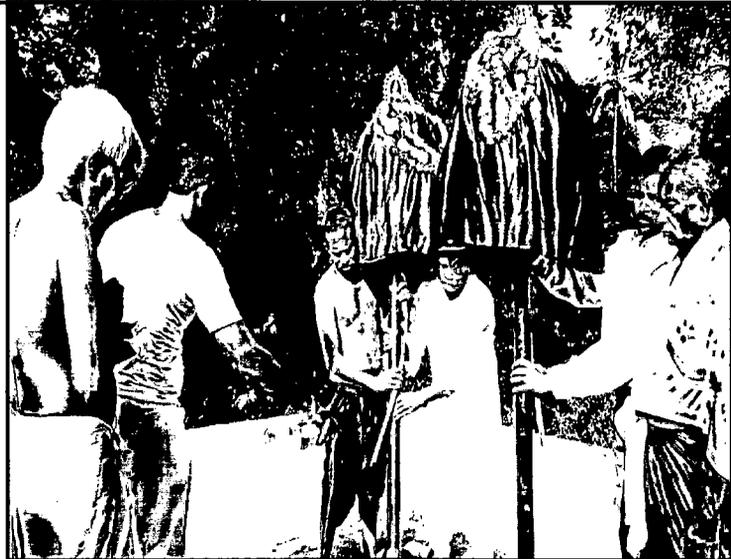
5.4 Offering *soro* in front of a *ghumtti* at Uskinichi Paz

5.5 *Sur* and *ronth* for sale at Margao, in front of the *Rakhonndar* of Damodar



5.6 Ceremonial washing of *Purov* at Rawalnath Temple

5.7 Ceremonial washing of *Purov* at Betal Temple. Also seen is the torgan representing deity Betal



After the *zatra* (festival) the *torongam* (umbrellas) representing the deity **Betal** and adorned for the occasion are to be kept back in place in a ceremony called *torongam soddtai* (undressing) performed by the *Vir* and the *Gurov* (temple priest) on a Sunday or Wednesday and signifying the end of the year's **Dussehra**. On this day, the *purov* behind the Rawalnath temple is washed with *feni*, and *kombê* are offered and later cooked and eaten in the temple premises — a ritual that keeps the unity of the villagers, who, irrespective of caste, enthusiastically participate in the celebration.

In Margao, the *Rakhonndar* (protector) of Lord Damodar is appeased at a specific place in the city. A month before any *utsov* (festival) like Holi, Dindi and such, the temple committee members offer *sur-ronth* to this *Rakhonndar* and pray for smooth celebration of the festival.

**Individual Offerings to *Devchar*:** On Wednesdays and Sundays large crowds from different religions make individual offerings to the *devchar* in Margao, regarded as the *rakhonndar* of Lord Damodar or *Dambab*. Offerings here include *sur-ronth*, specially baked *bakri* (leavened bread), five *vateo* (candles), five *uzvateo* (*agarbatti*/incense sticks) and two *iddio* (country made cigarettes). Interestingly, at Margao, a *Bamonn* does the offering of *sur/ronth* to the *rakhonndar* of Lord Damodar as he resides close to this place, on behalf of the people. Some people also offer slices of bread and *sur* instead of *bakri*.

***Uskinnichi paz*, at **Panzorconni**** in Cuncolim, Salcete taluka, is another famous place where, on Wednesdays and Sundays, offerings are made to the *devchar*, known here as *Kuddo azoba*. Offerings include bread, *sur* or *soro*, *sukem nustem* (dry fish) and *uzvateo*, collectively called *vosodd* (non-vegetarian). *Soro* is instrumental in appeasing the *devchar*, with sometimes a rooster sacrificed. Interestingly a group of families of the Naik Desai community has been traditionally authorized to appease the *kuddo azoba*.

In Bali, each farmer makes offerings to the *devchar*, praying to him before the sowing and after the harvesting. They include *soro*, *sukem nustem*, *iddi*, and *ujea bodd* (a stick with a flame). After keeping the offerings the individual farmer says: "*Deva, pal, tujem tuka ghe mhojem mhaka di*" (God, the father, take this, what was promised and give us what we deserve). Such practices date back to the times when man felt intimidated by Nature's uncertainties and so revered any power **that** might be helpful.

Again in Bali, the majority of the villagers offer *soro- rontth* to the *devchar* in front of the Kundeshvar temple, on Sundays and Wednesdays, either individually or as a family. The villagers compulsorily offer *soro- rontth* at least once a year; but some do so more than once, to fulfil *a sangnnem* (vow). A member of the **Devlli** community of temple servants (**Gomant** Maratha Samaj) is in charge of *soro* offerings. The **kolhorkar** who belongs to the Desai community bakes the *rontth* outside the temple in the traditional manner. This illustrates the caste-specific roles followed till today.

At the Chandreshwar Bhutnath temple in Paroda, Salcete taluka, *soro*, *iddi*, *sukem nustem* and *bakri* are used to appease the *devchar*, who is known as *hapsi*. Although people from all over Goa make their offerings, only the *Devil!* community is entitled to appease the *hapsi*.

Interestingly, many persons offer a little alcohol to the *devchar* before their own first sip of alcohol, either by pouring some on the ground or dipping their finger in the alcoholic beverage and flicking it, for unknown alcohol-craving spirit hovering around the place to inhale it!

There is a similar practice in Rajasthan: "Jai Mataji" is said while pouring the alcohol, as offering made to *dharti mata* (goddess Earth) (Hasan 1979: 132).

**Feni Offerings by the *Shet* Community:** The *Shet* (goldsmiths) worship goddess *Jogdomba*, a manifestation of goddess Durga. She is worshipped on a Tuesday of the Hindu month of *Malund*, being offered non-vegetarian food and *feni*.

**Feni Offering by the *Gosai* Community:** The *Gosai* have a community celebration in which alcohol has a significant place. In the past this community used to beg for their living. Every male member of this community has to undergo an initiation ceremony called the *kanchiro* (ceremonial cut on the ear lobe), normally held at seven years of age. An elderly male called *guru*, belonging to the community but not a resident of the same ward, presides over the ceremony. The blood from the incision is mixed with that of a *kombo* specially sacrificed for the occasion. The mixture is then applied as a *tilak* (vermillion) on the child's forehead. Offering *feni* is a necessary part of this ritual, after which all those present symbolically dip their finger in it and then touch their tongue as a *prasad*. A little *feni* is kept in the compound for the devchar and the remaining offered to the *guru*, whom this pleases. Only local *feni*, either palm or cashew, is used.

On **Dassehra** night, all male members of the community gather at the temple in Sirolem ward of Bali to venerate the deity of *Sidhanath Proson'n*. Other communities also visit the temple to pray; they fulfil their vows by offering a local rooster, a coconut and local *feni*. The rooster is cooked and served to the gathering. *Feni* also is compulsorily offered as *prasad* to all those present. Every participant pays 50 paise for the first round of drink, served in an empty coconut shell. Teetotallers dip their finger in the *feni* and take it as a *prasad*. Then, unlimited *feni* is made available for free, and the remainder sold later. It is also a rule that all the participants are expected not to disclose the proceedings at the temple. Such a practice only makes *us* imagine the liberties that the men take after consuming alcohol, in the absence of the women

folk. To the men of the *Gosai* community this is like an outing, some relaxation after the weeklong begging for alms.

*Feni for the lam: Xim* (boundary) is a custom followed mostly by the *Mahar* at the time of marriage. After completing all the other rituals, the married couple, their friends and family, proceed to the *xim*. There the *voddil* (elder) pours *soro* and implores the *devchar* to grant them a happy married life.

*Feni to ward off Evil Eye*: Goa is no different from other places in India as far as *dixtt* (evil eye) is concerned. It is said that some individuals have the capacity to intentionally or unintentionally cause misfortune to others just by looking at them. To get rid of the 'evil eye', incantations and charms are used, Wednesdays and Sundays being regarded as appropriate days to do so.

The *Mahar* community believes that it has powers to counter the ill effects of the evil eye. Palm *feni* occupies an important place in warding off evil and is used to appease the *devchar*. After the *dixtt* is 'cured', the healer pours palm *feni* for the *devchar*, in the compound of the patient's house. That very night liquor is poured in the healer's *maharangonn* (place where the *Mahar* community worships deities), too.

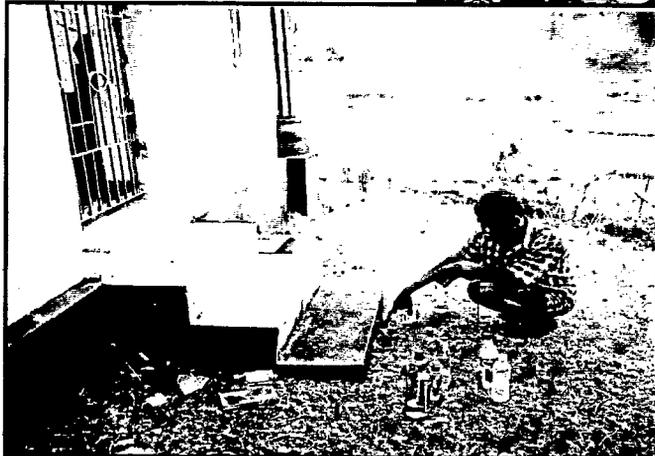
Warding of and countering the effects of the evil eye is also done by many people without using *feni*. Salt and chillies are waved around the affected person while reciting prayers and is thrown in the water or in the fire or left by the roadside. This is done by both Hindus and Catholics.



5.8 Offering for *rakhonndar* of Damodar

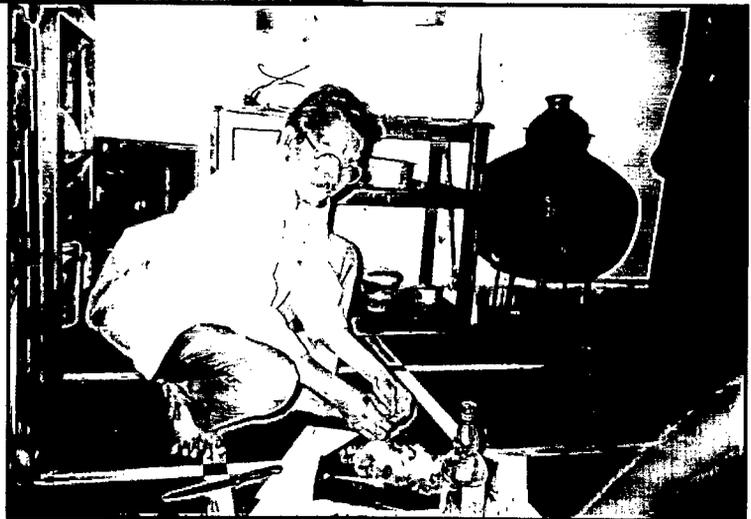
Note: can also see *Ghumti* (small structure)

5.9 *Soro, sukem nustem* (dry fish) *iddio* and *ujea boddi* (A burning stick)



5.10 Offering *feni* in *dhonno* at the Kundeshvar Temple

5.11 *Feni* used to get rid of *dixtt*



*Feni for Vorsavollichu Baumann:* Similarly, the *Mahar* community of Bali, visits their *maharangonn* at 12 noon after the *Xiddeo zatra* (village festival). On this day the *voddil* of the community has to offer *soro* to the *maharangonn*, in a *dhonno* (cone made of a leaf). A local rooster is sacrificed in a ceremony called *vorsavollichu boumann* (annual respect/remembrance), which is compulsorily made to avoid misfortunes to the community members.

*Sur offering at Maharangonn:* At Zambaulim, in Quepem taluka, there is a *maharangonn* known all over Goa and among all religions. This is only a place where offerings to the *devchar* are made; it has nothing to do with the *Mahar* community's place of worship. Hence we should not confuse the place with the *maharangonn* of the *mahar*. The person in charge of offering the *sur-ronth* belongs to the Devlli community. A number of people from all over Goa at times offer *kollso* of *sur* at this *maharangonn*. In fact the temple authorities have arranged with the toddy tapper to supply *sur* for this purpose.

*Feni at the Crematorium:* Among the *mahar palm feni* is also required at the *mosonn* (crematorium). After the body is cremated, two *dhonne* containing *feni* are kept in a corner, in appeasement of the *rakhonndar*, who ensure that the dead do not trouble the living. *Palm feni* is also served to those attending their cremation.

*Feni for Exorcism:* The *Zolmi* are the original inhabitants of Karai in Shiroda village. They belong to the *Kunmbi* community, and are also known as *ghaddi* (oracles/mediums). The temple of *Sukddo Zolmi*, built in remembrance of the eldest male member of the community, is famous for exorcism. *Palm feni* is used to 'treat' a person possessed by a spirit. The *ghaddi*, who mediates between the spirit and the person, finds out what the demands of the former to leave the body: Most often it is alcohol. On the day fixed for the exorcism, all the things asked for by the spirit are

ceremoniously offered to him. There is also a *purov* at this temple and the *devchar* residing there has to be appeased by pouring *soro*.

**Feni for Sottvi:** In the past, on the sixth day of childbirth, the whole family would have a night vigil, comprising singing and playing of *ghumott* (local instrument resembling a drum). The family awaited the visit of *sottvi mai* (mother goddess) to write on the child's 'forehead' its future. *Gott* (a copper or mud pot) mounted on a measure of rice, closed with a coconut, decorated with betel leaves and adorned with gold ornaments, personified *sottvi mai*. There was a *puja* in her honour. *Nivedhea* (food offerings) was shown to the *sottvi* first; only then all those present could eat. In order to keep awake the whole night the men drank *soro* and played *ghumott*. Coconut *feni* was the only alcoholic beverage served here.

This custom is also fading with the advent of deliveries made in hospital, the *Mahar* being the only exception to the rule. On the same day members of the community also offer *feni* at the *maharangonn*. Some other Hindus observe it if the mother is discharged from the hospital before the sixth day. This is indicative of the influence of custom and the absence of a scientific temper.

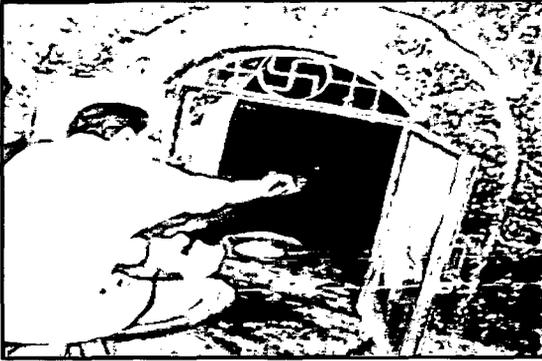
Among the Catholics, *sottvi* was practised a little differently. There was no playing of *ghumott* or worshipping of the *gott*; only a measure of rice would be kept in a corner along with a pint of coconut *feni*, a coconut and some money. This used to be done to avoid the attention of the society, as certain customs were banned among the people during the Portuguese times. The mother had to remain awake all night with the child in her arms. Early in the morning, before sunrise, the *voiginn* would take all the offerings.

According to Gracias (1994: 58), at a time when infant mortality was high, before the advent of the tetanus vaccine, or if the cord was not cut or tied in a sterile manner, people felt cursed by goddess Durga, and pre-emptively worshipped her.

**Feni for Adde Ceremony:** This is held before the *xiddeo zatra in* March, at Shantadurga Balikarin temple in Bali. Two days before the *zatra*, the villagers fetch a long tree trunk, called *adde* from the nearby jungle, which is required at the *zatra*. Two men are separately tied to the *adde* and rotated after they are raised as high as a coconut tree. But before the *adde* is brought to the temple it has to go through another ritual. This authority is given only to the *Mahar's voddil*. Since the *Mahar* are known to ward off all evil they try to purify the *adde* from any evil influences from the forest, in the form of a *puja*. This ceremony is famous for granting of individual intentions. The intentions and the fulfilment of the promises are made in terms of *feni*. After every request made to the *adde* money is given to the *mahar voddil*. Promises are made in terms of offering up to a gallon (twenty four bottles or thirty six bottles) of *feni* for favours granted. The *feni* is poured in a *dhonno* held by a member of the *Mahar* community who stands at a distance of around 100 metres from the *adde* and offered to the *zageavoilo*. The rest of the *feni* is consumed by the gathering and carriers of the *adde* to the temple. The *adde* ceremony is reputed to grant children to childless couples. After this ritual the *adde* has to be carried to the Balikarin temple, which is about two-and-a-half kilometres away.

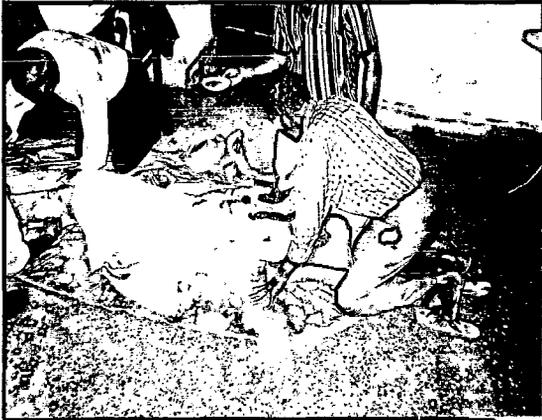
#### **Wine used to wash the holy image of Jesus**

Most churches in Goa have the holy image of Jesus Christ washed with wine by male members of the Church committee, before Good Friday. This is done to disinfect the image before which is kept for veneration. Only male members are allowed to wash the image, because it concerns a male figure.



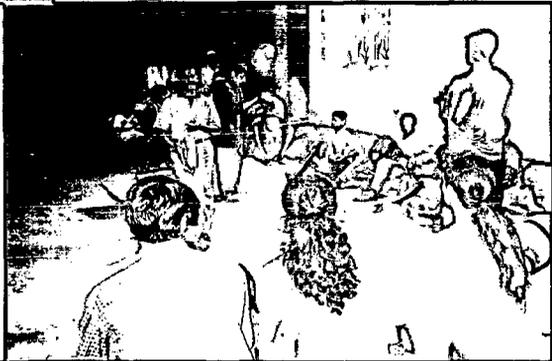
5.12 Offering *sur* at Zambaulim maharangonn

5.13 *Feni* poured in the *dhonno* held by Mahar community at *Adde* ceremony at Bali



5.14 Washing of the holy image of Jesus

5.15 Presenting an intention along with a bottle of *feni* at *Forgottem Zagor*



5.16 Bottles of alcohol kept on the cross after presenting intentions at *Forgottem zagor*

However, at Varca in Salcete taluka, we have observed a different practice. The cotton used to wash the image with wine is squeezed out into bottles and then transferred into smaller bottles sold to the public. Thousands of devotees come to the place on these days for veneration and for the wine. This wine is used as a protection of the faithful against all perils; this wine is also consumed to ward off evil influences.

**Adaptations by Catholics:** The Catholics of Goa observe many practices from the pre-Christian days. The *devchar* is often referred to, as *Dhoni* or *Dev* (God) by the Catholics.

Both Hindus and Catholics erect a *roxi mathov* (pandal made for cooking the wedding food) during the wedding celebration. For the Catholics it is important to pour a little *feni* inside the *roxi mathov*. On the middle hearth the crucifix is placed and beside it some *feni* is poured. This is for *Devak*. Instead, the Hindus offer *Viddo* i.e. areca nut, and betel leaves and so on.

There is also the Goan Catholic practice of pouring *feni* while erecting the *mathov der* (arc at the **pandal** entrance). The Hindus have their *mathov der* but devoid of *feni* offerings. Practices like these make us accept Sinha's (2002: 28-29) observation that conversion brought about a change not only in the worship of the gods but it also forced the converts to change their way of living. That is because, to instil their faith among the converts, the missionaries sought to eradicate the Hindu practices. Practices considered harmless were adapted, as long as the object and means of worship was Christian in content.

Even though there was a change in religion, some Hindu practices continued among the Catholics even during the Portuguese rule and have survived to our day.

***Feni at Forgottem Zagor:*** Catholics from the *Forgottem* ward in Goa Velha village, Tiswadi taluka, observe a *zagor* (night vigil) in the month of May. It begins late in the evening, near a chapel, and continues till the wee hours of the following morning. The *zagor* is held to pray for the well being of the people and the ward at large. An important component of the *zagor* is the appeasement of *dhoni*. He is appeased by an offering comprising a quarter bottle of palm *feni*, *viddo*, a bundle of *iddio*, matchbox, a bundle of *uzvateo*, a small piece of jaggery and bread, all of which are placed under a earmarked tree about 200 metres away from the venue of the *zagor*. Earlier, the *voddil* used to make the offerings; today, any elderly person does it given that the *voddil as* an institution does not exist. The *zagor* begins with a community wish. A bottle of *soro* is offered on behalf of the ward; some is poured on the ground and the rest consumed by the musicians and others involved in the *zagor*. Individual intentions and offerings follow, each with a bottle of *soro* from Catholics and Hindus alike. Earlier, the *soro* was necessarily *madd* (coconut *feni*); in the past two years, however, people have started offering Indian Made Foreign Liquor, including whisky. A number of alcohol bottles are consumed all night long and the remainder safely stored in the chapel for later consumption.

The Portuguese found all *zagor* suspect for their religious syncretism; the Inquisition even banned the Bardez *zagor*, which was, however, revived in 1865, following public pressure (Kamat 1999: 71). The Forgottem *zagor* must have been one such pre-Portuguese legacy. Besides, the offerings of *Viddo* and *Soro* placed at the hedge in Forgottem points to the belief of the existence of the *devchar* there.

***Feni for a Good Catch:*** Most members of the fishing community of Goa observe *zall ghoddnnek ghalta* (joining the pieces of the net), also known as *ghantt marop* (tying a knot). The entire net is knitted in two distinct halves, which are joined as one big net

ready for fishing. New nets are first blessed by a priest, and later the community prays at a Cross. It is a practice to pour *soro* on these middle knots. The community believes that the *soro* will keep evil away and ensure a good catch. *Dhump* (incense) is also burnt near the knots after pouring of the *soro*. *Dhump* also helps to keep away the evil. The fishing communities of Cansaulim, Siridao, Dona Paula and Agasaim follow this custom. Soft and hard drinks are served to all the participants.

The fisherman also makes use of *soro* to appease the *devchar* at sea. He pours liquor at the place where he spots fish. He says "*aiz mhaka novol/ojap korun dakhoi*" (Tray, perform a miracle today'). "*Mhaka ek pondra pantem nustem korun dakhoi*" ('Let me get a catch of fifteen baskets'). This prayer is addressed to the *devchar* of the sea! The net is then cast, one of its ends tied to the *vhoddem* (canoe). *Soro* is poured on this knot, too. In case the net does not fetch them enough, the procedure of pouring palm *feni* is repeated.

Another practice followed by the fishermen in Benaullim is the *maddi* (erecting a pole), held before the novenas for the feast of Infant Jesus at the neighbouring village of Colva. A bamboo decorated with *rama chuddti* (tender leaves of the coconut tree) is fixed in the ground together with a cross. *Soro* is poured at the bamboo base. Then a small group of people pray for their safety and a good catch. The uncertainties and hard labour coupled with the isolation they undergo when at sea may have persuaded the fisherman to depend on any source that might be beneficial. In Goa, the *devchar* is looked upon as a benefactor.

***Feni for Patti:*** Yet another interesting custom prevalent among a number of carpenters in Goa is seen when the *patti* (main beam) of the house is to be installed: in the Old Conquests elderly carpenters ask the owner: "*Pattiek soro na?*" ('Aren't you giving the beam any liquor?') This *patti* is very heavy and requires a number of

people to lift it. Once fitted, the house is taken as ready for occupation. The satisfied owner sometimes serves the carpenters some *feni*; and invariably they pour some on the *patti* and at the cross, if any, in front of the house. Most of it is left for their consumption. Some of such practices are only excuses to make the contented owner offer alcohol to the workers.

***Feni at winnowing time:*** While the peasants of Benaullim winnow the paddy they also pour some palm *feni* on the ground and pray to the *devchar*: "*Hem tujem tuka, varem sodd amkam, begin voiar kor*" ('This is yours, take it, and let loose the breeze so that we finish our work fast'). Earlier one quarter *of feni* with *iddi, vodgem* (rice cake) and a matchbox used to be kept for the spirit. Presently, this practice has been replaced by reading of some Biblical passages.

***Xim:*** Catholics also follow a custom similar to the *xim* of the *Mahar*. After the wedding, the party goes to the *xim* of the ward or the person's courtyard. The bride's and the groom's relations stand on either side of the boundary, on which bottles of coconut *feni* are then poured. At every point, words either of forgiveness or of thanking the host are uttered, and requests that the bride be well looked after are said. Nowadays, with the wedding receptions held in public halls, the practice is slowly dying.

***Rituals on the Wane:*** Our study revealed that many practices involving the use of *feni* are today becoming extinct. In some cases, these practices are followed clandestinely either due to religious pressures or the caste tag attached to the rituals. One of these is the *medd marop* (erection of the pole), which was very popular with the *Gauddi* community. This *medd* was installed before the marriage celebration, at the hands of the village *voddil/gaunkar*. Palm *feni* had to be poured at the *medd*. Underneath the *medd, viddo* and other amulet given by the *ghaddi* were placed, in the

belief that they would ensure the smooth conduct of the celebrations. However, the custom is on the wane; even the few who erect the *medd* flatly deny the use of *viddo* or any other things

*Medd marop* among the Catholic toddy tappers of Benaulim is also on the decline. They no longer see much meaning in the ritual. Moreover, the *gaunkar* has relinquished his rights, and this has also contributed to its decline.

*Pikas marop* (striking with a pickaxe) is another such custom. The *gaunkar*, after consulting the *ghaddi*, would be invited to strike with a pickaxe a plot earmarked for a new construction. He would then pour *soro* for the *zageavoilo* and make an offering to the temple on behalf of the owner of the plot. Today, however, most Catholic *gaunkar* have stopped such services; it is now the priest who blesses the *ghor khuris* (blessing of the foundation stone bearing a cross carving). Some even bury a gold cross and a few coins with the foundation stone. The pouring of *feni* is done clandestinely, if at all.

