CHAPTER 2
TIYAS OF NORTH KERALA: A BRIEF ETHNOGRAPHIC ACCOUNT
Tiya

William Logan described Tiyar as ‘a special group of people’ who were assigned the agricultural duties, especially sowing, hence known as Tiyar (Dweeper-Islanders) and they had been deputed to plant trees in the vacant land according to a Syrian Document. In one place of the document they were called Dweeper. Izhavar worked for a particular employer, organised as a guild under a leader called ‘Talayali’ (Moopan). They had two special rights of providing tala (foot rope for climbing palm trees) or Tapp Kuli (wages) and Eni Kuli (Ladder wages).

2.1 Etymology and myths relating to the origin of Tiyas

‘The etymology of the words ‘Izhuvan’ and ‘Tiyyam’ goes to show that they were probably immigrants from Srilanka. The word ‘Tiyyan’ is another form of ‘Dweepam’ which means an islander, while ‘izhuvan’ signifies that they belong to ‘izhan’, which is an old name for Srilanka. It is said that the ‘izhuvans’ and Tiyyans are the descendants of the Shanner colonists from Srilanka, and that in their migrations to Malabar, they brought with them the coconut and Palmyra palms, the cultivation of which is even now their chief occupation.
Common myth of North Kerala about the origin of ‘Tiya’ community is that the word Tiya is derived from ‘Divyan’ which means heavenly, extraordinary, powerful etc. The legend to substantiate this statement is that, when Lord Shiva and Parvati forayed into the forests under the guise of Kirata (forest dwellers), Shiva used to tap toddy from a slanted coconut palm even if it was opposed by Parvati. One day Parvati pushed the coconut palm and straightened it so that it Shiva could not tap the toddy without climbing on it. Lord Shiva took his blond hair and slapped on his thigh to produce a boy. A boy was born and Lord Shiva directed him to climb the coconut palm and tap the toddy. Irritated by this, Parvati plucked his eyes to make him blind so that he will not be in a position to climb the tree afterwards. But Lord Shiva gave him a boon with extraordinary powers and named him as ‘Divyan’. This ‘Divyan’ is considered to be the Vayanadukulavan Teyyam’ and believed to be the great ancestor of Tiya. Vayanadu kulavan Teyyam is also known as Thondachan (Dodda > Thonda = Old / Great Accan = father.) Many of the Tiya families worship Vayanadukulavan as their Kuladaivam (Family god).

Tiyas are also called Soundikans (one who is engaged in toddy). Another myth reveals the origin of ‘Tiyas’ as it was told by Soundikan to Vishaparva, a king. When Lord Shiva was in the forest he happened to see seven celestial beauties taking bath in a lake. Lord Shiva under the guise of fire overlooked their bath. They after the bath moved to the side of fire for warming up. Lord Shiva embraced them and seven children were born and they were named as ‘Soundikas’ as their birth place was ‘Sonachalam’
Those seven children belong to seven illams (clans) and one more illam (clan) was added later and Tiyas became a community with ‘Eight illams’. The distinction between Izhavas and Tiyas is that Izhuvas have four illams and Tiyas have 8 illams. Muttill, Chovillam, Mayyanad and Matambi (some places it is known as Pallichal) are the illams of Izhuvans. Nellikka, Pullani, Vangeri, Kozhikalan, Patanguti, Manankuti, Thenankuti and Velakkan kudi are the eight illams of Tiya. But the following are the names of illams prevalent in northern Kerala: Olavatta, Parakka, Nelliikkal, Vavu, Thalakkodan, Puthiyodan, Pala and Pekkadam.

Anantharam argues that the origin of Tiyas is an Island called ‘Thera’ in Mediterranean:

“Myth was responsible to uncover the history of Minoan region and civilization to which is linked the history of Kerala. Inspired by Schliemann’s discoveries an English antiquarian, Arthur Evans, thought that the myth of sinking of the island of Atlandis into Mediterranean sea could also be true. Some scholars had suspected the island of Crete or the island Thera to be the island of Atlandis. In 1900 AD he began excavation of Knoisos the earlier capital of Crete. His excavation revealed an immense palace and amazing and lively frescoes as well as pottery and bronze articles etc. Firm circumstantial sources are there to show the flow of the Dravidans from the Mediterranean to the west coat of India, Srilanka and Bengal. King Seisostras of Egypt had constructed a canal at Suez in 1493 BC for the flow of man rowed boats of those days between the Mediterranean and Arabian seas for conducting trade
relation with India and China etc. The violent eruption of the Thera volcano and the great earthquake in Crete happened. Simultaneously in 1450 or 1470 BC, it was therefore convenient for the Cretan navigators to sail off to the west coast of India with their families and partial belongings, especially as they knew the route because of trade relation with India (Anantha Ram, 1997:19-20).

