CHAPTER – II

A THEORITICAL OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY OF TRIBAL STUDENTS IN KERALA UNDER STUDY
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Introduction

Schedule tribe communities of Kerala can broadly be classified into four categories such as :-

i). Hunters and gatherers
ii). Agricultural labourers
iii). Shifting cultivators
iv). Settled cultivators based on their traditional economic activity.

However today majority of the Scheduled Tribe population is landless agricultural labourers. The essential characteristics of these communities are

i). Primitive traits
ii). Geographical isolation
iii). Distinct cultural
iv). Shy of contact with community at large
v). Economically backward.

In Kerala, at present there are 43 communities notified in the scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribe orders (Amendment Act 2002) (Appendix No:VII).

A few communities like Kurumba, Kurago, Kadar, Kattunaikan have been classified in primitive tribal groups considering their relative isolation from the rest of the population of the state. Special programmes are being executed by the Government for their welfare. Among the Scheduled Tribe population of the state, Paniyans inhabiting in Wayanad, Kozhikode and Malappuram district form the largest scheduled tribe community.
Traditionally majority of Scheduled Tribe population of the state were agricultural labourers (bonded slavery). Major Scheduled Tribe communities of the state like Paniyans, Adiyans and Eravallans come under this category and even today majority of them are landless. But communities like Kurichians, Kurumans, Malayarayans were traditionally settled cultivators and are relatively better than the agricultural labourer communities in terms of developmental indicators. However, forest regulations and alienation of land have made even those communities who were settled cultivators / shifting cultivators as agricultural labourers.

Government has taken a number of measures for the welfare of the tribal communities to provide the best possible education, health housing etc. Despite the effects from the part of the government, the welfare programmes have not given intended results. The government for the rehabilitation of the Scheduled Tribes communities initiated a number of projects, but most of them have not given anticipated results.

In the present study students belonging to 20 Tribal communities were identified and the community wise details are given below.

State wise distribution of individual scheduled tribe population under study by sex, locality and literacy (2001 census) are shown in Table No:2.1
Table No: 2.1
Distribution of Individual Scheduled Tribe population in Kerala
under study by sex, locality and literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Tribal groups</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Literacy rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kannikkar</td>
<td>20852</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>10325</td>
<td>11352</td>
<td>21677</td>
<td>80.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Adiyan</td>
<td>10613</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>5141</td>
<td>5574</td>
<td>10715</td>
<td>52.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Hillpulayan</td>
<td>2862</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1437</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>2893</td>
<td>49.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Erulan</td>
<td>23809</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>12038</td>
<td>11960</td>
<td>23998</td>
<td>49.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kattunaiken</td>
<td>14323</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>7425</td>
<td>7290</td>
<td>14715</td>
<td>40.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Korago</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>1152</td>
<td>57.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Paniyan</td>
<td>79337</td>
<td>2603</td>
<td>40001</td>
<td>41939</td>
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<td>48.47%</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Kuruman</td>
<td>25326</td>
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<td>Malayarayan</td>
<td>29947</td>
<td>2385</td>
<td>15916</td>
<td>16416</td>
<td>32332</td>
<td>94.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Malapandaram</td>
<td>2427</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>1342</td>
<td>1352</td>
<td>2694</td>
<td>56.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Malavedan</td>
<td>5697</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>3005</td>
<td>3181</td>
<td>6186</td>
<td>77.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Kadar</td>
<td>2066</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1067</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>2145</td>
<td>61.83%</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Malakuravan</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>136</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
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<td>2878</td>
<td>5696</td>
<td>56.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Mannar</td>
<td>7467</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>3814</td>
<td>3950</td>
<td>7764</td>
<td>59.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Muthuvan</td>
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<td>162</td>
<td>10764</td>
<td>10502</td>
<td>21266</td>
<td>41.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Kurchiyar</td>
<td>32202</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>16474</td>
<td>16272</td>
<td>32746</td>
<td>78.21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Ulladan</td>
<td>13765</td>
<td>2976</td>
<td>8187</td>
<td>8554</td>
<td>16741</td>
<td>81.68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Uruli</td>
<td>10827</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>5545</td>
<td>5558</td>
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<td>72.54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Maratti</td>
<td>27498</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>13858</td>
<td>13966</td>
<td>27824</td>
<td>71.42%</td>
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Among the Scheduled Tribe population of the State Paniyans inhabiting in Wayanad, Kozhikode and Malappuram districts form the largest Scheduled Tribe community. Most of the Scheduled Tribe community are small with a population of below 10,000.

District wise distribution of schedule tribe population under study is shown in Table No: 2.2
# Table No:2.2
## District-wise Distribution of Scheduled Tribe Population under study (2001 Census) in Kerala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>Trivandrum</th>
<th>Kollam</th>
<th>Pathanamthitta</th>
<th>Alappuzha</th>
<th>Kottayam</th>
<th>Idukki</th>
<th>Ernakulam</th>
<th>Thrissur</th>
<th>Palakkad</th>
<th>Malappuram</th>
<th>Kozhikode</th>
<th>Wayanad</th>
<th>Kannur</th>
<th>Kasaragod</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kannikkar</td>
<td>18872</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>21677</td>
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<td>Adiyan</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>9939</td>
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<tr>
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<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2597</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eruvan</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuruman</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>744</td>
<td>420</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-27824</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total           | 218421     | 22816  | 25576          | 32925     | 44844   | 47280  | 49300     | 49300    | 49300    | 49300      | 49300     | 49300   | 49300  | 49300    | 49300  |

18
As the Table No:2.1 and 2.2 depicts, their population, literacy rate and standard living are different for different communities. Due to the sincere efforts of Christian Missionaries some of them reach the highest socio-economic educational status Eg. Malayarayan group, but many of them are still in primitive state.

In Kerala, the tribal communities have their own identity in their social inter-relations with in their groups. Their life-cycle rituals constitute the process for socialization with in the community. It has to be appreciated that each small group has been living with its own beliefs and traditions for centuries. These beliefs, customs and rituals are 'land marks' of his own biographical passage through the social and economic circumstances of the group of which he is accepted as a member precisely because of his having passed through the forms involved in such membership.

The significance of life-cycle rituals is the greater when the community is smaller, the more remote interdependence of the individuals and the community in such cases makes the observances associated with the development of each individuals as a matter of concern. In small primitive communities, the community has a vital and vested interest in the individual. In such communities individual is a very important person, to be totally integrated in its cultural complex.

In the case of every individual within the community, life cycle rituals extended from conception to beyond death. Each individual may actively participate in some (Eg. His marriage), but a passive presence at birth and death. Each rite is a re-assurance and claim over the individual. It is also the individuals acceptance of his membership and his acknowledgment of his obligations to the community. It is the basis for integration of individual to the society.

Major rituals and ceremonies found among tribal communities are pre-delivery and post delivery rituals, puberty and adolescence, marriage and death. There are variations and differences among different tribal communities. But the common aim is socializing the individual and making them aware of
duties and responsibilities of an individual ie male and female roles within the individual community.

But these life cycle rituals are subject to continuous change in details and in essence many of them may be curtailed because of the expenditure involved in it. Economic changes makes the observances impractical or lossful. Legal restrictions also affect the system.

But the spread of modern education among tribal communities adversely affected their customs and life cycle rituals, although they have a socializing effect with in the community. Problems of tribal children studying in the schools of Kerala affected very much. Some of their school days are lost due to these life cycle rituals and religious ceremonies of their home and in their community. Due to this basic reason a brief introduction to different tribes under study are given in the appendix with their traits and peculiarities of life that affect their response to modern education.

A brief introduction to twenty different tribes under study are given in the following pages:-

1. KANNIKKAR

This community is found in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts. There are two segments among Kannikaran, those dwelling in forests and those dwelling in plains. There is a story associated with the word ‘Kani’. The rulers who live in the interior of the forest had to submit gifts to the rulers who lived in cultivable land. The forest dwelling rulers submitted gifts to the land rulers annually in the form of ‘Kani’ ie ritualistic submission of gifts to those who are supposed to be in the position of overlordship. From this practice of submitting gifts the term ‘Kani’ might have been evolved. It also said that the name Kannikar was given by the sage ‘Agasthia’ in ancient times as they were the forefathers of the rulers of Pandiya kingdom.

The legend goes that these people played a crucial role at the critical movement of the history of the Travancore princely states, ie they have shelter to fugitive king Marthandavarma in his fude with Ettuveetil Pillammar and in gratitude the king gifted them 36,000/- Acres of land Ottasekhararamangalam
and Kunnathukkal. This portion of the land is called Kanipattu in Trivandrum district.

**Physical Features**

Anthropologically speaking, the Kani’s belongs to the category of Australoids with sturdy and muscular body, long hands and slightly jutting chins. A unique feature of their men folk is that the chin is found with stubble here and there. Even though they are generally brown in complexion one can occasionally spot dark and fair complexioned persons.

**Tribal Administration**

There still exists an Administrative Triumvirate consisting of kuttukanı, Vilikanı and Pathı, the first among the three equals is Muttukanı. There are also minor officials called Moothavan and Munnan. Muttukanı’s words and views are treated as orders to be obeyed. But before taking a decision, he summons a meeting of the grown up men in the settlement and seek their opinion also. The meeting is normally held in a shed by the side of his house called ‘Pattupura’. At the meeting the decisions are taken by consensus. The position of Muttukanı is hereditary. But now a days because of contacts the Kani youth have authority enjoyed by Administrative Triumvirate are in wane and Kani society is facing its disastrous consequences.

**Gods and Worships**

Kanni worship ancestral spirits, Gods and Goddesses of the hills and forests. The principal deities are Mallanthamburan, Aayiravallimuthi, Muthans, Chathevu, Madan, Marutha, Karimkally, Chemmudi and so on. They perform specific custom-related worship associated with harvest, post harvest festivals, hunting festivals etc. Rituals and ceremonies related to birth puberty marriage; death and burial customs are prevailing among them under the leadership of Muthukanı and Pathı. So many days are spent for all these purposes. At present the chief object of worship is said to be Sasthan, a forest God. But the Kannikar also make offering to a variety of deities, including Amman, Poothathan etc. The worship of Sita and Rama practiced among them. They have their own separate entity in all matters.
Occupation and Agriculture

Kannis lead a precarious life collecting forest produce, medicinal herbs and roots, tubers and climbers. They were settled cultivators traditionally and majority of them are agricultural labourers and marginal farmers. They cultivated various kinds of cereals and pulses as well as tapioca, potatoes and tobaccos. Each settlement has a forest block assigned to it for cultivation with which other tribes are not allowed to interfere and where in the Kannikar are allowed to fell, clear and sow their crops. Some Kannikkar are engaged as coolies on planters estates or in felling timber and cutting bamboos for contractors others in the manufacture of bows and arrows with blunt barbed iron heads. In their system of cultivation, the Kannikars first clear a patch of forest and set fire to it. The ground is sown with hardly any previous tillage. When after two or three years, the land diminishes in productiveness, they move on to another part of the forest and follow the same rough and ready method of cultivation. But the Kannikar have now to a large extent abandoned this kind of migrating cultivation, because according to the forest rules, forest may not set fire or trees felled at the unrestricted pleasure of individuals.