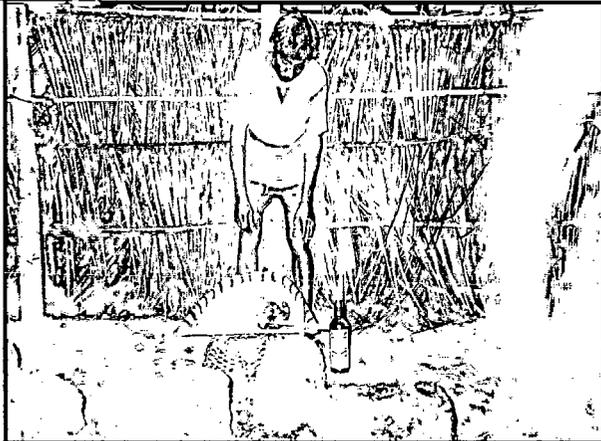
Similarly, the villagers of Verna had a number of beliefs centering on the *gaunkar*, who belonged to the *Gauddi* community. For example, during harvest, people would ask him to make offerings to the *devchar*, which, a decade ago, included killing *a kombo* and pouring *soro*. Very often, the villagers gave the necessary amount for the *gaunkar* himself to buy the required materials.

***Feni Offered at Bandiantulo Khuris:*** This cross, considered to be miraculous, is located on the national highway at Cortalim. The Catholic *Gauddi* community alone has the right to incite the *magnnem* (prayer) at this cross, following which palm *feni* is poured behind the Cross, a place demarcated for **the dhoni**, who grants the favours. People from all over Goa come here, on Wednesdays and Sundays, always with alcohol to offer.



5.17 Pouring of alcohol at the *Mathov der*

5.18 Offerings including rice, coconut and alcohol offered to the person erecting the *roxi mathov*



5.19 Offering *feni* at *Bandiantulo Khuris*

5.20 Inscription on the cross



We gather that most of those who used to participate in the *magnnem* died of alcohol-related diseases. Their family members continuously complained to the parish priest to take some action against the offering *offeni* at the Cross. In 2003, the parish priest objected to the practice dubbing the libation a pagan practice. The use of *soro* behind the cross has stopped, with effect from January 2005, after the new *voddil* took over. However, in secret, some Catholics still continue the practice.

In conclusion, it is interesting to note that alcohol gave all the abovementioned practices a Christian semblance, as a result of which *zagor* and the like escaped the hawk's eye of the Inquisitors (judges of the Inquisition Tribunal). The use of non-vegetarian items, like roosters, acted as a further endorsement.

Such practices were, however, not restricted to Goa; they were prevalent in other parts of the world. For example, in Greece alcohol was used in libations, for sacrifices and also as medicine. Wine was used in rituals and for festive occasions. Wine was also poured on the ground where any temple or house was to be constructed. This was done with the intention of consecrating the ground (Lucia 1963: 158).

# **CHAPTER VI**

## **SOCIAL FUNCTION OF ALCOHOL**

Culture is a universal phenomenon; and as Larsen (1998: 22) points out, it is also unique because of the past and present experiences of its population. The past and the present cannot be separated, as culture is the cumulative effort and experience of generations of people. The complexity of each culture arises from the innate web of beliefs, lifestyles, customs, and so on. It includes all the observable elements that manifest in a particular group of people. Classical anthropologists have taken this a step further to include social institutions, mannerisms, worldviews, values and interactions between people.

Alcohol consumption is a noticeable factor in most cultures. As discussed in Chapter I, alcohol is consumed variously in different places of the world. Since times immemorial, civilized people have had alcohol as part of their ceremonies. The rich and deep red colour of wine was usually compared with the richness and value of blood. Wine was used by men to pledge loyalty. Earlier, a pledge was often sealed by cutting the veins of their wrist and mixing their blood, thereby symbolizing that they became blood brothers. As civilizations progressed, this barbaric custom was replaced by sipping wine from the same glass, as the wine resembled blood. Wine was used to pledge loyalty and friendship at ceremonies like betrothal, marriage, christening, baptism and even death. Thus, alcoholic beverages became an accepted part of rituals (Block 1965: 33).

To research on alcohol use, the functional approach is a fruitful frame of reference. The four traditional principles of functionalism . are as follows: 1. Every

social system has certain needs for its maintenance. 2. Every social custom is functional in the sense that it fulfils some of the needs of the social system. 3. A social need may be fulfilled by different social customs. 4. Social customs together make up a meaningful whole so that a change in one social custom entails changes in one or more of the other customs (Straus 1971: 222-223).

Robert Merton distinguishes the manifest from the latent function. A social custom is said to have a manifest function if its consequences contribute to the fulfilment of social needs and are intended and recognized by the participants in the social system; it has a latent function if its consequences are neither intended nor recognized as contributory to the fulfilment of social needs by the participants in the social system (Ibid.).

Merton also introduced the notion of dysfunction as opposed to eufunction. **Eufunction** is contributory and dysfunction harmful to the maintenance of a social system (Ibid.). In this context the use of alcohol at social gatherings in the Goan society does satisfy the human desire to drink. Thus, on the one hand, society accepts social drinking and, on the other, points to the parameters of drinking. That is to say, alcohol consumption is culturally patterned. Consumption may or may not be associated with social deviance, as deviance has various definitions. The drinking custom is itself socially defined in terms of who drinks what, when, where, how much, with what effects, and for what reasons. Studies also reveal variations in terms of age, sex, rural urban residence, religious affiliation, ethnicity, and socio-economic status (Sterne 1967: 67-68).

In Goa, alcohol consumption is more than noticeable. We seek to explore the various events where the use of alcohol is 'accepted' and 'expected' by the society. We see that it has an important social function, particularly in the Goan Catholic life.

No social occasion is complete without alcohol. Using Merton's analysis, we can say that alcohol use is eufunction to the Goan Catholic community. On the other hand, it cannot be said that Hindu celebrations are totally devoid of alcohol use. In fact, some Hindu families have now started serving alcohol at certain celebrations, which are strictly social in nature and have no religious significance. Presently, there is little difference between alcohol consumption at the individual level in the two communities.

Goan society has socially sanctioned occasions for alcohol consumption, avoiding 'dysfunction'. Alcohol consumption is permitted as long as it fits in socially acceptable parameters. Thus, this kind of drinking pattern is not to be taken as an indulgence or obsession.

To understand this wide spectrum of celebrations where alcohol consumption is acceptable to the society, we have classified it into three distinguishable areas: 1) Alcohol use at rites of passage. 2) Alcohol use at community events. 3) Situational drinking.

### **Alcohol use at rites of passage**

Every individual, irrespective of his caste, religion or region, has to cross certain milestones. Whether or not these rites of passage are celebrated by the individual or his family depends on their economic capacity and personal preferences.

Important events in a person's life include age-related milestones like the 1<sup>st</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> birthdays; wedding and wedding anniversaries, especially the 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup>; or the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday of the bride in her matrimonial house. By and large, birthdays are celebrated at home. Friends and relatives meet for a meal, at which alcohol is also served.

The Catholic religion prescribes that its followers receive seven sacraments: Baptism, Confession, Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders and Extreme Unction. All except the last mentioned sacrament are conferred in a religious and ritualistic ceremony in a church. The sacrament of Confession and Extreme Unction are extremely private as the first deals with confessing one's transgressions and the second deals with prayers for the sick and dying. The other five are celebrated publicly. Church authorities confer the sacraments of Baptism, Communion and Confirmation on a group of individuals or families, which makes them all community affairs, as far as the religious aspect is concerned. The partying that follows is generally restricted to family members, close friends and immediate neighbours.

A marriage celebration is by far the most ostentatious of all celebrations with the two major communities of Goa. The preparations are quite elaborate with many traditions and rituals involved. Among the Hindus, the religious and social celebrations are usually held at a single venue — a temple or a community hall. Although many Hindus now offer buffet lunch, alcohol continues to be taboo. In contrast, at Catholic wedding party, alcohol is an integral part, no matter where it is celebrated — at home, a community/church hall or an open-air private area. Alcohol is 'expected' and 'accepted' here. In fact, the invitees presume that alcohol will be served at the celebration. Not serving of the alcohol invites social criticism

Our study revealed that the time the reception is scheduled is very relevant as far as consumption of alcohol. For instance, if the marriage is solemnized in the morning with the reception in the afternoon, alcohol consumption is less as compared to the marriages solemnized in the evening with the reception being hosted late in the evening.

It is important and mandatory as per traditions for Hindus to consult the *panchong (almanac)* to fix the auspicious time for their marriages. On the other hand, the Catholics fix their marriage timing to try and gather as large a crowd as possible. Thus, we observe that most Catholic weddings are held over the weekends and that too in the evening. This facilitates alcohol consumption as the time for drinking is also incorporated into the cultural milieu. The social function of alcohol at the Catholic wedding celebration is observed in the manner in which it creates the right atmosphere to enjoy the function and also dance. Alcohol at these events is not considered an intoxicant but as an aid to socialising.

Another social function of alcohol at Catholic marriage celebrations is that it fills the vacuum that exists in such long drawn out celebrations. The celebrations are held in the evening so that those gathered can relax over a relaxing alcoholic drink. Earlier, when the villages were not electrified, most of the celebrations were held in the afternoon, and alcohol was part of the celebration. The celebration would end by early evening enabling the guests to reach their respective homes before dark. The few wedding celebrations held in the late evening used to continue till the early hours of the next day. In this context Sullivan (1980: 645) says that, from the functional perspective, alcohol constitutes a cultural practice that may be more or less well integrated with other parts of society.

In fact, a festive atmosphere is noticeable in the Catholic households around fifteen days before the marriage ceremony. The house is stocked with alcohol so that the family members, relatives and friends who visit and those involved in wedding preparations are offered alcohol.



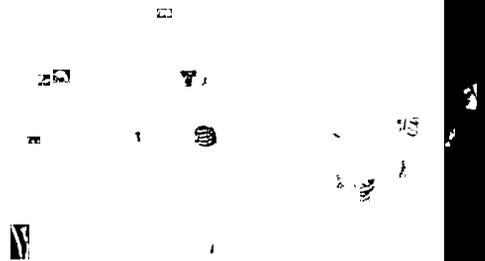
6.1 Receiving First Holy Communion in the church

6.2 Toasting the bridal couple with champagne



6.3 Couple sipping champagne at their Silver wedding anniversary celebration

6.4 People served wine glasses at the wedding toast



6.5 Toast for the first birthday of a bride at her husband's house

The toast: Alcohol has a very important social function at the toast, which is a must for every Catholic wedding reception. The toast is a prayer made for the new couple's well being. In fact, in present times, the function starts only after the toast is proposed. The toastmaster holds a wine or champagne goblet while proposing the toast. The wine symbolizes the union of the two families. The members of the bridal entourage are also served wine or champagne. In some cases the family members of the bridal couple who join them under the centrepiece for the toast are also given the wine or champagne. At the end of the toast, all those holding the wine glasses, sip the wine. In fact, the bridal couple has a small ceremony of making one sip the wine from the other's glass. The toast is very obviously a Western tradition incorporated in the celebrations by the Catholics.

As among the Hindus, it is rare to find any "toast" for their celebrations. Thus we can safely conclude that the "toast" is a Western concept.

**Engagement/Sakor puddo:** Among Catholics, an engagement ceremony precedes the marriage. It is normally held at the bride's residence. This ceremony is usually restricted to the family and close friends. The couple exchange rings and are betrothed to each other, with a priest presiding over the ceremony and blessing the engagement rings, thus providing it religious sanctity. This simple official ceremony is followed by a party. It is mostly a luncheon or dinner party, preceded by the serving of alcohol and snacks. Amongst the Hindus, the engagement ceremony is called *sakor puddo* and is also held at the girl's place. Alcohol is not a part of this ceremony.

**Potonnem/Panchporton:** The marriage ceremony is immediately followed by another tradition called the *potonnem* by the Catholics and *panchporton* by the Hindus, when the bride returns to her maternal house with her husband.

Among the Catholics, this is done either the day after the marriage, or sometimes the same evening if the marriage was solemnized in the morning. The bride along with her husband, his relatives, friends and neighbours returns to her maternal house. Normally it starts with a *ladin* (singing of songs venerating the saints and Mother Mary) or a prayer, followed by a party. Alcohol is a must for the invitees.

Among the Hindus, the bride returns to her maternal house along with her husband, his relatives, friends and neighbours. This takes place five days after the marriage. Hence, it is called *panchporton* (return after five days). Here too, a meal is served for the visiting entourage, which is mostly non-vegetarian. But serving of alcohol is a taboo. However, in recent times, arrangements are made by many, to provide alcoholic drinks to a few, either at the neighbourhood bar or in a secluded room of the house.

**Traditions:** *Saguade* (gifts), *bhikream-jevonn* (food for beggars), *ros/hollod* (application of coconut milk/turmeric paste) and *xim* (boundary) are basically traditions associated with marriage celebrations. We prefer to discuss them here to highlight the fact that some Catholics continue with their ancestors' traditions despite the change in religion and adoption of a Western lifestyle for centuries. These traditions are part of the main celebration like marriage. Alcohol is an integral part of these traditions.

**Saguade/Vojem:** This is an ancient tradition wherein the family members contribute in kind towards the wedding celebration. Relatives of the bride or groom send gifts to them before the wedding. Amongst the Hindus, who call this tradition *vojem*, local vegetables and coconuts are given. The Catholics, who call this tradition *saguade*, give a rooster, coconuts and alcohol. These gifts are given with the presumption that they would mitigate the wedding expenditure. In the case of the bride, items like

pillowcases or cushion covers, which could be included in the trousseau are also gifted. Earlier only *feni* was gifted, as mostly *feni* was consumed. However, in present times, beer or whisky is gifted. This reveals the preference given to I.M.F.L. over the local alcoholic beverages. However, this practice is on the wane because the whole procedure of marriage celebrations is undergoing a change. Earlier relatives, friends and neighbours would contribute their labour towards the marriage preparation. However, nowadays people prefer to get everything catered. Due to this reason a number of organizations have mushroomed to provide all the necessary services for a marriage celebration. Presently *saguade* is adhered to only by those who feel they have an obligation to reciprocate. In some cases it is also given when the relationship is very intimate.

Gift-giving is done for various events and reasons. Among the higher castes, particularly the Catholic *Bamônn*, we find a unique practice where alcohol is gifted on special occasions like a birthday or anniversaries. In case the recipient is a woman, normally wine is given, while for a male a bottle of premium whisky is offered. During the Christmas celebrations too, Catholic Brahmins very often include a bottle of wine or whisky in the Christmas hamper. There is reciprocity involved in these gifts. The similar presumption was that alcohol offering can contribute to the birthday expenditure. Since alcohol is consumed at these occasions it has always been an esteemed attractive gift.



6.6 *São João vojem*

6.7 *Sao Joao*  
offerings including  
*feni* bottle at Zuari



6.8 *Sao Joao*revellers  
diving *forfeni* bottles

Similarly, many villages in Goa follow the traditional Sao Joao celebration, where the family of the newly married lady gifts the Sao Joao *vojem* (basket of fruits and a bottle of alcohol) to the son-in-law. This *vojem* serves the purpose of offering some of the fruits and the alcohol bottle to the revelers. The revelers later consume these bottles in a group. Such practices unite the villagers, with alcohol consumption having a secondary role.

***Bhikream jevonn /Devkarem:*** Both the Hindu as well as the Catholic communities have a tradition of offering a meal in honour of the departed souls of the family. The Hindus call this tradition *Devkarem* while the Catholics call it *bhikream-jevonn*. The main distinguishing factor is the serving of alcohol by the Catholics and its absence amongst the Hindus. Certain people from the village are specially invited for this meal to represent the departed souls. They have to match the age and sex of the dead member of the family. They are feasted in the belief that the dead souls of the house are being appeased. Though it is called *bhikream-jevonn*, the special invitees are not 'regular' beggars but the poor people from the village specially invited for the occasion. Among the Hindus, the person invited is expected to fast from morning till the time of the meal. This is probably with the intention to allow him to eat well because he represents the dead member of the family. This tradition is normally held one or two days prior to the marriage.

Among the Catholics, certain dishes like meat and vegetables are cooked separately for these special invitees (*bhikarim*). The meat and vegetable pieces are huge as compared to the normal food. Similarly, extraordinarily big pieces of *dosh* (local sweet of gram and coconut) are served to them. These *bhikarim* are also presented gifts.



6.9 *Bhikream-Jevonn*

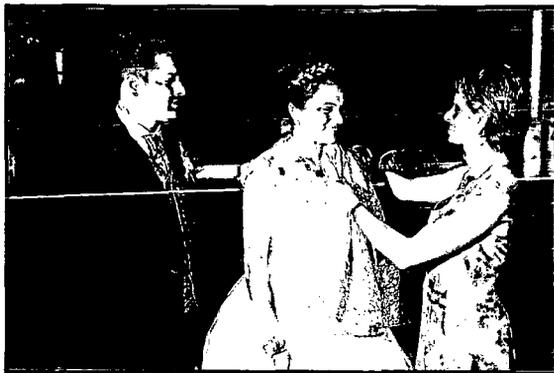
Note the feni pints at the side of the leaf plates

6.10 Alcohol poured in pints for the *bhikarim* to take home after the *Bhikream-Jevonn*



6.11 Application of *ros* (Breaking eggs on the head, for fun)

6.12 *Hollod* Ceremony in a Hindu home



6.13 Ceremonious offering of *Saddo* (dress) to the bride

However, among the Catholics, a pint of *feni* is necessarily given. Significantly, many of these *bhikarim* come with their own pints and the same are filled with local *feni* for them to take home. The belief is that they are old and economically not well off. In Goa, for the old, drink is anticipated to provide good sleep, appetite as well as good health.

The entire family, close friends and neighbours are also invited for this *bhikream-jevonn* and alcohol is served freely. Family members drink together and discuss the future prospects of children as well as of the family affairs. However, in recent times, this tradition has been waning primarily because one cannot find *bhikarim*. But the thought of having the *bhikream-jevonn* still exists. Such families give this food to the old residing in the Homes for the Aged. A wine bottle is also offered presuming that the old have a taste and wish to consume it.

Hence, particularly nouveau riche Catholics have begun using a new nomenclature for this tradition. Instead of calling it *bhikream-jevonn*, they now call it *ghorcheam-jevonn* (*meal* for family members). Such meals, apart from gathering families, help to introduce the younger generation to the older. Alcohol in this context helps create a bond. A number of respondents felt that on the wedding day, families do not get sufficient time to interact. It is on occasions like the *bhikream-jevonn* they do get opportunities to meet each other.

Many families also observe the first and third death anniversaries. On these days normally only one *bhikari* is invited to represent the dead soul. However, invitation is extended to immediate neighbours, family members and close friends. Alcohol is served along with meals. But it is not done ostentatiously as for wedding or communion celebrations.

Many families have the *bhikream-jevonn* on different occasions, be it a new venture or a vow, where alcohol becomes a part of the meal.

**Ros/ Hollod:** On the eve of the marriage, both Hindus and Catholics have a special ceremony for the bride or the bridegroom. The Catholics call this ceremony as *ros* while the Hindus call it *hollod*.

Among the Catholics, the bride or the groom is mostly made to sit in front of the altar or in the balcony, late in the evening. The family members followed by friends and neighbours apply *ros* (coconut milk) to the person getting married. This is followed by a ceremonious warm water bath. This ceremony is marked by fun. As the ceremony goes on, drinks including alcohol are served.

Hindus perform the *hollod* ceremony in front of the *tulsi* plant. The bride or the bridegroom is made to sit in front of the *tulsi* and *hollod* (turmeric paste) is applied to the face and the limbs. Family members, friends and neighbours participate in this ceremony. After the application of *hollod*, the bride or the groom is given a ceremonial warm water bath. However, no alcohol is served at the *hollod* ceremony.

**Jevonn:** It is a custom for relatives and friends to invite the newly married couple for lunch or dinner. This is called *jevonn*. This invitation symbolises the welcome and acceptance of the new member in the family. Offering alcohol, especially to the new male member, is considered a sign of hospitality. At this meal alcohol is consumed together in the family atmosphere.

**Barso:** Among the Hindus, the ceremony for the naming of a child is called *barso* and is normally held on the 12th day after birth. The ceremony is held at the house of the infant with ladies normally participating in it. Hence, no alcohol is served. However, the child's father in some cases may have a separate party for his close friends, mostly, in a public drinking place. But if he makes arrangements at home to serve his

friends alcohol, this is done in the late evening and is confined to one room of the house.

**Baptism:** This is the first sacrament received by a Catholic. Usually the person receiving this sacrament is an infant. At this ceremony the child is formally named in the Church. After the religious ceremony the social celebration follows, which is full of gaiety with liberal serving of alcohol.

**Communion:** This is the third sacrament that a Catholic receives in the Church. All the children belonging to a particular age group and who have undergone sufficient religious indoctrination receive this sacrament. The religious ceremony is followed by the social function where alcohol is served. In the present times, a number of people celebrate this ceremony grandly. This has made many elders remark that today's communion function is like a wedding of the earlier times.

**Confirmation:** This is the fourth sacrament in the life of the Catholic. The social celebration associated with this sacrament is a subdued affair. Normally, only the family members, immediate neighbours and close friends are invited. Alcohol is served at the social function. However, only those who can afford and wish to have a grand party organise such function.

**Ordination/Final Profession:** The sacrament of Holy Orders is received only by those who become priests. The religious ceremony is held in a church and those present — comprising only family members and close friends — are served snacks and soft drinks by the Church authorities.

Subsequently, most families of the ordained priest have a celebration. This celebration is mostly held at the residence, where **family** members, neighbours and friends are invited. Among the priests the celebration is normally held on the day the ordained priest celebrates his first mass in the village church. All the pomp and glory

associated with a marriage celebration is witnessed at the celebration of the first Mass, as it is considered to be the equivalent of the sacrament of marriage. Serving of alcohol is part of the celebration. Wine or champagne is also used during the toast. Interestingly, it was observed that the first mass is celebrated with grandeur mostly by the priests ordained for the Archdiocese whereas those joining the missionary Orders do not have ostentatious celebrations. This could be because most of the missionary societies have to lead a simple life.

Nuns make their final profession, which symbolizes that they have successfully completed their religious studies. She is also given a ring accepting her in the fraternity. Just like the ordained priest, all the pomp and glory associated with a marriage celebration is witnessed on this day, as it is considered to be the equivalent of the sacrament of marriage.

**Funeral:** Normally among the Catholics the funeral is held either before noon or in the late afternoon, attended by men and women. Alcohol does not have a strong social function at a funeral. However, alcohol is offered to those who partake of lunch or dinner. Similarly, a bottle of *feni* or any other hard drink is reserved for the elderly visitors on a condolence or after the funeral. Among the upper castes, funerals are held on a grand scale. Alcoholic beverages, along with a good meal are served for the family.

The gravediggers and others who help in the funeral arrangement and who are known to consume alcohol on a daily basis are offered a drink for their services.

Among the Hindus, however, funerals are attended only by men. Alcohol is necessarily kept at the crematorium for the consumption of those ~~working~~ there, either to collect the firewood or to ensure that the corpse has been fully cremated. This is learnt to be a practice that has been followed from times immemorial. Alcohol

consumption is, thus, associated with the function of providing psychological strength to the consumer to see the corpse burning.

It is observed that in the present times, some of the persons who attend the funeral also consume alcohol kept for those working at the crematorium. Among some communities like the *Velip*, soda as well as I.M.F.L is offered to the men attending the funeral, while among the *Mahar* serving alcohol to all those present is an obligation.

Similarly, the family of the deceased observe *baravo* (observance of the 12th day after the funeral). On this day a meal is served in the name of the departed soul. The family invites a known poor person from the village to represent the latter. If the departed soul used to consume alcohol, the person who represents the dead soul is also offered alcohol. Some families also offer alcohol to the men present. The serving is not done openly. A bottle is given to one person and those who wish to consume alcohol go in the backyard or courtyard to have the drink. However, this is done by a few people and is not a regular custom among the Hindus.

There are a number of other traditions, like *saddo* (offering a red dress by the maternal uncle's wife to the bride), *chuddo* (offering colourful bangles to the bride by the maternal uncle) and such others that are followed by the Catholics. Similarly, the sacrament of **Extreme** Unction and confession have not been discussed in this thesis, as they are not within the scope of the study. Alcohol is not used in these traditions or sacraments.

### **Alcohol use at Community Events**

As religion is deeply rooted in the Goan psyche, each community or village celebrates its own feasts or festivals. While Catholics celebrate feasts, Hindus celebrate *Zatra*. Catholics celebrate their village Church feast, which is often

restricted to the villagers. For Catholics, belonging to particular village life centres on the *igorz* (church building) A Catholic has to compulsorily attend mass every Sunday at the *igorz* or *kopel* (chapel). Similarly, for the Hindu, the temple occupies a prime place in his life. It is here that he seeks divine intercession.

For our understanding we prefer to categorise those celebrations related to the church or temple as community celebrations. Besides, festivals like the *Holi* or Carnival and religious celebrations like Christmas or Diwali can be classified as community events as the whole community celebrates them.

**Fest (Feasts):** This is one of the main celebrations for the Catholics. Once a year, the feast of the patron saint of the church or chapel is celebrated. These feasts are celebrated with great enthusiasm by extending invitations to relatives and friends. The celebrations normally begin on the previous day as friends and relatives come to spend the night. It is acknowledged that whenever guests are present, alcohol is always a part of the meal, served before the meal. However, alcohol continues to play an important role even after the feast. It is served in the late evening to those who have stayed back. Thus, we see that alcohol becomes a part and parcel of the celebration itself.