Duarte S Barbosa, who visited Malabar Coasts during the beginning of 1500 reports about the Tiyar as ‘Of low people’. According to Zevil Tiver, were eleven sects which no respected people touch under pain of death and between each other there is great difference and separation and one family does not mix with another. The best of these are labourers whom they call Tiver. Their principal employment is to till palm trees and gather their fruits.

The mythology and the ancient reports prove the fact that Tiyas are toddy tappers. The island Srilanka was known for coconut palms since ancient times. The migration from Crete to Srilanka must have been followed by migration to, as the latter was close to the former.

A. Aiyyappan, argues with the help of a folksong in Malayalam that Iravas had come from Srilanka.

Our ancestor of old

had their home in the kind of iram (Ceylon)

To the lord of Srilanka, anola (letter on leaf) was sent

By the king of Kerala
The lord of Srilanka got the letter

Then said the king of Ceylon

I shall send seven soldiers from here.

In the same song, it is mentioned that the immigrants were treated as honoured people and by royal charter they were given several of the insignia of high status. Other popular legends attribute the introduction of the coconut tree on the Malabar coast to the Irava immigrants. There is no doubt that the coconut palm was introduced into South India from the East Indian Archipelago by human agency (1906:119).

2. 2 Tiya community administration in olden days

Tiya settlements were called Taras consisting of 2 or 3 villages. One Tara had 6 to 10 Tiya tarawads (ancestral houses). There were other castes like Kavu Tiyan, Kaniyan, Vannan, Kammalan etc. living in the area of the Taras of Tiyas

The administration of a Tara was controlled by the Karanavars of four important Tharawads. They were called Tarayil Karanavars. Executive head was called Nalappadi. Administration of justice was done by the Tarayil Karanavars after a meeting. When four Taras join together it becomes a Kalakam. There were Kottila, when 32 of 64 Taras joined together. There were two Kottils such as Andallur in Tellicherry and Nilamangalam near Nileswaram.
*Chovan* in Travancore and *Tiyas* in Malabar and *Ezhava* in other parts of Kerala are similar castes and they are one of the dominant castes of Kerala. They are mainly agriculturists and agricultural labourers. They follow matrilineal, patrilineal, and a mixed system of lineage. It is also true that even among the matrilineal system followers, the membership in husband’s house was not extended to wives. The rights of the women in her house has not been surrendered at the time of marriage. The *Tiyas* population in Malabar is around 30%. Although they were agriculturists in the past, the agricultural holdings were not maintained by the *Tiyas*. It was held by the higher castes. Agricultural works in paddy fields, coconut gardens, taking of toddy from the coconut palms were the main occupations of *Tiyas* in Malabar area. But they were also doing medical practice, astrology, and sorcery as secondary occupations. They were experts in martial dances and had also worked as military personnel of the kings and chieftains. The *Chekavas* known in *Vadakkan Pattu* were *Tiyas* and they fought wars for their chieftains. Comparing to the Ezhavas of southern side, *Tiyas* of Malabar were living in higher status of the society.

The origin of *Tiya-* Ezhava- Chova community is believed to be Srilanka. The justification for this statement is that SriLanka is called *Elam* and the name *Elavan* is traced to Srilanka. Gundert has said that the name is derived thus: *Dweepan – Theepan – Theevan – Tiyan*. He again said that inhabitants of the Islands are called *Thiyyathalan* and the plantain tree brought from Maldives are called *Thiyyanvazha* (Ravivarma, 2004: 224). But
Elamkulam says that Tiyar name is derived from the word Thevaru and it is used for the worshippers of Bhoothasthanam and sacred groves. (Elamkulam, 1956: 133). Similar castes are found in Dakshina and Uttara Kannada districts of Karnataka. About the family set up of Tiyas in 1948, Kathleen Gough (Gough – 1972: 408) has analyzed as under:

1. Matrilineal family for more than two generations were found in 20% of the houses.

2. One man and his widow sister and her family for two generations were found in 30% of the houses.

3. Spouses and their male members and the family of the male members (patrilocal extended families) were found in 22% of the houses.

