Development of a Tourist Attraction – A Case Study of the Sacred Grove, Holiyechirai in Goa

Derek Monteiro¹, Dr. Dayanand M. S²

¹Research Scholar pursuing the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management Studies, Goa University, Goa, INDIA
²Associate Professor, Department of Management Studies, Goa University, Goa, INDIA

ABSTRACT
Nature worship is practiced in India as well as in other parts of the world. Various forms of nature worship exist; worshiping sacred groves being one such form of nature worship. In India, nature worship dates back to the pre-vedic times. While sacred sites have touristic appeal, sacred groves are different from others that have been developed for tourism. In order to protect the sacred grove vegetation and yet make the visitor experience more meaningful, well designed tourist facilities need be created to for the benefit of visitors.

This paper is a case study on the sacred grove, Holiyechirai located in the village of Caranzol in the North of Goa and aims at bringing out the stage of development the grove is at using two attraction development frameworks viz. Dean Maccannell Sight Sacralization Theory and Clare Gunn Theory.

Keywords--- Nature Worship, Sacred Groves, Vegetation, Tourism

I. INTRODUCTION
Attractions form the core for tourism. Swarbrooke (1995) states “Attractions are arguably the most important component in the tourism system. They are the main motivators for tourist trips and are the core of the tourism product. Without attractions, there would be no need for other tourism services. Indeed tourism would not exist if it were not for attractions.”

Sacred Groves also form an attraction, but for the devout few in the community and the area surrounding the community. The performance of ceremonies and events in these sacred groves has the potential to attract tourists / visitors.

Apart from this the sheer ecological value of such spaces to society, it is both practical and necessary to protect these sacred groves.

Specific eco-touristic products can be designed for knowledge / conservation purposes and also to educate the erudite and discerning tourist.

II. OBJECTIVE
To explore the possibility of developing Sacred Groves in Goa into tourist attractions.

III. ATTRACTION DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist Attractions – Definitions and their interpretations
Clare A. Gunn (1982) in “Vacationscape: Developing Tourist Areas classifies attractions by dividing all attractions into two general market driven classes:
(a) Touring circuit &
(b) Longer-stay

Touring circuit – attractions visited on a tour and for a comparatively short time because tourists are flowing through the area (development of such an attraction requires specific resources, designs and operations for the successive groups of tourists that will visit throughout each day).

Long stay – Attractions for a long stay require resources, designs and operations for groups of people who will stay for more than a brief visit”.

Alan Lew in his work titled “A Framework Of Tourist Attraction Research”, (1987) states that “there are three distinct approaches to understanding a tourist attraction site:
(a) A form, identity or name,
(b) An organizational and developmental structure and
(c) A perceived experience

At their most basic level attractions are identified by their individual name and these are most often used in inventories of small areas.
The structural approach does not examine the individual attraction’s form or identity but instead focuses on its spatial capacity and temporal nature. Geographical size is the simplest basis for categorizing the character of the attraction.

Approaches to tourist attraction perceptions and experiences are closely related to tourist motivation. This gets reflected in the inseparable relationship between the site and the visitor in the tourist attraction system.”

Dean MacCannell (Sightseers: The Tourist as Theorist) describes tourism attractions as “empirical relationship between a tourist, a site and a maker”. MacCannell states that “there are five steps to sight sacralization (1976):

1. **Naming** – Occurs when a sight is marked off from similar objects as worthy of preservation.
2. **Framing and Elevation**: Once a site is named, the boundary is marked around the sight, controlling admission if required.
3. **Enshrinement**: Occurs when the “framing material” itself becomes characterized as sacred with the help of a marker. A special setting is created for its preservation and admiration emphasizing its unique characteristics.
4. **Mechanical Reproduction**: Occurs when the sacred site is replicated and disseminated in the form of souvenirs, models, effigies, photographs, writings in brochures, etc.
5. **Social Reproduction**: Occurs when society recognizes it and begins to create easy access to visit the sight e.g. construction of roads. Social Reproduction also occurs when groups, cities and regions begin to name themselves after famous attractions (MacCannell, 1976)

Gunn (1988) conceptualized attractions by suggesting that “an attraction is composed of three important functional parts which are the Nucleus, the Inviolate Belt and the Zone of Closure.