Alcohol consumption at feasts is also visible in public places. Stalls in the fair sell alcohol. Many villagers consume it along with friends and family members. Although alcohol is consumed at home as a part of the celebrations, villagers visit these stalls to meet their friends over a drink. Very often, a dance or a beat show is organized late in the evening or night as part of the festivity. Alcohol is sold at these shows. In fact one cannot think of a beat show without the consumption of alcohol.

**Other feast:** There are some feasts that transcend the borders of a particular village and are celebrated by Catholics from all over Goa. The most striking example of such a

celebration is the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, celebrated on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at Old Goa. Catholics from **all** over Goa and even other parts of the country participate in the celebrations. A number of stalls serving alcohol are erected right from the time the novenas (religious preparation for the feast, which begins nine days before the feast is celebrated) commence. People from the village as well as others who come for the church services patronize these stalls selling alcoholic beverages and snacks. Friends or families meeting after a long time, at such places revive their friendship over a drink. Alcohol acts as a means to express the happiness of meeting after long time. This type of drinking is an acceptable part of the lifestyle. When a single family visits such stalls, in most cases, the man consumes an alcoholic beverage while the woman and children prefer a soft drink. However, the same woman may be found having beer at a wedding and other occasion. Drinking at such places provides no occasion for a drink for a woman. Hence, it does not fit in the socio-cultural milieu of drinking an alcoholic beverage.

Several feasts have become famous for a specific reason or devotion. The Feast of Three Kings, celebrated at **Cansaulim**, Chandor and Reis Magos, the feast of the Holy Spirit at Margao, and Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, celebrated on 8<sup>th</sup> December in Margao and Panaji. These feasts are celebrated with great pomp and show. Alcohol is served liberally at the houses of the parishioners celebrating the feasts. A number of stalls in the fair also sell alcohol. These stalls help the visitors who have no friends and relatives in the village to refresh themselves with an alcoholic drink

***Santam Pursanv*** (Goa Velha): The celebration of ***Santam Pursanv*** (Procession of Saints) is another striking event in the Catholic calendar. Even though it is not a feast yet it is virtually given the status of a feast. It is held during Lent, when most

Catholics abstain from meat and alcohol. Interestingly, alcohol is sold at some stalls in the fair. The parishioners also serve alcohol to their guests who participate in this celebration. These celebrations reiterate the fact that alcohol has become synonymous with celebration for the Catholic community. It is used at all types of celebrations. In fact, it is now considered that without alcohol there can be no celebration!

**Feast of *Sao Joao*:** The feast of *São João* is celebrated in most of the villages of Goa. Since this feast is restricted to the family, alcohol is not consumed in the household. The celebration is peculiar in that men of the same age group and status normally gather and move around the village, enjoying drinks together. In many places newly married couples have to offer bottles of alcohol to the tramping revellers. Bottles of alcoholic beverages are thrown into a well and are retrieved by whoever jumps inside, taking the bottles as their prize. This means that society sanctions this kind of drinking and fun at certain times; and even over-drinking is condoned. Most often, the youngsters in this group are pressurized by group members to consume alcohol.

***Zara*:** Among the Hindus, the entire village celebrates the *zatra*. Invitations are extended to friends and relatives. Since alcohol consumption remains a taboo for Hindus, the hosts sometimes make arrangements to serve their invitees alcohol, outside the house; it is mostly served in a room, particularly in case of habitual social drinkers who are comfortable with each other.

Some *Zatra* are specific to the village, like the *zatra in Bali*. One of the three days of celebration is the *doria dis* (offering day). Villagers offer the deity locally reared roosters; close friends and relatives are invited to partake of the cooked rooster. In many families, alcohol along with chicken is served to the *men* in a specially designated room. Close friends normally include male friends who have assimilated

alcohol into their life style. Festivals like *Zatra* do not demand a vegetarian menu; hence, it becomes an occasion for male friends to celebrate with alcoholic drinks.

*Zatra* other than the village *zatra*: Some *Zatra* have also become popular beyond the boundaries of the village, like the *sotrio* at Cuncolim and Shantadurga at Fatorpa. Here alcohol is not served openly; but stalls serving snacks sell it clandestinely. An inveterate drinker visits the *zatra* without his family; he knows the stalls that sell alcohol. Data from the bar owners also reveal that number of bars in the vicinity make brisk business during the *zatra*. Alcohol consumption at these *Zatra* is also evident in the participants' unruly behaviour and even from their breath.

Thus, the Catholics by their open attitude and acceptance to alcohol at feasts differ from the Hindus, who do not acknowledge it as a part of their cultural assimilation.

*Saibinn* (Image of our lady, the Mother of Jesus, which visits different households in a parish): Another celebration of the Catholic community where alcohol is served is the visit of Our Lady. A statue of Our Lady is taken ceremonially in a procession through the entire village. It is kept overnight in each Catholic home. The whole ward participates in the prayers though there are no formal invitations extended for it. Close family and friends are also invited. In the past, all would be served alcohol with snacks, a practice recently discouraged by the religious authorities. However, after the ward members disperse, intimate group members share a sumptuous meal accompanied by alcoholic drinks.

*Ladin* (Litany): *Ladin* is a socio-religious celebration of the Catholics. Many Catholics have it once a year or in fulfilment of a vow. A community *ladin* is also sung at a wayside cross, for individual intentions. When the *ladin* was sung for thanksgiving, the alcoholic beverage commonly used was *feni*, served in a *copin*

married lady, who in turn has to give them alcoholic drinks Through this practice the newly married lady is accepted in this community/ward. This alcohol is later consumed by these youngsters.

**Christmas, New Year and Easter:** These are community celebrations celebrated at the family level. Interestingly, alcohol does not become a part of these celebrations in most families. The higher castes, particularly *the* Catholic *Bamônns*, are an exception. They consume alcohol at events like Christmas and New Year. For this community, alcohol is a part of every occasion. Thus, our study brings out the fact that alcohol is synonymous with the celebrations, especially when guests are invited.

A lot of alcohol is also consumed at the various dances held in Goa on Christmas and on New Year's Eve, when Goa becomes a popular destination for Indians and foreigners. A lot of alcohol is consumed at these dances despite the exorbitant rates. In fact drinks and dancing seem to go hand in hand.

Blum et al. (1970: 189-193) have examined the functional use of alcohol in the Greek community. The Greeks too celebrate the rites of passage with alcohol, including the locally brewed alcohol known as *retsina*. The community events celebrated in Greece are similar to those celebrated in Goa. They include the feasts of patron saints and in some cases, as in Goa, there are pilgrimages to certain churches to celebrate the feasts. The Greeks also celebrate Carnival. They use alcohol on many occasions, from every day meals to rites of passage, festivals, hospitality and religious rites.

**Caste-specific uses of alcohol:** Most Hindus have not incorporated alcohol into their cultural life. Yet there are some castes that regularly consume it.

In the *Mahar* community, *feni* occupies a prominent place. It is served at almost all their functions and celebrations. This community strongly believes in all

superstitions and rituals. They continue to observe *sottvi*. Local *feni* is served liberally to all those keeping the vigil. In fact, the *Mahar* have a unique tradition whereby the maternal uncle has to compulsorily gift a palm *feni* bottle on many celebrations. Similarly, we have observed that most of the *moddvoll* (washer men) community members in Bali, Shiroda and Benaulim celebrate their occasions with alcoholic drinks. Interestingly, both those communities belong to the lowest ranks of the Hindu caste hierarchy. This only makes one conclude that since the *mahar* and *moddvoll* communities occupy the lowest place in the social hierarchy, the concept of 'pollution' due to alcohol usage present in the upper caste seems to be non-existent in them.

### Situational Drinking

According to Clinard (1975: 172-177) man has enjoyed alcoholic beverages since times immemorial and has also tried to control its use and misuse. Over a period of time, the public drinking house became institutionalised, the focal point of the drink and the drinker. Certain norms and values also developed to control the behaviour of the customer to a large extent. Drinking houses are known variously, as *tavernas*, bars, wine houses etc. Though all these are establishments, whose business consists in selling and serving drinks on the premises, have important social functions. They serve as places for people to get together, to organize games, and discuss personal problems. Drink is the only price of admission into this society. And for the visitor to these places, drink becomes inseparably connected with social activity, relaxation and pleasure. Levy (1951: 25) describes a pub as a 'home away from home', a place where people go for social life and entertainment, often in agreeable surroundings, which they lack at home. Further, he states that the idea of the regular pub-goer is to have company.

As Bales points out in Pittman (1967: 9) alcohol consumption is symbolic and a manifestation of the solidarity of friends or kinship groups. It is also an indication of acceptance of a male as a man among men, as an equal in his own age group. As situational drinking takes place mostly in bars, it would be relevant to first understand the term 'bar'. Public drinking houses in Goa are loosely called 'bars'. That is why even a place temporarily set up to chill and serve alcoholic drinks at parties is called a 'bar'. Generally speaking, all bars need a license to sell alcohol, which is issued by the Excise Department of the Government of Goa.

However, there are different categories of bars ranging from the age-old *tavernas* or *gadi* to opulent drinking houses in luxury hotels. We have classified these public drinking houses into the following groups: 1. *Tavernas/gadi* or bars 2. Bars and Restaurants (subdivided into normal, upmarket, and air-conditioned) and 3. Starred Bars-and-Restaurants.

Interestingly, in the Western world, too, we find similar classifications for public drinking houses. Johnson (1973: 523-524) broadly classifies the public drinking places in the West into three groups: (i) skid-row taverns (ii) cocktail lounges (iii) neighbourhood taverns. Skid-row taverns, which largely serve cheap liquor, can be likened to the *gadi/tavernas* and bars of Goa; cocktail lounges, patronised by white collar and business groups, are similar to the starred bars and restaurants of Goa; and neighbourhood taverns catering to local 'regulars' are comparable to the bar and restaurants of Goa.

In Goa, even during the Portuguese period, public drinking houses were categorized. The *tavernas* were allowed to sell only *feni* while the bars, which normally existed in city areas, sold Portuguese wine as well as foreign alcoholic beverages.

**Gadi/Tavernas and Bars:** These were found in every village and town of Goa during the Portuguese period. The *taverna* was usually one room of the residential house. The seating arrangements at these places included a few chairs and wooden benches. These *tavernas were*, and still are, patronized by the labour class, overwhelmingly men, who drink very fast and showing no inclination to cherish the drink.

There are a few such *tavernas* surviving in Goa; most have upgraded to bars. Many of them now have flashy signage, proper seating arrangement with chairs and tables. They resemble restaurants in their interiors. These latter-day bars are also mostly patronized by labourers, who resemble beehives, who just keep coming and going. Of course, *feni is* most in demand here. Cheap I.M.F.L. brands and a few standard ones are also available at these places. The food items sold include grams and peanuts.

Many *tavernas* and bars commence business as early as 5 a.m. and close almost at will. With little else happening in Goan villages after working hours, these *tavernas* /bars serve as social clubs for the lower sections of the society.

Both the *taverna* and the bar are managed by a single person, normally a male.

**Bars and Restaurants:** They are sub-divided into:

- a. Normal
- b. Upmarket
- c. Air-conditioned

a. The Normal Bar-and-Restaurant: It is similar to the one discussed earlier, as far as the seating arrangement is concerned. In addition, most normal bars and restaurants serve cooked food items, including meat and fish dishes. Most customers here are regular patrons enjoying a close bond with the owner. The owner knows the brand as well as the drinking habits of the customer. Similarly, he also knows his spending and drinking capacity. Hence, the owner usually pours the customer's favourite drink just following a sign from the customer. Middle class males with regular jobs or petty

businesses are such usual customers. If a place is known for certain meat or fish items, sometimes youngsters also visit such places. Very often, the regulars share a table and discuss the day's work or the political situation. They either pay their individual bills, or at times, the bill may be paid by a single person, depending on the circumstance.

Many such places also have a television set or a carom board, *moddko/matka* (number games, or one form of gambling) or even gambling with cards as added attractions.

b. The upmarket bar-and-restaurant: This is a new phenomenon in Goa. It is usually a specialty restaurant (with Chinese, Punjabi, or Goan, cuisine, etc), and visiting it has become a status symbol. Normally, families visit such places and the ambience is very serene; they have plush decors. Higher middle class people visit it to celebrate birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and so on. Sometimes, business meetings are also held.

By and large, upmarket bars and restaurants do not serve *feni*. However, in keeping with the demand, some serve *urrack* in summer. When *feni* is on the menu card, the price is generally high, as they claim it to be pure *feni*. By keeping prices of drinks high, such restaurants maintain a certain standard of clientele.

Expensive I.M.F.L. cocktails and foreign drinks are served here. Such bars are located in the major towns of Goa and in areas frequented by tourists, or along the national highways. They have impressive signboards and use good publicity machinery to attract customers. The food served at these places is the main attraction. Alcohol consumption plays a secondary role. Drinking at such places is a mere accompaniment to the meals. In coastal areas some have introduced entertainment

programmes like karaoke on weekends, while others have them everyday to attract a particular crowd.

c. **Air-conditioned bars and restaurants:** They are structurally and functionally similar to the upmarket counterparts. The only difference is that the food and drinks are priced comparatively higher.

**Starred Bars and Restaurants:** They are very exclusive and expensive, and so not well frequented by the locals, businessmen being exceptions. These hotels normally cater to foreign tourists. The ambience at these places is subdued, with piped music in the background. Only upmarket brands of I.M.F.L., imported alcoholic drinks and exotic cocktails are served at these places.

Thus, we see that the three public drinking places discussed above differ with regard to the drinks served, their consumers and the ambience. The differences introduce a hierarchy in the public drinking places, which also reflects the consumer's status.

Our study stresses the fact that presently situational drinking is becoming prominent among the Goans. Families, friends and others, like business partners and so on, prefer to visit public drinking places for various reasons. For our understanding, we have defined 'situational drinking' as spontaneous celebrations with alcohol. These functions are held for a specific reason. Normally, in situational drinking, only those who are comfortable in each other's company prefer to meet. These celebrations are mostly spontaneous celebrations; they can take place without prior planning, though at times they may be planned like a celebration of an event. It is very common in Goa for two persons meeting after a period of time to say "*kedna bos-ia?*" ('When shall we sit?' — referring to a get together for a drink). In other

words, situational drinking takes place among known people. Hence, the operational numbers here are small.

We shall now consider some situations where alcohol is consumed. In recent times, situational drinking has become a lifestyle statement. For instance, when somebody working abroad comes down to Goa, he celebrates his return with his friends at a party. These parties are normally held at a suitable restaurant popular for a fish or meat item. It is quite acceptable for two friends who meet after a long time to sit over a drink and discuss their lives.

The birth of a child calls for a celebration among friends, at a public drinking place, depending on the host's economic capacity. Although birth celebration falls in the category of rites of passage celebrations, they can also be categorized under 'situational drinking', involving as it does only a few people and is done with a purpose.

We have also found that elections, whether to the panchayat or the Lok Sabha, provide another opportunity for situational drinking. Alcohol helps bind the voters into one party. The candidates in the fray seek to induce the voters by offering them alcohol. Alcohol is not sent to the voters at their residence but its consumption is allowed in togetherness. This is done in two ways: the candidate either earmarks a bar or a normal bar-and-restaurant, by instructing its owner to serve his supporters a certain quantity and quality of alcohol; or, alternatively, alcohol is served at the candidates' residence or his close friend's house.



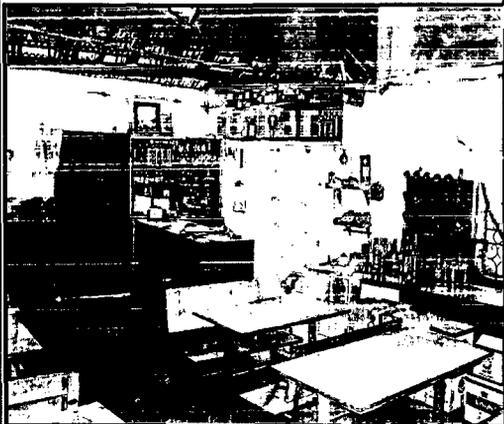
6.14 Exterior of a bar-and-restaurant owned by a Hindu

6.15 Curtain at the entrance of a bar

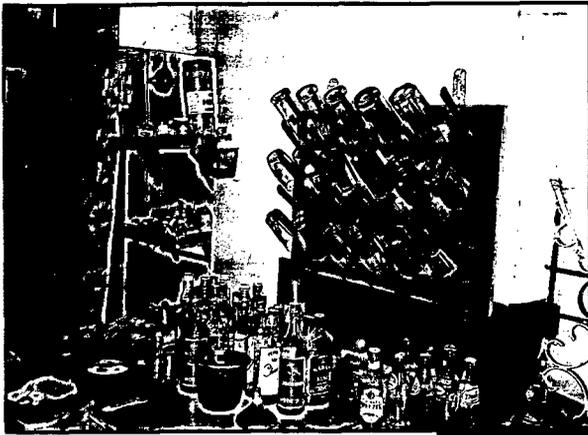


6.16 A Catholic lady managing a bar

6.17 Curtains used to provide privacy to alcohol consumers at a bar

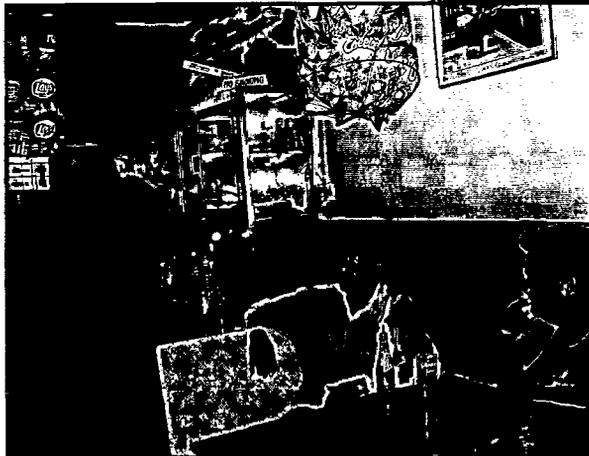


6.18 The inside of a normal bar



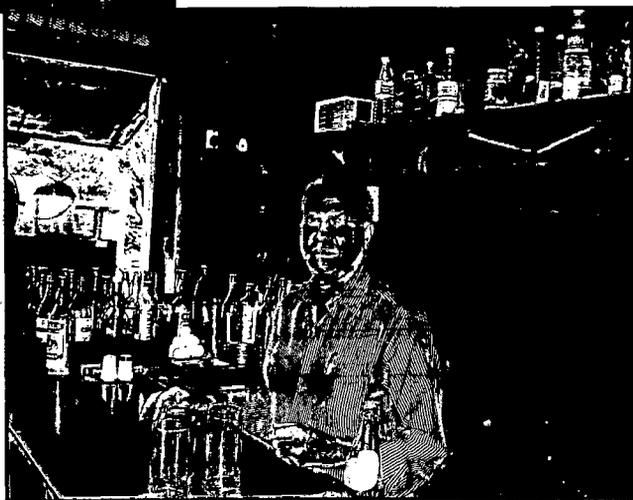
6.19 Glass stand in a *taverna* that existed in the Portuguese rule

6.20 Card games next to a normal bar



6.21 Interior of a normal bar

6.22 Counter of bar-and-restaurant, once a *taverna*





6.23 A typical bar frequented by fishermen

6.24 Seating arrangement in an air-conditioned bar-and-restaurant



6.25 Seating arrangement in an up-market bar and restaurant

Although two days prior to the elections are declared 'dry days', it is a well known fact that candidates clandestinely provide alcohol to all those who desire it. Alcohol is stocked at different places and sent to the supporters' houses in the night to enable them to party. Whatever the methods used, elections have emerged as one sure time for situational drinking, often a starting point for the vice among youngsters.

The *moddkea-zago* (*matka* den) is another place for situational drinking. The winner of the bet celebrates with friends by visiting a public drinking house, in keeping with his spending capacity, generally in the evening.

Similarly, among the working class, a promotion or a hike in salary calls for a celebration with work colleagues or even close friends at a bar and restaurant. Among youngsters, winning football and cricket teams celebrate their victories. Here, food, not alcohol, is the main attraction. The many fetes, beat shows, beach festivals and the annual food and cultural festival held, particularly in the coastal belt of Goa, are occasions for situational drinking for the young; not forgetting a new trend in the Goan society — picnics organized in and out of season. Earlier, picnics were held annually only during the summer season when the family or the neighbourhood visited a beach. This is no longer so; picnics are freely organized, on public holidays or Sundays.

Thus, we see that alcohol forms an important component of all celebrations in the Goan society. Whether the celebrations are related to rites of passage or community events, or even in situational drinking, celebration without alcohol, is considered incomplete. That makes alcohol the 'expected' and 'accepted' part of occasions.

# **CHAPTER VII**

## **SOCIAL NORMS GOVERNING ALCOHOL**

### **CONSUMPTION**

**In contrast to other intoxicants alcohol is incorporated in the cultural traditions of most societies. With the passage of time, every civilization adopted different patterns in the traditional attitude and norms towards consumption of alcohol. People started consuming alcohol for various reasons, such as individual motivation, dietary requirements, medicinal purposes, ritual celebrations, conviviality, etc. (Howe 1989: 29-32). Every culture developed and prescribed social patterns for alcohol consumption to avoid social problems due to its use. Thus, alcohol consumption got integrated into the cultural life of the group (Stark 1975: 89). The normative structures act to reduce risks and insulate group members against aggressive behaviour associated with drinking occasions (Roman 1981: 148).**

**Societies also determined the situations where men and women could consume alcohol. Besides the type of alcoholic beverage, the amount to be consumed and the manner of consumption was also socially determined. The social definition of alcohol consumption implies 'who', 'what', 'when', 'where', 'how much', 'with what effects' and for 'what reasons' one drinks. At the same time, these social rules also disapprove of drunkenness (Sterne 1967: 67, Calm 1970: 21, Straus and Bacon 1953: 127, Grant et al. 1998: 1-5, Wallace 1989: 331). Traditional social order and values also play a significant role in the use of alcohol (Jones 1963: 24).**

**In Goa, too, alcohol finds acceptability at events and occasions celebrated by the individual or the community. This is prevalent among the Catholics and to a**

certain extent among the Hindus too. For the former, the social use of alcohol is not a personal preference but a societal obligation. Hence, its use is not considered a social problem. In course of time, society developed a number of rules and regulations pertaining to alcohol consumption, with regard to gender, status and codes surrounding the production and consumption of alcohol. Today, an unwritten set of rules governs the use of alcohol in the Goan society.

The functionalist and structuralist approaches can be considered in order to understand the factors determining alcohol consumption. According to the structuralist perspective, the individual's actions, values, thoughts and identities are largely structured through social norms and expectations. These, in turn, are linked to the broader organization and structure of societies. From a functionalist-structuralist approach these norms and social institutions act to maintain social order, which means that individuals have expectations regarding the behaviour of others and are also expected to meet the expectations others have of them. Society is viewed as being largely consensual, predictable and stable, bolstered by the moral order kept in place by cultural and social systems (Lupton 1998: 8).

The functionalist theory makes a distinction between the 'manifest' (i.e. explicitly recognized by members of the society) and the 'latent' (i.e. a feature may fulfil, but may not be recognized or admitted by members of the society) functions. The functionalist theory also recognizes that a social system may exhibit dysfunctional features that disrupt that system and lead to social pathology. Similarly, the varying cultural norms affecting the use of alcohol from the anthropological viewpoint provide an insight into alcohol studies. This insight is obtained by applying a structuralist-functionalist model to different societies, i.e. by first developing a holistic understanding of the social structure on its own terms followed by

understanding alcohol consumption in the socio-cultural context and the interaction between drinking behaviour and other aspects of social life. And finally, the specific function assigned to alcohol within the social system is discovered (Lomnitz 1976: 177-178).

In the earlier chapter we examined the social functions of alcohol. A permissive culture necessitates norms to maintain social order and avoid over-drinking. Hence, though alcohol consumption is very much visible in Goa, there are invisible norms and patterns that ensure that over-drinking is controlled. The manifest function may reveal the societal obligations of alcohol as an aid to socialise while the latent function recognizes the social control over consumption. Social pathology, as a result of deviance from normative behaviour, is thus controlled. Hence, it is possible to conceive a range of questions about alcohol consumption from a broadly functionalist perspective.

This chapter focuses on the norms laid down by society to monitor alcohol consumption. How society views alcohol consumption at formal and informal gatherings is the focus. The various mechanisms preventing alcohol abuse are also discussed. Since every society has its own cultural ethos, it is not possible to identify a universal code of conduct for alcohol consumption.

A large number of Goans consume alcohol, yet only a few get addicted. What are the social mechanisms preventing addiction? How does society treat a drinker and a drunkard? What place does he or she find in the social milieu? An attempt has been made to analyse these issues in the following discussion.

### **Attitudes towards Alcohol Consumption**

Every society develops rules through the process of socialisation. These social norms, in turn, create a cultural system. The informal sanctions established herein

result in specific cultural patterns. This is very true even in alcohol consumption. Hence, in Goa, even though drinks are available without restraint, severe sanctions are imposed by society. Drinking parameters are established to ensure that abuse is minimized. Hence, we observe established patterns of behaviour during and after consuming alcohol at different places and occasions. For example, the manner in which alcohol is consumed at a picnic differs from its consumption on a formal occasion or at a bar.

The patterning of such norms is the basis of social institutions. Thus, social institutions serve as the operative basis of a social order. The individual's behaviour in this structure is channelled according to his status and role within the group. Norms are the substance of social control by which individuals are persuaded and compelled to conform to the group's expectations. Similarly, Sargent (1976: 343) identified certain characteristics applicable to an alcoholic. These include very high amounts of consumption as compared to even the heavy drinkers, deviant behaviour, non-conforming with the social norms and codes, displaying socially unacceptable behaviour, non-conformist with the rule of holding one's liquor. Of equal importance are the labelling and the perception that the behaviour is a social problem.

The most visible and effective mechanism used by the Goan society is the term *bebdo* or *bebdul* to chastise an individual who deviates from the society's expectation and acceptance of the amount of alcohol to be consumed.

