

= Khandoba =

Khandoba , ( Marathi : ?????? Kannada : ?????? , Telugu : ?????? , Kha??ob? ) also known as Martanda Bhairava and Malhari , is a Hindu god , worshipped as a form of Shiva , mainly in the Deccan plateau of India , especially in the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka . He is the most popular Kuladaivat in Maharashtra . He is also the patron deity of warrior , farming , herding as well as some Brahmin ( priest ) castes , the hunters and gatherers of the hills and forests . The cult of Khandoba has linkages with Vaishnava and Jain traditions , and also assimilates all communities irrespective of caste , including Muslims . Khandoba is sometimes identified with Mallanna of Andhra Pradesh and Mailara of Karnataka . The worship of Khandoba developed during the 9th and 10th centuries from a folk deity into a composite god possessing the attributes of Shiva , Bhairava , Surya and Karttikeya ( Skanda ) . He is depicted either in the form of a Lingam , or as an image of a warrior riding on a bull or a horse . The foremost centre of Khandoba worship is Jejuri in Maharashtra . The legends of Khandoba , found in the text Malhari Mahatmya and also narrated in folk songs , revolve around his victory over demons Mani @-@ malla and his marriages .

= = Etymology and other names = =

The name " Khandoba " comes from the words " khadga " ( sword ) , the weapon used by Khandoba to kill the demons , and " ba " ( father ) . " Khanderaya " means " king Khandoba " . Another variant is " Khanderao " , where the suffix " rao " ( king ) is used .

In Sanskrit texts , Khandoba is known as Martanda Bhairava or Surya , a combination of the solar deity Martanda and Shiva 's fierce form Bhairava . The name " Mallari " or " Malhari " is split as " Malla " and " ari " ( enemy ) , thus meaning " enemy of the demon Malla " . Malhari Mahatmya records Martanda Bhairava , pleased with the bravery of Malla , takes the name " Mallari " ( the enemy of Malla ) . Other variants include Malanna ( Mallanna ) and Mailara ( Mailar ) .

Other names include Khandu Gavda , Mhalsa @-@ kant ( " husband of Mhalsa " ) and Jejurica Vani .

= = Iconography = =

In a popular oleograph representation of Khandoba , Mhalsa is seated in front of Khandoba on his white horse . Mhalsa is piercing a demon 's chest with a spear , while a dog is biting his thigh and the horse is hitting his head . The other demon is grabbing the reins of the horse and attacking Khandoba with a club as Khandoba is dismounting the horse and attacking the demon with his sword . In other representations , Khandoba is seen seated on a horse with the heads of demons trod under the horse 's hooves or their heads under Khandoba 's knees .

In murtis ( idols ) , Khandoba or Malhara is depicted as having four arms , carrying a damaru ( drum ) , Trishula ( trident ) , Bhandara @-@ patra ( turmeric powder @-@ filled bowl ) and khadga ( sword ) . Khandoba 's images are often dressed as a Maratha Sardar , or a Muslim pathan . Often , Khandoba is depicted as a warrior seated on horseback with one or both of his wives and accompanied with one or more dogs . He is also worshipped as the aniconic Lingam , the symbol of Shiva . Often in Khandoba temples , both representations of Khandoba ? the aniconic lingam and the anthropomorphic horseback form .

= = Legends = =

Legends of Khandoba generally tell about the battle between the deity and demons Malla and Mani . The principle written source of the legend is Malhari Mahatmya ( Mallari Mahatmya ) , which claims to be from the chapter Kshetra @-@ kanda of the Sanskrit text Brahmanda Purana , but is not included in standard editions of the Purana . R.C. Dhere and Sontheimer suggests that the Sanskrit Mahatmya was composed around 1460 @-@ 1510 AD , mostly by a Deshastha Brahmin , to whom Khandoba is the family deity . A version is also available in Marathi by Siddhapal Kesasri ( 1585 ) .

Other sources include the later texts of Jayadri Mahatmya and Martanda Vijaya by Gangadhara ( 1821 ) and the oral stories of the Vaghyas , bards of the god .