The Nucleus of an attraction is the prime element of the attraction and is its raison d’etre.

The Inviolate Belt is the setting through which the visitor passes to reach the nucleus and is described as the frame for the feature.

The Zone of Closure is the surrounding area of the inviolate belt and contains the service centres.

Victor T. C. Middleton (1988) defines attractions as “a designated permanent resource that is controlled and managed.”

Neil Leiper (1990) states that “an attraction is a systematic arrangement of three elements: A person with touristic needs, a nucleus (any feature or characteristic of a place they might visit) & at least one marker (information about the nucleus). These constitute a tourism attraction when their connectivity with each other is established.”

Prentice (1993) created a typology of 23 categories of tourist attractions. He considered attractions from a slightly different perspective by developing a typology that is based on the main subject presented at the attraction. He suggests that the advantage of this is that attractions with like contents are grouped together and by carrying out consumer surveys of tourists to such attractions it would be possible to “relate reasons for visiting attractions, the benefits gained and other consumer characteristics to particular types of attractions” (Prentice 1993).

In developing the typology, Prentice uses the definition of attraction as “a site, theme or area which attracts visitors” (Elspeth A. Frew & Prof. Robin N. Shaw).

John Swarbrooke (1995) – states that “attractions tend to be single units, individual sites or clearly defined small scale geographical areas that are accessible and motivate large numbers of people to travel to some distance from their home usually in their leisure time to visit them for a short limited period.” (Elspeth A. Frew & Prof. Robin N. Shaw).

It is important, however, to note that a tourist attraction in itself does not draw tourists in or have any inherent pulling power but that the image of attractiveness is created by the tourists (Leiper 1990). It depends on the tourists’ interests and preferences as to which elements are perceived as tempting. Consequently, tourists themselves have a role in the production of a tourist attraction. It is for this reason that a tourist attraction is often understood as a system which consists of various components, the tourist being one of them.

MacCannell (1976), for example, approaches attractions through a relationship between a tourist, a sight and a marker, i.e. any information that refers to the sight. A systemic approach to attractions has been developed further by Leiper (1990), whose model replaces the sight with the concept of a nucleus, the central element of an attraction, or any feature or characteristic of a place which is visited by tourists. For Gunn (1988), who originally introduced the concept in 1972, a nucleus signifies the principal attracting force. Despite the perceived attractiveness of a nucleus, it may not always be enough to pull in large numbers of visitors. Present day tourists want new experiences, exciting activities and opportunities for shopping, eating well and sleeping in pleasant accommodation. A monument at a specific location may cause some passers-by to stop and take photographs, but if there are no tourism services in the vicinity they will usually move on towards the next attraction. In addition, sightseeing alone does not provide local tourism entrepreneurs with an income. Consequently, additional attractions are usually needed around the nucleus. According to Gunn (1988), the grouping of attractions into larger complexes makes them more fascinating and successful.

Attractions are also essential elements in the development of tourist destinations, because destinations
usually form as combinations of attraction clusters, connecting routes and a service community (Gunn 1988). Specific locations are usually abstract and invisible in the landscape until they are marked on the ground with a sign, a monument, a line or some other material object (Raivo 1996; Timothy 1998, 2001).

IV. SACRED GROVES LITERATURE

Socio Cultural Background

Gadgil and Vartak in “Glimpses of Indian Ethnobotany state that Sacred groves are patches of forest set aside by the local communities for worship, their size varying from grove to grove (mention the multiple sources). The entire vegetation within the grove along with the fauna is onserved. There is a belief that any matter should not be removed from the sacred groves as it is considered as an evil act (Gadgil and Vartak 1974).”

