The culture of the people is the sum total of all their customs, activities and beliefs. It stands for the moral spiritual and intellectual attainments of man. In the words of Marett it is 'Communicable Intelligence'. The study of primitive culture arose from the study of the culture of the present day man. There are three forces which influence human action either in co-operation or opposition to each other. These are the natural environment of the individual, the human environment and the intellectual or mental environment. Life was, as it is now, an eternal adjustment to environment. The history of human culture is the result of that environment. All cultures, high or low, have a history behind them. Of all aspects of culture, material culture is the most closely allied to environment factors. It deals with such material things as clothing, ornament, food, habitations and implements. All raw materials for food, clothing, and shelter depend on natural products.

**Food and Drink**

Food is the urgent and recurrent need of man. It indicates his activities in relation to land at every stage of economic development. Among the Kadars, the staple food now a days is rice, supplemented with
roots and greens. Rice was formerly a luxury, but now they get it as part of wages and from the shops\(^1\). It is cooked in the form of a gruel or taken solid, once or twice a day. The roots and greens are collected from the forest and used to be once the major source of food. It is known as *thettam*.\(^2\) A root of tuber or even a beehive spotted by on Kadar individual cannot be exploited by any other Kadan. The roots and greens collected by the Kadar include Nora, Thali, Nore, Chandra, Kandmira, etc. They also collect fruits of wild jack, cashew and mango. These are bartered for rice, tobacco, cloth, beedi, etc., Honey, Chinikkai, Pathiripu, Marohikkuru, Kakkankay, Chinikkai, Pathiripu, Marohikkuru, Pulinjaka, Malamanjal (wild tumeric), etc., are collected from December to April. Ginger, Cardamom, etc, are collected from May to September. Thelly, fruits of Mimosa, inchapatta, matti, cane, aralithiri, arrowroot, mellikka, mattipal, lemongrass, etc., are collected throughout the year. These items used to be sold or bartered to the contractors and exchanged for food items. Now-a-days, the Girijan Co-operative Societies have taken over this role. Another favourite item is tapioca, which they grow in their own kitchen gardens.\(^3\) Thurston described a variety in the dietary which would be the envy of a present day Kadar. It included succulent roots, bamboo, sheep, fowls, pythons, deer porcupines, field rats, wild pigs, monkeys, etc., which gave each Kadar a hard and well nourished body.\(^4\) These are all now strictly protected by the forest department.
The Malasars and Malai malasars are non-vegetarians and eat the meat of all categories of birds and animals. Their staple food is ragi and jowar, substituted by roots and tubers gathered from the forest. They drink alcoholic drinks, smoke beedi, and chew tobacco and betal. Like Malasar Mudhuvas and palayars also eat ragi, rice and tapioca. They take these with vegetable curries, but also take the meat of lizards, rats, and various species of deer, fowl, fish and crabs. The flesh of the blank monkey is the much relished delicacy. It is believed to confer long life, good health, and sexual vigour and to enable childless fathers to be get children. Beef, the flesh of the Indian bison and of the bear are not taboo, nor do they take the meat of dogs, jackals and snakes. During lean months, they fall back on the wild roots and tubers, the kuva being the most preferred. The main food is served in the morning, the father and the children eating off the same leaf plate. They have often to skip lunch. The supper is late in the evening. The men and the children are served first. They drink milk after boiling and in tea or coffee. They have a beverage called tuppikal, extracted from the juice of the wild palm, and fermented, some of them are addicted to opium, while many smoke tobacco. Eravallas are non-vegetarians, but avoid beef and the flesh of bison. The main dish is kanji prepared out of chamai (minor millet), cholam and rice. Nowadays, it is mostly rice. They take it with a mixture of tamarind, salt and chillies. The breakfast may be the left
over portion of the previous night’s meal. The mid day meal consists of kanji and vegetables.

