

Diasporic Nature of Konkani Communities in Coastal Karnataka

(1371-MRP/14-15/KABA028/UGC-SWRO)

**A Minor Research Project Report Submitted to
University Grants Commission**

Principal investigator:

Mabel Cynthia Mascarenhas

Mount Carmel College, Autonomous

Bengaluru, Karnataka – 560052

2015- 2017

ABSTRACT

This research project examines the diaspora of GSB and Mangalorean Catholic communities in Coastal Karnataka. It argues that they display diasporic features in their literature as well as a few aspects of their ethnic culture. Although being ethno-religious immigrant communities from Goa, their diasporic connection with Goa has been overlooked and no attempt at academic research has been made so far which this research seeks addresses. In this regard, it explores the notion of diaspora and collective displaced consciousness that results from transnational migrations alone. Even the concept of internal diaspora does not suit the Konkani context well as these migrations have not come about after the Indian nation gained its political freedom.

These Konkani migrations although occurred during the colonial period in pre-Independent India, their identity of being immigrants continues to impact the Konkani community consciousness in coastal Karnataka even to the present day. Keeping this aspect in mind, the project terms the diaspora of Konkani in coastal Karnataka as 'diaspora within' as the crossing over borders happened within a stipulated geographical region which is known as nation today. This geographical region had its territorial boundaries within and the Konkani migrants who belong to two religious communities today had to cross those political borders to arrive at the region they are located today.

With a combination of analysis of texts as well as a cultural study, the research argues that the two prominent Konkani communities from Udupi and Karnataka district regions are 'diasporas within' and hence are a part of the Goan or Konkani diaspora spread within India. While the GSBs and Mangalorean Catholics are regarded as sister communities sharing several aspects of culture such as language, history, surnames and a few customary traditions with their Goan counterparts, the research considers the differences in the expression of diasporic relationship by GSBs and the Mangalorean Catholic community. Unlike the GSBs who view Goa as the lost homeland, Mangalorean Catholics seek a Goan link only to establish a sense of historicity. The experience of Captivity of the community under Tippu Sultan is also regarded as an event that caused the loss of memory of Goa. The community also goes by the name Mangalorean or Kodiyali and their connection with Goa is fractional compared to that of GSBs which has prompted the research to call Mangalorean Catholics' diaspora as 'Partial diaspora'

Keywords: Konkani; GSBs; Mangalorean Catholics; immigrant communities; coastal Karnataka; diaspora within; partial diaspora.