The legend tell of the demon Malla and his younger brother Mani , who had gained the boon of invincibility from Brahma , creating chaos on the earth and harassing the sages . When the seven sages approached Shiva for protection after Indra and Vishnu confessed their incapability , Shiva assumed the form ( Avatar ) of Martanda Bhairava , as the Mahatmya calls Khandoba , riding the Nandi bull , leading an army of the gods . Martanda Bhairava is described as shining like the gold and sun , covered in turmeric also known as Haridra , three @-@ eyed , with a crescent moon on his forehead . The demon army was slaughtered by the gods and finally Khandoba killed Malla and Mani . While dying , Mani offers his white horse to Khandoba as an act of repentance and asks for a boon . The boon is that he be present in every shrine of Khandoba , that human @-@ kind is bettered and that he be given an offering of goat flesh . The boon was granted , and thus he was transformed into a demigod . Malla , when asked by the deity if he asked for a boon , asks for the destruction of the world and human @-@ flesh . Angered by the demon 's request , Khandoba decapitates him , and his head falls at the temple stairs where it will trampled by devotees ' feet . The legend further describes how two Lingas appeared at Prempuri , the place where the demons were killed .

Oral stories continue the process of Sanskritization of Khandoba ? his elevation from a folk deity to Shiva , a deity of the classical Hindu pantheon ? that was initiated by the texts . Khandoba 's wives Mhalsa and Banai are also identified with Shiva 's classical Hindu wives Parvati and Ganga . Hegadi Pradhan , the minister and brother @-@ in @-@ law of Khandoba and brother of Lingavat Vani Mhalsa , the faithful dog that helps Khandoba kill the demons , the horse given by Mani and the demon brothers are considered avatars of Vishnu , Krishna , Nandi and the demons Madhu @-@ Kaitabha respectively . Other myth variants narrate that Khandoba defeats a single demon named Manimalla , who offers his white horse , sometimes called Mani , to the god . Other legends depict Mhalsa ( or Parvati ) and Banai or Banu ( or Ganga ) as futilely helping Khandoba in the battle to collect the blood of Mani , every drop of which was creating a new demon . Finally , the dog of Khandoba swallows all the blood . Sometimes , Mhalsa , or rarely Banai , is described as seated behind Khandoba on the horse and fighting with a sword or spear .

The legends portray Khandoba as a king who rules from his fortress of Jejuri and holds court where he distributes gold . Also , king Khandoba goes on hunting expeditions , which often turn into " erotic adventures " , and subsequent marriages .

= = Wives = =

Khandoba has many wives who are women from many communities , who serve as cultural links between the god and the communities . He has five wives , Mhalsa and Banai / Banu / Banubai being the most important . While Khandoba 's first wife Mhalsa is from the high caste Lingayat merchant ( Vani ) community , his second wife Banai is a Dhangar ( shepherd caste ) . Mhalsa has had a regular ritualistic marriage with Khandoba . Banai , on the other hand , has a love marriage by capture with the god . Mhalsa is described as jealous and a good cook ; Banai is erotic , resolute , but does not even know to cook . Often folk songs tell of their quarrels . Mhalsa represents " culture " and Banai " nature " . The god king Khandoba stands between them .

Mhalsa is believed to be a combined avatara of Mohini and Parvati . Mhalsa was born as the daughter of a rich merchant in Newase called Tirmarsheth . On the divine orders of Khandoba in a dream to Tirmarsheth , she was married to Khandoba on Pausha Pournima ( the full moon day of Hindu calendar month of Paush ) in Pali ( Pembar ) . Two shivlingas appeared on this occasion . An annual festival marking this event is celebrated in Pali every Paush Pournima .

Banai is believed to the daughter of Indra , the king of the gods . Banai was found by Dhangar shepherd , when she was abandoned on earth by an angry Indra . When Banai grew up , it was predicted that she would get her match at Jejuri . There , she felt in love with God Khandoba . Khandoba also fell in her love . Khandoba accepted a self @-@ exile for 12 years by intentionally losing a game of chess ( Saripat ) to his wife Mhalsa . He took disguise of shepherd and started

serving Banai 's father . One day , Khandoba killed all the sheep and goats of Banai ' father and promised to make them alive again if he was married to Banai . The reluctant Banai was married to Khandoba , the shepherd in disguise at Naldurg . Khandoba revealed his real form to Banai on their way back to Jejuri .

On reaching Jejuri , Khandoba was greeted by Mhalsa 's fury and her strong protest of his second marriage . To avoid the quarrels of his wives , Khandoba gave the upper half of the hill to Mhalsa and the lower half to Banai . The idol of Mhalsa is placed with Khandoba in the main shrine at top of the hill at Jejuri . A separate shrine to Banai is situated halfway down the hill .