4. Spouses and their children were found in 28% of the houses.

5. They have eight illams or clans whose function is maintaining the system of exogamy.

6. 50 percent lived neolocally, in a house provided by the husbsand and 33% patrilocally.

It shows that there were only 50% of the matrilineal families available during 1948 and the abolition of Marumakkathayam law has come into force in the year 1933. Another interesting thing noted by Kathleen Gough is that 50% of the married persons constructed new houses, 33% stayed with the husband’s parents (patrilineal), 7% stayed in husband’s uncles house (kurchya model).
2.3 Role of Karnavars among Tiya community

There shall be a Karnvar in all Tharavads. Karnavar is the eldest male member of extended family. After his death another eldest member is selected for his post. There is no particular ceremonies for this power transformation function. A dispute between two members regarding his age is settled by the Kalakam. Some Tiya Karnavars are known as Cheray Panikkaran. (Revivarma 2004: 231) But in North Kerala, Panikker is the title bestowed to the Poorakkali artistes as a mark of distinction. It is also believed that some Tiya family had owned Kalari (martial school) along with their houses. Panikkan is the honour given to the martial exponents. There are several examples of his kind of martial ability of Tiya community in the Vadakkan Pattu (ballads of northern side). The powers of the Karnavars are limited as the family members have their own source of income from the labour works. The main function of the Karnavar is as follows:

1. To make the family members work in the lands of the family.
2. Apportion the income from the family property to the members.
3. Receive the paddy from the married ladies of the family.
4. Supervise the landed property of the family.
5. Conduct the festivals and rituals of the family.
6. Conduct the first marriages
7. Receive the bridal fees for getting the brides and giving the bridal fee for the bridegrooms.
8. Understanding the ritual functions of the family shrines.
Karnavar is worshipped as the god and honoured as the father after his death... (Revathiamma, Ibid: 41). There are teyyams performed in Tiya houses to worship the karanavars of that houses and tharwads. Karnavar teyyam is performed along with other Teyyams. The honor and affinity towards the Karnavan teyyam among tiyas is worth mentioning. Usually karnavar teyyam is to be performed as the first among teyyams in a house or in tharwads. It is only after Karnavan teyyam, other teyyams are performed. Another important feature of karnavar teyyam is that it is treated as a family member of that particular house. Sometimes it enters into the rooms and interacts with the family members.

2.4 Relationship between Kavu Tiyan and Tiyan

Kavutiyyars are the barbers of Tiya community. They are also working as the Parikarmi (ritual assistants) of Tiya community. Tiya has to take bath when he touches Kavu Tiya. But there is no restriction to eat in a pandal. Sometimes the sitting line is completed at the time of feast only if a Kavutiyyan sits in the southern side. Sometimes Kavutiyyan lights the lamps of the shrine. But a Tiyya can control the work of the Kavutiyyan. While Tiya is considered to be the higher caste than Kavutiyya the marriage between them is restricted. A Tiyya man can marry Kavutiyya lady but not vice-versa. The children born out of the above wedlock live as Kavutiyya. Another interesting thing is that a Tiya man opts Kavutiyya lady as his second wife. And the marriage is valid only when he visits her house.
2.5 Tiyan and Vannan

*Tiyan* and *Vannan* are two separate castes and have no marital relationship with each other. But vannan is the washer men for Tiyas. They also give fresh clothes to temple officials and karnavars for festivals and rituals. There is an argument that the original caste was divided into two and one section became the *Attakkaran* (performners-Vannans) and the other became the *Kalasakkaran* -toddy worshippers of Teyyam- Tiyan. (Chandera, 1978: 30-31) Vannan calls the *Tiya* as *Achan* (father), Raman-Ramachan, Kannan-Kannachan etc. It shows their relationships. It is also a fact that Vannans are also having eight *illams* like Tiyas. There is resemblance in some *illams* of the two communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tiya illams</th>
<th>Vannan illams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taliyil Peruvannan</td>
<td>Talakkodan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nellikka Vannan</td>
<td>Nellikka Tiyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manakkadan Vannan</td>
<td>Oloda Tiyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pala Vannan</td>
<td>Pala Tiyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandam Parakka Vannan</td>
<td>Parakka Tiyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kundora Vannan</td>
<td>Vavu Tiyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eramangalan Vannan</td>
<td>Pekkada Tiyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annur Vannan</td>
<td>Puthiyada Tiyan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another point to trace the commonness among the two communities is the worship. Both worship Muthappan Teyyam. The right to own Madappura (Muthappan shrine) vests only in two communities i.e Tiya and Vannan.