***Bebdo/Bebdul:*** Just as drinking practices and behaviour differ throughout the world, the perception of problems related to alcohol abuse also varies. There is no uniform definition of alcoholism even in our own society. It is dependent on many factors, one of which is the social characteristics of the concerned person. Another factor is the characteristic of the group involved. The average citizen receives his impressions as

an alcoholic, depending on his visit to the type of public drinking place, the frequency of drinking, the type of alcohol consumed and his behaviour after consuming the drink.

Many sociologists use the 'labelling' perspective to define alcoholism. This means alcoholism is a 'label' applied to an individual's drinking patterns by the socio-cultural institutions and their agents to define his behaviour as deviant. Public opinion plays an important role in labelling a person an alcoholic. Public opinion on alcoholism is negative; on the other hand, the public attitude toward social drinking is primarily a positive one (Mauss 1975: 283-293).

In this context it would be relevant to explain the *term bebdo* (drunkard). In Goan society, a *bebdo is* a person addicted to alcohol of any kind, who drinks excessively till he loses motor control and cannot retain a regular job. He begs, borrows or steals to get his alcoholic drink and is usually aggressive after consuming it. He does not adhere to any social codes and is not bothered about societal reaction. He becomes a nuisance, as under the influence of alcohol he abuses both verbally and physically, his family members, neighbours and even others. His speech is slurred and is most often rambling.

However, sometimes the term *bebdo* is also used liberally to describe a person who has imbibed too much of alcohol on a particular occasion. Very often, a person speaking nonsense or speaking illogically is also called *bebdo* by saying '*Bebdea baxen uloita mure*' ('You are speaking like a drunkard'). This points to the fact that the person has lost his senses, like a drunkard, and so speaks nonsense.

**Drinking to Socialise:** The social and cultural theories of alcohol consumption discussed by Deb (1977: 4-5) state that there is a variation within and between societies about the type of alcoholic beverages consumed and the intensity and

permissiveness towards its consumption. This is mainly because every culture has a set of attitudes towards the intake of alcohol. Some rigidly define expected and prohibited behaviour of alcohol consumption. Goan culture is not an exception to this. For example, in the two major communities of Goa, wide variations exist in terms of drinking patterns. Among the Catholics, it is the 'accepted' and 'expected' aspect of celebration, whereas among *the Hindus* it is seen more as an aberration. Although alcohol consumption has not been assimilated into the Hindu culture, the Hindus in Goa presently accept the fact that alcohol consumption is a way of life for the Catholics; hence, they do not frown or condemn the consumption of alcohol by Catholics.

Similarly, in terms of alcohol consumption, Hindus and Catholics have differing patterns and attitudes. Intolerance to drinking alcohol was evident among the Hindus, while the Catholics accepted its use as part of socialising. Women in general are more opposed to alcohol consumption and more sensitive to its adverse effects than men. Women consuming alcohol were not acceptable to the Hindu society. On the other hand, the majority of Catholic respondents accepted a lady consuming a glass of beer and not a hard drink at an occasion.

**Age for Drinking:** The Goan society has also prescribed the age at which a person can consume alcohol. Generally, a youngster below 21 years of age and who has not started earning his own living is discouraged from consuming alcohol. Any youngster deviating from this faces tremendous pressure from all quarters, like the family, neighbours and even total strangers. Due to this societal norm, it was not possible to find youngsters drinking alcohol openly at occasions. However, our study revealed that some youngsters do consume alcohol clandestinely, especially at every celebration in the evening.

Society has different norms depending upon the age group of the person. The categorization is largely based on age. For instance, the consumption of alcohol in the evening, after sunset and before supper, is accepted as a routine affair with the senior citizens, especially among the Catholics. Similarly, society also accepts a labourer doing hard manual work to have a drink late in the evening. This concession is so deeply ingrained in the cultural set-up that there is even a practice of paying a labourer a part of his wages in kind with alcohol, called *resão*.

**Time for Drinking:** Over the years, the Goan society has evolved its own code for the consumption of alcohol as far as the time is concerned. Generally, alcohol is expected to be consumed only in the evenings. It is normal and acceptable to have alcohol before meals, but having the same after meals is not appreciated. Hence, at parties and other places, it is observed that alcohol is not served or consumed after food. In contrast to this, in Western countries, it is a part of their culture to consume alcohol before, during and even after the meal.

Even for a regular drinker, alcohol consumption is acceptable only before supper, while drinking before lunch is discouraged. One of the means of discouraging alcohol consumption in the afternoon is by labelling such a person as alcohol-dependent or alcoholic. However, on certain occasions **and** business meetings held in the afternoon, alcohol consumption is excused, provided these occasions are not a regular feature. In the afternoons, on Sundays and holidays, a light alcoholic drink, like beer, is preferred. Beer is considered a beverage that helps to relax.

### **Societal Attitude Towards Women Consuming Alcohol**

One of the major indicators of the culture of a society is the place of women and the society's attitude towards them. The interplay of historical, economic, social

and political forces has significantly contributed to the shaping and re-shaping of gender role or equation. From the early ages, society has determined the woman's lifestyle. Prescriptions have been laid down for her, determining what she should do in her personal and social life. This included setting down conventions for her attire, demeanour and behaviour. Society ascribed her duties and also laid down her rights. The Indian society is patriarchal, characterized by male domination and female subordination.

According to Jones et al. (1976: 103) women started consuming alcoholic beverages about the same time in history as man. With the passage of time and introduction of social restrictions the number of women consuming alcohol diminished. It is also due to the social restrictions that many women do not reveal their drinking habits. Presently, with the changes in social customs, the number of women consuming alcohol is on the rise, and many of them report alcohol related problems.

Historically, Goan women were never considered equal to men. The women's position improved considerably after the Portuguese conquered Goa (Kamat 1999: 93). The rights to property, and privileges like participation in economic and social matters, enjoyed by the Portuguese women were unheard of by the Goan populace. Goan women who converted to Christianity were conferred these rights enjoyed by the Portuguese women. Hence, Christian women became models and symbols of emancipated womanhood. Conversion to Christianity broke the traditional and customary shackles that bound the Indian women (Xavier 1993: 161).

Our data reveals that the Portuguese rule introduced changes among the Catholic women, with reference to dressing and participation in social celebrations. But as far as alcohol consumption is concerned only a few upper caste women have

assimilated alcohol as part of their culture. Goan society considers alcohol consumption to be predominantly in the male domain while women are relegated to food-related roles. The fundamental social division of labour ascribed to man makes him the provider of income. In fact, most of the respondents were of the opinion that '*bail ghor samballta*' ('the woman manages the household'). Most of the respondents averred that alcohol consumption does not befit a woman because of her responsibilities and duties, the most important of these being childcare. A woman consuming alcohol would not be able to look after the children properly and would also be a wrong role model to the young minds.

The Goan society looks down upon a woman consuming alcohol regularly. This societal conditioning begins in childhood. As young children, girls experience and observe that drinking is a male behaviour. Larsen (1998: 26) terms this learning process through internalisation 'cultural conditioning'. Women have been socialised into internalising a whole range of prohibitions related to alcohol and its consumption.

An overwhelming majority of our respondents totally disapproved of a woman consuming alcohol at public drinking houses like bars. They pointed out that such bars are male dominated and associated with the lower social strata. Their argument was that a woman visiting bars would lose respect and credibility. Even her family members would not like to be identified with her. Such a woman is categorized as a *bebdul* (female drunkard). Some respondents opined that the woman consuming alcohol in a bar is *loz nasloli* (shameless). Interestingly, many respondents confessed that they have never seen a woman visiting a bar for a drink or even a *bebdul* for that matter. This indicates that societal conditioning prevents women from becoming alcoholics. Most of the respondents argued that it would be risky for a woman to visit such places as the males in their inebriated state could abuse her feminineness.

Secondly, the language used at bars is very crude, and not meant for women's ears. The fear of social ridicule prevents a woman from casually entering a bar for a drink like her male counterpart. On the other hand, considering alcohol consumption by women to be scandalous, many women have felt compelled to consume alcohol clandestinely.

Interestingly, in the past, society had set up the system of *burak* (hole) to cater to the needs of the female alcohol consumers. *Burak* were tiny openings at the back of a *gadi/taverna*. Many tavernas had such an arrangement that allowed a woman to procure alcohol for her consumption without being seen by other customers in the bar. Men who did not wish to be seen also used this arrangement. Another reason for the *burak* was probably the strict adherence to the business timings during the Portuguese regime. The *burak* was used to provide alcohol beyond the set timings. Today, the term *burak* is used to describe a place where alcohol is sold illegally.

Some women engaged in hard labour, like those working in the fields or selling fish, do consume alcohol in the belief that it helps them to relax after the day's toil. The impact of modernization and occupational mobility has introduced a new trend among women engaged in white-collar jobs: they visit upmarket bars and restaurants for their meals, normally accompanied by relatives or friends. Women also celebrate occasions like birthdays, job promotions and the like at such places; that is when some in the group may consume an alcoholic drink before their meals. The alcoholic drinks normally consumed by these women are largely light alcoholic beverages like beer, ready to drink (RTD) like *Breezer* or cocktails.

What is common to all these categories of women consuming alcohol is the fact that society disapproves of their behaviour and looks down upon them, though a small section with modern ideas may not mind it. In fact, a lonely woman having an

alcoholic drink at a bar and restaurant is most often presumed to be a commercial sex worker. This is yet another way the society tries to deter women from visiting public drinking houses.

Although Goan society condemns drunkenness, to some extent, the drunken behaviour of a male is condoned, but not that of a woman. This is reflected in the way society behaves with the children of alcoholics. The male alcoholic's children get some sympathy from society, whereas the female alcoholic's children only receive condemnation. Thus, we observe society's double standards in its reaction to male and female alcoholics. Even the slightest mistake by a female alcoholic's children evokes comments like '*bebdulage bhurgim ani kit' borem kot'tolim?*' ('What good can a female drunkard's children do?'). At every stage of life, the female alcoholic's children are reminded of their mother's deviant behaviour and are belittled and shamed. This is yet another form of societal pressure against the women to abstain from drinking alcohol.

As a result of this societal conditioning and societal attitude, consumption of alcohol has become a solitary activity for many women in Goa. They do not consume alcohol at public drinking houses. Her family also conspires to keep it a secret. This is because the shame and disgrace of having a female alcoholic would affect all the family members. Though it is rare to find women drunkards in Goan society, doctors at the de-addiction centre of the Institute of Psychiatry and Human Behaviour, Bambolim, reveal that a number of female alcoholics are admitted to the Institute. Wilson (1980: 116) also points that greater stigma is attached to heavy drinking and drunkenness in women. The family members experience strong feelings of shame over the drinking behaviour of the women. Further, he adds that the husband keeps his wife's alcohol consumption a closely guarded secret. This is because he wants to

preserve the man's masculine image and ability to control the wife. Hence, women who begin to drink heavily at home, most often are secret consumers.

Our study also revealed that in some cases the male assists the female to procure the alcohol. However, today due to the proliferation of retail and wholesale liquor shops it has become easier for many women to purchase alcohol. Earlier it was only the *gadi/bar* and the toddy tappers who sold alcohol.

The Portuguese practice of allowing the women to drink at parties, especially banquets, continues among the Catholics even today. Society does not frown upon a Catholic woman drinking at functions celebrated on a large scale. However, here too, there are certain norms laid down, and the woman is not expected to deviate from them. The norms prescribe that the woman may at the most consume beer. An elderly woman is condoned for having a peg of whisky or any other hard alcohol. Consumption of beer by any mature woman irrespective of her class or caste at such parties is acceptable by the society.

'Shandy' is a very popular drink especially meant for ladies; it is prepared by diluting beer with a soft drink normally with a lime flavour. Most of the respondents felt that shandy was the most apt alcoholic drink for women. Hence, a woman having a shandy at a public function does not attract many negative comments. This is a feature of the educated and higher-class women, while the labourers and others of the lower class know nothing about 'shandy'. Thus, we find that alcohol consumption among the educated and higher class women has become a means of socialising, while the majority of lower caste women by and large do not drink alcohol publicly on special occasions. However, presently when functions are celebrated at their homes, they converge in the kitchen or some other secluded room of the house and have a glass of beer just before the meal is served.

Society's discriminatory attitude towards females is also noticeable in the way it looks at teenage girls consuming alcohol. By and large, societal norms do not permit them to drink alcohol either in private or in public. It is common among a number of families to give a sip of beer to a child of either sex, but in the later stages she understands the place of drinks in her life. As the girl grows older, various social mechanisms deter her from consuming alcohol.

Alcohol consumption by a female teenager is, in fact, considered deviant behaviour. If she goes against these societal norms it could affect her status in the marriage market, or tarnish the reputation and image of the family. The girl generally fears that social drinking could become addictive, affecting her personality permanently, or that while inebriated they could become easy prey for lusty males.

Thus, social mechanisms work so efficiently that alcohol consumption has predominantly become a male activity. Similar findings are brought out in surveys of drinking habits by Saunders (1980: 67), which clearly demonstrate that as compared with the females of the same age, social class and ethnicity, males consume more alcohol, more frequently and in male company.

Even though these mechanisms restrict women's drinking, today one observes some deviation among the modern day generation of youngsters mostly belonging to higher socio-economic groups. Groups of youngsters, including young girls, party at discotheques and other places that organize events for youngsters, like karaoke or jam sessions. Their aim is not only to consume alcohol but also to eat and dance. The alcohol that is consumed by them is usually the ready-to-drink (RTD) like *Breezer* or cocktails. Incidentally, some RTDs have high alcohol content but are sweet in taste. These young girls consume alcohol only with their own group. Such deviant behaviour from the youngsters is due to the changes that are taking place in the Goan

social structure. They are due to the natural rebellious attitude of the younger generation, influence of the mass media, Westernisation, loosening of family control and availability of pocket money.

Interestingly, the Goan society appears to be slowly changing its attitude towards women consuming alcohol. A substantial percentage of our respondents did not really object to women consuming alcohol, though they were very categorical in prescribing the places and company in which women could do so and about the type and quantity of alcohol they could consume. The respondents did not find it wrong for a woman to consume a glass of beer in the presence of her husband. At the same time they disapproved of a woman consuming beer alone. Similarly, women visiting upmarket restaurants for a meal and consuming a drink with female friends and relatives, be it a beer or some ready-to-drink mixtures, do find acceptance with many respondents.

As compared to Catholic women, there were very few Hindu women who consumed alcohol. Most Hindu women do not even venture into the room where men are consuming alcohol. We also understand that some Hindu men do permit their wives to have a sip or two of the drink they are consuming when the family goes out for a meal. Our observation revealed that Hindu women from high socio-economic background, especially those in urban areas, sometimes consumed alcohol. But this consumption is done only in close family circles and never in the presence of strangers. On the other hand, many Catholic women join their family members and participate in the conversation even if they are not consuming alcohol. Some Catholic women even join the males in having an alcoholic drink.

A large number of the Hindu respondents could not accept the idea of a woman drinking alcohol publicly whether at functions or in bars. On the other hand,

most of the Catholic respondents did not object to women consuming alcohol, provided it was done 'within limits'. 'Within limits' for them was a glass of beer. This, too, provided it was consumed at an occasion and not on an everyday basis. Thus, in the present times, even though society is undergoing a **socio-cultural** change, inequalities regarding alcohol consumption exist to a large extent.

### **Various Modes of Serving Alcohol**

As mentioned earlier, the Goan society has evolved certain norms towards alcohol use. These include the way and the occasions at which it is to be served. The modes of serving alcohol are the manifestations of adherence to the existing cultural patterns. Over the years these modes of serving alcohol have got deeply internalised and ingrained. There is a pattern to it, which makes it possible to identify a kind of homogeneity in the procedure.

**Serving on Occasions:** The procedure involved in serving alcohol at events and occasions depends on the nature of the occasion along with the venue. At a largely attended function like a wedding reception, the mode is different from the one adopted at a small intimate gathering like a birthday party.

**Serving Pattern at Small Parties:** At small parties, like birthdays, anniversaries, church or chapel feasts etc., where only a few intimate guests are invited, the pattern of serving drinks is simple. As the host knows the guests, in most cases they also know what alcoholic drink they prefer, so the drinks are served as per the guests' taste. Alcohol bottles are kept on a table and guests are made to feel at home and urged to help themselves. Sometimes, the host may offer the first drink and then ask the guest to refill the drink himself. Interestingly, if a woman guest is known to consume alcohol, either the host or the guest accompanying the woman will serve her the alcoholic drink. By and large, women are not expected to ask for or help

themselves to an alcoholic drink. While the alcoholic drinks are kept in the room, their additives like soda, water or soft drinks are kept in the refrigerator and provided as and when required. Snacks served as accompaniments to the alcoholic drinks are also normally stacked in a tray and kept alongside drinks.

**Serving Pattern at Large Parties:** When a large number of invitees attend, say a baptism, First Holy Communion, birthday, or a house warming party the bar is normally set up in some corner, in the backyard or the garage. Hired tubs are used to chill the drinks with ice blocks. Usually, the host's friends and relatives manage these 'bars'. Their main task is to remove the bottles from the chilling places, open them and pour the drinks into the glasses. While beers and soft drinks are poured directly, measures are used to pour whisky and other alcoholic drinks. If the food is prepared by professional caterers, they provide the service of waiters free of charge, while people belonging to the lower income group engage youth from the neighbourhood along with family members to serve the drinks. It is, however, not uncommon to see upper income group also using the neighbourhood youth as waiters.

An assortment of drinks comprising soft drinks, beer and whisky diluted with soda are placed on trays and the waiters serve the first round of drinks. Subsequent rounds are served depending upon the host's decision. Normally, some member of the family goes around checking which of the guests needs a refill and accordingly arranges the same. In some cases, waiters move around offering people a refill. It is extremely rare to see any of the guests at such functions visiting the bar for a refill. These functions are normally held in the afternoon. The social mechanism at work frowns upon somebody drinking excessively and particularly so in the afternoons. The guests also notice the drinker who goes against the expected drinking manners.



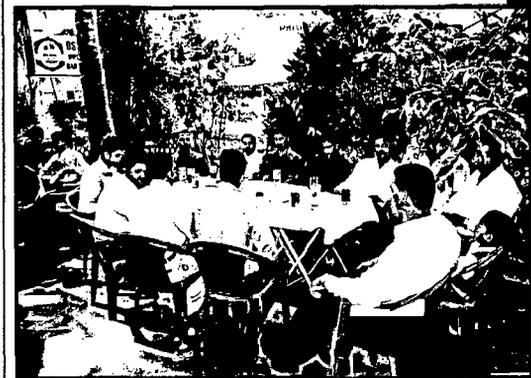
7.1 Temporary bar setup at a christening party held in the open air

7.2 Bar setup at a 21 Birthday celebration in a Catholic home



7.3 Seating arrangement at a Catholic wedding

7.4 Adults drinking in the presence of children



7.5 Group formation of alcohol consumers at a large party



7.6 Seating arrangement at a christening party held in a community hall

7.7 Seating arrangement at a birthday party held at a home



7.8 Seating and serving arrangement at an intimate party celebrated at a home. Note the alcohol bottles

7.9 Family enjoying their drinks together at a Catholic wedding



7.10 Alcohol consuming youngsters at a corner

The pattern of serving at these parties is also determined by the socio-economic factors. Among most of the lower income group members, it is common to serve only one round of drink. This is immediately followed by food. One of the reasons for this pattern of serving is to avoid excessive drinking that could result in some guest becoming boisterous. Another reason is to curtail the expenditure. On such occasions, it is quite common to find some guests lifting two or three glasses and keeping them under their chairs for later consumption. Those indulging in this act are normally seated in a corner. An interesting pattern of serving among this class is the fact that the celebration is held at two levels. For the guests at large, one round of drinks is served followed immediately by food comprising *pulao* and a meat dish. Once most of the guests depart, a separate celebration is held, only for family members and close friends, with a sumptuous meal. Alcohol also is served before the meal without any restrictions.

Among the higher income group many such celebrations are held in halls, the evening being the preferred time.

**Serving Patterns at Grand Celebrations:** Larger functions, like the wedding receptions or celebration of 50th birthday or the Silver or Golden Wedding anniversaries, are normally held in a hall or open-air dance floors. The serving patterns are similar to the ones at the larger parties held at home, as discussed above. The bar is set up in the area designated for it by the owners of these places. The drinks are placed in trays and the waiters go around serving the guests at regular intervals.

The only noticeable difference here is that, by and large, professional waiters normally provided by the caterer serve the drinks. While earlier, at these parties, the bar used to be kept closed during the dancing session, nowadays drinks are served continuously. In fact, nowadays the amount of alcohol served has become the main criterion for rating the celebration. Hence drinks are not served but literally 'poured'. Such social sanction of the consumption of alcohol definitely needs social mechanisms to control abuse. Nevertheless, among some lower socio-economic groups, the bar is kept closed during the dancing sessions to reduce expenses and avoid over-drinking. Similarly, most of their weddings are also held at home or in community halls.

The family members of the host also move around inviting the guests to have a drink, as part of their hospitality. Sometimes the guests do not even consume these drinks. The guests are also made to feel free to visit the bar and ask for a refill. Since the waiters keep moving around to see if any of the guests require a refill it also avoids overcrowding at the bar. Besides, in the present times, many people feel it is below their dignity to go to the bar to ask for a drink. Despite this, it is not uncommon to see the 'bar' area for some celebrations crowded particularly after the dancing session.

Since a heterogeneous crowd has to be catered to, it is impossible to consider individual preferences of brands at such occasions. But to avoid confusion, standard quality drinks are served. These drinks are normally popular in the market as well as among the people attending the function. The drinks served at these parties comprise soft drinks, any one brand of beer and any one brand of whisky. In some cases, rum and brandy are also kept to satisfy some intimate guests who prefer these drinks. However, some special guests like a politician or VIP are served a higher-grade drink

but this is done very subtly. It is presumed that dignitaries prefer as well as consume a better quality of alcoholic beverage suiting their status. Serving of a good brand also makes the dignitary feel important.

It is rare to find a guest asking the waiter the brand of the drink served. Most of the invitees accept the drink served to them. However, some whisky drinkers switch over to beer if their regular brand of whisky is not served. Similarly, there are some who are so accustomed to a certain brand that they carry their alcohol requirement in a pint. These normally belong to the higher socio-economic group who do not wish to compromise on the brand of drink.

Not many people serve wine, though among the upper caste it is customary to serve it. However, some of the nouveau riche now imitate this culture of serving wine.

**Status of *feni*:** Although *feni* is much publicized in the tourism brochures, it is ironical that *feni* finds no place in the Goan public celebrations. However, during certain traditional celebrations like *ladin*, *bhikream-jevonn* and funerals, *feni* still continues to be served. Even this *feni* is served to a particular category of people, like the elders and workers associated with the occasion, the argument being that they routinely drink *feni*. Presently, *feni* is considered a poor man's drink. Since serving it at parties is regarded as a manifestation of belonging to a lower rank of society, it is not served. On the other hand, many people claim that they do not serve it because it has no takers. It is said that the regular *feni* consumer at the bar avoids it at functions because it lowers his prestige. Yet another factor is its strong odour. It is quite common to hear someone say: '*Amger feni pivpacho konn nam*' ('No one in our family drinks *feni*').

**Serving by Hindus:** Among the Hindus, serving and consuming alcohol at occasions was an aberration; but they do serve it today, at functions with a non-vegetarian menu.

Birthdays, panchporton, *barso* and other events devoid of religious connotation, come under this category.

Sometimes alcohol is served clandestinely. As most Hindu celebrations are held at home, a remote room in the house or a veranda corner is designated for serving alcohol and imbibers are made to sit there. This is also possible as the number of the guests who consume alcohol is small. Normally, even the family members who consume alcohol in public drinking places do not participate in this type of consumption due to the presence of relatives. They not only fear it will ruin their image within the family, but they also feel uncomfortable to drink among unknown persons. Women keep away from this group, and most teetotalers prefer to sit elsewhere, as they avoid the temptation or fear that such company will tarnish their image.

The alcohol bottles — normally beer and whisky — are kept in the assigned room. One member of the family is given the responsibility of looking after the guests. This person has the task of providing additives, like soda or a soft drink, and snacks. Sometimes, when serving alcohol is not at all acceptable to the family members, the guests are taken to a nearby bar reserved for the occasion. Later, they return to the host's house for the meal.

At Hindu weddings, as well as at other celebrations, alcohol continues to be taboo. As these wedding receptions are held in the halls attached to the temples, neither alcohol nor non-vegetarian food is served. However, at a later date, some Hindu men also arrange a special party for some intimate friends and close relatives, where alcohol is served.

## Alcohol Consumption and Group Formation

Alcohol consumption is a part of the Goan socio-cultural milieu. Most alcohol consumption takes place in a group. Therefore, it automatically leads to group formation. Hence, we can discuss group formations at two levels: at parties and at public drinking places.

**Group Formations at Parties:** As discussed earlier, parties are categorized into three broad groups: intimate parties, large parties and grand celebrations. In the Catholic community, at intimate parties, the entire group sits together while consuming alcohol. The group includes the men consuming alcohol as well as women who may or may not consume alcohol.

At large parties hosted by Catholics, when the chairs are placed at random, inside or outside the house, groups are spontaneously formed as per the common interests shared by them. Accordingly, youngsters group together, while the elders form their own group. Families together may also form a group. Here, too, mostly alcohol consumers gravitate towards each other, while teetotallers form their own group. Among the alcohol consumers also, the groups are formed on the basis of age, sex, class, common interest, etc. As mostly no tables are provided at such parties, guests hold their glasses in their hands, or sometimes they rest them on the veranda railing or the windowsill.