Nature worship is an integral part of human society. Going back to the historic time period, the tradition was quite evident in every continent as represented in the culture, religion and social norms of traditional societies. Nature worship has various forms – divinity could be assigned to any place or natural elements (eg. Stone, rock, mountain, river, forest, etc.) or plants and animals depending on cultural and religious aspects of a society. The resurgence of worldwide interest in nature worship has increased manifold nowadays mainly due to the realization of importance of these community based practices in nature and natural resource conservation (Rajasri Ray, M. D. Subash Chandran and T. V. Ramachandran).

Sacred Groves, one form of nature worship, are considered as “Sacred Natural Sites” as per the definition provided by IUCN.

In common terms sacred groves are relic forest patches preserved in the name of religion/culture as observed in many societies. They were reported from many countries extending from Asia, Africa, Europe and The Americas but their present occurrence is mainly restricted to Africa and Asia.

In India, sacred groves are well documented from the north-east Himalayan region, Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, Coastal region, Central Indian Plateau and Western desert. (Rajasri Ray, M. D. Subash Chandran and T. V. Ramachandran)

Importance of sacred groves (Rajasri Ray, M. D. Subash Chandran and T. V. Ramachandran, M. L. Khan):

a) Sacred groves provide shelter to thousands of species of plants and animals.
b) They are believed to have great powers to heal body and spirit.
c) They are important reservoirs of biodiversity.
d) They are the last refuse for endemic and endangered species of plants and animals.
e) They are the storehouses of medicinal plants valuable to village communities as well as modern pharmacopoeia.
f) Some sacred groves contain relatives of crop species that can help improve cultivated varieties.
g) They help in maintaining the water cycle and water table in local areas. This is turn helps improve soil stability, prevent top soil erosion and provide irrigation for agriculture in drier climates.

Ulrich Deil, Heike Culmsee and Mohamed Berriane (2005) in “Sacred Groves in Morocco: A Society’s Conservation of Nature for Spiritual Reasons state The nature conservation value of sacred places is seen in their roles as: aesthetic elements of the landscape, models for future attempts to reconstruct degraded areas with endemic forest vegetation, biodiversity conservation, protection of rare plant species, protection of genetic resources and habitats for animals”.

Dr. Leslie E. Sponsel (2008) outlines the scope of such sacred places as a new frontier for interdisciplinary research on their own merits and for their relevance in biodiversity conservation. He states that the religious or cultural designation of an area as sacred, especially those which are relatively natural, may either intentionally or coincidentally promote the conservation of its associated biodiversity. Such sacred places can compliment national parks and other protected areas established by governments. Collaboration among religious, governmental, scientific, and / or conservation agencies may be desirable for the protection of sacred sites and landscapes.

Special sites or areas that have one or more attributes which distinguish them as being somehow extraordinary, usually in a religious or spiritual sense, are called sacred places. They tend to evoke a feeling of some awesome, mysterious, and transcendent power that merits special reverence and treatment like the active volcano Kilauea on the island of Hawaii. Individuals may experience a sacred place in different ways as a site of fascination, attraction, connectedness, danger, ordeal, healing, ritual, meaning, identity, revelation, and/or transformation.

Sacred Groves are patches of forests that are informally managed as part of a local cultural tradition without much intervention from forest departments. They represent the functional link between social life and forest management system of a region (Current Science Vol. 84, No. 6, 25 March 2003).

Gadgil and Vartak (1976) in “Glimpses of Indian Ethnobotany defined sacred groves as nature worship where all forms of vegetation including shrubs and climbers are under the protection of the reigning deity of the grove and removal of any material even dead wood of a twig is a taboo. This preservation of the entire vegetation in association with a deity is quite a distinct phenomenon...
from the preservation of isolated specimens of sacred tree species such as Peepal (Ficus religiosa) or Umber (Ficus glomerata) which are often preserved and worshipped even without any association with a deity”.

Pandey and Patnaik (1999) defined sacred groves as “culturally a living place of the deities and spirits of the village which protects them from calamities and brings prosperity and a patch of pristine forest having well conserved biodiversity.”