Khandoba 's third wife , Rambhai Shimpin , is a tailor woman who was a heavenly nymph or devangana and is sometimes identified with Banai . She is a prototype of the Muralis ? the girls " married " to Khandoba . Rambhai is worshipped as a goddess whom Khandoba visits after his hunt . She is also localised , being said to come from the village from Belsare , near Jejuri . The fourth wife Phulai Malin , from the gardener or Mali caste , She was a particular Murali and is thus a deified devotee of Khandoba . She is visited by him at " Davna Mal " ( field of southernwood , a herb said to be dear to Khandoba ) . The fifth wife , Candai Bhagavin , is a Telin , a member of the oilpresser caste . She is recognised as a Muslim by the Muslims . Apart from these , Muralis ? girls offered to Khandoba ? are considered as wives or concubines of the god .

= = Other associations and identifications = =

Mallana ( Mallikaarjuna ) of Andhra Pradesh and Mailara of Karnataka are sometimes identified with Khandoba ( Mallari , Malhari , Mairaj ) . Khandoba is also associated with Bhairava , who is connected with Br?hmanahatya ( murder of a Brahmin ) . Devotees emphasize that Khandoba is a full avatar of Shiva , and not a partial avatar like Bhairava or Virabhadra . He accepts the attributes of the demon king ? his horse , weapons and royal insignia .

Sontheimer stresses the association of Khandoba with clay and termite mounds . Oral legends tell of Khandoba 's murtis being found in termite mounds or " made of earth " . According to Sontheimer , Martanda Bhairava ( Khandoba ) is a combination of the sun god Surya and Shiva , who is associated with the moon . Martanda ( " blazing orb " ) is a name of Surya , while Bhairava is a form of Shiva . Sundays , gold and turmeric , which are culturally associated with the sun , form an important part of the rituals of Khandoba . Sontheimer associates the worship of the Sun as termite mounds for fertility and his role as a healer to Khandoba 's role as granter of fertility in marriages and to the healing powers of turmeric , which the latter holds .

Another theory identifies Kartikeya ( Skanda ) with Khandoba . The hypotheses of the theory rests upon the similarities between Skanda and Khandoba , namely their association with mountains and war , similarity of their names and weapons ( the lance of Skanda and the sword of Khandoba ) and both having two principal wives . Other symbols associated with Khandoba are the dog and horse . Also the festivals for both deities , Champa Sashti and Skanda Sashti respectively for Khandoba and Skanda fall on the same day .

= = Worship = =

Though Shiva is worshipped across Maharashtra in his original form , some Maharashtrian communities prefer to worship him in form of his avatars , Khandoba being the most popular . He is the most popular Kuldevta ( family deity ) in Maharashtra . One of the most widely worshipped gods of the Deccan plateau , Khandoba is considered as " the premier god of Sakama bhakti ( wish @-@ granting devotion ) and one of the most powerful deities responsive to vows ( navas ) " . He is worshipped by the vast majority of Marathi Hindu people from all strata of that society . He is the patron deity of warrior , farming , herding as well as some Brahmin ( priest ) castes , the hunters and gatherers of the hills and forests , merchants and kings . The cult of Khandoba in the Deccan principally consists of peasant classes Marathas and Kunabis , shepherd Dhangars , village guards and watchmen Ramoshis ? a " Denotified tribe " , the former " untouchable " Mahars and Mangs , fisher @-@ folk Kolis , balutedar castes like gardeners ( Mali ) and tailors ( Shimpi ) , though it also

includes of a few Brahmins and even some Muslims . Although Brahmin presence is nominal in his cult , Deshastha Brahmins , as well as the Kokanastha Brahmins - in Nashik and Satara - do worship Khandoba , some imitating the Deshastha Brahmins . The Deshastha Brahmins , Chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhus , as well as the royal families like Gaikwads and Holkars worship Khandoba as their Kuldevta . He is also worshipped by Jains and Lingayats . He is viewed as a " king " of his followers .

= = = Rituals and modes of worship = = =

Khandoba is believed to be a kadak ( fierce ) deity , who causes troubles if not propitiated properly as per the family duties . Khandoba is worshipped with Turmeric ( Bhandar ) , Bel fruit @-@ leaves , onions and other vegetables . The deity is offered puran poli - a sweet or a simpler dish called bharit rodga of onion and brinjal . Mostly a vegetarian naivedya ( offering of food ) is offered to Khandoba in the temples , though most devotees consider him a non @-@ vegetarian and a goat flesh is offered to the deity outside the temple .