**Dress and Ornaments**

Kadar woman who inhabit the interior forest put on a loin cloth and a bodice, while those living near the roads and villages put on lion cloth and blouses. Some of the women wearing sarees and blouses. However the men are scantily dressed. The innovations are the wearing of a banian and a four clubit lion cloth and many put on shirts. Boys are seen in short lion cloth or shorts and shirts. Girls wear skirts and blouses. Before the few generations they used leaf and bark garments. They are not fond of ornaments. The women wear *Thodu* (ear ring) formed of a roll of palm leaf ornamented with the red and black beads, *Mukkuthi* (nose ring), *Manimala* and *Kailumala* (bead necklaces), cheap metal or plastic necklaces and bangles of similar materials. A few Kadar men wear ear rings.

**The Kadar Comb**

The ‘Kadar Comb’ is one of the ideal products of their craft. Two types are made, one with four prongs and the other with numerous prongs. Both are struck with the hair sidewise and from the back part of the head. Now they struck ordinary comb also. Thurston drew attention to the similarity of the designs carved on the bamboo combs of the Kadar with
those of the Negritos of Malacca\textsuperscript{13}. According to him a Kadar man should always make a comb and presents it to his intended wife just before the marriage or at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony and the young men vie with each other as to who can make the nicest comb. But this habit is not common at present.

Among the Malasar and Malai malasar, the men wear a short cloth round the waist and half-arm shirts and baniyans. The women wear colored sarees, only the younger wear blouses. Most men crop their hair. The women part it in the middle and knot it at the back. The females wear nose rings, bangles, beads and the married women wear toe-rings. Most women and a few men have totoo marks\textsuperscript{14}.

Muthuva men wear a long cloth, six to eight cubits round the lion's head, hitched up short to facilitate movement. They wear a long cloth round their head as a turban. In early times, they before using head gear, a person had to obtain the sanction of the head man Mel-Vakka\textsuperscript{15}. A blanket is worn by elders both to protect from the cold as well as a rain coat. Now a days, most wear shirts and dhotis. Men allowed their hair to grow and kept it knotted into a tuft behind the occiput. Young children are clean shaven except for a small round patch retained over the forehead. Women wear a long coloured cloth tied round the waist with one end brought over the breasts and knotted over the right shoulder. The fold is so arranged that she
can carry her baby safely and comfortably on the back.\textsuperscript{16} Tattooing though sometimes seen, was not common. Both men and women tied talisman round their wrists\textsuperscript{17}.

Muthuvar men-wear earrings, rarely of gold, silver and brass rings on their fingers and sometimes a bangle on each wrist. The earrings and finger rings worn by women are similar. They also wear around their necks numerous strings of beads. They also like glass bangles and have a round amulet above their elbow. The ring called \textit{metti} is worn around the second toe of the right foot. They wear bamboo combs with designs carved on them. The design consists of a series of sings believed to be effective charms against diseases.\textsuperscript{18} Married women wear more ornaments than the unmarried girls. On the death of the husband, the widow has to remove all her ornaments. When she remarries she may resume them.\textsuperscript{19}

Pulaya men wear a loin cloth, and a shirt or a coat. Women drape a long coloured cloth round their bodies and knot the ends over the right shoulder. Small children are carried in the fold on the back when they go to work. Young women have begun to wear blouses. Men wear ear ornaments made of brass and the women, tubes made from \textit{ola}, the leaf of the palmyrah or wild date palms.\textsuperscript{20} Women also wear a nose screw of brass and necklaces of beads.
The Eravalla men wore vaistis viz., cloths with a coloured border about three meters long with one end hanging loose and the other tucked up behind, between the legs. Sometimes, tucked up behind, between the legs. Sometimes, they would put on a cloth across their shoulders they would put on a cloth across their shoulders and wear a turban. The women wore sarces in a fashion similar to hose of the Kadar. Both men and women allowed their hair to grow and knotted it at the back of the head. Men grew moustaches and wore a necklace of white beeds and brass finger rings. Women wore similar ornaments and in the holes in their ear lobes, discs fashioned out of palmyra leaf nose rings and bangles. Now a day, they have adopted dress patterns and ornaments similar to those of the locality, according to their economic standing.