Social Life

Till recently, the Kannikar have no permanent abode, but shift from one place to another. Their settlement composed of lowly huts built of bamboos and reeds and are abandoned when they suffer from fever or are harassed by wild beasts or when the soil cease to be productive. The settlement is generally situated away from the track of the elephants, in steep hill slopes, which are traced and planted with useful trees. The Kanikkar live together in small communities under a ‘muttukani’ or a headman’, who wields considerable influence over them and enjoys various perquisites. He presides over tribal council meetings, at which all social questions are discussed and settled and fixes the time for clearing the jungle, sowing the seed, gathering the harvest, worshipping the Gods etc. Fines which are inflicted are spent in propitiating the Gods. They are good practitioners in herbal medicines up to this time. The Kannikar are said to be characterized by high standard of morality and to be
straightforward, honest and truthful. They are good traders and fond of sports and in clearing forests path, they have hardly any equals. Their help and guidance are sought by and willingly given to any person, who may have to travel through the forests. The language of the Kannikar is a dialect of Malayalam with a large admixture of Tamil, which they call ‘Malapashai’ or the language of the hills.

The system of inheritance among those who live in the hills is ‘makkathayam’ from father to son. But a moiety of the personal property goes to the nephews with those who live in the plains, an equal distribution of their self acquired property is made between sons and nephews. If there are no sons, the nephews inherit the property, widow being entitled to maintenance.

2. ADIYAN

The Adiyas are known as ‘Ravulayar’ traditionally. The Adiya, like Paniya, is one of the slave sects in Kerala. ‘Adiyan’ (Adi = foot) has been defined as meaning literally ‘a slave’, but usually applied to the vassals of Tamburans and other powerful patrons. Each Adiyan had to acknowledge his vassalage by paying annually a ‘neizur’ (gift of money) to his patron, and was supposed also to be ready to render services whenever needed. This yearly ‘neizur’ which did not generally exceed one or two ‘Panams’ was called ‘Adima-panam’ (Slave money) ‘Adima’ means feudal dependency on a patron.

Social Life

The legend goes that Adiyans are descendents of a Brahmin who happened to marry a low caste woman. It is also supposed that they came to Kerala as slave of Brahmins and Chettis who came from Mysore. Adiyans claim to be the first cultivators of rice and coconut and founded the basis of agriculture in earth. At that time Adiyans are landowners and whole land belongs to them. Now they are Adiyans or Slaves of Zamindars and doing work for them, from dawn to dust for a meagre wage. Adiyans generally are of peace loving nature.
Adiyans are centre round mainly near Mananthavady in Northern Kerala. Adiyans are really slaves in many parts of Malabar. They have their own traditions and customs, dresses and flock songs. The dwelling places are called ‘Mandus’ or ‘Kudis’. Adiyan community is divided into twenty classes called ‘Mandus’. The head of the Kudi or Mandu is known as ‘Peruman’ or ‘manduthalaivan’ or ‘chommikkaran’. His wife is called ‘Perumuthey’. Peruman has no special powers. But he has certain rights in the mands. He calls for the meetings of each of the family to discuss the problems of the community. The office of the Peruman is hereditary. But if there is no son, the nephew can become the Peruman.

**Occupation And Agriculture**

Main occupation is agriculture. But majorities of them are landless. Collection of forest products are subsidiary occupations.

**Nuclear Family**

Marriage proposals are also made through Peruman. In the nuclear Adiya Tribal family the husband is the head of the household. Bride price is given to the parents of the bride from the groom. The Adiyan marriage is celebrated in the Bride’s house giving a chain of pebbles and ‘Thalikettu’ are the main functions Divorce, Widow marriage etc are permitted. Polygamy also practiced.

No punitive measure is prevalent among the Adiyas for sex offences. Even if their woman commits such offences they are allowed to undergo purifactory ceremony known as ‘Kalachu Veypu’ to join their community back.

Their nests have basements and mud walls. The roof is that had with leaves or straw. The huts in contrast to many other hill tribes have doors and windows. The Adiyans as Kurichyans are very keen in keeping the huts and surroundings clean.

Naturally for this life there is no need for school Education. Family has no experience with school and they are alienated completely in thick forests. So the students feel these problems irrespective of a boy or girl. Teachers have no contact to these families in forests. Adiyans also reluctant to come out of forests. Sometimes due to agricultural and other related work they have to
come in plain land. Parents are not aware of long run benefit of school naturally the children are withdrawn from schools. Recently some improvements can be traced due to Rural Development Projects.

In the filed of education Adiyan community is in a transitional stage, even though they have their own mental dispositions, which affect their path to progress. They had with them numerous superstitions and customs which affects their education and learning.

3. HILLPULAYAN

They are the most backward type of tribes among the clans staying in Marayoor and Kanthalloor Grama Panchayat of Devikulam Block, Panchayat in Idukki district. They are also found in the North Eastern slopes of the Anamudi massif in Idukki district. They are also known as “Mala Pulaya” in Kottayam district. They are three endogamous sub-divisions namely (a) Pampa pulaya, (b) Karavazhi Pulaya and (c) Kurumba Pulaya.

Pampa Pulaya considered to be the lowest because they eat the flesh of snakes. Kurumba pulaya claim superiority because they do not eat the flesh of cattle and bison and like the other two. They were collectors of forest produce. Karavazhi pulaya were agricultural bonded labourers. Differences are observed in the social practices and religious benefits among the three groups.

Political Organisation

No clan divisions are reported among any of the three sub-divisions. They had an internal political organization with an ‘Arasan’ (head men) and ‘Varian’ (assistant) and a council with a priest cum-headman and a deputy. The Karavazhi, who live closer to the plains have a headman (Natamkaran) assisted by a ‘Mantri’ the main advisor, ‘palan’ the priest and ‘Valakkarean’ the messenger. They often bedeviled by schisms and feuds as a result of which they could not even elect a Kani (tribal head) to attend the matters of common interest.

Social Life

Property is inherited in line. The eldest son succeeds the post of honour, if any, had been held by his deceased father. Though women are not
inferior in status, daughters do not inherit any property. Cross cousin marriage is preferred, mostly by negotiation with an obligatory payment of bride price. Divorce may be granted by the council.

Marriage is at the bride’s place. The ‘tali’ is necklace of beads. Bride money is to be paid by the in front of a single plantain leaf from which they share good.

Delivery takes place in a separate shed, or a corner of the veranda of the living hut. Pollution is observed for 30 days among the Kurumba and for 15 days among the other sub-divisions. On 31st day she is taken in procession to a stream and rendered clean by the headman, for which he is paid a fee.

Death pollution lasts for six days, at the end of which the eldest son kills a fowl and relatives and friends are treated to a feast. The disposal of dead bodies is by burial. The grave is marked by through plants and three stones planted over it.

They worship Kali, Mariamma Kataparanna, Chaplamma and Aragalinachi. A spot on the banks of the chinnar a stream joining the pambar is the venue for the worship of Katala parama, once in 3 years, when goat is sacrificed. An image of chaplamma is installed in the midst of a deep stretch of the chinnar. She is propitiated only in eight years.

Among the Hillpulayas of Idukki District associated with their traditional festival called ‘Nambu’ celebrated in the Tamil month of ‘Mashi’, when an 8th day long celebrations of dances and songs is held. At the end of the 8th day, goats are ceremoniously taken to the temple usually located in the midst of the forest, when they will be sacrifice to the goddess. After ponkals have been performed, the goats are sacrificed. Prior to this ritual, water is sprinkled over the head of the goat. The idea is that goat itself given consent for its beheading by shaking its head. It any goat does not shake its head as a token of having consented, the animal will be spared. Interestingly it is a foregone conclusion that goats being sprinkled with water would shake their heads as reflex action.

They are good gatherers and hunters. They trap birds like parrots and sell them in urban markets as pets. Many of them lead a nomadic life for weeks and months. They do manual labour and collecting forest product is
also part of their income.

They speak Tamil and follow their own unique and hereditary customs and they have their own primitive arts.

Their education level is very low. Due to the lack of sanitation facilities and better life prospects most of them are unhealthy. They are mainly interested in knowing and learning modern developments and programs of the world. They prefer to learn jobs, which may help them to earn a better income. One section of the Hillpulayas are traditionally skilled in art of weavings and their ability is exploited often by the mediators.

4. IRULAS

The Irulas are one of the major tribes of Kerala. The name Irula is supposed to be derived from the Tamil words ‘Irul’ meaning ‘darkness’ which may refer to their black skin complexion. They are found in eastern slopes of the Attappady Valley, with a few scattered colonies around walayar at the boundary Palakkad and Coimbatore districts. In Attappady, they constitute the most numerous among the scheduled tribes resident there and are distributed among 106 hamlets in the Agali, pudur and scholayur Panchayaths and Nilagiri hills Irulas are seen in Mysoore forests which lie near to, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Their language is ‘prakit’ one with terms from Kannada and Tamil language.

**Socio Political Organisation**

As a long settled tribe, they used to have a well-knit socio-political organization at the hamlet level. It consisted of hereditary ‘Muppan’ (headman) and a ritualist ‘Mannukaran’ (literally ‘knower to the soil’) who was also the specialist of agriculture. A ‘bandari’ was treasurer and in charge of hospitality to visitors and the ‘kurutali’ executed the orders of the families in it, under the headship of the ‘Muppan’. With the alienation of land, and the dissipation of the families each seeking its own employment, this hamlet-organization is virtually defunct. Now, a new religious functionary, pujari is in place, for conducting the worship of the deities of the hamlet, including man, the mother-Goddess.
Social Life

They were patriarchal and patrilineal. After marriage each couple would set-up a nuclear family of which the male was the undisputed boss.