An important part of the Khandoba @-@ cult is navas , a vow to perform service to the god in return for a boon of good harvest , male child , financial success etc . On fulfilment of the navas , Khandoba was offered children or some devotees would afflict pain by hook @-@ swinging or fire @-@ walking . This type of worship using navas is called Sakama Bhakti - worship done with an expectation of return and is considered " to be of a lower esteem " . But the most faithful bhaktas ( devotees ) are considered to be greedy only for the company of their Lord , Khandoba is also called bhukela - hungry for such true bhaktas in Martanda Vijaya .

Boys called Vaghyas ( or Waghya , literally " tigers " ) and girls called Muralis were formerly dedicated to Khandoba , but now the practice of marrying girls to Khandoba is illegal . The Vaghyas act as the bards of Khandoba and identify themselves with the dogs of Khandoba , while Muralis act as his courtesans ( devanganas ? nymphs or devadasis ) . The Vaghyas and their female counterparts Muralis sing and dance in honour of Khandoba and narrate his stories on jagarans ? all night song @-@ festivals , which are sometimes held after navas fulfilment . Another custom was ritual @-@ suicide by Viras ( heroes ) in the cult . According to legend , an " untouchable " Mang ( Matanga ) sacrificed himself for the foundation of the temple at Jejuri to persuade Khandoba to stay at Jejuri forever . Other practices in the cult include the belief that Khandoba possesses the body of a Vaghya or devrsi ( shaman ) . Another ritual in the cult is an act of chain @-@ breaking in fulfilment of a vow or an annual family rite ; the chain is identified with the snake around Shiva 's neck , which was cut by the demons in the fight . Another rite associated with the family duties to please Khandoba is the tali bharne , which is to be performed every full moon day . A tali ( dish ) is filled with coconuts , fruits , betel nuts , saffron , turmeric ( Bhandar ) and Bel leaves . Then , a coconut is placed on a pot filled with water and the pot is worshipped as an embodiment of Khandoba . Then , five persons lift the tali , place it repeatedly on the pot thrice , saying " Elkot " or " Khande rayaca Elkot " . Then the coconut in the tali is broken and mixed with sugar or jaggery and given to friends and relatives . A gondhal is performed along with the tali bharne . A gondhal is a ritualistic folk art in which the performer Gondhalis invoke the deities .

Khandoba is considered as the giver of fertility . Maharashtrian Hindu couples are expected to visit a Khandoba temple to obtain Khandoba 's blessing on consummation of marriage . Traditional Maharashtrian families also organize a jagaran as part of the marriage ceremony , inviting the god to the marriage . Copper figurines of Khandoba riding on a horse ( sometimes with Mhalsa ) are worshipped by devotees on a daily basis in the household shrine .

The Sanskrit Malhari Mahatmya suggests offerings of incense , lights , betel and animals to Khandoba . The Marathi version mentions offerings of meat and the worship by chedapatadi - " causing themselves to be cut " , hook @-@ swinging and self @-@ mortification by viras . Marathi version calls this form of bhakti ( devotion ) as ugra ( violent , demonic ) bhakti . Martanda vijaya narrates about Rakshashi bhakti ( demonic worship ) by animal sacrifice and self ? torture . Possession by Khandoba , in form of a wind , is lower demonic worship ( pishachi worship ) . Sattvic worship , the purest form of worship , is believed to be feeding Khandoba in form of a Brahmin .

== Muslim veneration ==

Khandoba is also a figure of respect and worship to Muslims , and this affiliation is visible in the style of his temples . He is called Mallu or Ajmat Khan ( Rautray ) by Muslim devotees , and many times portrayed as being a Muslim himself in this context . The latter is believed to conferred upon by the Mughal invader king Aurangzeb , who was forced to flee from Jejuri by Khandoba 's power . Some of these distinguishing Muslim features include his usual appearance as that of a Paṭhān on horseback , one of his wives being a Muslim , and that his horse @-@ keeper is a Muslim in Jejuri . The Mṛtaṅga Vijaya expressly states that his devotees are mainly Muslims . The worship of Khandoba had received royal patronage by Ibrahim II , which consisted of the reinstatement of the annual jatra and the right of pilgrims to perform rituals at the Naldurg temple . Malhari Mahatmya even records Muslims ( mlechha ) as the god 's bhaktas ( devotees ) , who call him as Malluka Pathan or Mallu Khan . In Jejuri , a Muslim family traditionally looks after the horses of the god .

