

Design Resource

Sacred Groves at Manav Sangrahalay

The traveling exhibition 'Sacred Groves of India'

Palash Vaswani
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
<http://www.dsource.in/resource/sacred-groves-manav-sangrahalay>

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Introduction

Cultures have been evolving around nature since ages. It has been given a Godly status in almost every religion. Customs have been built around the natural world, devoting our existence to the environment. Worshipping 'Nature' is a form of showing gratitude for all it has given us. 'Sacred Groves' are the best example of this phenomenon. These are the sanctified areas, where the growth of the forest is crucial for maintaining the ecological balance.

The traveling exhibition 'Sacred Groves of India' tries to show the importance of man-environment relations from the various parts of the country. It depicts the numerous methods adopted by the various communities in conserving the rich bio-diverse forests of India. Prototypes of the sacred grove shrines of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Tripura have been created, which gives visitor an authentic walk through of the place.



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Sacred Groves



Kaavu – Sacred grove of Kerala



Kovil Kadu – Sacred grove of Tamilnadu



Umanglai – Sacred grove of Manipur

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Kaavu – Sacred grove of Kerala

'Kaavu' are spread across the length and breadth of Kerala. These sacred groves perform a unique role in bio-diversity management of the area. There are over 2000 well preserved sacred groves managed by private individuals and Devaswami trusts in the state. There are many myths, legends, and faiths associated with the sacred groves dedicated to Lord Ayyappa, used to be the most common in the past. The sacred groves in North Kerala are mostly associated with goddesses or ancestral spirits (Amma, Ayalakshi, Ayirvalli, Bhagavati, Durga, Mashishasur, Mardini, Vana Durga, Vanadevta, Madan, Yakshi, Gandharvan, Yogeshwaran, Muthappan etc.), while in south Kerala; these are generally associated with snake worship (Nagam, Nagaraja, Nagini, Sarpam). The ritual and rites, performed in the sacred groves vary with regional caste and patron deity of the sacred grove. A ritualistic recitation called 'Sarpam Pattu' is performed in central and south Kerala, once every 10 or 12 years, to propitiate the snake gods. In the sacred groves, associated with Goddess in North Kerala, a dance called 'Theyyam' is performed.



Kaavu – Sacred grove of Kerala



Information card at the grove

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Kaavu – Sacred groves of Kerala



Shrine at Kaavu



Shrine at Kaavu



Shrine at Kaavu

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Shrine at Kaavu



Shrine at Kaavun

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Shrine at Kaavu

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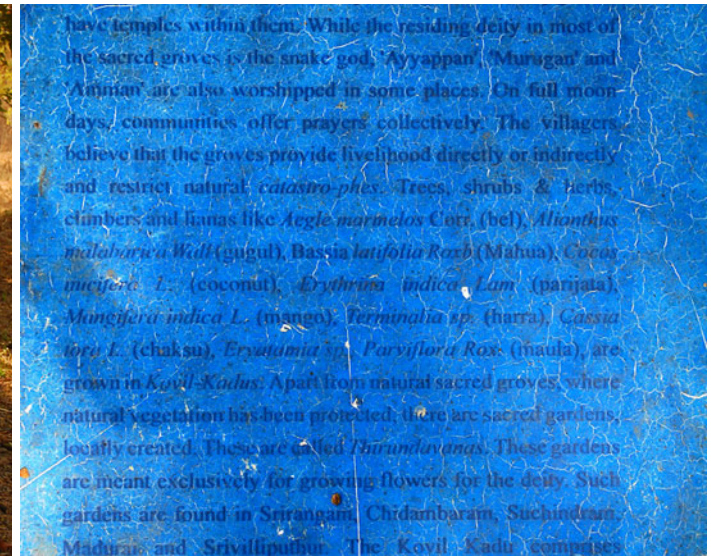
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Kovil Kadu – Sacred grove of Tamilnadu

Nature worship is an ancient Indian tradition. Sacred groves, representing one form of nature worship, are a component of the village landscape in Tamilnadu. Many groves have temples within them. While the residing deity in most of the sacred groves is the snake god, 'Ayyappan', 'Murugan' and 'Amman' are also worshipped in some places. On full moon days, communities offer prayers collectively. The villagers believe that the groves provide livelihood directly or indirectly and restrict natural catastrophes. Many species of trees, shrubs & herbs, climbers etc. are grown in Kovil-Kadu. Apart from natural sacred groves, where natural vegetation has been protected, there are locally created sacred gardens. These are called Thirundavanas, meant exclusively for growing flowers for the deities. Such gardens are found in Srirangam, Chidambaram, Suchindram, Madurai and Srivilliputhur. The Kovil Kadu comprises of sculptures of Tamil folk deities and saplings from Tamilnadu.