Cross-cousin marriage are preferred, but bride-price is insisted on; if a man is rich enough to pay it over and over again every time he weds an additional girl, he may have and as many as wives as he may afford. The obligation to pay bride price follows a man even to his grave, his life-less body cannot be buried until this amount is settled.

Traditionally, the pregnant woman used to be segregated in an isolation but away from the hamlet in the seventh month, her husband having the exclusive responsibility of looking after her and could return to the hamlet only six months after the event of welcomes with a feast by the entire hamlet. Now, of course, the most deliveries are in the hospital and segregation in not observed. The naming used to be by the headman, but now the parents choose it themselves, at school a non-tribal teacher may be substitute a modern name for it.

Menarche used to be observed with the isolation of the girl for seven days, during which only little girls would attend on her. On the 7th day, she has to drink a decoction of turmeric, her brother’s wife takers her to a stream and she cleans herself with some herbs which are carefully hidden after use- if a stranger finds it, it may cause all sorts of harm to her. While she is bathing the hut she has stayed in is demolished and burned and its ashes are thrown in to the river. She is escorted back to the hamlet, dressed in new clothe, and seated on a mat the efflorescence of a plantain tree and flowering branch of a jack tree are kept in her head, as fertility symbols and a pestle is kept beside her as her distinctive implement when she establishes a household of her own. His sister-in-law feeds her with specially prepared food, oil is poured on her hands, with which she dresses her hair. During monthly periods no pollution is observed nor are any restrictions imposed on her movements.

Boys and girls have plenty of opportunities of meeting before marriage. When a pair like each other, the boys mother takes the initiative in settling the marriage. The major issue is bride price, when that is settled the welding takes
place at grooms' house. The couple set up residence in a new hut, with an initial supply of cooked food from the girls' mother.

After death, the body is buried in the burial ground specially that of the hamlet or the clan. The grave is a circular pit with a chamber to the side the body is deposited in the chamber, care being taken to see tat no earth falls on it when the pit is filled. A funeral ceremony is conducted at the end of a year.

Each hamlet traditionally has a 'Paygudi' where the ancestral spirits and other deities are installed. The Mannukaran was entrusted with the task of worshipping them.

There are a number of practitioners of native medicine among them, some being favour as healers among non-tribals also. They insists on growing the herbs involved in the treatment themselves in their own gardens in order to maintain the efficiency of their treatment.

Today exiles was most exposed to the Development programmes undertaken by the Govt. ever since 1960. Most of their hamlets have been provided with tiled or concrete roofed building by the govt. Irula have now to supplement their income by working for wages under those who have grabbed their lends.

Currently, an ambitious programme with Japanese financial assistance is carried on, for eco-restoration for alleviating the disastrous consequences of the excessively ambitious agricultural and other activities of the settlers. The Irula are potentially the greatest beneficiaries of these programmes. The Hindu, the India's National Newspaper reported in its edition on Friday June 11, 2004 that Erula tribals are living hills in quest of education.

Intensive programmes for training them to take advantage of the programme are now on going. Hopefully, the number of educated tribal youth is increasing and forms the emerging leadership. They have to face considerable hostility from powerful and well-entrenched vested interests. Now they are partly hinduised.
5. KATTUNAIKAR

The Kattunaikars are one of the primitive tribal community in Kerala. They are found in Wayanad, Malappuram, Kozhikkode districts. The legend goes that in Wayanad, Kattunaikar and Kurumbar belong to the same Vedakingdom with Poothadi as the capital near Pulpally in Wayanad. The hermitage of Valmiki the Adikavi is in Pulpally and the Vedan who killed the lovebirds belongs to this ‘Puthedi’ Dynasty and paved the way for Ramayana.

Kattunaikkar are also known as Thenkurumers, Jenkurumar and Cholanaickens. In Tamilnadu and Karnataka they are known as ‘Kadukurumba’.

Kattunaikan means leaders of the Jungle. They are known as Thenkurumers because they collect ‘Then’ (honey) from the forests. As far as possible they keep aloof even from others hill-tribes.

Social, Political and Religious Life

A Kattunaikan settlement is known as ‘Kudi’. The maximum number of houses found in a hamlet is 22 and the minimum is 4. The traditional huts are flimsy structure devoid of any raised platforms, the walls are made of bamboo, and thatched with grass. The household articles are meagre. But recently they are benefited by various housing schemes of government and are living in field or asbestos roofed houses.

The Kattunaikan subsists mainly on food gathering collection of non-wood forest produces, forest labour and agricultural labour. They speak a language close Kannada. The Kattunaikans were forest nomads till a few decades back. They are now in a process of setting down in permanent abodes. The Kattunaikan settlements are seen distributed both inside the forest and in revenue lands and some of them are employed in Forest Department in mahouts and labourers in different estates. They are good in hunting. The Kattunaikan have a hand to mouth existence. They can be grouped in food gathers, collectors of minor forest produce, landless agricultural labourers, small scale cultivators and those who work in forest as mahouts, fire-watchers etc.
The head of hamlet is called 'Moopan' by them. But outsiders called them 'Muthalali'. Mooppan has an important role to play in all the religious and soul functions of the hamlet. No marriage should take place without consulting them. In divorce also his word in final. Moopan also acts as Velichapad (oracle in religious festivals).

Their concept about religion is very rude. Those who have constant contact with Hindus wish to be known as Hindus. But the majority worships Animals, tress, rocks, Hills, snakes, birds etc whom they believe were their ancestors. They have firm faith in witchcrafts. Sun, Moon and Bhageeran is the God of Hills. Though they are not Hindus and do not go to Hindus Temples, they celebrate the religious days of the Hindus. Kattunaikan worship ancestral spirits and deities of certain Hindu Gods.

Bride money is prevailed among them. During marriage they perform a dance known as 'Vattakali' accompanied by drum and pipe. The venue of the marriage is the hut of either bride or the groom as is convenient. Giving betel leaves and areacanut is an important function of the marriage. There is a feast after marriage.

When a person dies, his body is buried near the house. After that they discard the house and surroundings. The burial is done in sitting position which is in contrast with other tribes. The most primitive among them do not even bother for burial. They cover the body with leaves or meats and leave it in the thick forests as food for wild animals and birds. It is doubtful whether they have Pula after death.

They have no insistence in their food habits. Their main foods are roots, honey and leaves collected from forests. They eat the meat of all animals. But cows are neither killed nor eaten. If available they are happy to take alcohol.

6. KORAGO

They are found in Kasaragode district of Kerala. They are the poorest of the poor landless scheduled tribe community. They have been landless and included in the list of primitive tribes by the Government of India. Korago also
seen in adjoining areas of Karnataka State, which lies contiguous to Kasaragode district.

Though there are a number of myths of origin, the most significant is the tradition they had been the kings of the land. They were Kinsmen of Chandala king Habashika, who defeated Angara Varman, the King of Manjeswaram and ruled over 12 years. A neighbouring ruler Chandrasena treacherously proposed a marriage between his sister and Habashika; when the bridegroom with his retinue came for the nuptials they were made to believe that custom required them to lay aside their weapons. They did in the middle of the right, they were set upon and massacred. The survivors fled, naked as they were, from their night interruption leave without any possessions, to the forests, where they were reduced to penury. Some of them, who fled to the seashore, were ordered to be executed but the executers taking pity on their condition, allowed them to cover their nakedness with leaves and flee. Another myth is that they were the descendants of a baby born to a Sudra through a Brahmin lady and were once rulers. The present condition of Korago is the result of a secondary premitiviation after they were violently disposed by aggressive usurpers.

**Tribal Subdivisions**

They are segmented into different sub groups. Among them Ande korago were placed at the lowest among them. Ande Korago had to hang a pot from their necks; they had to spit into it as they were forbidden to spit elsewhere. They had to take special permission to enter towns and villages during the day. Each sub division was divided into clans with its own 'Bhuta' or spiritual deities.

The Korago live mostly in rural areas. They were compelled to lead a segregated life till a few decades back owing to the untouchability prevailed in the region. There were no inter-dining, no sharing of drinking water wells with non-Korago. Thus Korago remain socially economically educationally extreme backward. In Kasaragod district Korago live in 43 hamlets distributed in Kasaragod and Manjeshwaram blocks.
Social and Economical aspects of Life

The various families constituting a matriline age formed the ‘Kudumba’, the eldest male member of which presided over it, all the members being expected to congregate at the annual worship of lineage ‘Bhuta’. The social and religious head of a hamlet is called ‘Gurukula’. Now most of the colonies are government established. Families of a hamlet are bound kinship ties. Monogamy is the prevalent practice. Re-marriage of divorces and the widowed is common.

They were deprived in every sense of the term. It was a vicious circle, because of their poverty, they could not be choosy how they lived and what they ate. They had to live in the out skirts of towns and villages in the barest of huts, structures with four uprights and a thatch of leaves or grass, those in the urban areas slept on the road side or on varanda of public buildings. They were considered as the most polluting of all castes.

They now live literally hand to mouth existence. The main marketable items, they make are baskets woven with a coarse creeper, which they gather from the forests. It is cheap and used for carrying manure, farmers use it once and discarded it. They sell the baskets even for a glass of tea. What remains of cash at the end of the day goes for alcoholic drinks and tobacco. A Korago cannot conceive of a life without drinking liquor and chewing pan. Men smoke but their women don’t. They spend almost the whole of earnings on drinks before they return home. Both men and women chew betel leaves.

To day rice is staple food of the Korago. They generally take left over of the previous night in the morning itself. The Korago cook mainly the evening meal. It is also seen that while they work at hamlet premises they cook afternoon meals also. The Korago are non-vegetarians. Besides meat they also consume fish with fresh or dried. Roots and tubers are collected by Korago from near by jungle to supplement their diet. They have their own treatment under the leader and do not believe in education. Due to the work of missionaries they improved very much and they are now in cope with the main stream of life.
7. PANIYAN

The Paniyan means worker as they are supposed to have been the workers of non-tribals. The term is derived from 'Pani 'an' means one who works. Paniyans are 'Panikars' under 'gauder' or janmi. They have no future or past in their dreams. They have close similarity and resemblance with the Negro of Africa. The dark complexion, curly hair and widened nose are main features of Paniyans. There are numerous speculations regarding the origin of paniyans. It is possible that they were imported from Africa and sold in Malabar.