In the case of Teyyam performance, Vannans are considered to be a major community while Tiya is the major community behind the performance as they supply tender coconuts leavesw and toddy for the performance. The rank of the Kalasakkaran in a performance is always above the Vannan community.

2.6 Vannathimattu

The role of Vannan among the life of Tiyan is very important. Vannathi mattu (washed or purified clothes to be worn after menstruation) is unavoidable for a Tiya family. The right to wash cloths of Tiya vests on Vannan community. The female folk of Vannan community is called Vannathi. To get rid of the pollution from birth, menses and death, the washed cloths given by a Vannathi are to be worn. A Tiya can control the occupation of Vannathis. Tiya authorities can restrain the right of Mattu from the Vannathis. It amounts to a punishment to the family who are restrained from receiving the mattu. A Tiya girl accepts washed cloths from Vannathi right from her menstruation period. The Vannathis are given paddy, rice, turmeric etc inorder to receive the washed cloths for the puberty attained girl. She places the washed cloths in a pedestal. The girl, along with four other ladies, takes the Mattu with the accompaniment of lighted lamp, a measure of rice, and a kettle of water. They circle to the pedestal on which the mattu is placed and
places a coin on the mattu and keeps in the room where the girl was lying. When a family is denied the mattu by the Vannathi, it is considered as the excommunication of the family. Nobody will partake in their ceremonies and eat from the house after they are denied the mattu. There are instances that those families even denied the drinking water by the neighboring wells. In the Kalakam also mattu is denied by the kalakam officials to the wrongs done by the Tiya families. Even the higher castes such as Brahmins receive mattu from the Vannathi to purify their pollutions during menstruation. There are two types of baths performed by higher castes. One is before wearing the Mattu given by the Vannathi and another bath is after wearing the Vannathi Mattu. (Revi Varma, 2004: 239) The higher castes wear the cloths washed by their own washing communities like Veluthedan.

2.7 Pandal Mangalam

Pandal Mangalam or Thalikettukalyanam was performed among Tiya community. This is a mock marriage performed by the elderly people like Karnavars or Achanmar of the Kalakam. This was a ceremony in order to tie Tali to the girls before attaining their puberty. This is usually conducted en masse. Unless a girl is performed the Talikettu Kalyanam the whole family was subjected to ex-communication in olden times. A decorated pandal is erected after consulting the astrologer. A pedestal is placed in the middle of the Pandal. The girl after taking bath and putting the Kajal in the eye and her hair is tied on the top. She is made to sit on the pedestal and the Karnavar ties a
thread with a Tali on her neck. A feast is also served to the relatives and other peoples after the occasion. Pandal mangalam is not in existence for the last 50 years.

In olden times Thirandamangalam (puberty attaining ceremony) was conducted in almost all houses in Tiya Community. The girl was made to sit in a corner of a house immediately after attaining the puberty. A Kavuthichy was summoned and a Vannathi was also summoned to the house. On the third day the girl was taken to the bathing place escorted by Vannathi and Kavuthichy. They help the girl in bathing. The bathing place is usually a tank, pond, stream or river. On the same day a feast was also prepared and served. It is called Mangalam. A special food called Chakkarachoru (cooked rice with jaggary and coconut) was the special item for the feast. On the fourth day Kavuthichy sprinkles the tender coconut water in order to get rid of pollution.

2.8 Kalampatu and Pumsavanam

Kalampatu ritual is performed for warding of evil spirits entered into the body of pregnant women which causes great trouble to her. Sterility is also cured by performing Kalampatu. There are several evil spirits like Yakshi, Yaksha, Gandharva, Karukalakki, Ninapishachu, Pillatheeni etc. The astrologer is consulted to find the spirit and a picture of the said spirit is drawn on the floor and then he sings songs to ward of the spirit. This is done by Kanisan community. The affected girl is made to sit facing the drawing. Finally, she gets into trance and erases the drawing. It is believed that after
performing the Kalampattu she is able to conceive and can deliver healthy babies.