At grand parties among the Catholics, the seating arrangement depends upon the host's spending capacity. Nowadays, such parties are normally arranged in the open air where tables and chairs are arranged so that families can congregate. Most often, members of the clan sit together by joining several tables and chairs to **form** one big group. Hence, at such functions, group formation is mainly based on blood relations or friendships. Thus, we observe alcohol consumed openly without any

inhibitions amidst family and friends, males and females, elders and youngsters. In such an atmosphere alcohol signifies happiness and togetherness. Such events bond the members of a society into a pattern of reciprocal obligations.

If such parties are organized in community halls, only chairs are provided. Hence, the group formation is also different. At such occasions people sit in groups based on gender and age. Generally, women sit with their men even if they do not consume alcoholic drinks. Children play among themselves rather than sit with their parents. However, in most cases, men prefer to sit in the veranda having their drinks while the women are seen seated inside the hall around the dance floor.

At these grand celebrations, it is quite common to see youngsters consuming alcohol as they sit together in a corner not very brightly lit. They also make sure that the village elders and family members do not spot them. In contrast, when celebrations are held at home, particularly in the afternoon, the youngsters mostly refrain from consuming alcoholic drinks.

Among the Hindus, group formation for grand celebrations like a wedding is predominantly based on friendships and family relations. Usually there is no table arrangement. As alcohol is not served family members form a group. Normally after wishing the couple, the family immediately proceeds to have their meal. In fact, the guests leave immediately after wishing and having their meal.

Our study revealed yet another fact related to Hindu celebrations. Some Hindus belonging to the higher economic group today celebrate certain non-religious functions with alcohol. At such parties the seating arrangement is similar to that done by Catholics. The waiter moves around serving alcoholic drinks to the guests. People of similar age and class sit together. Significantly, only Hindu men usually attend such functions. Another arrangement made by Hindus at similar parties is to keep

alcohol beside the *pandal*, where the men desirous of having alcohol congregate. Drinkers with similar interests usually sit or stand there.

**Group Formations at Bars:** A definite pattern of group formation is observed at bars that are not upmarket bars-and-restaurants. Although the seating arrangement at these bars is standard — a table with two- or three-seaters face to face, or four or more chairs — visitors form their own groups, depending on the persons' temperament and social status. Visitors to these bars can broadly be classified into two categories — the regulars and the occasional visitors.

Occasional visitors are those who visit the bar infrequently to celebrate some event. The group selects the bar usually on the basis of the snacks or food served. Mostly, occasional visitors come in groups; they occupy a table or join more tables to accommodate the entire group. This group does not interact with others in the bar, as the other consumers are unknown to them. Their intention is to eat and celebrate, with alcohol consumption playing a secondary role. The group comprises consumers of both alcoholic and soft drinks. The bill is normally shared by the members of the group, or paid by a single individual, depending on the occasion.

Alcohol consumption in a group exerts indirect pressure on a person to avoid over-drinking; it also teaches the individual how to socially adhere to a group. Similarly, when families congregate and drink at larger functions, they are conscious of others around them. These are like safety valves, which make group drinking preferable to solitary drinking. Therefore, to most of our respondents group drinking was preferable to solitary drinking. The latter is identified with addiction and is considered bad. Similarly, Robinson (1975: 26) considers solitary drinking to be 'hidden' while social drinking is subjected to social control and social pressures.

The other category of alcohol consumers comprises the 'regulars'. They generally belong to the working class or are retired individuals who prefer to visit the bar at fixed hours and consume certain favourite brands only. They may even prefer to occupy a particular table and chair — they talk to their counterparts seated at different tables — and to pay the bill, sometimes at the end of the month. Thus, we observe social bonding among the regulars at these bars, even though they visit individually.

Yet another group — the labourers — visits the bars after their work. Since most of them finish their work at the same time, they visit the bars in groups. The labourers working together form one group at these bars.

At upmarket bars-and-restaurants there are hardly any regulars. Largely families and friends celebrating an occasion or a weekend outing patronize these places. Hence, group formation here usually depends on the type of group.

### **Who serves alcoholic drinks?**

In Goa, societal norms determine who should drink, the amount, the company, and also who should serve it. In the Goan patriarchy this is the male domain.

At these intimate gatherings, normally, the drinks are kept on the table, and the guests are *free* to help themselves. If there are female guests who are known to consume alcohol, they are served either by the host or other male guests.

At larger parties, if there are no waiters, the neighbourhood boys assist to serve the drinks to the guests. In many cases, the ladies of the family accompany these boys who move with trays. She may also get a refill for a guest, but she is never involved with the bar from where the drinks are served.

Our study indicated yet another oddity. Professionally, there are Catholic women who manage bars, when the male relative is not present either due to death or

overseas employment. These women are adept at pouring the drinks at the counter. They also serve the customers, as one person manages the whole enterprise. In a few cases, helpers are employed to serve the customers; however, if required the woman also serves the customers. Significantly, such women generally belong to lower castes.

None of the above applies to Hindu women: they are not involved in any aspect related to alcohol, not even serving the snacks to the men consuming alcohol. Nor have we come across any bar managed by a Hindu lady.

### **Societal Etiquette Governing Alcohol Consumption**

Going through the aforementioned societal norms, we can assume that society has evolved certain etiquette with regard to alcohol use. In England, during the 18th century a number of conventions developed in connection with alcoholic beverages especially among the elite. 'Dry' fortified wine such as Sherry was considered an appetizer and hence consumed before a meal; light 'white' wine was accepted with fish and poultry and other light food (Leake 1963: 9). In Latin America, the Spanish and the Portuguese overlords followed the civilized amenities of European culture with the use of sherry as appetizers and liqueurs after dinner for relaxation (Ibid 1963: 11).

In Goa, the many years of Portuguese rule did make an impact on the manner of alcohol consumption. Societal expectations towards alcohol thus shape the individual's response to the drink. We observe that alcohol consumption even in large quantities receives social acceptance provided one knows how to 'hold one's drink'. This consumption also has to be done only at specific events like wedding receptions, parties, traditional celebrations and festivals like the Carnival. But even then, the consumption is diligently monitored by society.

Etiquette also demands that the host provide brands that are popular in the market or among the drinkers, thereby ensuring that most of the guests ~~will~~ enjoy their drinks. Serving cheap or less popular brands is castigated. However, all this is determined by the host's economic status. For instance, if a labourer is celebrating an occasion, serving a cheaper brand of **I.M.F.L** is acceptable but a person of a higher economic status doing so will invite criticism.

Significantly, though alcoholic drinks are served continuously at occasions, the individual is not under pressure to consume. The host may at best urge the person to have a drink; the ultimate decision, whether or not to have it, is left to the individual. Refusing an alcoholic drink is not considered an affront. That is why, though alcohol is served freely in Goa, drinking orgies are rarely heard of. Social rules demands that the individual be able to continue behaving normally after consuming alcohol at parties or other celebrations. Interestingly, among the American Indians, heavy drinking is done in groups as the group pressure determines the rate at which alcohol is consumed, which is fast. They also regard refusal of an alcoholic drink as a social offence (Baker 1982: 244).

Strange to say, the person who becomes boisterous and a nuisance due to over-drinking may be found sober at a funeral, where the atmosphere is sombre. After the sad event, the village drunkard may gulp down his drink and quietly slink away without creating a scene. This is because societal pressures and etiquette demand seriousness at a funeral. Thus, as pointed out by Pernanen (1981: 64) and Poplin (1978: 104), the cultural values and social beliefs partly determine reactions towards an individual and his behaviour, thereby creating a 'role' of the drunk in different cultures, depending on the social values. Similarly, Roman (1981: 148) reiterates that cultural norms define the typical behaviours accompanying drinking situations.

Consumption of alcohol in the morning is totally disapproved of, and the person indulging in this is called a *bebdo*. Similarly, frequent drunkenness and regular visits to bars is also ridiculed. Thus, we can see that good social manners ensure that consumption of alcohol happens 'within limits'.

**Manner of Drinking Alcohol:** The manner in which one consumes alcohol is decided by the prevailing etiquette. As a rule, it is considered uncivilized to gulp down the drink. This style of alcohol consumption normally exists among the labour class, mostly observed at the bars. Significantly, this class normally consumes the local *feni*, which is just tossed down the throat.

Normally, alcohol, whether it is beer, whisky, brandy, rum or any other alcoholic drink, is sipped; and this is followed with some conversation or a snack, and so on. Hence, the drink is for cherishing and consuming over a period of time. Beer is consumed at a slightly faster pace than other alcoholic beverages, as it is only a mild intoxicant. Thus, a person who gulps down his alcoholic drink is frowned upon. The ensuing negative vibes automatically force the person to slow down the pace of his consumption.

**Serving of Alcohol:** Etiquette also prescribes specific glasses for specific types of alcohol: Beer is served in mugs, whisky in tumblers, wine in goblets, champagne in flutes. The upper crust of society follows these canons at intimate family gatherings and elsewhere too.

On the other hand, in more recent times, given the easy availability and practicality of standard drinking glasses offered by alcohol manufacturing companies, Goan society has virtually abandoned the use of alcohol-specific glasses, except for wine. Thus, the marketing strategy of alcohol manufacturing companies has contributed towards demolishing the societal etiquette.

Similarly, for practical reasons at large gatherings, all drinks are served in glasses of a standard size. This is primarily because crockery suppliers do not keep the special glasses in stock. Though champagne bottles are opened routinely nowadays, very rarely does one find it being poured in flutes; most often the standard wine goblets are used.

At funerals, alcohol is served to intimate guests, on a small scale, if at all. The drinkers mostly pour a drink for themselves. As said earlier, some Hindus have a bottle of alcohol taken to the crematorium, with no glasses accompanying. The drink is usually had mixed with soda.

### **Societal Obligations With Reference to Alcohol**

Among the Goan Catholics, there is a saying, '*zalearui soro ani melearui soro*' ('**Alcohol** is served at birth and death'). This adage sums up the community's outlook of alcohol, which is '*soro nastona kaim zaina*' ('**There** can be no celebration without alcohol'). Hence, alcohol is 'accepted' and 'expected' to be served on almost any occasion among the Catholics. While the host feels it is his obligation to serve alcohol, the guests feel it is the host's duty to serve it. As rightly pointed by Poplin (1978: 107) from these patterns of observation children associate alcohol with sociability and may presume that they cannot have a good time at a party or at social gatherings without imbibing alcohol. Families, interestingly, rarely consume alcohol on a daily basis; at the most, a drink may also be offered to a close friend on a visit.

Since serving alcohol at celebrations receives such a high priority, a lot of time is spent on deciding what types of alcohol and what brands are to be served and the manner of serving them. Much money is spent in arranging the drinks. Quite often, the host is compelled to serve alcohol much against his personal wishes, as society

expects him to serve it. Fear of criticism for not serving alcohol is the major reason why alcohol is served despite personal aversion.

Another important aspect is that the guests at a Catholic celebration come with a mind-set that alcohol will be served. Alcohol is believed to help break the ice and make people feel at ease; it contributes to the success of the occasion by giving everybody a 'good' feeling. Serving of alcohol has practically become mandatory because of the 'reciprocity factor'. As others have served the host alcohol, it becomes necessary for him to serve **alcohol** at his celebration too.

At functions, where alcohol is not served, it is quite common to see the guests visiting the nearby bar for a drink. Thus, the host is disgraced in the neighbourhood if his guests are seen going out for a drink. Sometimes, guests leave the function early, giving some excuse or other, if they realize that alcohol is not going to be served.

Serving alcohol has symbolic value at a Catholic celebration, as it is said to bring it *sobai* (beauty). Hence, nowadays there is a sort of a competition to generously serve the best of alcohol. Absence of it attracts derogatory remarks, like: '**Amger** boro pivpa ielolo, apnnager **sukhear** uddoilem' ('He had alcohol at our place but left us high and dry at his *home*')' *Zaina zalear kitea kot'tai?*' ('Why do they invite people if they cannot afford to serve alcohol?'), '**Soro** dinam zalear, amk' poilem sangpachem ami ieche naslole' ('Had we been told earlier that alcohol would not be served, we would not have come here'); '**Amge**' kite jevonn na mhonn ami inga ieleai' ('Have we come here because we have no food at home?') A social event without alcohol is regarded as a 'flop'.

On the other hand, an increasing number of people, particularly among the Catholics, are realizing the drawbacks of serving alcohol at social events. The pattern of social drinking is changing. This is due to the awareness created by the Charismatic Renewal retreats, a topic that we take up in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ALCOHOL AND RELIGION

Every society has its own value system, by which its members live. This is usually dictated by religion. Thus, religion becomes the backbone of the society. Lifecycle events, social calendars and even personal behaviour are controlled through religion.

Early historical accounts mention the use of wine and link drinking practices to religious rituals and ceremonies (Chafetz and Demone 1962: 4). Since the Biblical times, the negative consequences of alcohol use have been mentioned for the individual and society (Greenberg 1981: 70). Every religion has its own view on alcohol consumption. Strong religious and sub-cultural convictions keep some people away from using alcoholic beverages (Fort 1973: 99).

In India, historians point out that *somras* (an intoxicating drink) was very popular in the early Hindu civilization. Besides *somras*, there existed twelve other types of alcoholic beverages. Although the *Puranas* condemned the use of alcoholic drinks, alcohol consumption was present in all the ages of the early Indian civilization, including the Vedic period. In fact, alcoholic drinks find a mention in ancient Hindu mythology and writings, which include the *Sutras*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Bhagwat Purana*, *Jataks*, and even the *tantras*. The noted poet and Hindu sage Kalidas also mentioned alcoholic drinks in his *Shakuntala*, *Kumar Sambhava* and *Raghuvansha*. Consumption of wine was denounced as one of the five moral sins, and invited the severest punishment under *Manu Smriti* (Mamoria 1991: 723-724). As the Hindu scriptures and society disapproved of alcohol

consumption, its use was confined mostly to the lower strata of the society (Madan 1966: 161).

Hindu scriptures depict alcohol consumption as evil, as illustrated by the following passage from the *Mahabharata*: "Under the influence of intoxicating drink, people behave like mad men. Some laugh without reason, some talk incoherently, some dance, some sing proper and improper songs, some fight, some falter, some fall, some talk nonsense, some losing their head, become naked. Those who take the enslaving drink are sinners. Liquor is a destroyer of forbearance, modesty and intellect and after taking it drinkers become immodest and indecent. They become evildoers, and are impure as they eat anything. They treat with disrespect their elders too and use unbecoming language towards them. They violate the chastity of women. Thus, there are many evils in drinking and the drinker goes, without doubt, to purgatory. The wise people who desire their own welfare must eschew liquor if, for preservation of chastity or character, drink is not shunned, then the whole world will become unprincipled and irresponsible. Therefore, for the preservation of wisdom, the good people have declared drinking as entirely forbidden" (Chand 1975: 1).

Islam as a religion does not permit the use of alcohol in any form, as their Prophet Mohammad forbade the use of any intoxicants. The Koran does mention that wines and other intoxicants have some benefits. However, it also stresses that their sinfulness is greater than the benefit. Though never universal, abstention from alcoholic beverages has been an essential tenet of Islam (Jones 1963: 3). However, alcoholic beverages were freely consumed in India during the Moghul Empire and country liquor was available in plenty during festivals. In fact, during the regime of Jehangir, many top officials died due to excessive alcohol consumption. Aurangzeb, who was a teetotalter and devout Muslim, implemented strict rules to curtail alcohol

consumption. Even though Muslims did not consume alcohol in public, they consumed large quantities of alcohol in the privacy of their homes (Mamoria 1991: 724).

Similarly, Judaism also uses wine in its rituals (Manis 1984: 430). The Jews have a ritualistic attitude towards alcohol and its consumption has a symbolic association and sacredness. Orthodox Jews drink wine at rites of passage. Wine is a part of their traditional and religious rituals. The head of a Jewish corpse is washed in wine before the burial (Jones 1963: 23). Thus, we observe that religion plays a predominant role towards alcohol use in a particular community.

The Bible, replete with references to the uses of wine, refers to it as a means of cheering, nourishing and stimulating (Lucia 1963: 157 and Steinglass 1987: 4). In fact, the first miracle attributed to Jesus Christ is the conversion of water into wine at a wedding in Cana. Mass cannot be celebrated without wine, as it symbolizes the blood of Jesus Christ (Morasker 2000: 31). The Church calls this transformation of wine into the blood of Christ 'transubstantiation'.

Thus every religion has its own views on alcohol use, which in turn influence the alcohol consumption of that community. This chapter discusses the Catholic Church and its current views on alcohol consumption. It also studies the role of the Catholic Church in discouraging the use of alcohol. The impact of religious movements on the Hindus vis-à-vis alcohol consumption is also discussed.

### **The Catholic Church in Goa — Its current views on alcohol consumption**

The identity of the Catholics in Goa in comparison with that of the rest of the country lies in its historical evolution. The acceptance of the Portuguese ways of life among the converted Goans brought about major changes in their lifestyle and culture, including the acceptance of alcohol. Over a period of time, the new way of

life of the converts in the Old Conquests found acceptance in the New Conquests too. As a result, today, we find a similar lifestyle and culture among Catholics all over Goa.

When Christianity took roots in Goa, the Portuguese did not disapprove of social drinking. The Catholic Church in Goa did not discourage its flock against the use of alcohol. Eventually, the use of alcohol became a socio-cultural requirement at all life events. Alcohol use became customary at socio-religious ceremonies of the Catholics, like *ladin*, Christening, First Holy Communion, wedding ceremonies, and even funerals.

In Goa, the Roman Catholic Church is not opposed to social drinking. Drinking at various events related to the individual and community is taken as part of culture. Alcohol consumption patterns harmful to the individual, family life and the society at large are not keeping in terms with the teachings of the Church; that is to say, drunkenness, every day visits to normal bars is disliked by the Church since this not only affects socio-economic life of the family but hinders the progress of the society. Other than the issue of alcoholism the Church also undertakes number of other issues concerning the individual and family life.

Comparatively, other Christian sects in Goa do not consider alcohol as part of their socio-cultural facet. In fact, they even decry personal consumption of it. Some sects do not even use wine at Mass; they use dry/or fresh grape juice instead. Alcohol is not assigned any function. This also reflects influence of the Portuguese society and of the Church as such, on the alcohol use in the Goan Catholic society.

The Catholic Church in Goa functions not only through the clergy that works at the parishes or chapels but also through various other organizations comprising mainly the laity who help in the affairs of the church, whether administrative, social

or spiritual. These organisations include the Parish. Youth Associations, the Parish Pastoral Councils, the Legions of Mary, St. Vincent de Paul Associations, Liturgical Committees, Special Ministries, Catechetical Associations, Social Cells, Altar Servers, Couples for Christ, Small Christian Communities and such. Many of these organizations were formed in recent times. Parish Pastoral Councils, Couples for Christ and Small Christian Communities were some organizations launched by the Catholic Church in relatively recent times.

In fact, in the present times the Church in Goa has become a 'participatory church'. Viewing alcohol consumption as disruptive to social life some members of these organizations, have taken a stand against alcoholism, at their individual levels, by refusing to serve alcohol when entertaining guests, at home or in public. According to our study, this participation of the laity in Church matters has transformed a number of people. Interviews reveal that the incidence of alcoholism, which had once been a serious problem for a number of Catholic families, has declined especially among the lower strata of society.

This shows that alcohol use in a particular community is determined by the predominant religion of that community. Among the Hindus, alcohol use is considered to be a taboo as their scriptures disapprove of it. The Hindu culture and religion, therefore, have not assimilated alcohol use, but the Catholics in Goa, influenced by the Western culture, have assimilated it. Over a passage of time this use of alcohol by the Catholics has become a socio-cultural facet and an aid for socializing.

The Second Vatican Council (an ecumenical council held at the Vatican from 1962-1965) expressed concern over the socio-economic welfare of Catholics. Its main emphasis was on the moral and spiritual renewal of the Christian people in the church

and society. Significantly, it was after the said Vatican Council that the Catholic Church, the world over changed its style of functioning. While earlier the clergy alone decided everything, the Vatican Council paved the way for the laity's participation in the administration of the Church. Thus, the Catholic Church was converted into a participatory church. The Church advocated addressing socio-economic problems of its followers, while at the same time tending to their spiritual needs. Hence, various ills affecting the Catholic community, including alcoholism, came under scrutiny.

In recent times, many individual priests and some Catholics in Goa have analysed the ill effects of alcohol consumption. After reviewing the earlier patterns of consumption and deviations, they launched a concerted drive to discourage excessive alcohol consumption in individual and community events. Though the institutional Church addressed this issue only recently, priests at their individual level had begun the movement much earlier.

Initially, this movement had humble beginnings with only a few priests through their sermons and lifestyle urging Catholics to give up alcohol consumption. These priests, in the first place, refused to imbibe alcohol at any celebration, thereby, setting an example. Subsequently, more priests took up the battle against excessive alcohol consumption. Today, it has become a full-fledged movement.

Gradually, the Church sought to address the problem of alcoholism. The problem was discussed at various meetings. In some cases, efforts were made to minimize use of alcohol at socio-religious functions. For example, many Parish Youth Associations were organizing fetes, beat shows and dances to raise funds. It was observed that alcohol was consumed at these events and many of them were even sponsored by alcohol manufacturing companies. Many did not appreciate alcohol consumption at these programmes organized by the Church associations. Some also

objected to the consumption of alcohol in the premises belonging to the Church, where these programmes were held. Besides, it was also felt that the youth were getting introduced to alcohol at these programmes. Taking cognisance of these factors, the then Archbishop Patriarch issued a circular bearing No. **CP-Cir./145/92**. The circular directed parish priests not to permit functions in the premises of the church where alcohol was served. Besides, Church organizations were barred from seeking sponsorship from alcohol manufacturing companies. This was one of the first concrete steps taken by the Catholic Church in Goa to tackle the problem of alcohol.

The efforts to prohibit alcohol use at socio-religious celebrations were successful to a great extent. Serving of alcohol at the visit of *Saibinn* was totally stopped. It was apparent that serving of alcohol at *Saibinn* could lead to alcoholism. A person attending these functions used to find free alcohol practically every day; hence he kept imbibing it, which increased the possibility of turning number of men into alcoholics. The presence of alcohol also attracted many men to attend *Saibinn* celebrations in other wards. That is why, earlier, a large number of men used to be present. Today, alcohol is not served. This change was brought about by the edicts issued by the leaders of the Small Christian Community and priests' sermons. In Bali, the Small Christian Community of Pattern ward achieved total success in stopping the serving of alcoholic drinks at all their celebrations.

Earlier, there was a practice amongst the Goan Catholics to keep a *kollso* of *feni* in one corner of the graveyard at a funeral. After the funeral rites were over, those who wished to consume the alcohol would do so. In some places like Verna, this practice prevailed even a few years ago. However, the Church has completely proscribed this practice.

The Church has also succeeded in stopping the use of alcohol in Christmas Hampers. Christmas Hampers were lotteries brought out by Church organizations or other associations. They usually contained prizes in the form of either beer, wine or whisky bottles.

Another area in which the Church has acted effectively in stopping the use of alcohol is the libations. As discussed in Chapter V, it was customary to offer *feni* to the *zageavoilo in* a number of traditions. However, as the Catholic Church has educated its followers **that** this practice was not in keeping with the teachings of Christ, many Catholics have stopped offering *feni* to the *zageavoilo*. Similarly, the Catholic Church in Benaulim has succeeded to some extent in convincing the traditional fishermen to abandon the practice of pouring *feni* on their nets at *ghantt marop*. Most people who have stopped using *feni* are those who are very active in the church and are members of its organizations. Some of them are very active members of the Small Christian Communities.

Many Catholics have also given up the traditional practice of pouring *feni* at the *roxi mathov* and *mathov der*. The role of the Church in this is evident from the fact that these Catholics now read a relevant passage from the Bible and recite prayers instead of pouring alcohol.

Earlier there was a practice among many families to place a pint *of feni* in the **coffin** of a regular alcohol consumer. This was done with the belief that the soul should be content with his favourite drink and should not come back to trouble the living. The Church has stopped this practice through sermons.

A number of priests have, at their individual level, played a major role in tackling the problem of alcoholism in the Catholic community. The priests took up this issue depending upon the place and the prevailing socio-cultural ethos. For

example, at Bali, where alcoholism is a major problem faced by the Catholic *Gauddi* community, the priest regularly sermonized against alcohol consumption. At Cortalim, too, an individual priest succeeded in stopping the use of alcohol for libations at *Bandiantulo Khuris*. As discussed earlier in Chapter V, *feni* was offered as libations at this Cross, and the male members of the *Gauddi* or *gaunkar* community consumed what remained. Many males of this community died of alcohol related diseases. Therefore, the women approached the parish priest to take some action against the offering of *feni* at the Cross. In 2003, the parish priest objected to the practice and even refused to celebrate Mass at the feast of the Cross, on grounds that the *gaunkar* were following pagan practices in offering alcohol for libations. Since 2005, after a new *gaunkar* took over, this practice of offering *feni* has been stopped, upon being convinced by the priest and members of the various Church organizations.

Similar practice existed in Mercurim, **Agaçaim**, Tiswadi taluka, at the miraculous *Gauncho Khuris* (village Cross). *Magnnem* (prayers) used to take place on Wednesdays and Sundays. The right to incite *magnnem* was only with the *gaunkar*. After the *magnnem* it was a compulsory practice to offer banana, bread and *soro* (palm or cashew) at the side of the cross. Due to the intervention of the then parish priest this practice came to an end.

For Catholics the world over, Lent is a period of sacrifice, normally marked by abstinence. A number of Goan Catholics, who generally consume alcohol everyday, abstain from it during Lent; some do not serve it even when they celebrate occasions.

Our study revealed another significant contribution of a few priests towards tackling alcoholism. Goan Catholics usually ask the priest to bless their vehicles, business premises, etc. Many priests refuse to bless bars and other public drinking

places and also places where alcohol is sold wholesale. These priests have taken the stand that blessing such business premises is contradictory to their teachings.

Besides, practically every priest at his individual level preaches **against** drunkenness, also because of its effects on the family and society. Horror stories of disturbed family and social life of alcoholics are vividly described during the sermons. Incidentally, our study indicates that priests, by and large, are not against social drinking but definitely object to drunkenness.