A vast majority of the tribes in Kerala state hail from the Paniya tribal sect is found in Wayanad alone. They also possess the neighbouring parts of Kannur and Malappuram. They are also found in the Mysore and Kutaku districts of Karnataka State where they are known as ‘Yaruvas’ and in adjacent Tamil Nadu districts of Nilagiri. But their largest concentration is in Wayanad. They have also spread in adjoining areas of Kannur and Malappuram districts. Some of them are found in Eranad, Kozhikode, Taliparambu, Thallacherry, Badagara, quilandi taluks of Kerala. They constitute the largest tribal community in Kerala.

They are bounded labour under the different categories of land-holders who succeeded one another in Wayanad. As bond labourers, the Paniyas were once sold along with plantations by the landlords. The traditional manner of bonding them was by advancing loans to the head of paniya families, all of whom religiously used to annual festival at the temple of mother goddess of the valliyar kavu. The bondage was for one year until the next festival. They should be accommodated in the sheds in the masters property and paid less than market rate of wages, the obligation binding all members of paniya family. They were also employed as professional thieves and killers by higher castes. The young boys have to look after their master's cattles and the girls work as domestic help. Presents of cloth would be made on the customary festivals. Bonded labour survived in the area until it was abolished by the strict implementation of the Central Bonded Labour Abolition Act 1975.
Social Life

The paniyans settlement is called as 'paddi' or 'kudumbu' represents a few houses or huts built in rows in one corner of agricultural farm. Gone are the days when Paniya settlement had a headman called 'Kuttan' appointed by the landlord. Next in rank to Kuttan was the 'Mudali' are head of the family. Both Kuttan and Mudali are called 'Mooppanar'. Men wear a 'Mundu' around their waist and a long towel around their body. They are non-vegetarians in their 'kudumbu' colony they had round stones gathered in a place and this is called 'Daivathale' they have 'Mooppan' as their leader.

They have their own marriage system and their relation of husband and wife is life long. Monogamy appears to be the general rule among the party. Bride price is payable. Divorcee is granted in cases of adultery, a fine being levied on the guilty party. Three is no bar on the remarriage of the divorces or widows. Polyandry is prohibited. They have their rituals during pregnancy, childbirth and death.

The Paniyans have only a crude idea of religion. Their major dirty is called 'Kali' is believed to be malignant and so powerful. They also worship Banyan tree. They hesitate to cut trees and if any one attempts to cut them they fail sick.

In fact poverty and starvation are the two problems of Paniyans in their day-to-day life. Writing about Paniyan, the largest tribal community in Kerala, the eminent Indian Anthropologist Dr.A.Aiyappan had disclosed years that 'most of the Paniya parents were very eager in sending their sons and daughters to the paddy fields and coffee plantations non tribals as a means of livelihood.

Government made many schemes for the education of young generation. But the 'Jammi' wanted to remain 'Paniyas' as 'Panickers'. So they try to make all efforts of government a failure. They also exploit the superstition of Paniyans against the government when government give uniform for school children these Jammi propagate that they are adopting children for military and then also bribe they by giving money and other small presentation for not receiving education and other good benefits by it.
8. KURUMAN

The Malayalam version of the generic ethnonym ‘Kuruma’ (Tamil) it is
interchangeable Kuruba (Kannada). The word Kurumpar is used to mean
(Petty chieftain) Kurumpu means a fort, in Sangam literature.

In Kerala the term Kurumba is used for those found in Attapady and
Kuruma comprises some of them in Wayanad.

The following illustrates the various communities who have been
designated in Kurumba, Kuruba and the Kerala variants, Kattunaikar and Shola
Naikkar.

Kurumba / Kuruba / Kuruma

Pala Kurumba Mullakurumba Alu Kurumba Uralikurumba Vetta Kurumba Geneu Kurumba Kadu Kurumba

The Mullu Kurumas of Wayanad are a scheduled Tribe communities who
are settled agriculturalist. Mullukuruman consider themselves superior to other
Kuruma sects.

The Urali Kurumas, the most versatile and colourful tribal people, is one of
the rarest artisan tribes in Kerala. They are mostly found in the Wayan region.
Ruallikuruma is one of the three subdivisions of ‘Kurumba’ and the two others
being ‘Mulla’ and Jen Kuruma tribals. Uralikurumas herald themselves as the
followers of ancient ‘Kurumba’ or ‘Pallava’ which were once so powerful
through southern India. Uralikurumas are also called bet Kurumas. While Bet
Kurumas, found now in the Mysore district of Karnataka speak Kannada, these
tribals in Wayanad speak a mixture of Kanada and Malayalam languages.

Social Life

Traditionally they were cultivators of land who occasionally hunted for
food. Their settlements are known as ‘Vedu’ consisting of a number of huts
(Pers) arranged in a planned manner around a central open quadrangle, if the
number of huts is large, then a second or subsidiary quadrangle may be
formed. At the centre of the quadrangle is the ‘Daiva Pera’, the hut of the
Gods. The women of the household show off their best artistic talents in
decorating the walls by drawing figures of animate and inanimate objects, according to them, difficult to name. Ceremonies connected with birth, puberty attainment, marriage and death are conducted in it.

All the houses are built on raised planes, generally rectangular and one-roomed in planes, with a wide Varanda running on all sides. The roof traditionally thatched with layers of grass, slopes steeply, the caves extending over the platform formed by the plinth from the ground level.

They are segmented into exogamous groupings known as Kura-(house). There are hundreds of them grouped into four clans, Mooroli, Eytholi, Aroli and Bandaroli. They are matrilineal descent groups. Mooroli and the Etholi are the most popular in Wayanad. A headman is called ‘Megalan’ and each clan selects a Headman.

The Kurumas chose their life partners from their tribe itself. Marriage (maduve) between cross cousins is preferred, though monogamy is the norm polygamy is permitted with social approval. Widow / widows and divorces may remarry. Sorority is prohibited. Girls are married only after attaining puberty and bride price is payable a pendant (minnu) is the symbol of married status for women.

One salient feature of Kuruman women is their skill in preparing an Ayurvedic medicine by name ‘Kurukkumpuli’ using the ripe mangoes from the forests. This can be used as medicine and for preparing foods just like our tammirine. For preparing the Kurukkumpuli 12-48 hrs is necessary for boiling the mango juice and it is rich in vitamin C. Kuruman women prepared this for their own use and for giving presentation to relatives at the time of delivery and other functions. Deforestation advisedly affected these herbal medicines and also deprived of getting edible items like roots, fruits leaves and tubers from the forest.

When a person dies they believe that the soul of the good become gods and that of the bad become devils. They worship deities as ‘Bettu Chikkamma’ and ‘Bamadu’ and also demons and ancestral spirits. They play the flute and drum during their festival occasions. An old man in the group performs rites to their deity. Women are not allowed to participate in these
ceremonies. But they are skilled potters. Baskets and mats of various types with reeds and bamboos are handmade goods and they also manufacture clay pots internally.

Kurumans mainly occupied in Meenagadi, Poothadi, Manjikandi colonies of Wayanad and as their own traditional art, culture, music and dance.

Their language has its own distinctive features and is very different from the other tribal dialects of the area. It is very close to Kannada.

9. MALA ARAYAN

They are scheduled tribes mainly found in Ottawa and Pathananthitta district. The word means ‘king of mountains’ and their forefathers were rulers (‘Arayans’) of the first.

Their myth of origin show that they had been Sanskritized fairly early; one of the stories is that they were descended from sage Gautama and his errant wife Ahalya who had been transformed into a rock by his curse, to be released from it when Shree Rama stepped on the rock. They therefore themselves call ‘karimkal brahmanar’ – Brahmins of the rock. In the medieval times they were brought under the pinjar rajas and subjected to a poll tax, payable a ‘head tax’(tala karam) for males and ‘breasts tax’ for females, in protest, they shocked the avaricious raja by presenting to his agent a served male head, and female breast in payment of the tax.

Their houses were good substantial creation of wood and stone but some prefer temporary huts of mud, bamboo and grass thatch, every son has his own room into which no one intrudes, except himself and his wife. The houses were build on the banks of stream and with a raised ground level. But Malayarayan living in interior forest settlements used to build tree houses on the top of tall trees,(Aana maadam) in order to keep out of the reach of gracing wild elephants.

Arayans are some of them being rich, being large cultivators of hill slopes, which they clear of in dry season and sowing during rains. They continue to practice shifting cultivation with a complicated series of
observances and techniques even a little more than a century back. Now these systems are only legendary memories.

Now they have taken to settled agriculture, and forest has been destroyed. Several Malayarayans have been alienated of their fertile land by hordes of land-grabbers who rushed in to their homelands. Several have converted their holding to rubber plantations. Tapioca has replaced paddy in several areas. Fruits are now in the produce of horticulture to be marketed at maximum profit. Animal husbandry is as common as among non tribals.

There are no sub-clans, but they are divided into six exogamous ‘illums’ there are humorous myth associated with the foundation of these divisions which are remembered now in order to regulate marriage. They used to follow matrilineal inheritance and succession. They observed no rituals and performed no ceremonies during pregnancy. Once puberty rituals were elaborate, but not strictly observed now though close relatives may be invited for a feast.

In the past, the initiative for marriage was with boy’s parents, it continues to be so. The rites and ceremonies have undergone great changes. The trend is to adopt the practices and observances of neighbouring Ezhava communities which have been sanskritised under the influence of Sree Narayana Guru Swamy and his disciples.

Malayarayan buried the dead, after applying oil, dressing with new clothes etc. The eldest son and eldest nephew were joint chief mourners the grave was marked by plating two big stones. Pollution lasted for 16 days and a feast was served. If death had been due to un natural causes like the attack of wild animals, the body used to be buried without rituals or ceremony.

Animism and ancestral worship prevailed among them. The old faith and observances are now fading and being replaced by Hindu deities, one of the most popular is Ayyappan of Sabarimala. The tradition of local Hindu communities has influenced them very much recently.
10. **MALAPANDARAM**

The term is anglicised as Hillpandaram, they are a scheduled tribe originally resident in the Kollam and Pathanamthitta districts, but recent reports indicate that they live also in Palakkad district. They are found in the hills of Achancoil, Pathanapuram, Naduvathamoozhy and Mannarappara forest rangers in the Kollam and Pathanamthitta districts. A few Malapandaram families are staying in the Azhutha block Panchayat in the Idukki district. The Malapandarams are the most primitive tribe still pursuing a life of fruit and root gathering.