Teeth Chipping

A singular custom among the Kadar was that of chipping all or some of the incisor teeth, both upper and lower, into the form of a sharp pointed cone. The chipping is done at the age of eighteen for the boys and ten for the girls. Both Thurston and Iyer have described about it, as quite a painful operation and drew parallels with similar practices among the Mala Veda of Kerala and some tribes in the Malay Peninsula, Africa and Australia. Now this practice is not common among the Kadars.
Language of the Tribes

The dialect of the Kadar is Tamil mixed with Malayalam. Most of the vowels and constants are as in Tamil. For illustration ‘L’ tends to be pronounced as ‘y’. Example Mala as Maya. Kuli as Kuyi (hole) palam as payam (fruit). In all the above mentioned words, the vowels are in Tamil. The word ‘kuli’ has been pronounced as ‘kuli’ in Malayam Sound. Some other words are natu-country, nallutu – good. Sometimes n is used word initially as in nan-I, and often with c medially as anchu-five, mancu-dew, parancha-said. sakti-strength, masi-mayi-ink, sani-Saturday, niko-you, maya-rain, kuyi-hole, ba-va-come, vara-line, vyalalcca-Thursday, tenna-coconut, manna-mango, kelaman-barking deer etc., All the Tamil words in Kada dialect have influence of Malayalam.²⁴

The dialect spoken by the Malai Malasar also closely related to the Tamil and to Malayalam and the Malasar speak Tamil. The dialect spoken by Muthuvas is closely related to Tamil and to Malayalam.

In the Muthuva language, ‘Marankal’ is pronounced as ‘Marannal’ for tree. ‘I’ has become ‘Y’ in several cases such as ‘elu’ has changed to eyu (=seven). Kuli becomes kuyyi (= pit). In a few cases ‘I’ changes to ‘i’ as in Tamil. Example ‘elai’ becomes ‘ela’ meaning poor. Instead of the
word-final-an of Tamil or Malayalam, Muthuva uses ‘ey’, example, avey instead of the word avan, meaning ‘he’.

In singular forms, Avan vantan = he came; aval vantatu = she came and atu vantatu = it came. While plurals generally formed as -lu, eg., kuncii-child, kuncilu-children. A sample of Muthuva words with no Tamil or Malayalam equivalents is akki-sweetness, inatte - yesterday, elantari - unmarried man or woman, kalla - necklace, netti - site of waterfall, kola-much, takku-to suffer, terami-beauty, tikku-to know etc.,

Pulayas speak a dialect of Tamil which is unintelligible to Tamil speakers. It contains a large number of Malayalam words and phrases. Among the Eravallas, they speak a poor dialect of Tamil, which language they use for communication with others. For example endhukoli-what, ninmu-you, kaliyanam-marriage, varatte-to come, thagappane-father, chala-hut etc.,
Music and Dance

Dance is a very pervasive element in tribal life. It is closely interwoven in the very fibre of every being. There is ‘dancing’ on every conceivable occasion. Every tribal village has in fact, a dance floor specially maintained. In dance, they probably find the highest expression of their sense of order, rhythm and delight. It also provides them the occasion to deck themselves in their fineries. These dances have their magical, sexual and social significance. They are marked with almost a military precision and a poetic fluidity of patterns at the same time. Some dances are for men alone, some for women, while other are mixed.