The UNESCO Ghanaian “Co-operative Integrated Project on Savanna Ecosystems on Ghana” (UNESCO 1996) defined Sacred Groves as “an area of ‘natural’ vegetation preserved through local taboos and sanctions that entail spiritual and ecological values. The ecological values are found in the traditional association of the sacred groves with wildlife and physical landscape such as streams.” The grove is the focus of common religious and socio-cultural affinity for a number of surrounding village communities. The respective communities together with their land constitute the grove community area.

Historically sacred groves can be traced back to the hunter-gatherer societies which viewed the environment as an inalienable part of their life (Kosambi 1962). Such societies consisted of “ecosystem people” as they were truly conscious of their dependence on nature and natural resources and hence worshipped nature as God (Dasman 1988). Later they practiced primitive cultivation for which they had to clear forests. While doing so they had to move from place to place so that the original forest could regenerate in the cleared area called shifting cultivation. As the population increased they cleared large tracts of forests. It assumed grave proportions and threatened the very survival of the forests. The idea of sanctifying forests and trees was evolved to conserve local biodiversity and to arrest this pernicious trend (Rappaport 1971 and Vannucci 1991). The advent of agriculture coupled with population pressures triggered fragmentation of hill societies and their migration to the plains. The practice of establishing sacred groves continued as their reverential attitude towards nature was inborn and inherent. At this time society’s belief that sacred groves sheltered God who ensured a bountiful harvest to obedient subjects was strengthened. The fear of the wrath of God thus saved the groves from biotic interferences such as grazing, fire wood collection, resource harvesting, etc.

Sacred grove culture in India has pre-Vedic roots; the Vedic people though personified elemental forces of nature as divinities had no association with sacred grove culture of non-Vedic inhabitants (Chandran, 2005). The institution of sacred grove, is on the wane in India, its last important stronghold, though it is still very much a living tradition here. Called variously as jankor, sarana (Central India), jaher (West Bengal), orans (Rajasthan), kavus (Kerala), deorai (Maharashtra), devarakadus (Kodagu), laktyntang (Meghalaya), kans (parts of Karnataka) etc sacred groves also have been reported from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim and other north-eastern states. The numbers of groves in these states/regions are in hundreds or in thousands. Nevertheless there is also urgent need to systematically inventories the sacred groves in various parts of the country (Malhotra, 1998).

Scientific studies on the sacred groves of India got a fillip with the pioneering work of Gadgil and Vartak (1975, 1976, 1980). For the first time the groves were studied in a holistic way encompassing biologic, ecologic and socio-cultural perspectives. More studies followed and several conferences held nationally and internationally on sacred groves and natural sacred sites resulting in sudden growth of literature on sacred groves over the last three decades.

Most studies hitherto can be broadly categorized into:
- Inventory and documentation
- Cultural aspects
- Biodiversity and ecological assessment
- Conservation status and conservation programmes
- Social and policy framework

Russell E. Brayley in his paper titled “Managing sacred sites for tourism: A case study of visitor facilities in Palmyra, New York states that Tourists to sacred sites are attracted by curiosity and by devotion. The curious onlookers are drawn by a desire to see something different or to better understand why others are drawn to the site for reasons of devotion. Devotees or pilgrims to sacred sites are attracted by a sense of obligation, a desire to center their faith or spiritual understanding, or be enlightened or qualified. Whatever their reasons for visiting a sacred site, tourists and pilgrims both need services and from that need is born the potential for economic development in the community or region wherein the sacred attraction is located. Tourist facilities, which include a variety of basic traveler services and interpretive facilities, can both contribute to making the sacred site experience meaningful to the visitor and enhance the host community's economic base”(R. E. Brayley).