They are still semi-nomadic and have taken to agriculture with great reluctance. According to them, they had migrated into the present area from Madurai and Thirunelveli districts of Tamil Nadu. They live in groups of three or four families in a place for a while and move on to another site. These sites are generally in the deep interior forests, away from other people. They had no clothing living in holes, rocks or trees. Malapandarams numbering about 15 families live in deep hollows and caves of rocks and cliffs seen in the proximity of the forest around the hill Shrine Sabarimala. It is said that they started living in and around Sabarimala about 40 years ago and the only human contact they have had with the outside world was the pilgrims who come to Sabarimala hill shrine. But now they prefer small huts, circular in plan and conical elevation, with floor at ground level and thatched with wild leaves which are abandoned when the group level and thatched with wild leaves which are abandoned when the group move on.

They now depends on the roots and tubers. Some familiar settled in forest clearings, have taken to cultivate paddy tapioca, plantains etc. The harvest suffices for two or three months, requirements. They catch fish from the streams and pounds, but have not developed traps or nets. When they are hungry they may remain in their hut for several days and still they do not practice robbery and stealing. They do not tell lies, do not steal or rob. Strictly vegetarian, they are averse to hunting animals. Once the forest was a cornucopia for them providing delicious fruits and roots of various types. Now the situation changed and they have to come out of the forests looking for food.
Malapandarams are still unaccustomed to washing themselves and brush their teeth regularly.

Their major mean of livelihood is the collection of minor forest produce. Honey and beeswax form the bulk of their collections. Now they sell it through Girijan co-operative society.

The families who have settled down have some areas under wet cultivation where they group paddy. After the harvest, they make offerings to Kuruppaswamy, their main deity to ancestral spirits and in sacred spots in the forests.

In favourable locations like Manappara, where the land is level, the soil fertile and a stream to water the area they cultivate plantains, vegetables, tapioca and other miscellaneous crops including papaya. These find a ready market in the near by estate sites some taken as far away as Punaloor for sale.

A few find employment in the various estates, which have come up in the area including the state-farming co-operation, which has a rubber plantation nearby. The Forest department employees some of them as firewatcher and as wild life guides. In Achancoil some are occupies as causal agricultural and manual labour.

They have no sub groups or clans. Two or three families live together with a headman called ‘Muppan’. He is also priest of the community. A hut would be constructed for him by others ad food collected by each shared with them. Now a days the Muppan has to depend on his own efforts.

The family is the unit of social organization and may be loosely knit. The continuing pattern of separation and re-aggregation between families and individual is an important aspect of Malapandaram social organization. Divorce is easy by desertion. Inheritance devolves equally among sons and nephews or may equally divided among daughters and nieces. Now a days they follow matrilineal succession.

Childbirth is considered more polluting than menstruation. Birth is in an isolation shed built for the purpose about 100 meters away from the living hut by the husband. Men are forbidden to visit or see her. She is assisted by an elderly women. Pollution lasts for 6 months if the baby is male and only 5 if
female. During this period the husband should stay at home. Naming taken place when the baby is one and a half years old.

At menarche, the girl is secluded in a separate hut built for the purpose by her maternal uncle’s son, about 30 meters away from the hut. The isolation is for 14 days and during which she should neither see nor seen by a male. On the 14th day she has oil bath, places between leaves and nuts before the elders and receive presents. Once a girl attained puberty, they are married to a person of her blood relation. Due to early marriage girls at the age of 10 are found to have become mothers.

The boy’s father takes the initiative to arrange a marriage for him. Bride price has not been reported. The marriage is not bride’s house, the tying of the tali being done by the boy himself, not with the help of this sister. Her father joins the right hand of the bride to the right hand of the groom. The couple sits on a mat and groom’s sister places four rice balls on a leaf plate in front of them and they feed each other and a feast is served. The couple start living on a new hut constructed for them.

In the interior forest area of Manimala and Ranni ranges when a Malappandaram dies, the body is left as it is in the hut itself, and the hut burnt. The surviving members will immediately leave and not return to the site until after 3 or four years. Pollution is observed for 8 days none in the settlement will wander about on the forest. All the members of the hamlet are treated to a breakfast (Pattinikanji) on the 8th and a feast on 10th day.

They worship hills, trees and peaks, the Thalapara Mala a prominent peak being the most important Sastha (Ayyappan) to them is a sylam deity, who has his abode at Sabarimala, but Karuppaswamy, considered by Hindus as one of Ayyapan’s lieutenant, is more dreaded and worshipped God. Ancestor spirits are also worshipped. Now a days, pilgrimage to Sabarimala is popular among them.

After independence, Governors constructed colonies for them comprising of brick and tile houses, but the Malapandaram also would desert them during the minor forest produce collection season, a few would return during the monsoons, but many did not.
A colony of about 50 house was constructed for them at Achancoil and 40 hectares cleared forests and allotted to them for cultivation. Now a days the Malapandaram families have settled down in the houses and rubber has been planted in the lands, providing them with comparatively less labouries employment. They are now interested in modern education along with the children of other plantation workers.

11. MALA VEDAN

They are found mainly in the forests of Pathanamthitta, Thiruvananthapuram and Kottayam districts. They are seen in places like Urukunnu, Thenkuzhi, Thenmala, Achancovil etc. Their main occupation is hunting (‘vetta’). They are different from "vedar" who belong to the scheduled caste community.

They were once described as wearing dresses made of leaves, and therefore called by the neighbouring "Kannikar" as ‘Tolvedan’ (Veda wearing leaves). Those who eat alligator are known as chiganni vedans and those who took of eating crocodiles are known as ‘Chiganni Vedans and those who eat rates are ‘elichate’ vedan. But the modern vedas know practically nothing about these divisions.

There was a legend of their origin. When Lord Siva take the form veda and wandered through the forests with his friends, they had to face many difficulties in the forests. In that struggle some people stand firm to him and some fled away. People who stayed with him are called "Mala vedan" and those who fled away are called "Ulladens".

Their huts are generally on the brows of hills near to streams. Huts are made of cheap materials like mud walls, low thatched roofs coming down almost to the ground, and low door leading to central all purpose room. The kitchen may be in the corner of the varanda, another corner is for menstruating women.

They are now reduced to casual wage earning as agricultural labour. Government also allotted land for cultivation. The question of inheritance never bother them, for they have little to bequeath. Pre-delivery ritual of administering
tamarind decoction (pulikudi) was prevalent among them. Confinement was in a room in the hut and now a days in the near by hospital. Pollution lasts for ten days removed by sprinkling cow dug solution. A feast of 'rice kanji' would served and the baby is named on the second day.

A practice once prevalent among Malavedans and Kadar was the filing of teeth. The operation was done for men by men at the age of nine or ten. The chipping was done by a small knife. When a girl is to be operated, she lies down and rests her head on the lap of a woman, who holds it family. A third woman takes a small knife and chips away the teeth till they are shaded to a point.

The girl suffers from severe pain during the operation and her face swells. The pain and swilling continues for a day or two. Before chipping the outer edges of the teeth are smeared with ‘Chunnamp’ (lime). It is supposed to make the chipping easier. This custom is found among several tribes in Africa, Australia where the custom is confined to the ancestor.

Manarche was once upon a time the occasion for elaborate ritual. But now it is a domestic observance of pollution for a few days.

The first person one who would approach when a young man is ready for marriage would be his brother in law. When a girl is found the local astrologer (Kaniyan) is consulted and an auspicious date is fixed for marriage.

On the wedding day the bride stands in front of the hut and her uncle places for her a measure of paddy and one chakram. He then take a few grains of paddy and places them in his left hand, he removes the grain pairs. If an odd number remains all the grain is thrown over the head of the girl. He repeats the process and if he gets an even number in the end he says, the girl will be blessed with a large number of children.

On the seventh day the bridegroom’s parents go to the bride’s parents house with five measures of rice, four chakram worth of pan and ten chakrams. The bride’s father also provides an equal quantity of these materials. The women of two parties separately cook rice. Meanwhile, the male members go to the toddy shop and regale themselves. When they return they exchanged the cooked rice and pan. All enjoy a feast. Next morning the married couple to
the husband’s house. Even if the girl is not attained puberty she is allowed to live with her husband.

12. KADAR

The ‘Kadar’ (The ‘Kadan’ singular, Kadar plural) is one of the primitive tribes of Kerala are known in Anthropological literature as ‘Kadar of Cochin’. The Kadar language is a form of Tamil with Malayalam elements anthropologically they are one of the most intensively studies community for about a century. They are believed to represent a ‘negro substratum’ of the people of India- a theory that has been discarded by subsequent sophisticated physical Anthropological studies. The Kadar lived in Kingroups of three or families and lead a nomadic life in the ‘Kadu’ or forests. So they are called Kadar. The word ‘Kadar’ in Malayalam means human denizen of the forests. They occupy the summits of Annamali and Kollenkode ranges. They are a short, muscular race of deep black colour, with thick lips like Negroes. Their ancestors were ‘Nairs’ who helped the king of Kottayam.

Until the beginning of the 20th century they were semi nomadic and wore bark cloths. They are originally cave dwellers. They made temporary leaf shelters while camping forest and give up when they are going to collect minor forest produce. Their huts are neat with one or two smell huts used as menstruation or pollution huts by women in their periods. Maharaja of Cochin took paternal interest in their welfare and had a colony of masonry houses with tiled roofs constructed for them at Kuriarkutty. He also caused Ayurvedic facilities to be raided the paddy and took over the tanks for wallowing. After independence more houses were provided and now most of them in Parambikulam area live in permanent houses in the forests.

They had developed a complete technology for the collection of money distinguishing four types of bios, including ferocious Indian Rock Bees. They climbed the tallest tree using ingenious ladders fashioned from bamboo and rested against the giant tree trunks. To collect the honey from Rock Bees they would let down fiber ladders from the top and smoke away the bces and collect honey.
Their methods of collecting honey and wax are worthy of detail. They carry on this business only at nighttime. One of them goes out with a basket hanging loose from his neck by means of a string and a glaring torch held in his hand and ascends the tree on which the hive has been discovered, on pegs driven in one above another up to the point where the hive has been found. On seeing the torch, the bees get frightened and fly away, leaving the hive behind. Then the hive is taken out and is brought away in the basket carried on the neck. But if the honey or wax be found on a rock or a precipitous, the process is different. A ladder is made of long canes stripped of the outer covering and twisted together. This is then hung down the rock or precipice and by means of it the men climb down. It is in ways such as these that both the Malayars and kadars collect honey and wax.