Kovil kadu – Sacred grove of Tamilnadu



Information card at the grove

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Kovil kadu – Sacred grove of Tamilnadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu

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Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu

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Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Shrine at Kovil Kadu



Kovil kadu – Sacred grove of Tamilnadu

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Umanglai – Sacred grove of Manipur

State of Manipur in the Northeast of the country has a rich bio-diverse forest life. Ethnic people of the state are quite aware of its importance to the ecology of the area. Patches of forest are dedicated to local deities, which are worshipped along with the jungle. Sacred groves of Manipur, existing in various locations, also harbor rich diversity of medicinally potential plants. They are also home to various endangered animal species. There are around 365 sacred groves or 'Umanglai' in Manipur.



Umanglai – Sacred grove of Manipur



Umanglai – Sacred grove of Manipur

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Umanglai – Sacred grove of Manipur



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Umanglai – Sacred grove of Manipur



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Manav Sangrahalaya

The Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), also known as “The Museum of Mankind” is an open-air anthropology museum that celebrates many traditions and cultures of India. An initiative by the Government of India, it displays the cultural evolution of India in the most detailed manner. Spread across the Shamlu hills in Bhopal, it covers a sprawling 200 acres of the area.

Being the only museum of its kind, it tells the story of mankind in time and space. The museum exhibits around 40 and more tribal culture and actual-size dwelling of various Indian tribes in different eco-climatic zones of India. The most interesting part of this exhibition is the actual size dwellings and display that has been built up directly by the folk and the tribal communities. It also displays a brilliant collection of pre-historic painted rock shelters, traditional technology used in the earlier days, a trail based on the mythological beliefs of Indian tribes, and sacred groves. Apart from all this, it has modern looking in-door museum, that display a collection of tribal costumes, arts and crafts, agricultural and household implements, and other objects. There is a well-stocked library, audiovisual archives and a huge collection of ethnographic specimens.



Entry at Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya



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Map



Temporary exhibition hall

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Temporary exhibition hall



Evening at IGRMS

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Evening at IGRMS



Evening at IGRMS



Evening at IGRMS



Jackal talking a walk

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Entry of desert village exhibition



Entry of desert village exhibition



Bhunga at display



Boat at coastal village exhibition

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Coastal village exhibition



Sacred grove exhibition

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Veethi Sankul – indoor museum



Veethi Sankul – indoor museum

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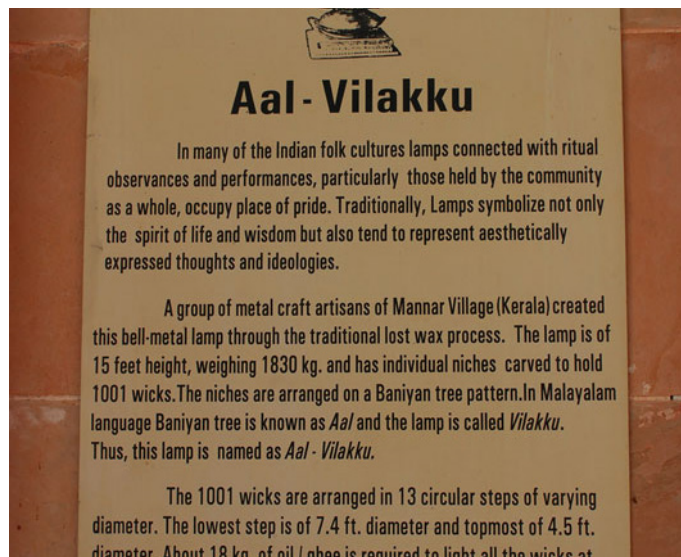


Aal – Vilakku lamp at display



Aal – Vilakku lamp at display

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Information display



Veethi Sankul – indoor museum

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Veethi Sankul – indoor museum