Russell Brayley further states that “For a site to become sacred in the eyes of those who visit, whether tourist or true pilgrim, it must be considered to be holy, set apart for the service or worship of deity, worthy of veneration, or entitled to reverence. The site achieves this status as the result of a sacred experience enjoyed by one or more visitors who, in turn, testify of their experience to others who then accept their testimony and desire to be either vicarious or direct partakers of that sacred experience. Eliade (1957) described the sacred experience as “a ‘centering’ event during which an individual finds, in the midst of a relatively homogenous existence, a break or interruption and a realization that the physical space in which this interruption occurs is a space that is qualitatively different from others. (R. E. Brayley).”
V. COLLECTION OF DATA FOR THE CASE STUDIES

Data for the case studies was collected in the following manner:

- Visits to the sacred groves for the purpose of recording / photographing the area and the rituals performed
- Interviews with the gaonkars (villagers managing social and cultural affairs of the village) and
- Local people of the villages
- Interviews with noted historians and environmentalists

VI. METHODOLOGY

The Case Study method is adopted. This involves Qualitative Research. Qualitative Research is concerned with a qualitative phenomenon that is a phenomenon relating to quality or kind.

This is especially important in behavioral sciences where the main objective is to discover the underlying motives of human behavior.

VII. CASE STUDY

The sacred grove, Holiyechirai is located in the village of Caranzol in the north of Goa, India. The village of Caranzol is located at a distance of approximately 15 kms from the main township, Valpoi. Caranzol lies within the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary. It has a population of 839 people (Census 2011). The Shree Satteri temple lies at the foot of the sacred grove. The rituals associated with the grove are performed at this temple.

Speaking to a resident of the village of Caranzol, we were informed that the grove gets its name ‘Holiyechirai’ from the fact that the sacred tree is cut (on the occasion of Holi - The Festival of Colours) only from this hill and not from the other eleven hills surrounding the village of Caranzol.

There is no clear demarcation of the grove. The same resident informs that formally villagers entered the grove only on the occasion of Holi to cut a mature tree from the grove. However, he says now the villagers enter the grove all through the year, especially to collect the resin of the tree Vateria indica commonly known as ‘dhup’ and used locally as incense. There are only two such trees on this hill which are believed to more than 300 years old. The other trees found within the grove are Pterocarpus marsupium (locally known as Kino), Calycopteris floribunda (locally known as Uski), Terminalia paniculata (locally known as Kindal), Dalbergia latifolia (locally known as Shiso), Terminalia tomentosa (locally known as Matti), Caryota urens (locally called Birlo Mad), Vateria indica (locally called Dhup) and Syzygium cumini (locally called Jambhul). All the flora and fauna are protected as
sacred. The avian fauna include Magpie Robins, Paradise Flycatcher, Peacock, Parakeets, Common Green Bee Eaters, Great Hornbills, etc. which are all regarded as sacred.

The same resident informs that the following festivals associated with the sacred grove are celebrated – Holi, Ranmale and Chorutsav.

Holi – the festival of color:

The sequence of events that takes place on the day of the festival of Holi were explained in detail. On the day of Holi, a tree is cut from the sacred grove Holiyechirai and brought down to the Shree Satteri temple. The tree is cut only from this grove and not from any of the eleven hills around Caranzol. It was explained that it is for this reason that the grove is called Holiyechirai. It was further explained that it is the gaonkar who selects five persons to accompany him into the sacred grove to cut the sacred tree. He selects these persons after saying a silent prayer to the presiding deity of the village for wisdom to select the right people.

The selection of the tree is done by the presiding deity of the forest who then informs the gaonkar, which is the tree to be cut. It was also explained that the tree that is cut is generally the tallest tree and must be straight without any curves. He states that the side branches, if any are trimmed so that the tree appears straight without any branches.

It was also said that before the tree is cut, a coconut which is de-husked is placed at the foot of the tree. Prayers are then offered by the village gaonkar in thanksgiving to the presiding deity for selecting the tree for them. The tree is then cut. Once the tree is cut, the coconut is broken open on the ground by the gaonkar, using his bare hands and then broken into pieces and distributed to all gathered. No instrument is used to cut open the coconut and that the coconut must be broken open using ones bare hands. The water of the coconut, he mentions must be allowed to soak into the ground.