They hunted small animals with the help of dogs which they trained carefully. They are fearless. They knew everything about the forests. They were also snake charmers and herbal cures for snakebites.

A singular custom was that of chipping all or some of incisor teeth both upper and lower into the form of sharp pointed core. The chipping would be done with a chisel on boys at the age of 18th girls at the age of 10. It was a quite a painful operation and had parallels with some practices among the Malavedan of Kerala and Tribes of Africa and Australia. The practice is now gone out of vogue among the Kerala.

They are expert elephant catchers. In ancient times Maharaja granted presents to the most valiant Kadar among the elephant trappers.

They used to carry wander on bamboo internodes. Now a day a carthen and aluminium vessels are used. The staple food of Kadar is rice. This is also supplemented with roots, meat and fish, beef and buffalo meat and tabaco. They drink, toddy, arrack and smoke ‘beedi’.

The hamlet headman is called ‘Muppan’. He controls the socio-political matters of hamlet. In olden days they are installed by the Royal family of Kochi and here ‘Moopans’ wield much powers in the community without his consent no marriage puberty, ceremony, funerals and death rituals could be celebrated. Mooppan do not wield the same authority is in the past.
Kadar follows a bilateral system of inheritance to which matrilineal and matrineal inheritance and succession pattern have permeated to an approved degree.

Cross cousin marriages is not favoured or prohibited. A boys selects a girl an obtains the sanction of the headman of this settlement in which she lives. A token of live was the presentation of a curved bamboo comb by the boy to the girl.

Birth was usually in an isolation hut in which the mother and baby stay for ten days after the delivery. It is interesting to note that they had indigenous methods of birth control, using extracts of the forest vegetation. A Menarche the girl\' is continued in an isolation shed and stays for seven days. After purification bath on 7th day she is received in the settlement and given new clothes and presents. During the night the youngster indulge in entertainments enjoyments and folk dance. Birth pollution is observed for 91 days and death pollution for 5 to 7 days and death pollution for 16 days. Burial was adopted. The grave is on the western side of the settlement. All the implements and articles used by the deceased are buried with the body. The chief mourners are the eldest son or eldest nephew.

Their chief dietty of Kadars is ‘Malavay’ (Hillmen) and’Malakurathy. A house of tree called Kannimaram also worshipped. The induction of large armies of workers from Tamil Nadu for the construction of dams and other works brought in the worship of Mariamma and other village deities of the neighbouring villages like ‘Kathavarajan’ Kadar worship Hindu deities after ritual fasts. Onam and Vishu are the two important festivals celebrated by the Kadar.

Today many changes are occurred in regard to dress tattooing and teeth chipping and have almost disappeared. Kadar are not dark as described in earlier days. The difference between one generation and another is easily visible. On a Kuriakutty, they have been found to be serious in taking to agriculture. They were always at the tender meries of the Forest Department and its local officials. Most of their land was planted with teak, under an ambitious plan to earn increasing returns from forest wealth for the state. The
area was declared as wild life sanctuary and the Kadar lost to the right to hunt and trap small game, so essential and important a part of their menu. The circuit available for them for collection of minor forest produce was curtiled when the most productive forests in the valleys bottom were in undated by the reserve. They are now been reduced to the position of being earners, subsisting on employment under the Department, or the contractors providing various services and works under Tamil Nadu Public Works Department, which owes and merges the Parambikulam Aliyar Project. The strangest factor is the enforced secondary primitiviation imposed by the strict preservation of their habitat as a Wild Life Sanctuary.

13. MALAKURAVAN

Malakuravans are seen in the forests of Quilon, Trivandrum and Kottayam. They are mainly concentrated in Chittar, Kattachira, Rajampura and certain other places in Nedunmangad. They are different from scheduled caste kuravans and treated as lower strata among the tribes. Dialeet is a composition of Tamil and Malayalam. They have their custom, dances and music.

The Malakuravan had their origin from ‘Kauravas’ in the battle of Mahabharata. Some of the Kauravas fled away from the battlefield and they crossed the Western Ghats and entered in the forest of Kerala. Thus malakuravan has a very old tradition. They have four division in Kerala.Kankuravan, Pandikuravan,Kakka kuravan and Ponkuravan (kakkan-kakkathi).

The malakuravan families huddle together in huts away from the choice sites of non-nucleated villages, which have sprung up. They have not been reduced to depending on wage labour in the estates they have come up. Some, living near to the forests continue their traditional occupation of collecting forest produce both for survival (roots, tubers, fruits etc) and for making marketable surplus(wild pepper, honey etc.) others have joined the army of workers engaged in the extraction of reeds. They are among the poorest in the locality. They also know palmistry.
In the past they where divided into eight exogamous clans, these are hardly remembered now. To the extent that it is known, clan exogamy is practiced. A woman retains her affiliation to her natal clan even after her marriage, and her children also belong to the matrileal clan. Matrilateral cross cousin marriage is preferred. Each settlement used to have a village council presided over by ‘Urali’, now a days the urali retains socio-religious functions, but the council is definite. When an Urali dies, his son succeeds to the post.

A man marries the widow of his deceased elder brother, though an elder brother may not marry the widow of his younger brother. The surviving brother or mother’s uncle looks after the children of a deceased brother.

Like other Kerala communities, the pre-delivery ritual of drinking tamarind extract (pulikudi) is observed in the seventh month. Most take their woman to the nearest hospital or health centre for delivery. Pollution is observed for seven days and the purification is by sprinkling cow dung solution. On the 27th day, the baby is named

At menarche, a girl is confined in a room, where other girls of her age keep her company. The bath at the end of the seventh day may be postponed in order to make it coincide with a Monday or a Thursday. Which are considered auspicious.

Negotiated marriages or love marriages are the most frequent. Bride price has become a thing of the past, the tendency is to pay dowry. Marriages are conducted in public places or temples, with a party, loud speakers blaring out cinema songs. Exchange of garlands and rings complete the ceremony. Residence after the marriage is determined by convenience.

In the past, the chief mourner at death used to be the nephew, but now it is the son of the deceased. Cremation is preferred to burial, the rites are now getting established in the pattern of the Ezhava practices prevailing in the area.

The old deities are remembered only by the aged. They worship animals and trees, after temple entry are welcome to as anyone else to spend their hard earned money at any temple.
14. MALAYAN

The Malayars (from Mala – mountain) means the men of the mountains. The Malayars and the Kadars are identical races living about the western and eastern side of shuys respectively. In point of natural characteristics, they partake of the nature of the aborigines of the country. The myth is that they are the offspring of Siva and Parvathi who changed himself as ‘Vedan’ and ‘Vedathy’.

The Malayar language is a felicitous combination of Tamil and Malayalam, diversified here and there by the admixture of certain singular provincialisms. Their pronounciation is of a curious kind. The Malayars are socially provincialisms. Their pronounciation is of a curious kind. The Malayars are socially superior to the Kadars, who are little between than savages. In physical appearance even the slaves are inferior to the Malayars. Each community of the Malaya sect has its own chief, who collects the dues from them and arranges their barer for them.

They mainly subsist on rice, wild game and arrow root and occupy themselves in the cultivation of small spots of rali and felling timber and firewood, which fetches them something to live upon.

Their main occupation is collecting honey and beeswax and they are also famour as trackers in jungle, by which pursuits they manage to make up any deficiency in their means of subsistence. Like some of slave classes, they are exceedingly fond of toddy, which they consume in large quantities.

Their ornaments consist of a long string of beads tied found the neck. Their women also are fond of ornaments; and usually wear strings of white and red beads round their necks, bangles on their arms and rings on their fingers and often on their toes. Rigid endogamy is enforced amongst them, they marrying within their own village. Polygamy is absolutely unknown amongst them; but divorce is freely allowed for infidelity on the part of the wife; though it is a matter for eventual settlement by the villagers. When wife is so divorced by the husband, she is not afterwards taken back by him; but may be re-married to another man. But cases of divorce are extremely rare. Their marriage customs have something peculiar about them. At a marriage, feasting of guests take
place at the expense of the bridegroom’s father; and after the conclusion of the marriage he makes a small gift to the girl’s mother and only a present to the daughter for her to buy a new dress with. The pair then proceed to a newly built cottage erected as their futures place of residence, where they spend therest of their lives in such little comfort as they can derive from their straitened circumstances.

The believe in a Supreme Deity who presides over their destinies and supplicate Him through their tribal God who is called a Mullung, which is a stone placed inside a circular wall erected for the purpose. It may be summarized that they are practically an ancestor-worshipping class, the spirits of their various ancestors being represented by a collection of stones, one for each. Such spirits are invoked for help and protection from calamities of all kinds. Towards the month of April they offer sacrifices of honey and sometimes of goats; and failure to do this is believed to bring about their destruction by tigers and wild elephants.

One peculiar custom amongst them requires special notice. They repose a profound belief in the evil powers, which they are capable of exercising over one another through their evil deities, who are their guardian angles. Hence, when one of them finds wax or honey on a particular tree, he takes special care to examine its bar to see whether it bears any sign made by another in indication of its previous discovery and appropriation by him, in which case he religiously abstains from taking out the honey or the wax, any evil influence should be exercised on him by the previous finder. This scrupulous observance of the sanctity of possession by them seems to account for the comparative scarcity of crime in Malayar life.

The diseases they commonly contract are not numerous. It is not strange that living as they do amidst mountainous surroundings and breathing the poisoned air of those regions they are subject to attacks of malarious fever; but they are their own physicians, who can cure themselves and cases of fever are not very frequent; nevertheless, they are subject to constant attacks of cholera. They are also believed to be powerful snake-charmers and to be able to effect curse is case of cobra poisoning, with a green leaf administered
internally to the patient, and applied externally to the part affected by the bite. They bury their dead, instead of cremating them.

The Malayar houses are of a peculiar pattern. They are raised on clumps of bamboos, which are all cut about the middle to the same height so as to produce an even surface high up from the ground. This surface is then converted into a sort of flooring by spreading planks closely all over it and over the planks a thick layer of mud is beaten down and rendered firm. Then other planks are fixed perpendicularly to the four sides of the flooring, in a closely set order, so as to serve as walls. Over these latter is again put a roofing of planks, and openings are made in the walls, thus making a stronghold against the devastations of wild animals. Entrance to this dwelling is facilitated by means of a ladder made by cutting away the knots from a single bamboo outside the clump and leaving only the root ends of these knots to serve as stairs or steps to descend or ascend by. The Malayars keep in their custody all the year round a number of very strong bows and a cluster of arrows with slightly spread, out and sharpened iron ends; some of which are kept always ready in their furnaces to be shot red hot at wild animals that approach them. They kill the game, bring it home, faly it, and dry it in the sun so as to preserve it for winter living. The Malayars are extremely devoted towards their masters, the owners of the mountains where they take up their abodes. They make presents to them occasionally of honey and wax. Instances are common in which they have shot and killed lonely passers, by in the neighbourhood of their mountain abodes and robbed them of all their belongings. They are a sturdy, muscular race, endowed with tremendous physiques; and their bows, their ordinary weapons of offence and defense, are incapable of being bent to any appreciate extent by our strongest – built men.