During the seventh month of the pregnancy, pumsavanam or Pungan is performed. In this ritual, tamarind mixed water is given to the pregnant lady on an auspicious day. She is also taken to worship the family deities and also the principal deities of the area.

In olden times the lady was brought to her house in the seventh month of pregnancy. Large quantity of sweets and snacks were also taken for bringing the pregnant lady. A feast was served to the parties of the bridegroom.

Delivery takes place at mothers’s home. A local midwife (Malayi lady) was summoned for assisting the delivery. After the delivery, the news is sent to the husband’s house by the wife’s relatives. The delivery expenses on oil, new cloths, midwife’s payment and gifts etc. were brought from the husband’s house to the wife’s house. The naming ceremony of the new born baby is conducted the 28th day. To get rid of the pollution due to the birth Kavuthichy is to be summoned and she sprinkles fresh water on ninth day or the eleventh day after the birth. Vannathimattu is also required to remove the pollution due to birth. Piercing the ear also takes place in the fourth or fifth month of delivery. In olden days a male or female were used to pierce the ears.

Cow milk is given to the babies on the 28th day and rice is given during the 6th month after the delivery. Now-a-days rice giving ceremony takes place in the shrines. Majority of the Tiya families goes to Parassinikadavu Sri Muthappan temple for giving the rice to the babies.
Naming ceremony was conducted usually on the 28th day after the birth. On the same day Kajal was put on the eyes. Wooden cradle is also prepared for the new born babies.

Bangles

The names of the bangles usually worn by the women folk of Tiya in olden days is called Aluvala which resembles the bangles used in Gujarat. Another type of bangle is called Oruttuvala which is a round shaped bangle fixed with nails.

Ear rings

There were three types of ear rings prevalent in this area. They were Chittu which was worn in the upper part of the ear. In the middle an ear ring called Erinhippu was worn and in he lower part of the ear Thakka was worn. Later on the Thakka had become Kammal.

Nostril Rings

Nostril rings were also worn by the women folk in the olden days.

Necklaces

The necklaces were usually worn by the women folk with coins called Kasu and Arakasu. The golden coin is tied on the threads.

There were two types of silver girdles used by women folk. They were Muruchukutti and and Noolu.
Ear rings of male folk

There were two types of ear rings used by the male folk. They were *Pandikadukan* and *Pookadukan*.

Dress patterns

Blouse was not in vogue in the olden times. Instead women folk covered their breast with *Mekkett* (towel wrapped around the chest). It is a towel tied on the shoulders. *Pudava* (white long cloth which covers the body from abdomen to feet) was used as the main dress. A printed perpendicular line (*Kara*) was also there in the backside of the *Pudava*. The measurement of the *Pudava* is as follows:

One *Ana* = double *dhothi*

Half *Ana* = single *dhothi*

Death ceremonies

The dead body was usually buried in the same compound of the house. *Telippu* (cleansing) was performed on the third day. *Bali* was common to the elder people. A feast was given on twelfth day night and thirteenth day noon. *Kanji* (Porridge) was the main food served during the death ceremonies. *Kannokku* (gift of grains and vegetables by the relatives) was also common among the *Tiya* community. But now a days almost all dead bodies are cremated in the *Tiya* burial grounds. Burial ground is maintained either by the *Tiya* community organizations of each place or the Panchayath graveyards.
allotted by the Gram Panchayaths. A separate committee for cremation is also found in almost all places for this purpose. Obsequies end with \textit{telippu} and the feast on 12\textsuperscript{th} and 13\textsuperscript{th} days in which community organisations take active part.

Feeding the Bhramins on the 41\textsuperscript{st} day after the death is also noticed among the \textit{Tiyas}. Likewise, ashes of the dead body collected in an earthen pot at the time of cremation is immerssed in the holy rivers or sea. An additional \textit{bali} is also performed under the guidance of a Bhramin priest in connection with this ritual.