The cut tree is then brought down in a procession and decorated with fresh mango leaves and erected in front of the temple atop the hillock. Folk dances are then performed in front of the tree on the next day. Once the Holi festivities end, the tree is removed from its pit, placed in front of the temple and allowed to decay naturally.

Ranmale:

On the sixth day of Holi, the folk festival of Ranmale is held in the late evening / night where a folk dance performance is held in front of the temple. No female members are allowed to take part in any of the
rituals or festivities and hence all the characters in the folk festival dressed as females are actually males.

**Chorutsav:**

On the seventh day of Holi a ritual known as Chorutsav takes place in front of the Shree Satteri Temple at around 6 pm. It was told that there are only two villages in Goa where such a ritual is performed - one is the village Caranzol and the other is in the village of Zarme. The resident of the village of Caranzol points out that while Chorutsav takes place on the seventh day of Holi in their village, it takes place on the second day of Holi in the village of Zarme.

Here six persons are buried alive for a few minutes in pits dug in front of the temple – three of them buried up to their necks with only their heads visible above the ground (to appear as if severed from the rest of the body) and the remaining three with only their bodies visible above the ground. This act of burying the six persons in the ground is called Chorachi Purni (literally meaning burying the thieves in the ground in the local dialect, Konkani).

Chorachi Purni begins with a mock chase with guns, sticks and sharp weapons for the believed thieves. Two persons are impaled on poles as can be seen in the pictures below. As legend has it, these two persons are the ones who were not killed but wounded in the beating given to them by the villagers. Their waist is covered with leaves of the Ashoka tree (Saraca asoca) while their head has a head gear made of leaves and flowers of the same tree. These leaves and flowers are taken from the sacred forest.

These eight persons are chosen from among the male members of the gaonkar community.

Once selected, they must accept with pride the obligation of being buried alive. We were explained that legend goes back to the Kadamba period when eight youth perhaps from Ponda, a township in Goa located about 25 kms from the village of Caranzol were crossing the ghat (a dirt road through the forest) and as night fell decided to spend the night in one of the balconies of the village homes without seeking prior permission of the inmates. The inmates of the house, believing them to be thieves badly beat them up and killed six of them.

The parents and spouses of the youth came in search of them the following day. From the descriptions of the youth given by the family and spouses, the villagers realized that they had in fact killed innocent youth who were not thieves. The parents and spouses of the youth cursed the villagers for the commission of this brutal act. To appease the souls of the deceased youth, the ritual of Chorachi Purni is performed on the seventh day of Holi in which eight persons from the descendents of the families who killed the innocent youth are buried alive for a few minutes. The curtain is lifted for viewing of the gathering for a minute each time with a gap of a minute between viewings. This is repeated thrice and then the curtain goes up and the buried persons are brought out of the soil.
It was informed that the residents of the village of Caranzol believe that there are sacred idols in the forest. However they are unable to locate these idols which he says could be covered with forest leaf fall over generations. What is therefore worshipped are a few boulders within the sacred grove (as seen in the picture below). It was explained that the tree that is cut is one from around these sacred boulders.

As explained by this resident, there are twelve hills surrounding the village of Caranzol which are as follows:

1. Darwaja
2. Ulamajoba
3. Tambdimalaar
4. Golsodio
5. Karal Rai
6. Holiyechirai
7. Damunseri
8. Morlo
9. Bala
10. Sadawal
11. Devsoli
12. Vadatalab (this has a pond atop the hill)

He explains that Darwaja is the first hill on your right as you enter Caranzol. It signifies the door / gateway to the village of Caranzol (darwaja meaning door / doorway). He then points to Ulamajoba, the tallest hill. On the ninth day of Holi, he says, twelve men (selected by the village gaonkars) go to each hill in the order of increasing seniority. Hence Ajoba (meaning grandfather) will be visited last.