15. MANNAR

Mannar tribal community is seen in Kottayam, Ernakulam and Quilon districts. They centre round in Kottayam, Kattapana, Kumili, Kallar etc. even though Hindu origin some of them embraced Christianity. But in life and culture there is no difference. They have no relation with 'Mannan' or 'Vannan' of scheduled caste in Kerala.
They settled in sites selected after a divination (Kotangi) performed by a magician or an elderly mannan, with the aid of paddy grains. The huts are comparatively large and build on six wooden posts or poles, with thatching of leaves of reeds or grass. The walls are also of same material.

A separate hut is build about 3 to 5 meters away to serve as a seclusion hut for women which they are considered polluted by puberty, menses or child birth. This hut should be obligatorily at a lower height than the main house.

Boys of marriageable age were not allowed to sleep in their parents hut, but had to shift to a bachelor's hut, which was build larger in size than the average residential hut. Correspondingly, all young unmarried women were housed in another shed, in the charge of an elderly woman. These institutions have disappeared now. They tattoo the right or left arm, and their foreheads with representation of various gods, fish, sun, moon etc. These are first drawn on the body parts with charcoal and pricked over with a needle, then a solution of avara plant is applied over the prick marks.

Their mainstay used to be shifting cultivation. They also would organise hunting expedition to augment their food supply, even rats and porcupines were caught. The women enjoyed fishing, groups of them disporting in the water to do so. The men were expert in tree climbing and collected honey and bee wax. They also collected wild cardamoms, reeds and other items. All these conditions have changed now. Most areas in their range has been formed into Thekkady Wild Life Sanctuary (tiger). Shifting cultivation has been put down. The peripheries of the sanctuary to which they were re-settled have now been encroached upon and form townships. Tea, coffee, cardoman and other estates have curtailed Mannan's shifting cultivation circuits.

The Mannans have thus been effectively deprived both of their traditional resource baser as well as their life support systems.

Now they depend on casual labour and the luckier individuals as workers in the plantation estates government have constructed model housing colonies for them, but these are now badly maintained. The settlers have grabbed several facilities intended for them. Many Mannan are now engaged as headload workers.
They have hierarchical organisation with a Raja mannar, whose sway extended over all the tribe. The institution survives, through diminished authority.

They are aware of the modern education and their Moopan thevan raja Mannar visited the school in Vamanapuram in Thiruvananthapuram district recently to get education for their children (Appendix- 13). Mannar have no formal education and illiteracy is rampant among the older generation.

In Idukki district one Balawedy and one primary school is functioning well. A parametric hostel for boys and one for girls is functioning in Kumili.

In livelihood of Mannan community fishery hs an important place, Kumali fisheries co-operative society is established in 1985 and at the present the secretary and board of directors belong to Mannar community.

16. MUTHUVAN

They are a special tribe mainly living in the deep and dense forest inland of Devikulam, Adimali and Nedumkandam block Panchayats. They had been tamed by the mesmerism of nature and were forced to unite and co-operate with the natural phenomenons respectfully and living very typically with their own heritage. They drink water from the deep forest streams (brooks) eating wild roots and living a simple life. They are exclusively different with the other clans of the tribes and civilized people. They like to live a secluded life fostering their own culture. Since they are in the deepest parts of the forest, they are illiterate, ignorant and very superstitions. The lack of basic centres of health, education and other facilities stop them to know about the necessities of life. Their economical, social and educational improvement is negligibly nil and it has been a phenomenon for centuries. Almost 90% of the people are living in bamboo huts. Their reluctance and refusal to social development has been little bit changed and they are being motivated continuously for a better life. Their women are strictly prohibited to have any relationship with the outside world other than their bamboo huts. They are severely secluded in the huts not allowing even to talk to other men. Literacy is a difficult term for them and the knowledge for a good life is little that their present state in the latter half of the
20th century is not different from the fate of the first men. They begin consuming tobacco at an early age and more over their men are too much addicted to liquor and other intoxicants. They cultivate Ragi in their own farms. They have 3 to 10 acres of forestlands for cultivation. But the unfortunate thing is that cardamom and other refined forest products they collect are being devalued and the mediators are exploiting Muthuvans superbly. Their ignorance in the modern farming methods and their inability to invest money for agriculture are being exploited. Their huts are very much congested and stay close to one another. Their lack of awareness in sanitation and health programs put them in a battalion of infectious diseases and this lead to the untimely death of Muthuvans.

17. KURICHIYAR

Kurichiyar, centre rounds the kannevam forest of Malabar area. They also see in Badagara and Quilandy taluks of the Kozhikode district. They are also seen in Kottayam, Kurumbanad etc. Their social position is relatively very high in Malabar than other tribes.

Kurichyar them selves proclaim that they are assigned this name by the Pazhassi Raja for whom they have bravely fought. There is evidence from history to show that they are excellent Bowman played an imported role in Pazassi Raja's rebellion against British in the beginning of 19th century. The place they used as their base for this gorilla fight is still known as Kurichiyard meaning the place of Kurichyans.

Untouchability more prevailed among Kurichayar. They feel that they will not out caste if they mingle with other castes especially scheduled caste. They do not even touch one another, especially the Kurumans and Kurichayar in Wayanad. They do not drink water from other low caste tribes. If a lower caste enters into their 'Kudi' they left it and wint away or get it burned. They also people in land. They consider them as devils and have no purity. They believe that they belong to superior caste and inter mingle only with Namboothiries. They do not touch Paniya or Pulaya. They believe that opening of schools in forest areas result in fury of Gods and God will punish them in the form of diseases. They will not go to hospital due to fear of out casting from the
contact with other peoples.

There is a pula for 41 days associated with childbirth. The father should not see the newborn child till the pula is over. The naming ceremony takes place in the third year of birth.

Honesty permeates all aspects of Kurichiya life. This outstanding character was instilled to them from infancy by association with elders through their folk songs, and the fear that they would be disgracing their ancestors and gods, through their taboos and the entire process of their socializing.

They are, among the better off tribal communities, and most of them have always had lands. They live in scattered homesteads each a self-contained unit with its own hills, fields and tanks. The open yard in front of the main dwelling unit is called ‘mittam’. It is the venue for all the important life cycle rituals, ancestor worship rites, congregation of the extended households and its relation on all important occasions. The building may be build on raised platforms, and the walls formed of wattle plastered over with mud and cow dung veandhas will be formed with thatched roofing all around.

The main weapon for battle as well as hunt consisted of bow and arrow. every Kurichyan used to be judged by his proficiency in their use. They made their bows from fire hardened bamboo staves and spun the cords from fibres of various plants.

With diminution of wild life population and the strietares of the laws relating to wild life protection, bows and arrows are now carefully preserved as heirlooms in the family armouries.

They have ‘vettakalan’ hunter god, in whose honour a ceremonial hunt is used to be held in September- October.

They used to keep large hards of cattle; the dung was the chief source of manure and mixed with water for plastering their floors.

Agriculture and hunting are their main occupation. At birth the child may make them heard the sound of a bow and arrow at first sound and if it is a girl child they make them heard of a sweeping sound. Even at the burial ground they show an arrow if it is a man and sickle if it is a woman. Thus bow and arrow has an important role in their life. Even their recerative activities also
centre round a story of hunting. Their main songs are 'manpattu' and 'naripattu' related to deer and jackal respectively.

In history also they place their stamp as the protector of Pazashi Raja for at about nine years until he committed suicide. The Kurichiyar are the most developed among the tribes. They are small land owners where as the other tribes are mostly labourers. The Kurichiyars have a great martial tradition. Development activities have changes their life style, through co-operative sectors. It is said that ‘Sastha’ and Ulladan were master and servant and were descends of a Brahmin women.

18. ULLADAN

Ulladen tribes are concentrated on Alleppy, Trissur, Ernakulam, Palakkad and Idukki districts. They are also seen in Achankoil and Sabarimala. Some of them are not living in hills or forests. They are seen in low country and hills. As their name signifies they were originally residents in interior forests. They were segmented into four endogamous sects:-ulladen, cherappan and Nayadi , being considered as separate groups while thallipan act as barber to other communities. They are real forest race. They are known as Kattalan (the jungle man) they are considered as lowest among the tribes.

Ulladans on the seacoasts make boats and cut timbers. Their brethren in the interior gather honey and collect minor forest produces, and sell it to contractors. During the agriculture season they engage in every kind of agricultural work such as ploughing, sewing, transplanting reaping etc. they also craze the cattle of the farmers. They are still continuing jungle cultivation and hunting. Now some of them are labourers.

They get a few annas worth of paddy for their labour. For most of the months in the year they are in a half serving condition and resort to eating wild roots and animals which they set hold of.

Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer wrote, their huts situated in the forest plains by the side of paddy flat or in coconut gardens. The huts are erected in the bamboo posts, the roof and the floor sides of which are covered with plaited coconut leaves. Bamboo frame work of the same leaves, serves the purpose of the doors.
The caste assembly consisted of the elderly members of the caste. There is a head man called Muppan and he had an assistant who is known as ponamban. The head man has to preside at all marriage and funeral ceremonies and to decide all disputes connected with the caste.

In religion the Ulladan are pure animist or demon worshipers. All cases of sickness and other calamities are attributed to the malignant influence of demons, who it is necessary to propitiate. They worship kappiri thikudi and chathan all of whom are represented by a stone placed under a thatched roof known as ‘Kottil’. They made only temporary ‘Kottils’ (huts) and change their dwelling arts reaping.