Music and dance are indigenous and even the elders participate in it. The Kadars have developed well formed diverse dance movements and orchestra. The musical instruments are made by them. The leather instruments made by wooden plank are used. The leather instruments made by wooden plank are used. The leather from black monkey is used to make instruments. The flutes are made from Vengai and jack tree. The seven or nine holed flutes are called by them ‘Karumbu’. The main instruments of the Kadar are ‘Udukku’, ‘Kendai’ and ‘Urumi’. The Kendai is look like a cylinder, which play with stick called ‘Kendai Kuchi’. In some occasions, Kendai is played along with flute. Urumi is made from vengai tree. It is smaller than Kendai and played both side with sticks. Another musical
instrument is called by the Kadar, ‘Karumbu’ or Sindhi. When compared to other instruments it is hard to play.\textsuperscript{28}

When the two musical instruments are played the Kadar men and women dance according to the tune. \textit{Kummi, Kollattam, Oyilattam} are the important dances performed by the ladies. The dances played by the gents are called \textit{kollattam, pandriyattam and mandhiattam}. Kummi is played by the ladies without instruments. They stand round and sing songs merrily. The term Kollattam in Kadar language is called as ‘\textit{Koliattam}’. The ladies perform this slowly while the gents do fastly. Oyilattam resembles the folk dances of plains. The dancer should keep standing position and perform. Pandriyattam is performed by the Kadars along with music. It indicates the hunting of pigs. Mandiyattam perform along with the music. In this type imagine himself as monkey and performed the dance.\textsuperscript{29} This dance resembles their hunting profession.

Music and dances are performed by the Malasars and Malaimalasars during the occasion of religions worship, puberty, marriage and other festivals. The musical instruments are made up of wood and leather. They are \textit{mathalam, urumi, kolal}, etc., The Malaimalasars go the plain and approach the paraya community people to make some musical instruments. \textit{Nayanam} and \textit{tavil} are the instruments set from the paraya community and they become trained with these instruments, \textit{sathakolal, urumi},
*thambattam*, *pambai* are the hereditary instruments. The instruments are also played while they are going to Palani temple. The musical instruments of the Muthuvas consist of a miniature tom-tom formed by stretching monkey skin over a frame of split reed.

The Pulayas have many musical instruments. The *murasu* is a cylindrical drum with a wooden or brass frame cow-hide on both ends. The sound is produced by beating and rubbing with two curved sticks. The *mathalam* is also a similar drum but originally made of eathernwave. The *kidumuthu* is yet another drum with a conical base and flat upper end. The kuzhal is a pipe and the ensemble is completed by cymbols.

Educational Status

Education is considered the most effective change agent in socio-economic progress. It is the key to the development of human resources. For the tribals education is the pivot on which their success depends. Education disseminates knowledge. Knowledge gives inner strength, which is very essential for the tribals for attaining freedom from exploitation and poverty. Due to ignorance arising out of illiteracy, the tribals have not been able to take advantage of innovations in science and technology.

In the pre-independence era, the policy in regard to the tribals revolved round the isolation-assimilation controversy. The British administration for various reasons liked to keep the tribals in a state of isolation. Administrative reforms could not reach the inaccessible tribal belts. After independence, the
government was committed to a policy of all round development of all sections of
the population, more particularly of the marginalized sections hitherto neglected.
The Governments, both central and state began to launch tribes oriented
programmes which included education. Education commissions were appointed
to promote tribal education. Government tribal residential schools were started the
hill areas. The Directorate of Adidravidar and tribal welfare is running these
schools for the benefit of tribal children. The children studying in these schools
are provided with free boarding and lodging text books writing materials and
uniforms. Apart from these schools the forest departments and some voluntary
organizations are also actively imparting education to the tribals.