The twelve men are then honored in front of the temple and twelve cocks are sacrificed. As he explained earlier, no female persons take part in any rituals with the exception of one woman who is the devdasi. He explains that there is no gender restriction to enter this sacred grove.

The sacred grove is entered via a very narrow path uphill involving approximately a 45 minute climb. It was explained that the sacred grove cannot be accessed during the rainy season (June to September) due to the strong currents from a seasonal stream as well the presence of leaches. He mentions that it is advisable to carry a bamboo pole for support when descending the hill. This is provided by the temple committee and must be returned upon descent from the hill.

It was explained that the management of the temple is by a committee of nine persons and the maintenance and upkeep of the temple is from funds collected via donations. The painting and white washing of the temple, he says is done by the village community; generally men folk who consider it as an act for god.

VIII. ANALYSIS USING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Using Dean MacCannell Tourist Attraction Development Theory which identifies five steps to sight sacralization, we find the Sacred Grove, Holiyechirai at Caranzol at the following stage of development:
Naming: The grove gets its name ‘Holiyechirai’ from the fact that the sacred tree is cut (on the occasion of Holi) only from this hill and not from the other eleven hills.

Framing and Elevation: While there is no clear demarcation of the grove, the process of Framing and Elevation as well as Enshrinement seemed to be rolled into one stage with the boulders within the grove being worshipped along with all the flora and fauna within the grove.

Mention must also be made that there is an Internal as well as External Framing. We refer to an Internal Framing where the sacred boulders are framed within the sacred vegetation and refer to the External Framing where the eleven hills frame the entire grove as well as the Shree Satteri Temple.

Enshrinement: To ensure that the Enshrinement is nurtured, the rituals of Holi, Ranmale and Chorutsav are performed as outlined in the above case study. These rituals are all associated with the sacred grove as mentioned in the case study.

Mechanical Reproduction: The fourth stage viz. Mechanical Reproduction in the sight sacralization process does not appear in this case. The progression of development of the site has not yet reached this stage. Mechanical Reproduction occurs when there is enough scope for it to sustain when there is demand for it from society.

Social Reproduction: The last stage Social Reproduction exists only in the form of a poorly defined path through the grove leading to the sacred boulders. 

Mention must be made that the grove becomes inaccessible during the monsoon season (June to September) due to the presence of a fast flowing seasonal stream and the presence of leeches.

IX. ANALYSIS USING CLARE GUNN TOURIST ATTRACTION THEORY

Clare Gunn (1988) conceptualized attractions by suggesting that an attraction is composed of three important functional parts as follows:

1) The Nucleus – this is the prime element of the attraction.
2) The Inviolate Belt – this is the setting through which the visitor passes to reach the Nucleus and is described as the frame for the feature.
3) The Zone of Closure – is the surrounding area of the Inviolate Belt and contains the service centers.

The Nucleus here refers to the sacred boulders and it forms the prime element of the attraction and is regarded as the most sacred part of the grove.

The Inviolate Belt is also very sacred and includes the entire flora and fauna of the grove around the sacred boulders. This is the space through which devotees traverse to reach the sacred boulders. Enshrinement is further nurtured by the fact that the sacred tree is cut from this space on the occasion of Holi.

The Inviolate Belt seems to merge with the eleven hills around the sacred grove and in a way encompass the entire sacred grove.

The third functional part in the Clare Gunn Theory viz. Zone of Closure to complete the attraction development which would contain the service centers does not seem to have been reached. However mention must be made that there exist mobile service centers on the occasion of Chorutsav in the form of temporary stalls selling refreshments.

X. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The sacred grove, Holiyechirai exhibits the sight sacralization process as laid down by Dean MacCannell in so far as the stages Naming and Framing and Elevation are concerned.