In fact, the deliberations of the Church Synod held in February 2002 decried the use of alcohol among the Goan Catholics. Since the Catholic Church can influence the socio-cultural life of the Catholics it becomes important to understand the deliberations with reference to alcohol use. However, these are mere recommendations and when and how they will materialise depends on the society at large.

**Synod Deliberations on Alcohol:** The Synod is an ecclesiastical body of lay people from each parish, the Bishop and priests. The Synod laid a lot of emphasis on the problem of alcohol facing number of families in the Catholic community. It made various recommendations on how to tackle the problem. The issue was sought to be addressed at all levels ranging from the family to the society at large.

The Synod put the whole issue in perspective by observing that, "the phenomenon of globalization has not left Goa untouched." (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 6) and further points out that "the liberalization of the Indian economy and the advent of globalization have had a disastrous impact on our society, particularly on Goan youth" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 7). This observation of the Synod endorses our findings in Chapter III, that globalization and liberalization have had a cataclysmic effect on the Goan society.

Further, it notes that "the promotion of Goa as an attractive and lucrative tourist destination has left deep scars and is causing further wounds to the ecology and ethos of Goa. Drugs, prostitution, paedophilia, alcoholism, etc. are a constant menace to our families" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 7). In such an atmosphere, the Church realizes that the Catholic population, "marked with the ups and downs of our journey, which is fraught with struggles and tensions, are in constant need of renewal" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 4) (meaning, constant guidance and counselling through the various Church forums). This indicates that the market forces, which have come into play following the liberalization policy, have emerged as a potent force eroding moral values.

The Synod has observed, "We cannot overlook the present-day scourge of alcoholism, gambling and drug addiction afflicting many of our young people" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 23), recommending that "the DYC (Diocesan Youth Centre) should set up a specialized cell with a team of experts along the coastal belts of Goa and co-operate with NGOs to fight the rising menace of drugs and alcohol, paedophilia, sexual promiscuity and other evils" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002:25).

Focusing on the Catholic families, the Synod observed, "Consumerism, sexual permissiveness, individualism, greed and property disputes, alcoholism, violence within the family and the generation gap are some of the major factors that have adversely affected the family" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 19). The Synod recommended the formation of "Family Service Cells in every parish.... particularly to tackle family social issues and other crisis situations" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 21) and observed that "the Diocesan Family Service Centre (DFSC) needs to make concrete proposals aimed at the well being of widows, battered

wives...." (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 22). The Church's observation is in conformity with the sociologists' view that alcoholism is not an individual's problem but a social menace.

The Synod has also recognized, though not specifically mentioned, the fact that women are the most affected due to alcoholism and has called for an increase in women's participation in the church, and that "the denunciation of evils such as rape, violence against women, dowry and amniocentesis should be part of our prophetic mission" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 27). "Violence against women", mainly domestic violence, is mostly due to alcoholism.

The Church has called for "a sustained campaign against alcoholism," specifying that "public consumption of alcoholic drinks on church/chapel grounds and near public crosses is to be discouraged/banned" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 84).

The Church's concern about alcoholism among the Catholic community is reflected in the Synod's recommendation on *Alcoholics Anonymous*, a movement launched with the help of the Church. It invariably functions from the premises of either the church or a parish school. Out of around 61 Alcoholics Anonymous Inter Groups (Goa), 47 are based in church premises. Very often, a priest is invited to attend meetings of the Alcoholics Anonymous, to give counselling, guidance and prayer.

The Synod has also reiterated a recommendation of the Second Vatican Council, namely '**Inculturation**'. The Synod has stressed, "Inculturation is different from a mere external adaptation. It involves an interior transformation of authentic cultural values through integration..." (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 91).

The Synod observed, "unfortunately, patronage given by parishes and religious institutions to fetes and 'dine and dance' gatherings, beat shows and commercialised entertainment programmes, promoting such a materialistic culture, are a counter witness to the gospel of values and to the authentic ethos of Goan society" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 91). The Synod recommended, "Clear norms should be formulated by the Diocesan Authorities for entertainment and cultural programmes organized by our Parishes and religious institutions. They should be implemented strictly and urgently" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 92).

The feast of the Parish patron is the most common socio-religious celebration for a Goan Catholic. A lot of alcohol is consumed at the individual as well as community level during this celebration. The Synod has taken note of this while observing, "emphasis should be given to the spiritual preparation and liturgical celebration rather than the external pomp and pageantry. In this regard some areas of concern are indicated: (a) the celebrations of our feasts and other liturgical celebrations have tended to be a mere display of wealth and social status and have resulted in divisive tendencies; (b) a competitive spirit leads to extravagant expenses on excessive drinks, decorations and fireworks" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 73 - 74).

We see that the Church has accepted the fact that the religious celebrations of the Catholics in Goa are more ostentatious while neglecting the spiritual aspect. This observation of the Synod reiterates our findings about Goan Catholics using alcohol for each and every celebration.

Significantly, the Church has also taken cognisance of the problem of alcoholism afflicting the clergy. Recognizing that priests are not super human beings, the Synod observed, "priesthood does not signify a greater degree of holiness but a

particular gift to help the people of God to exercise faithfully and fully the common priesthood it has received" (Archdiocese of Goa and Daman 2002: 50). Hence, priests having problems like alcoholism, moral lapses, and those who are victims of calumny and unjust ill treatment, should be cared for with sympathy and understanding. A special team, comprising competent priests and even lay counsellors to help such priests, is the need of the hour. What is significant is that probably for the first time, the Church has admitted that some members of the clergy are victims of alcoholism.

The Archbishop of Goa and Daman accepted the recommendations of this Synod and wished to have the same implemented. But, when, how, by what means and by which time they should be implemented has not been mentioned. In short, no timeframe has been set up for the implementation as it primarily depends upon the co-operation of the clergy and the laity.

In conclusion, we may say that the Roman Catholic Church in Goa has now taken cognisance of the fact that alcoholism is adversely affecting the community. The church is of the view that the promotion of Goa as a tourist destination is one of the major factors leading to alcoholism. Besides, the process of **globalization** and the government's liberalization policy has adversely affected the moral values of the community. Identifying these problems and their causes, the Church has recommended various ways and means to tackle them. One of the major recommendations towards minimizing the use of alcohol at Catholic celebrations is urging the clergy and the laity to give more emphasis to the spiritual aspects of the celebrations while cutting down the ostentatious forms of celebrating feasts and other religious occasions. However, it is yet to address the problem of alcoholism very specifically as it has failed to set up any **timeframe** to implement the Synodal recommendations.

## Impact of religious movements on alcohol use

Among the Hindus, the *bhatt* (Hindu priest) has a limited role, normally restricted to religious ceremonies and guidance, especially when the Hindu seeks divine intercession. Usually the *bhatt* advises the person seeking divine intercession about the ills of alcohol consumption, if he comes to know about the drinking habits of the person. Similarly, the Hindu community organizes various *provochanam* (sermons) or *kirtonam* (divine songs) during festivals like Ganesh and such. Popular Hindu religious leaders are invited to speak on the occasion. These occasions provide an opportunity to acquire social messages, like the ill effects of alcohol consumption,

Other than this, the Hindu *bhatt* does not have much influence over the socio-cultural life of the Hindus. However, we have come across the Padmanabh Mutt, an organization responsible for many of our respondents giving up alcohol consumption. It became important to study this institution and the manner in which it tackled alcohol consumption among its followers.

**The Padmanabh Mutt:** The Padmanabh Mutt, headquartered at Kundaim in Ponda taluka, has abstinence from alcohol as one of the main conditions to be its member. Swami Padmanabh in Girgaon, Mumbai, set up the Mutt. Swami Brahamanand, who took over as the *guru* of the Mutt on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1976, established and extended the **Padmanabh** Mutt in Goa.

Swami **Brahmanand** tried to break away from the established caste system. He educated his followers, who were mainly from the lower caste (Bhandari Samaj), on the knowledge of *Vedas* and other Hindu scriptures; they now regard themselves as equals to the *Brahmins*. That is why it appears that these followers keep a tuft of hair, wear the *zannvem* (string round the torso) and follow dietary restrictions, including abstinence from alcohol consumption.

Swami Brahmanand also concentrated on fighting alcoholism among his followers. He observed that these poor labourers would toil the whole day and then spend most of their earnings on alcohol at the bars or *tavernas*, while their families suffered. Thus, he made it compulsory for his followers to give up alcohol consumption. The Mutt does not offer anything or do anything to make a person give up alcohol consumption. This desire is normally created through social pressure with family members and others urging the drinker to give up his addiction.

The person's decision to give up alcohol is intimated to the Mutt, which in turn nominates a group to help the concerned person. The person is then put on trial, which normally lasts a fortnight, when the person has to totally abstain from consuming alcohol. The group helps him during this time to face the withdrawal symptoms. Following the trial period, the person is taken to the Mutt headquarters for an audience with the head of the Mutt. The Swami counsels the person and discusses the evils of alcohol consumption, thereby, strengthening the person's resolve to give up alcohol consumption. The Swami co-relates alcohol consumption with violence and criminal activity. Besides, he justifies alcohol consumption in the West due to the climatic conditions prevailing there. The combined effect of the Swami's charismatic personality and his logical discourse influences the person to give up alcohol consumption. The discourse is followed by the solemn oath made at the *paduka* (wooden slippers). The concerned person makes five promises, which are: abstinence from alcohol consumption, vegetarianism, truthfulness, honesty and non-violence.

In order to prevent a relapse, the Mutt has set up cells in various parts of Goa, Maharashtra and Karnataka. These cells, called the *Sant Samaj*, meet every week where scriptures are read and explained and other issues discussed. Keeping in touch with this group helps the person to keep away from alcohol.

**Christian Sects:** The various Christian sects established in Goa also had an impact on alcoholism. Many of these sects specifically prohibit the use of alcohol for personal consumption as well as social functions. Some of the sects where alcohol consumption is a total taboo include the Jehovah's Witnesses, Believers, Pentecostals, etc. These sects liken the creation of man by God to that of a temple, which, they say, should not be polluted with intoxicants. Thus, through their deeds they propagate their message against consumption of alcohol.

**Charismatic Renewal Movement:** The Charismatic Renewal movement, which has spiritually influenced a number of people in Goa, has also contributed immensely towards curbing alcoholism. Our study reveals that Catholics who attend the Charismatic Retreats get motivated to give up alcohol. This is more prevalent among alcoholics who make the weeklong retreat at the Catholic Divine Retreat Centre, at Muringoor, Kerala. Here, the person is kept within the premises, with no opportunity to satisfy his craving. Besides, constant prayer and fellowship helps to distract the mind from the addiction.

At the time of registering, all participants are asked to leave behind alcohol or the tobacco products they are addicted to. During the retreat, participants are reminded of the same. The pressure of the neighbours prying and the constant exhortation compels the addict to throw away the intoxicant. The regular sessions, which are scientifically structured to provide psychological support to the addict giving up the intoxicant, help him to overcome his addiction. A whole session is used in discussing it. Alcoholics give testimony of how miserable their lives were when they were alcoholics and how they succeeded in giving it up because of the spiritual help. This motivates other alcoholics to give up their addiction. Later on, the preachers ask alcoholics willing to give up their addiction to raise their hands, **and**

promise to pray that they receive the necessary support and strength to give up alcohol. The participants of the Retreat promise to give up alcohol, and, in order to avoid relapses, they visit the place regularly.

This retreat centre has become extremely popular with the Goan people, who attend the weeklong Charismatic Renewal Retreats in large numbers. Many alcoholics and smokers who attended the retreat at the Divine Centre returned home freed from their addiction. This spurred others to visit the place. In fact, the number of Goans attending the retreat grew to such an extent that the centre now conducts retreats in Konkani.

Interestingly, in keeping with the decision, many Roman Catholic families have even stopped serving alcohol to guests. That is why, today an increasing number of functions like marriage receptions are celebrated without serving alcohol. Since the host do not consume alcohol due to religious conviction, they don't serve it to the guest either. Similarly, many Roman Catholic families, who used to run bars, have closed them down and ventured into other fields.

Various prayer groups have begun functioning at different places in Goa. The most popular ones are those at Ambelim in Salcete taluka, Vasco in Mormugao taluka, Mandur in Tiswadi **taluka** and other such places. A number of participants at these prayer services are alcoholics, who are either forced or cajoled or convinced by their near and dear ones to be present.

Of late, Goa has been witnessing another phenomenon, a direct result of the Charismatic Renewal movement, in the form of devotional 'beat shows', where only devotional songs are sung. These songs have all kinds of beats, which are popular amongst the youth. The music for these shows may be pop, disco, classical, and semi-classical and even rap. Some of the songs sung at these shows have popular English or

Hindi song melodies but with religious lyrics. An example of this is the Rexband, which performed in Goa recently.

The most interesting feature of these devotional beat shows is not only the presence of youth in large numbers but also the total absence of alcohol or other intoxicants at the venue of the show. This is in sharp contrast to the other beat shows that are organized in Goa, where sale of alcoholic drinks is an important ingredient of the success of the event.

Religious institutions have thus often been at the forefront of the struggle against alcoholism. But we see that the Roman Catholic Church in Goa, while vehemently opposing drunkenness, has not really come out against social consumption of alcohol. In fact, some of our respondents justified their regular alcohol consumption by pointing out to the use of wine during the celebration of the Mass. However, it must be noted that the Catholic faith emphasizes that the same is understood to be the real Blood of Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, some Christian Sects make alcohol consumption a total taboo. Similarly, among the Hindus, the Padmanabh Mutt also makes it mandatory for its members to give up alcohol consumption.

## **CHAPTER IX**

### **CHANGING TRENDS**

In the previous chapters we discussed how alcohol has attained a prominent place in the Goan society, and has been incorporated into the Goan Catholic culture and lifestyle. We also traced and located its predominant role in the Catholic community celebrations. Over the last few decades, we observe that the Goan society has undergone a number of changes that have impacted various facets of alcohol production and its consumption. The booming tourism industry, foreign exchange earnings, the industrialization policy, and so on, have resulted in people's increased income. These and various other developments since Liberation have brought about many changes in practically all areas of alcohol use in Goa. Many of the accepted norms of yesteryears are no longer visible. Instead, new norms and patterns have been established.

In the present chapter we study the changes that have affected different aspects of alcohol. To simplify this vast topic, we have divided it into three main sections: changes in drinking trends, changes in alcohol production and preference, and the effect of alcohol consumption on Goan society.

#### **Changes in Drinking Trends**

Since Liberation, Goan society has undergone many changes. Landlordism has been replaced by individual ownership. Tillers have become owners of the land. Education has now become universal, thereby opening different employment opportunities for people of all classes and castes. Besides, the liberalization policy of the Indian government and the booming tourism industry has brought about a sea change in the lifestyle and culture of the Goans. All these changes have impacted

alcohol consumption in Goa, as a result of which one can clearly discern a change in drinking patterns.

Change is visible in the whole social system. The celebrations at rites of passage, community events, the situational drinking, have all undergone immense change. That is why today birthdays, even of infants, are celebrated with much pomp. The statement *aich' batizad mhonnche poilim kazar'* ('Christening celebrations today resemble the wedding celebrations of yesteryears') is a reflection of this change in society's attitude towards celebrations. In fact, in present times, celebrations like christenings and even birthdays start in the afternoon and continue till late in the night. A number of male guests prefer to visit in the late evening since they are more comfortable consuming alcohol at that time. Besides, evening celebrations are compatible with normal work schedules. This was not a feature of the earlier society. Earlier, the family used to celebrate only a few occasions. A number of events that were once celebrated in a restrained manner are celebrated ostentatiously today. House warming parties, birthday and anniversary parties are some such events that are celebrated prominently. Picnics, too, have emerged as an occasion for consuming alcohol.

In the past, social drinking used to mostly take place only on occasions or at celebrations. Nowadays, many events are celebrated at upmarket public drinking houses only with immediate family and close friends. This new trend indicates increase in situational drinking in Goan society today.

Among the Hindus too situational drinking is on the rise. Although they have not yet assimilated alcohol use in their culture, a growing number of Hindu males organise parties at public drinking places to celebrate occasions like a birth or anniversary. Hindu men regularly patronise public drinking places. As per a new

trend, Hindu higher-class women consume alcohol at upmarket public drinking places along with their family members. Significantly, following Goa's Liberation, social interaction between the two major communities has tremendously increased.

Our study establishes the fact that the increase in people's purchasing power, the escalating number of public drinking places, wholesale outlets, availability of assorted alcoholic drinks and competitive prices of alcoholic drinks have introduced a change in the existing drinking patterns of the Goan society.

There has been a significant alteration in the societal attitude towards alcohol consumption, a very good indicator of which is seen at matchmaking. In the past society was particular in checking the prospective bridegroom's drinking habits. If the person were found to be consuming alcohol, the alliance would be cancelled. Men who abstained from alcohol consumption were more appreciated and in demand. However, today the attitude towards alcohol consumption is not negative. '*Aiz kal konn soro pina?*' ('Who does not consume alcohol nowadays?'), or, '*To ilo ghetta*' ('He consumes a little') are comments often made to justify the drinking habits of present day prospective grooms. Thus we see that alcohol consumption is condoned on grounds that it is social drinking and not co-related with problem drinking. It is noteworthy that despite the liberal attitude towards alcohol consumption, one only rarely finds people over-drinking at public places.

Goa does not have a culture of consuming tea or coffee in the late afternoon or late evening. Generally, especially males consume alcoholic beverage in the late evenings. Many business meetings take place in the evening at bars and upmarket bars-and-restaurants, over alcoholic drinks.

Alcohol consumption at home has become normal, particularly in the Old Conquest areas. This is primarily because the Non-Resident Indian (NRI), on

returning home from his sojourn overseas parties regularly with friends and relatives, where very often he shares imported alcohol with them. Alcohol is taken for granted as a socialising tool. Generally, the **NRI** hosts these parties to re-establish his links with his relatives whom he may be meeting after long, while also wishing to flaunt his new economic status.

The upgrading of the *tavernas* has introduced another group of alcohol consumers as against the elderly people. The *tavernas* normally catered to the labourers and other elderly group by serving varieties of *feni*. Today, the situation has completely changed. An overwhelming number of *tavernas* have been upgraded to bars where, to attract customers, many serve exotic snacks made of wild animal meat.

The proliferation of bars has provided the anonymity sought by youngsters to consume alcohol against the social norms. In the past there were few *tavernas* in a village, and elders could monitor the youngsters' indulgences. Presently, an increase in the number of bars has given youngsters the opportunity to visit bars and restaurants away from their village, in complete anonymity. These visits to public drinking places away from their village are facilitated by the fact that many youngsters have their own two-wheelers, thereby giving them mobility. Thus, the social norms that youngsters inculcate during socialisation compel them to conceal their drinking, as they understand that this is a deviation from the social norms with reference to alcohol consumption.

Significantly, solitary alcohol consumption is not a feature with the youngsters, for whom it is generally a group activity. Teenagers celebrate at bars and other places, not primarily to get intoxicated but to pass their time till food is served. In fact, Lowe et al. (1993:42) examined the social function of alcohol for adolescents, concluding that group interaction was the most important function.

As compared to earlier generations, the present generation of Goan youth are by and large straightforward and non-submissive. If questioned by elders about their drinking habits, youngsters are quick to come back with questions such as '*Tuge poixeam pita?*' ( *Am* I drinking at your cost?'), or '*Tuge ghara konn pita to poilem choi*' ('First check who drinks in your own household'), all of which makes the elders feel offended. The fear of such insults or their loss of self-respect makes them maintain a stoic silence. The bar owners (for whom serving drinks is only a business!) do not question the youngsters. In one case, a bar owner who did condemn the youngsters and refused to serve them alcohol had to face their wrath: that night, they destroyed the roof tiles of his bar.

Alcohol consumption is also rising quite rapidly among the younger generation of many Hindus. The changing modes of entertainment and religious celebrations are contributory factors. These new modes are the *sorvjonik* (community) Ganesh celebrations, *Norkasur vadd* (burning of Narkasur's effigy) competitions, Holi celebration and sports events. It is learnt that most often Hindu youngsters get their first taste of alcohol while preparing for or participating in these events, since preparations for these events begin weeks in advance and are held invariably in the late evenings. It gives them an opportunity to consume alcohol in a group while preparing for such celebrations. Among the Catholics, festivals like Carnival, *São João*, beat shows and tournaments offer youngsters the opportunity to consume alcohol. In these instances, as pointed out by Lowe et al. (1993: 42) alcohol establishes the gender identity of the youngsters and also enhances their relations with their peers.

Earlier, the whole family together used to contribute their mite towards the traditional occupation. Today, with the decline of these traditional occupations many

youngsters are unemployed` many of them gather at local bars in the evenings, where they play carrom as a pass time. As per a recent trend, youth teams lay bets, and the losing team is obliged to buy drinks for the winning team. In this manner, many of these unemployed youngsters get habituated to drinking alcohol. Some youngsters gather at other places common in every village. These are normally the neighbourhood culvert or in the shade of a huge tree, thereby giving the appearance of `corner groups' or gangs. These gatherings sometimes end up with alcohol (especially beer, which is accepted as a mere beverage and not an intoxicant) for some specific reason, which could be somebody's birthday and so on.

Another recent development is the youth's links with politicians. Unemployed youth participate in the election process; they go around canvassing for the candidate, after enjoying an afternoon party and another at the end of the day. As the active campaign period lasts a fortnight, these youngsters live in an extremely liberal environment. Many of them often develop addiction to alcohol, something that bonds the political supporters.

The 'working parents' syndrome coupled with the NRI parent phenomenon has resulted in the concept of pocket money among the Goan youth. Having a 'good time' has become the catchword for many youngsters today. 'Good time' invariably means sharing snacks and alcohol. As there are many single-parent families, parental control over the youngsters has weakened. In many cases, the children often blackmail the single parent with desertion or suicide. To avoid drastic steps from their children, the parent prefers to overlook the undesired behaviour of the child. The break up of the joint family system is also a contributory factor for an increase in alcohol consumption, particularly by youngsters.

Another widespread new trend is that, unlike earlier, when recreational activities for youth were held in the village itself, recreation now means visiting discotheques, gaming clubs, to play billiards or snooker, and gambling clubs at the various starred hotels. Consumption of alcohol at these places is considered a part of the youth activities. It must be noted that this new trend is visible mostly in the Old Conquest areas. Thus, we have recreation, once thought to comprise innocent fun, now steeped in alcohol.

Beer drinking has become very common and its consumption is very often promoted on health grounds. A large number of people consider beer, often referred to as *ghoddea muth* (horse's urine), meaning that it is only a beverage, not an intoxicant. Many respondents, while vociferously denying that they served alcohol at their parties, admitted that they did serve beer. This indicates that they do not consider beer to be an alcoholic drink. Unlike in the past, when people would say, "let us have a cup of tea"; nowadays it is more common to hear people saying, "let us have a beer."

Earlier drinking any alcohol, including beer, directly from the bottle was not acceptable to the Goan society. Today we notice many youngsters drinking directly from the bottle with great pride and without any guilt or shame. Such drinking patterns are observed at picnics, beat shows and food festivals.

More recently, beer manufacturers have started bottling beers in smaller bottles. Those not desiring to consume the full bottle of beer can now purchase the smaller one. Thus today one finds beer bottled in 500 ml and even 300 ml bottles. Similarly, hard liquor manufacturers have also started bottling in smaller packages. Today, popular hard liquor is routinely sold in pint-measured bottles at one-fourth the price of a big bottle.

Besides, the time when one consumes alcohol has also been relaxed. In the past, alcohol would be consumed only in the afternoon and only after sunset in the evening. Today, at picnics, it is quite common to see people, especially youngsters, drinking beer as early as 9 a.m. and till the end.

Society has adopted a 'relaxed approach' towards alcohol consumption. Society now does not frown upon alcohol consumption so long as it is done within limits. These 'limits' mean the imbiber should not lose control over himself. In short, the person should be able to "hold his drink" and should not display characteristics of a drunkard. This new moral consideration of 'drinking within limits' has resulted in drinking patterns undergoing a change. Earlier, alcohol consumption was a quick activity at the *taverna*. However, today it is a leisure activity undertaken as a means to relax after the day's work. This is because drinking at bars is no longer a clandestine activity. Even the family members know about the person's visit to the bar. Secondly, nowadays a visit to a bar and restaurant is considered a requirement, to meet influential people, discuss business or strike a deal. In fact many respondents opined that *boslear kam' zatai* (work gets done over a drink). Thus, apart from bonding the alcohol consumers, such visits help develop contacts with other members of the society and makes possible business transactions.

Another reason attributed to this change in considering drinking alcohol as a leisure activity, is the change in the set up of a bar. In the past the *tavernas* had some primitive seating arrangement comprising one or two benches. Even if a person wanted to sit for long, the ambience was not conducive. Besides, as the streets were not lit, the consumer had to reach home before it became too dark. And above all, the drink consumed, which was the local *feni*, understood to be a very potent drink, was normally just gulped down undiluted.

The availability of I.M.F.L along with dilutants, like sodas and flavoured soft drinks, has resulted in a drastic change in the manner of consuming a drink. Presently, even *feni* drinkers use dilutants, although there are a few who still drink it undiluted. It is accepted that **I.M.F.L** has to be consumed in a diluted form.

The present Goan society considers the relaxed pace of drinking and dilution of the alcohol to be 'decent drinking'. In fact, in present times, one rarely finds a *bebdo*, as against the past, when it was quite common to find one or two practically in each ward. We gather that the children prevent their fathers from over-drinking. Probably because of the shame and disgrace they had suffered, children of *bebde* are often teetotallers. The taste has also changed with the availability of a variety of drinks. The attitude towards alcohol consumption has changed, as it is now come to be considered more a means of relaxation and socialising than a means of regaining lost energy as the earlier labourers used to think.