The tribal groups of Anamalai, like elsewhere in the country lacked the
infrastructure for education. As it is widely believed that literacy among tribal
would prevent them from being used by those who are plundering forest wealth,
the Forest Department is taking all efforts to enroll more children from the tribal
settlements in the Adi-Dravidar and tribal residential schools run by the state’s
Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department. It is part of the 'catalytic role' of
the Department to bring the tribal population to the mainstream. All the forest
territorial ranges viz., Pollachi, Ulandy, Manambolly, Valparai, Udumalpet and
Amaravathy took up this enrolment drive during the academic year 2001-02 and
liaisoned with the Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department in getting the
tribal children registered in the nearby schools and accommodation in the board-
ing hostels run for the tribal.
With the initiative by the Forest Department, about 794 children attending to schools from all these settlements. The enrolment drive launched by the Forest Department has led to a 35 percent increase from 179 children joining schools during 2001-02 compared to previous years in Manambolly and Ulandy ranges alone. A similar rate of increase is reported from other ranges also. In the primary school run by the Forest Department at Top Slip, present student strength is 72 against 15 during 1990 when the school was started. Several facilities have been provided to the students through various agencies. Under Sarvasiksha Abiyan Schenks, schools have been opened at Sarkarpathi and Udumalpet areas. Proposals have been sent by the forest department to the District Collector, Coimbatore for opening of new tribal schools near the settlements where there are dropouts of age group of 6 to 14 years. Proposals are also under consideration for appointment of educated tribal girls as teachers in co-ordination with the administration.

School facilities were totally absent in some settlements, educational facilities were also not available. Distance to school, backwardness, medium of instruction, lack of motivation etc., are reasons for the educational backwardness of the tribes in Anamalai region.

The following are the suggestions to promote educational status of tribes: Schools should be located in the tribal areas. The medium of instruction should also be in the tribal languages at least up to the primary level. The
should be selected from among the tribals by relaxing the educational qualifications. Steps should be taken for setting up of more and more *palwadis*, crèches and child care centers in the tribal areas. The contents of education should take in to consideration. There could be arrangements for vocational education. The curricula should keep in view the traditional local skill and crafts. The tribals should also be taught elementary civics to familiarize them with their rights and duties. Industrial institutes may also be opened.

**Health Status**

Due to the remoteness, the tribal do not have basic medical facility in their areas. Much attention is being paid for the health care of tribal in the sanctuary. A dispensary is being run by the Forest Department at Top Slip for the benefit of tribal. Medical camps are conducted frequently in different locations. The multi specialty and general mega medical camps were conducted every year at Topslip, Kulipatty, Sarkarpathy areas in coordination with the district administration, district health authorities and corporate health houses. Tribals were given free medical check up and medicines are distributed free of cost. The tribal who were screened for eye problem and TB were taken for further treatment. Malnutrition and communicable diseases are reported from all these communities. Most of them do not have healthcare facilities with in their settlements. To improve their health status, the health awareness programmes should be conducted in every settlement. Steps should be taken for setting up of more primary health centres, hospitals and pharmacies in the tribal areas.
Welfare Measures for Hill People

Various developmental works were undertaken for the welfare of tribal living in the settlements under the Innovative Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (IJRY), a scheme sponsored by the Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development and routed through District Rural Development Agency, Coimbatore. Development works were undertaken at a financial outlay of Rs.300 lakh between 1996 and 2002. The works were aimed at providing both basic amenities in the tribal habitations and enhancing livelihood opportunities. As all the works were executed using local tribal as labourer, they have earned substantial amounts as wages in addition to the community assets. Provision of elephant proof trenches around the cultivated lands in settlements help to keep the larger herbivores at bay besides serving as a demarcation of the settlement area. Various water-harvesting structures facilitate the storage of water in streams and help in developing irrigated farming.

In some settlements the tribal have been found cultivating lemon grass in large areas which is harvested, and oil extracted for sale. As an extension of welfare activities for the benefit of tribal families, comprehensive proposals have been drawn up by the Wildlife Warden and placed before the district administration for its approval under various on going schemes. Helpful to the cause of tribal communities in the district, District Collector, Coimbatore took initiatives to sanction many of these proposals during 2001-02 and 2002-03, which are under various stages of implementation.
References - Chapter - 6

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