

Name of the Element: Ranmāle.

Community: The agricultural and forest dwelling communities of Western Ghats of Goa are the bearer of this tradition. It is practiced by valips and Gaonkars, the forest dwelling communities of Sanguem Taluka of the South Goa district. It is also performed by the agricultural communities, locally known as the Nave Marathe and Zune Marathe in Zarme and Caranzole of Sattari Taluka of North Goa.

Region: Ranmale is performed in Western India in the Sattari Taluka of North Goa District and Sanguem Taluka of South Goa District. It is also performed in the border villages of Maharashtra like Mangeli, Patye and is also practised in Karnataka in the villages of Chikhale, Kankumbi, Parwad, Gawali, Degao.

Brief Description: Ranmale is a ritualistic and folk theatre form based on mythological stories from the popular Indian epics of Ramayan and Mahabharat. It is presented during the Holi festival which is celebrated as Shigmo (spring festival) in Goa and Konkan areas. The word 'Ranmale' has evolved from two words, 'Ran' which means battle and 'Male' representing the traditional torch used as a source of light during the performance. It is believed that its origin is rooted in ancient times when a group of visiting artists peeved by the demands of the local settlers killed them while they were engrossed in watching their performance, since then Ranmale is performed as an act of atonement of that past event. This form comprises dance, drama and folk songs called Jats. Each participant of the drama makes his entry to the tune of folk songs. The traditional instrument, Ghumat is an earthenware drum with one of its ends covered with the skin of the monitor lizard and the other mouth kept open. The accompanying instruments Kansale, cymbals of brass, are used for the base rhythm. Jats are sung by the initiator of the folk drama called Sutradhar, while the folk artists stand in a row on the stage acting like a backdrop.

In the village of Zarme, the presentation of Ranmale is a must after the annual festival of Chorotsav, while in Caranzole it precedes the festivities. It is a popular belief that non-performance of the element may invite the wrath of the village deity.