\textbf{Marriage ceremony}

In earlier times, the bride was selected either by the uncle or father of the boy. Working ability of the girl was the main criterion for the selection. Usually five to seven people used to go for the marriage negotiation. A \textit{Pudava} and a \textit{Thorthu} (towel) were exchanged for the marriage. \textit{Illam} of the bride was also considered. Marriage within the \textit{illam} is prohibited. Likewise girl from the lower \textit{illam} was also not encouraged. While fixing the marriage, betel leaves, areca, tobacco were exchanged. For fixation of the marriage two male relatives of the boy escorted by a \textit{Kavutiyyan} went to the bride’s house and betel leaves, areca and tobacco were given to the elders of the bride as a token of betrothal ceremony. They were treated with rice, chicken, curry and toddy. Betrothal of the marriage was done during the night time. After the betrothal they invited the relatives for the marriage.
Invitation to the marriage is called *Kettuvekkal*. The bridegroom along with a *Moonnan* (an elderly third person), (also known as *Changathi i.e* friend), usually cousin of the bridegroom go for inviting the relatives. His own maternal *tarawad* is the first house to be invited followed by his father’s *tharawad* and other houses. A bunch of betel leaves, areca nuts and tobacco are placed on the door steps of the house, while extending the invitation. A *Pudava* is also gifted by the *tharavad* to the bridegroom. The *Pudamuri* (cutting of the *dhothi*) is the main function of the marriage which takesplace at the noon. *Kanjipanam* (money for the food) has to be given to the bride’s house by the bridegroom. *Parkal* is the local name for marriage. Amount for an unmarried man is quarter rupee and for five persons one and quarter rupee has to be given to the bride’s house by the bridegroom as the money for the food.

The bride has no role in the marriage. She usually sits in a corner of the house. Cutting the *Pudava* using the knife is the main function of the marriage. The *Moonnan* takes this role and gives the cloth to the bride. She wears the *Pudava* and holds *Kettukuda* (palmleaf umbrella) and accompanies the bridegroom to his house. She is also escorted by women in equal number of the male members of the bridegroom’s party. Another interesting thing is that the male goes to his wife’s house only during nights. He will not disclose this to anybody. Even on the *Salkaram/Munnalurukkal* (a feast usually on the third day of the marriage at brides house) day bride goes to her house with her sister-in-law and the husband goes to her house only during night. He takes *Appam*
(snacks) and *Thumman* (*betel leaves, arecanut and tobacco*) to the bride’s house and in return they give *Karayappam* (a snack baked in a special pan). He never stays in her house. Divorce was common in *Tiya* community. People having married for several times were also there among *Tiya* community of Northern Kerala.

Salt was served first in the feast. It is followed by lemon pickle, *Puli inji* etc. *Erissery* made of jackfruit or banana is the main ingredient. *Eruvuli (Pulissery)* and *Chakkarachoru* are also served before rice. Banana is stuffed with sugar and eaten. Ghee was also added in that. One man asks to the dining party whether everything is served (*Othuvo*). If the answer is yes, they start eating. There is an order for serving the food. *Acharakkar* (temple officials) and *Moopanmar* (elders) were served first.

Another interesting item of the marriage was that while taking the water kettle the bridegroom used to sing a song related to Ganga river.

Now-a-days marriage is conducted usually in the auditoriums like the marriages of other castes. Hundreds of people take part in this. Betrothal of the marriage is taking place at hotel rooms and small conference halls. Marriage fixation at brides house is also common, where 20-30 male members, usually elders of the bridegroom’s families go to the brides house and fix the marriage date, venue, and also discuss about the number of members who are supposed to come for the marriage from the bridegroom’s side.
The main function of the marriage now-a-days is exchanging the floral garlands by both and tying of gold *tali* by the bridegroom. In many cases, bride and the groom exchange garlands. Exchanging of finger rings are also common. Bridegroom hands over a silk saree to the bride after that. Taking a circle around the *mandapam* (artificial sanctum) holding the bride’s hand commemorating the *Sapthapadi* (walking seven steps) is also common among *Tiya* marriage. Marriages are also solemnized from the temples.

There are eight to ten dishes served in the marriage. *Sambar, Kalan, Kootukari,* different types of *Pachadi, Avial, Olan, Rasam, Moru, Upperi, Plantains, Pappadam, Prathaman* and or *Palpayasam* are served during the marriage. All these items are pan Kerala dishes and common among all higher castes. The second day or the third day or the forthcoming holiday is preferred for the *Munnalurukkal* ceremony. 10-15 people including women folk used to go to the bride’s house in a hired vehicle for this function. Large quantity of bakery snacks has to be taken to the bride’s house. Rs.1000/- or 2000/- were given to bride’s house as the expenditure for the feast. In return they gift large quantity of snacks and plantains to the bridegroom.