== Temples ==

There are over 600 temples dedicated to Khandoba in the Deccan . His temples stretch from Nasik , Maharashtra in the north to Davangere , Karnataka in the south , Konkan , Maharashtra in the west to western Andhra Pradesh in the east . The eleven principal centres of worship of Khandoba or jagrut kshetras , where the deity is to be called awake or " jagrut " , are recognized ; six of them in Maharashtra and the rest in northern Karnataka . Khandoba 's temples resemble forts , the capital of his kingdom being Jejuri . The priests here are Guravs , not Brahmins . His most important temples are :

Jejuri : The foremost center of worship of Khandoba . It is situated 48 km from Pune , Maharashtra . There are two temples : the first is an ancient temple known as Kadepathar . Kadepathar is difficult to climb . The second one is the newer and more famous Gad @-@ kot temple , which is easy to climb . This temple has about 450 steps , 18 Kamani ( arches ) and 350 Dipmalas ( lamp @-@ pillars ) . Both temples are fort @-@ like structures .

Pali ( Rajapur ) or Pali @-@ Pember , Satara district , Maharashtra .

Adi @-@ mailar or Khanapur ( Pember or Mailkarpur ) near Bidar , Karnataka

Naldurg , Osmanabad district , Maharashtra .

Mailara Linga , Dharwad district , Karnataka .

Mangasuli , Belgaum district , Karnataka .

Maltesh or Mailara temple at Devaragudda , Ranebennur Taluk , Haveri district , Karnataka .

Mannamailar or Mailar , Bellary , Karnataka .

Nimgaon Dawadi , Pune district , Maharashtra .

Shegud , Ahmednagar district , Maharashtra .

Komarvali , Warangal district , Telangana .

Satare , Aurangabad district , Maharashtra .

== Festivals ==

A six @-@ day festival , from the first to sixth lunar day of the bright fortnight of the Hindu month of Margashirsha , in honour of Khandoba is celebrated at Jejuri , to commemorate the fight with demons Mani @-@ Malla . On the sixth day ( Champa @-@ Shashthi ) , Khandoba is believed to have slew the demons . A jatra ( temple festival and fair ) is held in Pember on Champa @-@ shashthi , and the festival continues until the day of the new moon . Another festival Somvati Amavasya , which is a new @-@ moon day that falls on a Monday , is celebrated in Jejuri . A palakhi ( palanquin ) procession of Khandoba and Mhalsa 's images is carried from the Gad @-@ kot temple to the Karha river , where the images are ritually bathed .

Deshasth Brahmans and Marathas observe the Champasashthi festival every year in honour of Khandoba . The festival begins on the bright half of the Hindu month of Margashirsha . The images of

Khandoba and Malla are cleaned and worshipped . For six days a fast is observed . On the seventh day the worshippers break their fast by a feast known as the Champasashtliiche parne . An invitation to this feast is regarded as an invitation from the god Khandoba himself and is harder to refuse .

In Pali @-@ Pember , the ritual of the marriage of Khandoba with Mhalsa is annually performed . Turmeric is offered to the deities . Two festivals are celebrated in honour of Mailara , as Khandoba is known in Karnataka . These are the Dasara festival at Devaragudda , and an eleven @-@ day festival in Magha month ( February ? March ) in Mailar , Bellary district . Both festivals have enactments of the battle between Mailar and the demons Mani @-@ Malla . Chaitra Purnima ( full @-@ moon day ) is also considered auspicious . In general , Sundays , associated with the sun @-@ god , are considered as considered auspicious for Khandoba worship .