The Ulladan generally bury the dead in special place called chotala, but some of them bury the corpse a few yards far from their huts. The young are buried deep in the ground while the older are buried not so deep. The dead body is placed in a new piece of cloth a spread on a bamboo bier what is carried by the relatives to the grave yard. The caste men of the neighbourhood including the relatives and friends of the deceased accompany the bier to the burial ground and return home after bathing. The members of the family fast for the night. They observe pollution for 15 days and in the morning of the 16th day the talipan comes and cleans the huts and its surroundings and sprinkles cow dung mixed with water on members of the family as they return from bathing in order that they may be freed from pollution. They entertain their caste men on that day.

As regard social status the Ulladan form the chandalas of the plains. Their approach with a radius of 64 feet’s pollutes Brahmins and all higher castes, including the sudras. The ulladans cannot walk along the public places or come to markets or bazzars.

Ulladans are real forest race and they are known as ‘Kattalans’, the jungle men and they are considered as lowest among all tribes. The population of the group is about 300. They are still continuing jungle cultivation and hunting. But now some of them are working as laborers. Even some among them are giving as government employees. They have no permanent dwellings. Anyway they lead a peaceful contented family life.
19. **URALI**

‘Uralical’ is very primitive type people who had been acculturated because of their geographical isolation and primitive means of livelihood. The name can be interpreted to mean to those who love in the village. They were the Umbrella holders of king Madura, come to jungle to escape from slavery. They are found in various places in Kerala, Periyar, Vandenmede Upputhara, Cheradykuddy, Pathipally, Churuli Varaimony, Kanchiyar, Chittor, Kattachira, Vedekkemala, Vazhathoppe and Cheruthoni.

They are experts in making earthen pots without the use of wheels. Women trample mud until it is of suitable consistency, then they mould it into a long rope like form. A flat disc is patted out with the hands to form the bottom of the pot, the mud in the rope like form is wound round and over it, layer by layer, forming the vessel. Then they beat outside and inside surface smooth and apply decorations on the outside, dry it in the sun fire it in a kiln. The pots are substantial and long lasting. But now, cheap substitute from the potter communities and aluminum and plastic utensils have killed the industry.

They are skilled collectors of varied minor forest produce with which their forest habitat is richly stocked. Husbands and wife team collect honey in the dark nights from the deep forests. Now-a-days, the produce they collect is traded through Girigen Service Co-operative societies for a comparatively better remuneration than they used to get under the regime of Minor Forest Produce contractors.

The main traditional occupations were shifting cultivation food gathering, hunting and fishing. The man did hazardous jobs like climbing trees etc and women collected, harvested and cooked. The women were also expert at basket and mat weaving.

They are divided into eight recognized clans known as ‘kootum’eg.’kannakutum,’ periyilakutum’ etc. The social organization revolves round nuclear family even though extended and joint family type are not uncommon. Authority is patriarchal, but in the event of father’s death the maternal uncle act as guardian of the minor children.
They had a 'kanny' or 'kannikaran', plathy and panchayat in each settlement, which usually consists of a single clan. The 'kanny' used to carry a stick with a silver crest as the symbol of authority. The council exercised considerable powers of punishment to enforce adherence to the community norms.

As the interior settlement and as temporary shelters in their shifting cultivation sites. They used to put up tree houses known as 'erumadam'. They are hesitant to plough and they believe that ploughing pains the Goddess of Earth. Another notable feature of their settlement is 'Amballam a combination of work-shed, meeting place and a dormitory for the bachelors. Visitors from other settlement also accommodated in it.

Marriage by exchange of sisters had been traditionally the most common mode for finding mates. No man can have a wife unless he has a sister whom he can give in exchange. An Urali who has no sister has to lead a life of single blessedness. A woman who commits adultery or has liaison with a non-Urali is liable to be excommunicated. These conditions are rapidly changing to the pattern now universal in Kerala. In the past, a girl is isolated in a tree house remote from the habitations of her people, at menarche and before her time of delivery. But now these taboos are forgotten and delivery often takes in a hospital.

They believed in a supreme God, 'Padacha Tampuran', who is the creator of the Universe and is formless and unknowable.

They speak a dialect of their own with many words borrowed from Kannada, Tamil, Tulu, and Malayalam.

Urali in several settlements have been the victims of repeated evictions from their occupations during the constructions of the giant Idukki Hydel Project. Roads were cut through their homelands, which constituted the richest resource of minor forest produce, without regard for their rights and for which they have no records. These works polluted their water sources and their fishing grounds. The rivulets and streams were swallowed up in the mighty water spread of the reservoir. No serious efforts have been undertaken to rehabilitate the outstees.
20. **MARATI**

Maratis are notified as a scheduled tribe, in the Hosdurg and Kasargode. Historically they claim to be the origin from Maharashtra. Their dialect is also close similar to the Marati language. Even though their mother tongue is Marati, they are bi-lingual in Tulu, Kannada and Malayalam languages. They are settled cultivators, some of them owning and cultivating large areas of fertile hill sides, with high value commercial crops like areca nut, pepper, turmeric, ginger etc. they have selected holdings which are commanded by rivulets and springs, so that irrigation is readily available. They allow bi-lateral cousin marriages and are segmented into 12 patrilineal exogamous clans. The woman folk are locally known as ‘Bat’.

The earliest mention of this tribe is found in an inscription in the Konkan-Poona pass and dates back to first century B.C. They were believed to be migrated from Goa. They are original emigrants from Maharashtra. They are wealthy and well developed. They never mingle with tribals. Their main occupation is business. They have good houses with adequate facilities. They had better living conditions. They do not mix, inter marry or inter dine with any of the other tribe and treat them all as low. Their custom and ceremonies are those of the high class Hindu.

They had the institution of the ‘Gothukaran’ that is the headman, also known as ‘Yajamanan’. Brahmin priest are engaged at their marriages. The ‘tali’ or ‘dharimoni’ is used as the wedding symbol; it has to be presented by the groom to the bride, along with a nose ring and a blouse. Widow re-marriages are permitted, while a virgin bride is known as a ‘knodhara’, a widow appearing as bride is known as ‘budu dhara’.

Polygamy and sorority are not permitted, levirate is prohibited. Divorce is granted fairly easily and divorcees can re-marry, though divorcees and widows are not permitted to re-marry relatives of their former husband. Menarche is observed with the segregation of the girl for four days. Childbirth entails pollution for a month, but on the 20th day, a ceremony ‘pulla’ is conducted to worship the gods and the newborn is placed in a cradle for the first time. Dead bodies are cremated, with ritual similar to that of Brahmins.
There is another community who speaks Malayalam and Tulu known as ‘Maaraadis’ in Hosdurg taluk. They are similar to Nayadis of central Kerala especially Palakkad and Trissur districts and regarded as the lowest in the caste hierarchy, but merely untouchable and even useable. The name signifies those with no cloths on their breasts. Maratis are the poorest of the poor, but they are not even scheduled as a caste.

Actually maratis are not adivasis but included in the list of scheduled tribe. Their culture is also different from adivasis. Very recently Maratis are excluded from the list of scheduled tribes by Government of India in 2002. All concessions and scholarships are also stopped.

Major population of scheduled tribes 18% in Kerala is distributed in Wayanad district. They mainly consist of Kaniyars, Kurumas, Adiyars, Kurichiyar, Uralies and Kattunaikans. It forms 36% of total percentage of the state. The cultural profile of these communities represents different tribal categories. The Kurichiyans are mainly agriculturists. Kuruman is an artisan group who is also efficient in carpentry, blacksmith and preparation of hand made pottery. A division of Kuruman is (Mullakuruman is an agricultural group who was once practiced shifting cultivation and hunting). Adiyan and Paniyan are agricultural serfs. Kattunaikans were food gatherers and labourers of the forest department. Each of these tribal communities have their own culture and tradition even though they are distributed in the same ecological niche.

Wayanad the so-called tribal belt and experienced large scale immigration of non tribal communities form the Travancore area during the last few decades. Christians and Muslims were the dominant immigrants. After settlement in Wayanad, the immigrants purchased acres of lands from tribal and the poor non-tribes of the locality for nominal costs. This has also resulted changes in the occupational pattern and economic relations, especially the landless labourers like Adiyan and Paniyan were employed as wage labourers under these immigrant landlords. Later on large portion of the forestlands were deared for permanent cash crop cultivation, which has resulted a change in the dietary practices and the traditional occupation of the tribal of Wayanad. Deforestation has badly affected the health status of the tribal communities of
Wayanad. The rare herbal medicines that they prepare from the medicinal plants of the forest are also disappeared due to deforestation. Even today some of the tribal communities like Kattunaikens show an indifferent attitude towards allopathic medicines. At the same time they are not getting the traditional herbal medicines as in the past. This will lead to un-identification of certain diseases, deterioration of nutritional status and increased death rate. The iconological equilibrium plays a vital role in the socio-cultural stability of food gathers like Kattunaikan and cultivators like Kurichian and Kuruman. The estimate of occupational status of the landless tribal families shows that 95% of the adult population have been returned and remained as coolies.

Deterioration of nutritional status, poverty and the inability to adapt with the Eco-cultural is scenario; cultural social taboos have its influence on the education of their children. Government has set up certain developmental activities to change their life style. The tribes are rehabilitated in their own houses built for them by the Government. There are certain co-operative institutes in Wayanad like Mananthavadi Tribal Plantation Co-operative Limited and Suganthagiri Cardemom Project functioning under the south Wayanad Girijan Joint Farming Co-operative Society are engaged in tribal welfare activities. Special attention is given to the education of their children by these agencies and social workers.

The education of tribal is still a being problem. Inspite of a lot of efforts, they have not yet been brought to the main stream. Many are admitted to schools, but they do not remain. The only consolation is the two schools Rajiv Gandhi Residential school at Muthanga and Dr.Ambedkar Residential school at Nallurnadu near Mananthavady, set-apart for the education of tribal children. Both these have better facilities and are well run.

The tribes of Kerala have been exposed to formal education only recently. By and large their response to formal education and programmes of literacy has significantly varied between tribes. The percentage of literacy among the tribes of Kerala is rather low. While among Malayaraya and Kannikaran the percentage of literacy is about 20-25% and it is only is about
10% among such numerous large tribes such as Kurichiyan, Kuruman, Mannar, Kattunaikan and as low as 5% among Paniyan, Muthuvan, Adiyavan and Erulan.

Untouchability and alienation are two major obstacles in their educational advancement. Besides poverty, an investigator may note some other reasons too for the educational backwardness of tribals like unsuitable curriculum in sufficiency of stipends to Adivasi pupils, sickness of children, lack of trained teachers for teaching tribal students separation of parents etc are some of the main reasons for the slow progress of tribal education in the state of Kerala.
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