**Some common names among Tiya community of yester years and present day**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old names</th>
<th>Present names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(Male names)</em></td>
<td><em>(Male names)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannan</td>
<td>Sudeep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunhikkannan</td>
<td>Suresh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kunhiraman Sumesh
Ambu
Kunhambu Pradeep
Prasanth
Kottan
Kottankunhi Gireesh
Koran
Kunhikkoran Suksheh
Pokkan
Veluthambu
Karuthambu
Cheriyakkan
Ambunhi
(Female names)
Karichy Sujatha
Kumba Sini
Vattichi Sumathi
Mathi Praseetha
Parthi Sheena
Chappila Preetha
Kalyani Mini

It is also observed that names like Sankaran, Chandu, Kammaran, etc were not common among Tiyas as it was found in other communities like Nair, Nambiar, Vaniyan, Chalyan castes. But now a days all castes use all names.

54
In recent years there is a tendency to name their child using the words of father and mother. For example, Narayanan (father) and Mini (mother) name their child as Nimmi.

**Food of Tiyas**

Kanji (Gluel) was commonly used by the Tiya community in olden times. Tea and Coffee became common to all houses for the last 50 years. Tiyas used to take Kuluthu or pazham kanji (cold rice kept in the preceding night) with curd/ lassi or fish curry. Horsegram, bengalgram, greengram etc were used to make dishes. Green leaves of different plants and shrubs were also used to make dishes. Rice is used during festivals. Otherwise they eat Kanji three times a day. Ancestor worship was common to all houses during Vavu (new-moon-days). Specially made rice cakes, arrack, chicken etc were offered to ancestors during those days. Chathoruku kodukkal (giving to the dead) is observes by Tiyas for 12 new-moon-days. On the Vavu day rice is eaten only during the noon time and snacks are taken in the morning. Non-vegetarian food was compulsory on vavu day.

**Snacks and refreshments of the Tiyas:**

Main snacks prepared by Tiyas in the olden times were:

- **Ottada** - rice cake burnt on iron pan.
- **Ketti poongal** - preparing rice cake using steam.
- **Ada** - Rice cake using coconut.
Chakkara choru- preparing rice with jaggery and coconut.

Kalathapam- steamed rice cake with coconut.

Dandan ada- steamed cake offered for vyanadu Kulavan deity.

Chakkara – country jaggary made from toddy

Ari pongichathu- Dried boiled rice with coconut.

Ari varuthathu- Dried fried rice.

Drinks and beverages

Chakkara vellam- Boiled water with Coriander and Chakkara.

Racku – Country made arrack.

Kallu- Toddy

Now Tiya food cannot be identified separately. Almost all food items, dishes, tea, coffee etc are common to Tiyas also.

In conclusion, it is observed that the Tiyas of North Malabar have undergone much change in their socio – cultural life. In the past, the society was dominated by matrilineal descent and matrilocal residence. At present, patrilineal descent is adopted by almost all the families. In the economic front also, we find dramatic changes. The old occupation of toddy tapping is not practised now. The educational level of Tiyas is very high and they are able to enter diverse type of skilled occupations in India and abroad. However,
agriculture continues to be a primary occupation for majority of Tiyas. Various land legislatin acts of Kerala helped Tiyas to get ownership of agricultural land. Earlier, they were tenants of higher castes like Nayars in the same land. As a result of diverse occupations and higher economic status, the life style of Tiyas have undergone many changes.

Sanskritization is another social process which has been taking place in Tiya community during the last one hundred years or so. This aspect has been discussed elsewhere in the thesis.

However, the institutions of Klakam and Teyyam rituals continue to dominate the socio-religious life of Tiyas. Some minor changes can be seen in these institutions like the formation of committees, clubs and etc to organise the Teyyam performances.
1
Pre-adalath discussion among the officiants of Nilamangala Kalakam before going for final verdict

2
Muthappan Teyyam – main deity of Tiyas
3
Royal visit of Ramavilyan Kalakam

4
A Tiya Worshipping ‘Kalasam’ (Toddy)
Wayanadu Teyyam Great Ancestor of Tiya