Significantly, our study indicated that, considering the growth of population, the frequency and number of people consuming alcohol has relatively increased, as reflected in the number of deaths due to alcohol. It is our observation that the contemporary generation knows how to conceal. That is to say, alcoholism is quite prevalent, although alcoholic behaviour is not so obvious or externally visible.

Another changing trend is that many women are more actively participating in alcohol consumption. Earlier, only the women belonging to higher castes used to drink alcohol at parties. Today, alcohol consumption among the women has cut across class and caste. But this drinking is done at functions or during situational drinking with only the family or close friends. Our study indicates that the change in social roles has enabled women to participate in social drinking.

Due to the availability of cocktails and ready-to-drinks (RTD), like 'Breeze', women presently consume alcohol without any inhibition. These RTD are sweet and produced in several fruit flavours, especially meant for ladies or youngsters. *Feni* serves as a base for a number of exotic cocktails specially marketed for the tourists. The mass media's constant promotion of alcohol consumption through surrogate advertisements has made a great impact on the attitudes of the youth and women towards alcohol.

While, on the one hand, the variety of alcoholic drinks and the number of drinkers has increased, on the other, there is a significant negative change among the Catholics. The Charismatic Renewal movement has resulted in many people giving up alcohol. The emergence of various Christian sects has also had a similar effect. A number of regular drinkers and alcoholics have stopped alcohol consumption after attending the Charismatic Renewal retreat or joining the other Christian sects. Interestingly, many Catholic families have also stopped serving alcoholic drinks at their homes and for their parties following the Charismatic Renewal retreat or their conversion to the new sect.

Our study has revealed that though the local *feni* is used practically as a synonym for Goa, it does not find much place in the Goan society. People, particularly the nouveau riche, shun it. Those who move higher in the social ladder give up drinking the local *feni* to establish their new status in society. "*To feni marpi*" (He drinks *feni*) has come to be a new criterion for determining a person's social status. Earlier, when wedding receptions and other occasions were celebrated at home, guests would be served flavoured *feni* especially distilled for the occasion. However, now that *feni* is not a much-preferred drink due to the availability of **the** distilling of flavoured *feni* is on the decline.

The second reason for *feni* losing its popularity is the difficulty of procuring pure *feni*. Most *feni* available in the market is presumed adulterated. Further, it was revealed that regular consumption of adulterated *feni* makes the person anaemic. 'To *pandd zala*' ('He has turned pale') is an oft-heard euphemism for an addict. Adulterated *feni* is also known to cause other medical problems like nausea and giddiness besides dehydrating the person severely.

However, with the recent sophisticated marketing of *feni* it is gradually becoming attractive to the upmarket consumers, mostly tourists.

### **Transformation in Alcohol Production and Preference**

Geographical factors, like soil, climate and topography, determine the type of alcoholic beverages available to a particular society and its drinking patterns. For instance, the geographical factors of Southern Europe facilitated the growth of grapes. The use of beverage alcohol becomes widespread as it can be easily manufactured (Mckim 1997: 99). According to Chopra et al. (1965: 126), in India, consumption of fermented and weak distilled liquors generally prevailed in areas of heavy rainfall such as the mountainous tracts of the Himalayas, Chota Nagpur and along the Western Ghats. Weak alcoholic beverages, such as country beers, were commonly believed to be a necessity of life for dwellers in malaria-prone tracts. In drier areas like the Punjab, Rajasthan and U.P. and parts of Bengal and Bombay, where extremes of heat and cold prevail, strong spirits are in demand

Similarly, the climatic conditions of Goa, along with the soil and the topography of the land, facilitate the cultivation of coconut and cashew trees. *Feni* has existed in Goa from ancient times and the Goan society has accordingly developed the necessary techniques for its distillation.

The alcohol content of alcoholic beverages depends on the raw materials and the process used to prepare them. There is a wide variation in the alcohol content of different alcoholic drinks. The Goan palm *feni* can be categorised as a strong alcoholic drink, as it is distilled from fermented coconut sap. Similarly, cashew *feni* is also distilled from fermented cashew apple juice. The outstanding feature of *feni* distillation is that no synthetic products are used and hence, the final output retains the natural odour and flavour. Following the Industrial Revolution, there has been a technological explosion all over the world. These technological advances have affected the agriculture sector and also the manufacturing and transportation of alcoholic beverages. This, in turn, has made its impact on the drinking customs of different societies (Merton 1976: 188).

In this sub-topic we discuss the introduction and availability of synthetically manufactured alcohol beverages in Goa. These alcoholic drinks are wines, beers and I.M.F.L. comprising whisky, brandy, vodka, gin, rum, and so on, and their impact on *feni*, in terms of its production and acceptability, and the aggressive marketing of these new alcoholic beverages. Some of these drinks were available in Goa even before the arrival of the Portuguese (Dhume 1985: 148, Costa 2002: 7). However, the Portuguese made alcohol consumption an accepted activity for the Goan society, particularly among the converts. As the Portuguese could not develop a taste for the local alcohol, they imported alcohol of their taste. Over a period of time, consuming or offering these imported alcoholic drinks became a status symbol in Goa and the rich Goans abandoned the use of *feni*. *Feni* thus became a drink to be cherished by the poorer people who could not afford the imported alcoholic drinks. Thus, over a period of time, the imported alcoholic drinks were regarded as superior drinks, while *feni* came to be regarded as a lower grade drink.

In the present times, even though *feni* production is not affected, the quality has definitely changed. Despite visible changes, one can still find continuity in the production, distribution and consumption of indigenous *feni*. *Feni* was not a favoured drink among the rich during the Portuguese regime; it gained social prominence after their exit from Goa. This was primarily because the imports of foreign alcoholic drinks ended with the departure of the Portuguese. As *feni* was the only drink available to the society immediately after Goa's Liberation, it became an acceptable drink. *Feni* retained its prominence in the Goan society till the introduction of I.M.F.L.

The industrialisation policy in Goa resulted in setting up many alcohol-manufacturing units producing I.M.F.L. The local population was offered variety of alcoholic beverages at affordable prices. Thus, we observe an inter-relationship between the demand and supply of alcohol. These factors shaped the drinking patterns and preferences of the modern Goan society.

I.M.F.L. production is less arduous and more profitable than the production of local *feni*. As discussed in Chapter IV, the production of *feni* is very laborious and done on a small scale. On the other hand, the mechanisation of production process has resulted in large-scale production of I.M.F.L. The present Goan society has given I.M.F.L. the same rank as the Portuguese had given to the imported alcoholic drinks during their times. Interestingly, during the Portuguese regime *feni* was considered to be the common man's drink, while today, it is considered to be the drink of the labour class. This is largely due to the availability of brands of I.M.F.L. at affordable prices for the common man. Thus, Goans with the improvement in their economic status began to shift to I.M.F.L. introduced in the market.

The increase in demand for **I.M.F.L.** and the simultaneous emergence of rapid transportation system made it possible to supply the products to even the remotest parts of Goa. Over a period of time, due to the supply and availability there has been a change in the attitude and procedure of alcohol consumption at public drinking places. I.M.F.L. and beers are becoming more popular and favoured drinks among the Goan population in general, particularly at the public drinking places. As a result, *feni* does not find place as a drink to be consumed at celebrations. The younger generation prefers the I.M.F.L. as against the *feni* because of its 'offensive' odour and its association with the labour class. However, despite its odour, the younger generation does consume *urrack*, as it is a seasonal drink. In fact, it is taken for granted that summers amongst **Goans** are synonymous with *wrack*.

I.M.F.L. is manufactured to match the paying capacity of the consumer. For example, the price of whisky varies considerably and cheaper brands are priced nearly on par with palm *feni*. On the other hand, certain whiskies are priced quite high to meet the requirement of the affluent sections of society. I.M.F.L. are also bottled in different quantities keeping in mind the drinking habits of the consumers. They are available in miniatures, which are of a peg measure, pint bottles, half bottles and full bottles. Similarly, beer, a mild alcoholic drink, is gaining social acceptance, favoured by the youth and women in general.

Technological advances have contributed to the manufacture of alcoholic beverages in different flavours and of varying potency (Kuper 1985: 19). Earlier *feni* also was available in different flavours. The variety of RTD is a manifestation of the same trend; they have different fruit flavours and are mostly marketed for women and youngsters. And though the alcohol content is quite high, because of the sweet taste they are considered light alcoholic beverages.

The wide range of products targeting the consumers has resulted in aggressive marketing. Various incentives are offered to the consumers, which include glasses, key chains, pens, coasters, ash-trays, discounts, and free bottles, cash rewards hidden under the crown, and so on. I.M.F.L. retailers are also offered incentives ranging from tabletops, discounts, wall clocks and other gifts, coupons for lucky draws having very attractive prizes etc. Winners of the various schemes are given much prominence in the media, thereby generating a desire among others to win similar rewards.

In a bid to reach as many people as possible, I.M.F.L. manufactures, besides the usual surrogate advertisements in the media, use various other means, the most popular being sponsorship of dances or beat shows, where the sponsoring company's products are sold at a price determined by them. This price is very often lower than the market price and sometimes with an accompanying free drink. I.M.F.L. manufactures have also begun sponsoring the printing of *tiatr* (local drama) tickets. The name of the company and its brand is prominently displayed on these tickets, thus ensuring wider publicity for the product. The manufacturers of I.M.F.L. to promote their products also use the float parade organised during Carnival and the Bonderam festival at Divar extensively. Alcohol manufactures also organise annual festivals named after their product. One such example is the *Arlem* festival.

As mentioned in Chapter III, the Portuguese through their imports of wines introduced 'wine culture' to the Goan society. However, this was restricted only to the upper sections of the society. Following the departure of the Portuguese, the wine culture was on a decline, as good quality wines were not available and had to be imported at very exorbitant prices. But, in recent times, the wine industry has been gaining firm root in India. In Goa, too, the wine culture has seen a revival. All the Indian wine manufacturers have introduced their products in Goa knowing the history

of the land and its earlier prevalent wine culture. The government's liberalisation policy has also enabled the import of foreign wines at competitive prices, also available in the Goan market. In a bid to promote wines, besides the usual marketing strategies, the manufacturers have, organised seminars on wines, to discuss their medicinal value and attempt to educate people on the various nuances of wine, such as its taste and texture, and wine etiquette. In the last three years, a wine festival has been organised in Goa under the aegis of 'The Grape Escape'. National as well as international wine manufacturers promote their products at this festival. Visitors are offered wine to taste and are educated on the qualities of the wine.

However, if the sale of wine in Goa has not increased further, it is probably because of their high price as compared to I.M.F.L. Secondly, as these wines are dry wines, they have to be consumed within a day or two after opening the bottles. Many liqueurs are also available in Goa today. However, these are consumed by a minuscule percentage of Goans of the upper caste; others interviewed did not even know the meaning of 'liqueur', often confusing it with liquors.

### **Alcoholism and its effect on Society**

In the previous sub-topics we have seen changes in alcohol manufacture and ensuing change in society's attitude towards alcohol consumption in Goa. Most of the data for this sub-topic was collected by attending meetings of the Alcoholics Anonymous and holding interviews with former alcoholics and their spouses. This is supplemented by responses from the main interview schedule. Through observations and interviews with bar owners we obtained information, which allowed us to draw some conclusions. In this topic we have examined only the sociological aspects of alcohol abuse as the biological and physiological aspects of drinking is beyond the scope of this study.

Effects of alcohol use are a complex interaction of diverse factors. It includes the personality and attitudes of an individual and the socio-cultural setting. It also covers the socio-cultural values attached to the drinks. What becomes a problem in a particular community with regard to alcohol may be a feature accepted in another community. For instance, when certain occupations demand the use of alcohol for their continuity, drinking gets acceptability. Association of alcohol with hard labour by a large section of Goans is one such instance. Therefore, alcohol consumption by a person doing hard labour is taken for granted as it is seen as a requirement of the job. Similarly, alcohol consumption by the gravedigger is also taken for granted, because it is **believed** that he needs it to be bold enough to work in the eerie surroundings of the cemetery. As pointed out by Poplin (1978: 106) the cultural environment that condones the use of alcoholic beverages to relieve tension is also a variable that influences excessive drinking. Also in the process of growing up, people acquire different attitudes towards alcohol consumption. While alcohol is an aid to socialisation, excessive consumption always disturbs the family and societal peace (Chunkapura 1988: 18).

For a proper understanding we have discussed this sub-topic in three parts: first, the effect of alcohol on the individual vis-à-vis society's attitude to him; second, the effect of alcoholic on the family; and lastly, the effect on the society.

**Effect of alcohol on the individual vis-à-vis society's attitude towards him:** A person who drinks excessively is not in a position to work as his efficiency is reduced. His physical as well as mental faculties deteriorate; he is affected physiologically as well as psychologically. It is understood that, in the past, though there was heavy drinking and drunkenness among number of people in the Goan society, most heavy drinkers did not neglect work; in fact, the drinking used to happen in the late evening.

The most common physical ailment associated with alcohol consumption, cirrhosis of the liver, has claimed many lives in Goa, with an overwhelming majority of the victims being males. Most alcoholics are also known for memory loss. An alcoholic forgets things including his own words, as illustrated by the Konkani saying: '**Soreacher** *mullolem mhonn ugddas nam*' ('He has forgotten **because** he had said it under the influence of alcohol'). Very often a person abused by a *bebdo* is urged to forget the incident, as the people say *bebdeage kitea ghen bosla*" ('Why are you upset with what a drunkard has said?'). Thus, we observe that once a person is known to behave like a *bebdo* too often, society at large begins distancing him, and his family experiences discomfort in his company. Due to this, the alcoholic faces rejection in the family and society. His family for major family decisions, like his children's marriage, does not consult such a person. An alcoholic may also become a recluse, if socially ostracised. Thus, non-conformation to the patterns expected and accepted by the society has a strong impact on the social life of an alcoholic.

Among the Catholics this behaviour is manifested in the alcoholic shunning the Church and not attending mass or other religious ceremonies. He thus goes against the established religious norms. However, he may be found attending an event in the village, even if not invited. He is usually present wherever alcohol is served. Similar behaviour is noticed among the excessive alcohol consumers in the Hindu community. The Hindu alcoholic totally shuns the temple. However, he is present at funerals, when alcohol is kept at the cremation grounds.

Besides, many drinkers who consume alcohol regularly turn abusive and violent or highly sensitive under its influence. Sometimes, even if his views are contradicted *he* drastically changes his behaviour. Our respondents revealed that earlier the *bebdo* was normally submissive and would not become abusive or violent

after consuming alcohol. This could be due to strong societal pressures like the joint families and presence and respect of elders in a village. The degeneration of values and disregard of social mores has drastically changed the behaviour of a number of alcoholics today. At social occasions, the *bebdo* is regarded as a nuisance because of his behaviour. However, when occasions are celebrated at home, a *bebdo* may attend the function. Although his presence is not welcome, he is not told to leave. Such moments makes the wife suffer from *unneponn* (sense of deprivation) because of the embarrassment he causes to the family. The alcoholic's children display reluctance and even feel ashamed to identify themselves with their alcoholic parent. Hence, they avoid participating in celebrations; do not go to places frequented by him, as they would not like to witness the father in an inebriated state; and are reluctant to invite their friends even for a casual visit.

**Effect on the family:** The family is the first victim of an alcoholic. The wife and children bear the brunt of his obnoxious behaviour. Most often an alcoholic's wife lives a truly miserable life as she is abused both verbally and physically. Even if the alcoholic husband is working, a major portion of his earnings is spent on alcohol. In many cases, he does not provide anything for the family. The wife is forced to look after the family. It is quite common to find the elder siblings taking on the responsibility of looking after their younger ones when the mother has to go to work. In many cases, the alcoholic depends upon the spouse to pay for his drinks. Being unemployed, he either demands money from his wife or steals it. There are many instances when the alcoholic has pawned or sold his wife's jewellery to pay for his drinks and at times, has even sold household items. As a result of this, the family members do not trust an alcoholic.

Our study reveals that the alcoholic husband is one main cause of domestic violence. In many cases when he returns home in a drunken state he turns violent, compelling the wife and children to take shelter at the neighbour's house. The alcoholic then abuses the neighbours for shielding his family, which strains the relationship with the neighbours. Thus, the family is gripped with constant fear and uncertain behaviour of the alcoholic. The loud brawls and the screaming that follow the beatings disturb the peace of the locality.

The wife suffers from social ostracism and humiliation. Similarly, the children also suffer from social castigation. It is quite common to hear people referring to an alcoholic's wife and children as '*bebdeabail*' ('the drunkard's wife') or '*bebdeabhurgim*' ('the drunkard's children'). Our interviews reveal that due to such humiliation suffered by the family many men whose fathers were alcoholics are averse to drinking. They do not participate in any social drinking even though they socially gratify the guests with a drink for their function. In short, the entire family is neglected and sometimes even ostracized by the neighbourhood. Children of such alcoholics are traumatized and this is reflected in their performance at schools. Besides, very often, particularly among the lower class, children of alcoholics drop out of school. The physical and verbal abuse faced by them and their mother is traumatic and the children cannot live a normal life. Thus, alcoholic's children normally detach from the friends. On the other hand, some children of alcoholics turn extremely aggressive and violent. Their frustrations and helplessness of the home atmosphere is translated into anger towards the society at large.

Generally, there is a degeneration of values and a disregard to social mores among the children of alcoholics. The bad example set by the parent hardens some of them towards the society and they most often grow up to be rebels. This adversely

affects the natural progression and development of society. In fact, Wilson (1980: 107) found developmental disorders in both girls and boys aged ten years due to the presence of a violent alcoholic father.

The problem does not end here as the children's future is always at stake. They have a problem in getting suitable spouses on attaining the marriageable age. Girls face a severe problem as they are looked down upon as children of a drunkard. Besides, these girls are presumed not to be in a position to bring anything with them as either dowry or trousseau and so are not favoured\_ In the case of the boy, the girl's parents are reluctant to allow their daughter to marry in the household of a drunkard, as they fear that she will not be able to live in peace. Very often the prospective groom's lineage is questioned, thus, even casting aspersions on his mother's character. With love marriages on the rise, however, this problem has become less acute.

Our study revealed that even though the family endures the drunken brawls and various other problems including physical abuse and societal ostracism very rarely are divorces sought due to alcoholism. The wife normally tolerates and bears up with the alcoholic husband as society expects her to do so. She does not seek divorce, which is still a social taboo in Goa. In many cases, the wife takes on a paramour for financial security, which behaviour the society by and large overlooks. Our study has also found that as the children grow older they do not tolerate the father's behaviour, and they shield the mother from his outbursts, if any.

Thus, alcoholism affects not only the individual but also devastates the family (Wienberg 1970: 439). As rightly pointed out by Sain (1989: 154), the evil of alcoholism does not end with the individual but causes family instability and wrecks his very social and economic existence\_ Due to this, alcoholism is termed as a family

illness, with families facing a number of social problems (Chunkapura 1988: 28, Krimmel 1973: 297).

**Effect on Society:** Alcohol is responsible for a number of unnatural deaths among the youth. With a two-wheeler becoming a trend, driving under the influence of alcohol has become the cause of a number of accidents. The injuries and very often deaths caused by these accidents affect the society, as it loses productive people.

Hence, we can see that excessive consumption of alcohol not only affects the imbiber but also causes misery and trauma to his family. The society is also adversely affected either through the loss of peace and tranquillity due to the drunken brawls in their neighbourhood or through the death or incapacitation of the youngsters, thereby affecting their productive powers which would have otherwise contributed to the general development of the society.

The spurt in the number of bars has introduced the element of competition among their owners. Our study reveals that it is quite common for them to provide alcohol to regular consumers on credit. Normally, this amount is paid when the consumer receives his weekly or monthly wages. In case of death, the bar owner sends reminders to the family to settle the consumer's dues. Thus the family members have to suffer humiliation at the hands of the bar owner and in many cases struggle to make the payment.

Many alcoholics work just for their drink, as their working capacity is taken over by alcohol. Such alcoholics are found doing odd jobs for the villagers in exchange for a small sum or a drink, illustrated by the Konkani saying, '*Sorea konta kam korop*' ('**Working** for alcohol'). The inevitable conclusion is that a *bebdo* gets no chance to contribute to the social progress; he rather becomes a burden for the society.

# CHAPTER X

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter we summarize the findings of our study. '*Location of Alcoholic Beverage in the Goan Society*' was a study undertaken not to prove any hypothesis but with the broad objective of understanding the use of alcohol among the Catholic and Hindu sections of the Goan population, for which purpose we had framed specific 'lead questions'. The study was undertaken in four villages, two each from the Old Conquests and the New Conquests of Goa. Religion was an important variable for selecting the sample. The study had a two-pronged approach: to study the production and consumption of alcohol and to examine the socio-cultural implications of alcohol consumption.

Alcoholic drinks are used in one way or other in different societies. Its usage is seen from among simple bands of gatherers to the modern society. In Goa, too, alcohol plays a significant role as a tradition. Alcohol consumption is considered part of social activity. Tradition as well as religion provides a rationale and moral justification for the persistence of its usage.

Alcohol consumption has been prevalent in Goa since the pre-Portuguese period; but the **consumption** was personal in nature, mainly associated with hard labour and *as a* medicine. The association of *feni* consumption with hard labour later even brought about the practice of *res 'do*, *i.e.* part of wages in the form of alcohol.

The 450-year rule of the Portuguese introduced a change in the consumption pattern. Alcoholic beverages were incorporated into the social life of the people. The personal examples of alcohol consumption as set by the Portuguese, together with their policies of conversion, Lusitanisation and Inquisition, introduced an attitudinal

change towards its consumption. Presently, alcoholic beverages play an important social function at all celebrations. Alcohol consumption at such events was understood to promote interaction among the invitees and fill the vacuum created by the long functions.

In the Catholic community, alcohol consumption mostly takes place at weddings, birthdays and community gatherings. All celebrations related to rites of passage and community events, like feasts and festivals, are incomplete without alcohol. The serving of alcohol has become a societal need and obligation; failure to offer it is considered a serious breach of hospitality, attracting social criticism. This pressurises the host to abide by the existing norm of serving alcohol at all celebrations. It also creates social integration, reinforcing symbolic ties among the people. Today, it is generally 'accepted' and 'expected' that alcohol will be served at celebrations by Catholics. It is consumed openly with friends and family members, with no stigma attached to the 'open consumption' pattern.

Sometimes large amounts of alcohol are consumed; when this happens on a daily basis, and especially at bars, it is frowned upon by society. Criticism acts as a deterrent for many a drinker. Another positive function of open consumption is inculcating in the child the patterns of consumption.

Among the Hindus, alcohol would find no place in any celebration, whether individual or community. However, some Hindus have now started serving alcohol at celebrations devoid of religious connotation. The non-acceptance of alcohol, the strong sanctions against its entry into their culture, or the fear of being labelled a drinker, prevents them from drinking/over-drinking. Hence, among many Hindus drinking on certain occasions is done only among known persons. These are social mechanisms of controlling alcohol consumption in both the communities.

For historical reasons, the earlier generation of Hindus used to keep a distance from the Catholic community and their celebrations. In fact, alcohol consumption was viewed by the earlier generation of Hindus as 'polluting' them and their religious values. However, presently, education and industrialization have reduced the social distance between the members of the two major communities. Hindus now associate drinking with social activity. This change is more noticeable among the youngsters. It is not rare to find **the** youth from both the major communities mixing with each other.

Due to the Portuguese rule, the Goan Catholic cuisine has undergone a transformation. *Feni* and vinegar made from palm sap are important ingredients in cooking. Their use is found in the preparation of a number of dishes. On the other hand, Hindus do not use *feni* or vinegar in their cooking. But, in recent times, a few Hindus **due** to their interaction with the Catholics, have begun using vinegar.

The antiquity of *feni* can also be traced to its medicinal use. Despite the advances made by science and the availability of modern technology, a large number of Goans, Catholic and Hindu, still use *feni* for medicinal purposes. Whereas the Catholics ingest it, most Hindus use it for local application. However, in present times, with the disintegration of the joint family, the traditional use of *feni* as a medicine is on the decline.

The existence of palm *feni* for libations also reveals the antiquity of *feni* as well as the belief system of the Goan society. Hindus irrespective of their caste appease the *devchar* by offering *soro/sur-ronth*, and so do some Catholics. But, due to the fear of their religious leaders and co-religionists, Catholics are secretive about such offerings. The fact that these practices continue clandestinely is indicative of their lack of mental and psychological preparation as Catholics. They are, however,

undergoing a spiritual renewal now, as they read the Bible more often instead of appeasing the *devchar*.

The main objective of our study was to compare alcohol use by Hindus living in Catholic-dominated Old Conquests with those living in the Hindu-dominated New Conquests. This helped us to trace the *use* of alcohol in the Goan culture. The Portuguese rule made no impact on the Hindus, as far as the use of alcohol in their celebrations is concerned. On the other hand, though Westernisation and modernisation have made an impact on their celebrations, they have not incorporated alcohol in their culture. Whether living in the Old Conquests or the New Conquests, Hindus by and large do not use alcohol for their celebrations.

Alcohol consumption by Hindus generally happens at public drinking houses. Significantly, the younger Hindu generation has fewer reservations on alcohol consumption, the Brahmins performing *puja* being exceptions to this. And while in yesteryears the distilling and selling of alcohol was relegated to the lower caste, today, owning a bar or even involving in distillation has become a lucrative business for a number of Hindus.

Geographical and climatic conditions have contributed to the production of the local alcoholic beverage *feni*. Palm *feni* production was once a well-established cottage industry in Goa. The occupation resulted in the emergence of a sub-caste known as *render*. Today, palm *feni* production is a family enterprise only for a few. The hard labour involved, stagnant selling price, lack of marketing avenues, availability of salaried employment for the younger generation and the social stigma attached to the occupation have all resulted in the younger generation shunning the occupation.

