

Sahapedia-UNESCO Fellowship 2019 to Dr. Pedro Pombo

[Dr. Pedro Pombo](#), Assistant Professor (Visiting Faculty), Dept. of Portuguese and Lusophone Studies has been shortlisted for the Sahapedia-UNESCO Fellowship of this year. He is one among the 50 individuals to receive this fellowship. This short term fellowship, awarded by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, provide a small grant for a research project on Indian heritage. There were a total of 840 thought-provoking applications this year and that exhibits the importance of Dr. Pombo's proposal.



Using this fellowship, Dr. Pombo would be studying the village

temples with wooden structure in the Goan Ghats. These temples are usually situated on a landscape of dialogue between the untouched forest and the cultivated fields in the small sinuous valleys. The paddy fields are cultivated for the maintenance of the sacred rituals. In Goa, all villages in the forested hills do have their small temples dedicated to the *Gramdevata*, the *Grampurush* or to protector deities as *Shri Betal*, besides other sanskritized deities.

Dr. Pombo had surveyed old temple structures in the Ponda taluka way back in 2006. During the survey, he noticed, extraordinary architecture, hidden from tourism and public heritage discourses in Goa, reflecting the relationship between local culture and its environment. Part of the Western Ghat system, these hills of the Goan hinterland are rich in wood. Old village temples translate the natural surroundings in architectural forms that protect the deities that embody the village history and territory. In some of these small village temples, we still find some stone pedestals dating from the Kadamba dynasty, from the 10th to the 14th century. Dr. Pombo feels, this calls our attention to the need of studying and salvaging this heritage. When these old wooden structures were substituted by stone and mortar constructions during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as is the case of most of the large temples in Ponda and Bicholim talukas, the new structures maintain traces of the old wooden ones in the rhythm of columns and beams that sustain inclined roofs suitable for the monsoon.

This documentation proposal initiates a broader visual and architectural archive of wooden village temples in Goa. Best wishes to Dr. Pombo in his studies and we look forward an interesting outcome.