= = Development of the cult = =

The cult of Khandoba , a folk religion , reflects the effect of Vedic Rudra , the Puranic Shiva worshipped as Linga in Brahmanical religion and Nath and Lingayat sects . Khandoba may be a product of the Vedic Rudra , who like Khandoba was associated with robbers , horses and dogs . Sayana traces the name Malhari to Taittiriya Samhita , Malhari is explained as enemy ( ari ) of Malha ( Prajapati ) - an epithet of Rudra , who is considered a rival to deity Prajapati . According to Stanley , Khandoba originated as a mountain @-@ top god , solar deity and a regional guardian and then assimilated into himself gods of various regions and communities . According to Stanley , Khandoba inherits traits from both the sun @-@ god Surya as well as Shiva , who is identified with the moon . Stanley describes Khandoba as " a moon god , who has become a sun god " , emphasizing on how the moon imagery of Shiva transforms into the solar iconography of Khandoba in the Malhari Mahatmya .

As per R. C. Dhare , two stone inscriptions in 1063 C.E. and 1148 C.E mentioning the folk deities Mailara and his consort Malavva which suggests that Mailara gained popularity in Karnataka in this period . Soon , royals of this region started erecting temples to this folk deity , upsetting the elite class of established religion who vilified Mailara . Initially exalted by an incarnation of Shiva , Mailara was denounced by Basava , the founder of the Shiva @-@ worshipping Lingayat sect - who would later promote the deity . Chakradhar Swami ( c.1270 , founder of Mahanubhava sect ) , Vidyaranya swami , Sheikh Muhammad also criticized the god . The Varkari poet @-@ saint Eknath also wrote " disparagingly " about Khandoba 's cult worship , but after him , the " open " criticism of Khandoba stopped , but the " barbaric " practices of his cult were still targeted .

Sontheimer suggests that the cult of Khandoba is at least older than 12th century , which can be determined by references in Jain and Lingayat texts and inscriptions . A 12th @-@ century Jain author Brahmarshiva claims that a Jain , who died in battle after a display of his valour , was later named as Mailara . By the 13th century , wide worship of Malhari or Mailara is observed by kings , Brahmins , simple folk and warriors . With the rise of Muslim empire , classical Hindu temples fell into ruin , giving rise to the folk religion such as of Khandoba . Chakradhara remarks , ' by the end of the Kali Yuga , temples of Vishnu and Shiva will be destroyed , but those of Mailara will stay ' . A 1369 AD inscription at Ailoni near Warangal tells an account of Mallari different from Malhari Mahatmya ? Shiva helped the epic hero Arjuna kill the demon Malla , thus acquiring the title of Mallari . Mailara was the family deity of Kakatiya dynasty ( 1083 ? 1323 AD ) ; a text from their rule records the self @-@ torture rituals of Mailara @-@ devotees and describes the deity . Throughout his development , Mailara is looked upon as a lower manifestation of Ishvara ( God ) by Lingayat and Maharashtrian bhakti saints .

Malhari Mahatmya states that Khandoba first appeared on Champashasti , which was a Sunday , at Premapur , which identified as Pember ( Adimailar , Mailarapur ) near Bidar . Marathi traditions tell that Khandoba came originally from Premapuri , now Pember in Karnataka , then went to Naldurg , Pali and finally to Jejuri . Sontheimer suggests that the cult of Mailara may have originated in Pember and then spread to Maharashtra , merging with the cult of Khandaka ? the patron yaksha ( demi @-@ god ) of Paithan giving it its distinct Maharashtra characteristics . Maharashtra call

the god - Kanadya Khanderaya , the god from Karnataka . The cult possibly was spread by Lingayat , Jain and other merchants , associated with Mailara @-@ Khandoba , to other parts of the Deccan . Besides Mailara , Khandoba is identified with other deities of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh , and is called as Mallanna , Mairala , and Mallu Khan . Other traditions like Shakta cults of folk goddesses were assimilated into the Khandoba cult , identifying the goddesses with Khandoba 's wives Mhalsa or Banai .

Marathi literature has a mixed reaction to the cult of Khandoba . Naranjanamadhva ( 1790 ) in stotra ( hymn ) dedicated to Khandoba calls him " an illustrious king with rich clothes and a horse with a saddle studded with jewels " , who was once " an ascetic beggar who ride an old bull and carried an ant @-@ bitten club ( khatvanga ) " - a humorous take on the Puranic Shiva . In another instance ( 1855 ) , he is called a ghost by a Christian missionary and Konastha Brahmin in a debate against Deshastha Brahmin . Another Brahmin remarks with scorn about the impurity of the Khandoba temple , visited by Sudras and whose priests are non @-@ Brahmin Guravs . The Marathi term " khel @-@ khandoba " , which is taken to mean " devastation " in general usage , refers to the possession of devotee by the god in his cult .