A deviation appears in the sight sacralization process in that sacred material (sacred tree) is removed from the enshrined space (sacred grove) and brought down to the front of the temple to complete the rituals associated with the sacred grove. The sacred material is not returned to the grove upon completion of the rituals but is instead allowed to decay naturally. This is in contravention to the established definitions of sacred groves, to again quote Gadgil and Vartak (1976) where they defined sacred groves as “nature worship where all forms of vegetation including shrubs and climbers are under the protection of the reigning deity of the grove and removal of any material even dead wood of a twig is taboo”.

This also goes against what Pandey and Patnaik say where in 1999, they defined sacred groves as “culturally a living place of the deities and spirits of the village which protects them from calamities and brings prosperity and a patch of pristine forest having well conserved biodiversity” in that a mature tree is cut and removed from the sacred grove. While this is explained by the village community as a form of regeneration, as when the tree is cut, the root structure remains intact and gives rise to new growth of at least two branches, it does amount to cutting and removal of sacred material from the sacred grove thereby contravening the definition of sacred groves.

To protect the sacredness of the grove, only five persons along with the gaonkar are allowed to enter the grove on the occasion of Holi to cut the sacred tree. The tree once brought down and decorated is erected in front of the temple to complete the rituals associated with the reigning deity of the grove. The sacred material is not returned to the front of the temple to complete the attraction thereby contravening the definition of sacred groves.

It is clearly evident that there is an integration of the people of the village in the ritual associated with the grove without all the people of the village actually going into the grove.

The stage Mechanical Reproduction has not been reached. There is no record at all of replication and dissemination of the site in any form viz. brochures,
souveniers, models, effigies or photographs or any other form.

Social Reproduction is limited to only pathway access to the grove in fair weather. The grove is inaccessible during the monsoon season (June to September) due to the presence of leeches and fast flowing seasonal streams. Beyond this form of social reproduction, no other form of social reproduction is known to exist.

The sacred grove Holieyechirai exhibits the Attraction Development Theory as laid down by Clare Gunn to the following extent:

The sacred boulders form the Nucleus of the attraction and is regarded as the most sacred part of the grove.

The Inviolable Belt is also very sacred and includes the entire flora and fauna of the grove around the sacred boulders. This is the space through which devotees traverse to reach the sacred boulders.

There is a deviation from the theory laid down by Clare Gunn in that the Inviolable Belt is also a very sacred space which must be traversed to reach the sacred boulders. As part of the rituals taking place during the festival of Holi, the sacred tree is cut from this space and brought out of the sacred grove to complete the rituals.

The Inviolable Belt seems to merge with the eleven hills around the sacred grove and in a way encompass the entire sacred grove.

The third functional part in the Clare Gunn Theory viz. Zone of Closure to complete the attraction development which would contain the service centers does not seem to have been reached. However mention must be made that there exist mobile service centers on the occasion of Chorutsav in the form of temporary stalls selling refreshments.

XI. LANDSCAPE WITHIN THE GROVE

The case study shows that the grove is rich in flora and avian fauna. This is of great aesthetic value. The sacred groves also act as store house for medicinal plants. For example, local people use the bark of Pterocarpus marsupium locally known as Kino to cure varicose veins and rheumatism while the wood decoction is used to treat marsupium locally known as Kino to cure varicose veins.

For example, local people use the bark of Pterocarpus marsupium locally known as Kino to cure varicose veins and rheumatism while the wood decoction is used to treat marsupium locally known as Kino to cure varicose veins.

In conclusion it may be said that it would be a worthy attempt to look at tourist visitations to the rituals associated with the grove, which if successful can be replicated in other sacred groves of Goa.

REFERENCES

[19] Löytynoja Tanja (2008) Department of Geography, PO Box 3000, FI-90014 University of Oulu, Finland.
Paper on: “The development of specific locations into tourist attractions: cases from Northern Europe”

[28] Pandey and Patnaik (1999:369) Definition of sacred groves
[29] Pierce (1991) Definition of Attraction
[34] Raivo (1996); Timothy (1998, 2001) Approach to tourist attractions
[40] UNESCO (1996) UNESCO Ghanaian “Co-operative Integrated Project on Savanaa Ecosystems on Ghana” on Sacred Groves