Though the occupation is declining, plenty of palm *feni* is still available. In terms of calculating the actual cost of *feni* and the *sur* used in distillation, one can discern that *feni* today is adulterated. The few aficionados who prefer to savour pure *feni* purchase it directly from the toddy tappers for a price four times higher than the market price. In the economic sphere, too, *feni* has carved out a niche for itself. It is exported to meet the alcohol needs of the Goan Diaspora, particularly in the Middle East.

Significantly, cashew *feni* production has not been affected to a great extent; it continues to be a family enterprise. However, the produce of cashew apples for the season depends on the climate. It is a seasonal activity coinciding with the children's summer holidays. Thus, children also contribute towards the occupation. *Urrak*, which is the first distil of cashew *feni*, continues to be popular till date, because of its exotic aura. Even the cashew *feni* potency is said to have been disturbed. Earlier, after extracting the juice the pulp would not be reused, as some cashew *feni* distillers do today together with some other stuff, in order to hasten the fermentation process.

Alcohol was a part of life for the Portuguese, who were identified with wine culture. It is also stated that a lot of wine was imported for their consumption in Goa. The present day celebrations and consumption patterns of the Goans are also attributed to the Portuguese. However, our study reveals that only a few upper caste and class members adhere to the wine culture. Hence, some of the questions that need to be considered in this context are: What happens to the tradition brought from elsewhere? When was it imposed? Did it become part of the social set up in a different society? What tensions exist in the receptive group? Further, we can speak of a culture encounter, or say, that culture acts, reacts and interacts. Was it a compromise between the two? The type of consumption prevalent today may not be the same as

that of the Portuguese: Is it **de-contextualized**? In order to have a proper understanding of the type of patterns that were introduced by the Portuguese, it becomes important to study the consumption patterns in areas ruled by the Portuguese, in other parts of India, as well as the existing patterns in Portugal. This will help us to understand the societal attitude towards alcohol consumption and trace it in its proper context.

Interviews with senior citizens disclose that the Portuguese and the rich natives consumed varieties of wine. White wine was consumed with fish and red wine with meat. Foreign beer, whisky as well as liqueurs were available in abundance and consumed at celebrations, which etiquette a few rich converts assimilated. Earlier, the upper caste was synonymous with the upper class consisting of a few members. There was no industrialization; the majority of Goans worked as labourers and others continued with their family occupations. Thus, in Goa, the landlords formed one group and landless labourers and occupational groups comprised another. The former identified and mixed with the Portuguese; they availed of the educational facilities and assimilated the Portuguese lifestyle, which they could well afford. For instance, they could afford to consume imported wines and other imported alcoholic drinks. Foreign crockery, cutlery, and in particular, glasses for a variety of alcohol beverages formed part of their lifestyle. These imported glasses and jars still exist in the homes of some affluent Catholics today.

Upper caste members who could afford to buy these imported wines considered it a status symbol to consume and serve wines, about whose intricacies they soon became knowledgeable. But this lifestyle was inaccessible to the majority of the Goan population; hence, they did not develop the taste for wine and liqueurs. Therefore, they adjusted themselves with what was available within their economic

capacity. *Feni* was the popular drink at their celebrations. Even the toast was raised with flavoured *feni* and in some cases locally prepared wine. Varieties of *feni* were especially distilled for celebrations. The upper caste, on the other hand, used imported champagne or good red wine for the toast. Thus, there was a noticeable difference with regard to celebrations by the upper and lower castes.

With the Liberation of Goa, the drink scenario in Goa underwent a drastic change. Import of foreign drinks stopped. Foreign drinks became expensive and rare. Hence, the upper caste also had to get used to the existing drink. It was at this time that *feni* gained prominence. The earlier patterns of consumption of imported wine and liqueurs gradually became restricted to a few. The non-availability of foreign drinks bridged the gap between the upper caste and the majority with reference to the type of alcohol used at celebrations. The availability of I.M.F.L. in Goa simultaneously created a homogeneous pattern of alcohol served at celebrations. Due to the availability of a variety of drinks, the consumer could form a preference, which ultimately defined the societal attitude towards the consumption of a particular type of drink. The majority of Goans, on improving their socio-economic status, have forsaken *feni* for I.M.F.L.

Our study indicates that presently Indian and foreign wine manufacturers are seeking to promote their products in Goa, to rekindle the earlier prevalent wine culture. Due to the availability of a lot of foreign and good quality wine, a number of upper caste families today prefer to celebrate with wine and liqueurs. But wine has not yet become popular among the lower castes.

There has been a spurt in I.M.F.L. production following the industrialization policy. A large number of I.M.F.L. manufacturing units, including breweries, have come up in Goa. Besides, major national and international alcohol manufacturers

market their products in Goa, as it is a tourist destination. **I.M.F.L.** is also bottled to cater to different economic groups. I.M.F.L. brands have devised smaller packages. Hence, we observe that the consumer has a wide choice in alcoholic drinks ranging from the local *feni* to the best of foreign brands and the rarest of wines.

Technical advances have enhanced the availability of alcoholic beverages in a wide variety of flavours and potencies. The traditional drink is also challenged by globalisation. Presently, *feni* does not find much favour with the Goan populace. It is mostly the labour class from Goa and settlers here who consume it, while the rest of the Goans prefer I.M.F.L.

From the ethnographic material available, it is clear that in all cultures where more than one type of alcoholic beverage is available, drinks are classified in terms of their social meaning. Every drink is loaded with symbolic meanings and conveys a message. Alcohol is a symbolic vehicle for identifying, describing, constructing and manipulating cultural systems. Choice of beverages is rarely a matter of personal taste. Similarly, in Goa, drinks are used to define the nature of the occasion. For instance, champagne is synonymous with celebration. If opened on a normal day, the question asked is: 'What is the occasion or celebration?' Similarly, *feni* is associated with a beggar's lunch. Thus, the type of drink served, defines both the nature of the event and the social relation between the drinkers.

From the above, it is also evident that the choice of beverage is a significant indicator of social status. In other words, I.M.F.L. has a higher status than the local beverage while imported drinks have a still higher placement compared to the I.M.F.L. Among the I.M.F.L., again, the price determines the status of the drinker.

Religious conversion from Hinduism to Catholicism provided the inhabitants of Goa an 'openness' to alcohol, given the religious sanction to the use of wine at

Mass and, as the Bible indicates, at social celebrations, or personal use as well. In fact, the whole menu of the Catholics changed to non-vegetarian. The observance of certain *var* that existed among the Hindus was not applicable to the people who converted to Catholicism.

Both Catholics and Hindus have some similar customs and traditions. However, alcohol is a distinguishing factor. Hindus observe their traditions without the use of alcohol whereas for the Catholics alcohol is an important component. Our study reveals that in order to circumvent the Inquisition and continue their ancestral **traditions** and rituals, the converts of that era incorporated alcohol. The use of alcohol and a non-vegetarian menu provided the customs a Catholic touch. Many Catholics still continue to visit temples of their ancestors for *prasad*. Such visits to the temples reveal that the earlier converts kept links with their ancestors.

Although there is plenty of alcohol available in Goa and is served free for all Catholic occasions, societal mechanisms prescribe a code of consumption. This code is based on gender, the time for consuming alcohol, the age at which it can be consumed, the place of consumption, the quantity and the manner in which it has to be consumed. We have found that society has devised its own mechanism to curb alcohol abuse. Similarly, by using various methods ranging from berating to ostracizing, society ensured that deviant behaviour, as far as alcohol consumption is concerned, is kept in check.

Gender bias prevails as far as alcohol consumption is concerned. Society imposes restrictions on women consuming alcohol particularly in public places. However, alcohol consumption before evening meals by elderly women is condoned on health grounds. Although many Catholic women consume beer at social gatherings, Hindu women do not drink any alcoholic beverage in public. However,

urban Hindu women have been observed consuming alcohol in the company of their family members at upmarket public drinking places. Ironically, society disapproves of women consuming alcohol in spite of the fact that they contribute immensely in the production of both cashew and palm *feni*. Significantly, alcohol consumption among the females is on the increase as compared to earlier days. Social drinking is on the rise among Catholics and educated and working women. Earlier, social drinking by women was prevalent only among the upper castes at parties. Thus, we observe a change in the societal attitude toward women consuming alcohol.

Distinction between 'masculine' and 'feminine' beverage with regard to consumption is observed in the Goan society. Beverages with higher alcohol content like I.M.F.L. are associated with men, while wines, beers and 'shandy' are synonymous with women.

Even though the Goan society has devised its own mechanism for controlling abuse, addiction does exist like in any other society. The consumers of alcohol reveal diverse habits of alcohol consumption. Similarly, society has also devised its own classification of an addict. This definition may differ from society to society, and even in the Goan community itself. Hence, it is difficult to totally identify and separate a drinker from a drunkard. For instance, if we go by the taxonomy given by the Alcoholic Anonymous, more than 75 per cent of alcohol consumers among Catholics can be labelled addicts. Therefore, the societal definition has its own peculiar characteristics.

Taking into consideration the alcohol consumption patterns in Goa, we have classified alcohol consumers into three broad categories: 1) *Social drinkers*, who consume alcohol only at social gatherings where it is served. They consume drinks as part of the social ceremony. They also partake of the drink because they enjoy it;

2) *Routine drinkers*, whose drinking pattern is entirely different from the voluntary, deliberate, pleasure-promoting behaviour of social drinkers. This group is sub-divided into (a) Regular consumers of alcohol, who ingest a drink before meals (b) Alcohol-dependent consumers, for whom alcohol is indispensable to tackle emotional stress and strain; who nonetheless function as normal human beings at their work places, at home and in other social environments. They may drink heavily but are not regarded as drunkards as they know how to hold their drink. The World Health Organisation calls this stage hazardous, for its potential harmfulness (Costa 2007: 10); 3) *Addicts*, who cannot function without drinks; and since their main aim is to get intoxicated, they consume any alcoholic drink, even it means begging, borrowing or stealing. In Goa, *bebdo* is the word used to describe such addicts.

Incidentally, **Thimann** (1966: 1) has also done a similar categorization of alcohol consumers. Report of Special Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (1986: 105) and Wechsler (1979: 39) also found extremely diverse habits vis-à-vis alcohol consumption. For instance, some people do not consume alcohol at all, some do so on rare occasions like celebrations; some consume only on weekends while some consume it every day.

Mullen (1990: 138) describes the two opposing poles of value structure **vis-à-vis** alcohol consumption in the American society, where he found the pro-drinking and abstinent sentiments. Pro-drinking groups view drinking as hospitable and sociable, while the abstinent groups view drinking as sinful and hedonistic. These extremes of value orientation lead to conflict within the attitudes of majority of drinkers in a society. Our study indicated a similar position in Goa, between the two major communities. In our study the Hindus and the Catholics of Goa can be likened to the pro- and abstinent groups, respectively. Among the respondents there was

general approval towards alcohol consumption. Even those who rarely consumed alcohol did not display any strong anti-alcohol attitude. Their pro-drink attitudes, however, were generally qualified: drinking was seen to be all right in moderation or at specific places and time.

In the past, alcohol was consumed mostly on occasions or festivals where a big group was gathered. The number of occasions celebrated was small and low profile. Presently, even a minor occasion is an event for many Catholic families to celebrate with drinks. Apart from revealing the rise in economic standard of the society, it also shows the rise in situational drinking. Coupled with this attitude is the fact that alcoholic drinks are easily available in Goa. The rates are cheaper than in neighbouring states (Costa 2007: 10). Celebrations take place at home and among those who can afford it at up-market restaurants, in the company of family and/or friends. Besides, a new concept of upmarket bar-and-restaurant has emerged to cater to the needs of a family going out for a meal. The setting of public drinking places has undergone a sea change. Most of the erstwhile *tavernas* have been upgraded to bars-and-restaurants. In 2002 there were 9,200 bars and liquor shops in Goa (Costa 2007: 10).

Another significant finding of our study is that the number of youngsters consuming alcohol is on the rise. Alcohol has become an important component of enjoyment. Youngsters consume alcohol at festivals like *Arlem*, *Bonderam* at Divar, Carnival dances, beat shows, and so on. They also do so at public drinking places, especially those having games and entertainment. The seating arrangements at weddings held at open-air dance floors are conducive to alcohol consumption.

Costa (2007: 1, 10) states that social drinking is a way of life, and at any given time approximately 10 per cent of the Goan population could be alcoholics.

Alcoholism and alcohol-related diseases in Goa are a serious problem. Further, she points out that till date no study has been conducted on the total population, to find out the male-female ratio of alcoholics.

The Catholic community uses alcohol at all their functions. However, in recent times, a noticeable change has occurred. The Charismatic Renewal Movement has resulted in inspiring even inveterate drinkers to shun the drink. Many families refuse to serve alcohol even at celebrations. A number of Catholics have also withdrawn from participating in any alcohol-related activity, like marketing or distillation. We have also found that alcohol use in traditions towards libations is diminishing. Instead of 'pouring' alcohol, as was done earlier, now a prayer is said. The presence of different Christian sects in Goa has also influenced the alcohol consumption patterns, as many of them prohibit alcohol usage at individual or social level.

The Catholic Church in Goa has also taken cognisance of the fact that alcohol consumption is proving to be a major problem for the community. At the Synod, held a couple of years ago, the Church officially laid down clear guidelines to tackle this problem. Among the Hindus, Brahamanand Swami launched a successful drive against alcoholism.

The consumption patterns of various communities differ on the basis of caste and class. Most people having drinking pathologies and succumbing to alcohol-related illness belong to lower castes. Although one does not find drunkards as in the past, deaths due to alcohol-related incidents are on the rise, in both the major communities. This finding leads us to conclude that an increasing number of Hindus has also begun consuming alcohol. Similarly, according to Costa (2007: 10), out of 3500-4000 accident victims at the Goa Medical College annually, 25-30 per cent

happens under influence of alcohol. Ten to fifteen per cent of deaths, too, are alcohol-related and the figure is still on the rise.

Similarly, we have found that the lower castes, especially those involved in hard labour, are more habituated to alcohol consumption. This is also because society by and large accepts or correlates occupational groups with alcohol consumption. For instance, alcohol consumption is correlated with those working at the crematoria, gravediggers and manual labourers, who belong to the lower castes. Similarly, the type of alcohol consumed by them is harsh and cheap as well. In many cases, it is the adulterated drink that acts as a slow killer. Consumption normally happens on an empty stomach, affecting health.

Thus, we can conclude that the permissive attitude towards alcohol consumption later makes a number of drinkers dependent on alcohol. Though they may not be termed 'drunkards' by society, they do constitute a social burden. The permissive attitude can be changed with governmental intervention in the following ways: 1. By raising the price of drinks 2 Monitoring the timings of public drinking places 3. Monitoring the manufacture and price of the local *feni* 4. Creating awareness on the evils of drinking through the mass media 5. Supporting the Alcoholic Anonymous groups 6. Being strict at work places about alcohol consumption during the day, for Government employees and private employees 7. Checking drunken driving, especially after parties and celebrations, at night, by using breath analysers 8. Introducing topics related to alcohol and drug addiction in the school syllabi.

## GLOSSARY

<i>Adde</i>	– tree trunks
<i>Alem</i>	– ginger
<i>Ambott</i>	– <b>sour</b>
<i>Amot-tik</i>	– a hot and sour curry
<i>Angaro</i>	– a moderate hammering used for treating the spadix of the coconut tree
<i>Anter</i>	– custard apple: <i>Annona squamosa</i> (Bot.)
<i>Assado</i>	– roast (meat)
<i>Azo</i>	– grandfather or elder
<i>Bakri</i>	– Goan bread
<i>Balch&amp;</i>	– pickle (made of fish, prawns or meat)
<i>Baravo</i>	– observance of the 12 <sup>th</sup> day after the funeral
<i>Barso</i>	– naming ceremony
<i>Bebdo, Bebdé (pl.)</i>	– <b>drunkard(s)</b>
<i>Bebdul</i>	– female drunkard
<i>Bett</i>	– <b>plastic</b> strips used to replace <i>gopes</i>
<i>Bhann, Bhannam (pl.)</i>	— large earthen pot(s)
<i>Bhatti</i>	– furnace
<i>Bhikari, Bhikarim (pl.)</i>	— beggar(s)
<i>Bhikream jevonn</i>	– food for beggars
<i>Bokddo</i>	– male goat
<i>Bonddkecho hat</i>	– <i>Pandanus tectorius soland</i> ( <b>Bot.</b> ), duct used to connect the <i>bhann</i> and <i>lavnni</i>

<i>Cabidela</i>	– spicy pork meat preparation
<i>Choru</i>	– offering made of cooked rice mixed with blood of goat for the deity
<i>Chuddtam paddo</i>	– felling of coconut leaves
<i>Damnem</i>	– small earthen pot
<i>Ddobo, Ddobe (pl.)</i>	– large empty <b>tin(s)</b>
<i>Devak</i>	– for God
<i>Devchar</i>	– local supernatural spirit
<i>Dhanknem</i>	– lid
<i>Dhoni</i>	– local supernatural spirit or owner. Sometimes also referred to God
<i>Dhonno, Dhonne (pl.)</i>	– cone made of leaf
<i>Dhump</i>	– incense
<i>Dixtt</i>	– <i>evil eye</i>
<i>Doi</i>	– a big ladle made of coconut shell
<i>Dudnnem, Dudnnim (pl.)</i>	– a container used by toddy tappers to collect <i>sur</i>
<i>Dukxiri</i>	– <i>Hermidesmus Indicus (Bot.)</i> , locally available herb used during distillation to give flavour to palm <i>feni</i>
<i>Feijoada</i>	– a preparation of beans, sausages and salted pork
<i>Feni</i>	– local alcoholic beverage, distilled either from fermented palm sap or cashew juice
<i>Fenn</i>	– froth
<i>Fenno</i>	– bubbles
<i>Forrea kam</i>	– digging work
<i>Gallmo</i>	– fine shrimps
<i>Garannem</i>	– prayer normally made by the village <b>elder/Voddil</b>

<i>Gaunkar, Gaunkars(pl.)</i>	– original inhabitant / village head/ members who enjoy social rights
<i>Gauddi</i>	– the original inhabitant of Goa; also called <i>Gaudas</i>
<i>Ghaddi</i>	– oracles/mediums
<i>Ghantt marop</i>	– tying a main knot of fishing net
<i>Ghor khuris</i>	– blessing of the foundation stone bearing a cross carving
<i>Godo</i>	= the residue in the <i>bhann</i>
<i>Gope</i>	– strands from the frond of palm leaves
<i>Gray</i>	– alcometer
<b><i>Hollod</i></b>	– turmeric; also a ceremony of turmeric application by the Hindus
<i>Hampam</i>	– grooves cut into the coconut tree trunk
<i>Ghumott</i>	– local instrument resembling a drum
<i>Ghumtti</i>	– a little stone structure erected for the <i>Devchar</i>
<i>Ghuto</i>	– place where the 'stills' for cashew distillation are fixed
<i>Gott</i>	– a copper or mud pot personifying a goddess
<i>Hapsi</i>	– a local supernatural spirit
<i>Hing</i>	– asafoetida
<i>Iddi, Iddio (pl.)</i>	– country-made <b>cigarette(s)</b>
<b><i>Ir</i></b>	– coconut palm mid-rib
<b><i>Jirem</i></b>	– cumin seeds
<i>Kakonne</i>	– twisted ring made of coconut leaves
<i>Kanchiro</i>	– ceremonial cut on the ear lobe
<i>Karo</i>	– <i>Melia tomosita</i> (Bot.)
<i>Karipatta</i>	– curry leaves

<i>Kasaim</i>	– cymbals
<i>Kaxhti</i>	– loincloth
<i>Kati</i>	– a special knife used by toddy tappers to slice the spadix of the coconut tree
<i>Kazkar</i>	– lease holders/cashew <i>feni</i> distillers for cashew plantations
<i>Khajro</i>	– <b><i>Stryegnos nuxvomica</i></b> (Bot.)
<i>Kidd</i>	– worms
<i>Kiranttem</i>	– <i>Androgaphis panniculata</i> (Bot.)
<i>Kirtans</i>	– psalms or divine songs of the Hindus
<i>Kodem</i>	– a large earthen basin
<i>Koddu voum</i>	– ajwain: <i>Trachystemum</i> spp. (Bot.)
<i>Kollombi</i>	– oval trench cut roughly into a rock -the section where where the fruit is squashed
<b><i>Kollso, Kollxe</i> (pl.)</b>	– earthen pot(s)
<i>Konkon dhuddi</i>	– bottle gourd
<i>Kombo, <b>Kombé</b> (pl.)</i>	– rooster(s)
<i>Kumeri</i>	– seasonal vegetable cultivation
<i>Ladin</i>	– litany
<i>Lavnni</i>	– the earthen pot used for condensation
<i>Madd</i>	– coconut; also refers to the coconut <i>feni</i>
<i>Magnnem</i>	– prayer
<i>Maharangonn</i>	– a place where <i>mahar</i> community worships deities
<i>Mamageli battli</i>	– maternal uncle's bottle
<i>Mathov der</i>	– welcome arch at a wedding celebration
<i>Matt 'tti tree</i>	– <b><i>Terminilia crenulata</i></b> (Bot.)
<i>Methi</i>	– fenugreek seeds

<i>Medd</i>	– pole installed before the marriage celebration
<i>Môl</i>	– fish/meat pickle
<i>Mollop, Mollpam</i> (p1.)	– crude form of <i>feni</i>
<i>Moranne</i>	– sealing process/ packing the mouth of the <i>Mann</i>
<i>Mosonn</i>	– crematorium
<i>Murem</i>	– <i>mist</i>
<i>Nal</i>	– coconut
<i>Nas</i>	– local supernatural spirit
<i>Niro</i>	– sweet cashew juice
<i>Nivedhea</i>	– food offerings to the deity
<i>Nollo</i>	– duct connecting the <i>bann</i> and the <i>lavnni</i>
<i>Ozem</i>	– basket full of gifts
<i>Paddekar</i>	– coconut plucker
<i>Ponchong</i>	— <i>almanac</i>
<i>Pão</i>	– bread
<i>Pap</i>	– medicinal paste
<i>Para</i>	– dry fish pickle
<i>Patti</i>	– <i>main</i> wooden beam of a house
<i>Pavnni</i>	– auction
<i>Pikas marop</i>	– striking with a pick-axe
<i>Pochok</i>	– residue after palm <i>feni</i> distillation
<i>Poi</i>	– spadix of the coconut tree
<i>Poingiro</i>	– <i>Erythrina indica</i> (Bot.)
<i>Puja</i>	– prayer
<i>Pottli</i>	– bundle

<i>Prasad</i>	– divine offering
<i>Prasadpakli</i>	– divine sign
<i>Provochonam</i>	– sermons
<i>Pudina</i>	– mint leaves
<i>Purov</i>	– sacrificial stone found mostly at temples
<i>Rakhonndar</i>	– local supernatural spirit or protector
<i>Rama chuddti</i>	– tender leaves of the coconut tree
<i>Recheado masala</i>	– chilly and other condiment paste
<i>Render</i>	– toddy tapper
<b>Resão</b>	– wages through alcohol
<i>Rontth</i>	– leavened bread
<i>Roxi mathov</i>	– <i>pandal made</i> for cooking the wedding food
<i>Rounnechi mati</i>	– mud taken from anthills
<i>Sangnnem</i>	– <i>vow</i>
<i>Saguade</i>	– items like rooster, bottle of alcohol, coconuts, local vegetables, fruits and sweets gifted by Catholics to relatives on the occasion of a wedding
<i>San 'nam</i>	– steamed rice muffins
<b>Sankallop</b>	– de-weeding and clearing the undergrowth at a cashew plantation
<i>Shet</i>	– goldsmith
<i>Sobai</i>	– beauty
<i>Soro</i>	– alcohol
<i>Soro - rontth</i>	– alcohol and leavened bread
<i>Sorpotel</i>	– a dish prepared from the organs of a pig
<i>Sontonn</i>	– Indian devil tree: <b><i>Alstonia scholaris</i></b> (Bot.)

<i>Sottvi</i>	— observance of the sixth day after birth
<i>Sottvi mai</i>	– Mother Goddess
<i>Sur</i>	– toddy
<i>Sur- rontth</i>	– toddy and leavened bread
<i>Sukem nustem</i>	– dried fish
<i>Sumb</i>	– thin coir rope
<i>Tambio, Tambié (pl.)</i>	— tumbler(s)
<i>Tenddi</i>	– gherkins
<i>Taverna</i>	– Portuguese name for local drinking house
<i>Ujea boddi</i>	– stick with a flame
<i>Urrack</i>	— <i>the first distillate of fens</i>
<i>Utsov</i>	– festival
<i>Uzvateo</i>	– <i>agarbatti/incense sticks</i>
<i>Vadde</i>	– wheat flour preparation for religious offering
<i>Vaie</i>	– See <i>gope</i>
<i>Vangddi</i>	– member (of a caste)
<i>Vhoddem</i>	– canoe
<i>Viddo</i>	– areca nut and betel leaves
<i>Vindalho</i>	– a spicy meat pickle
<i>Vodgem</i>	– rice cake
<i>Voddil</i>	– elder
<i>Voiginn, Voiginneo (pl.)</i>	— mid-wife(s)
<i>Vojem</i>	– the Hindu counterpart of <i>saguade</i> comprising of local fruits and vegetables. Certain Catholic communities also employ this term <i>vojem</i> to describe items at presented certain traditional festivals like Sao Joao

<i>Vol 'lmachi sal</i>	– bark of <i>Mitragyna parviflora</i> (Bot.)
<i>Vorsavollichou boumann</i>	– annual offering ceremony
<i>Xenn</i>	– cow dung
<i>Xim</i>	— boundary
<i>Zageavoilo</i>	– guardian of the place
<i>Zagor</i>	– night vigil
<i>Zall ghoddnek ghalta</i>	– joining the pieces of <i>net</i>
<i>Zatra</i>	– festival
<i>Zun</i>	– over mature

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