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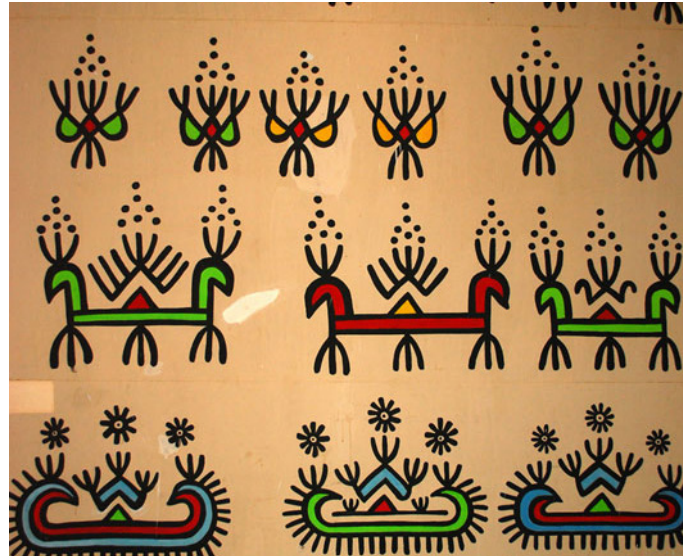
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Tribal habitat exhibition

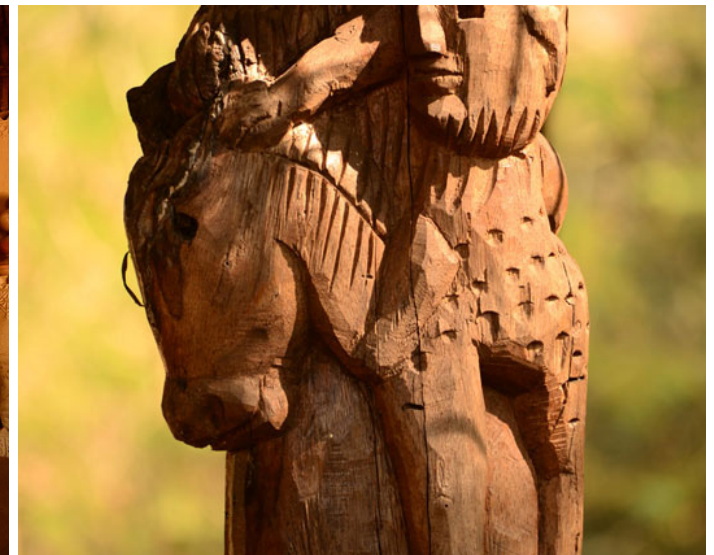


Desert village exhibition

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Interiors of bhunga, huts of Rabaris from kutch, Gujrat



Woodwork

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Temporary exhibition on Narmada river



Himalayan Village



Himalayan Village



Dussera rath from Bastar region

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Sacred grove of Manipur

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Tribal habitat exhibition



Tribal habitat exhibition

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Hut structure from North-East India is been created

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View from Shamla hills



Entry for Mythological Trail

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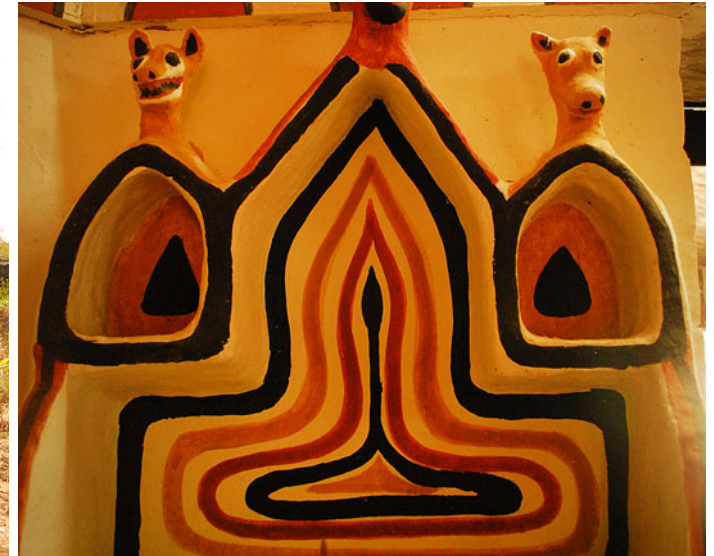
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Display at Mythological Trail



Indoor exhibition



Indoor exhibition



Entry for Traditional technology exhibition

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