Mukkulatthors are living in almost all the districts of Tamil Nadu. However they live in Thanjavur District in a concentrated level. The present thesis entitled Unique Customs of Peravoorani Taluk, with special reference to Moy Virundhu aimed at revealing the traditionally handed down customs of the people of Peravoorani region particularly Moy Virundhu. It brings out the findings and certain unique features which are given below.

The Ahamudaiyars of the Peravoorani region, though one of the Mukkulathor trio, do not have marital linkages with them, and they exist as a separate social group with the titles of Pathinonru naattu Ahamudaiyars, Ainthu naattu Ahamudaiyars, and Punniyarasu naattu Ahamudaiyars. The customs and manners prevalent among them are brought out in this study.

Though the Peravoorani Ahamudaiyar community people have many common customs, rites and rituals on par with that of the people of other communities, they are noted for observance of certain unique customs which are pointed out in the study.
That the Naattuk koottam, Gramak koottam, Vaasal Vazhi amaippu, etc., of the Ahamudaiyars community are meant for regulating the social behaviours of the said people.

It comes to know from this study that all people of the region take part in festival occasions irrespective of caste and communal divisions. Duties are carried out by them without discrimination.

Data collected from the said area reveals that polygamy, widows remarriage, marriage of the divorcee etc., have got social sanctions in the Ahamudaiyar community.

Marriages are performed with the concurrence of the social group.

People of Peravourani region are not exceptional in following the rites, rituals, omen (sakunam), etc., as is the case with people of other districts.

Moy Virundhu has acquired the status of an exclusive custom meant for the Pathinonru Naattu Ahamudaiyar, and which determines the social life very often.
Moy Virundhu has become the touchstone regarding the social and economic status of the Peravourani people.

The custom of Moy Virundhu which was prevalent exclusively in the Ahamudaiyar community upto 1990 became the widespread custom followed by other caste and communities.

As a kind of cultural transmigration, Moy Virundhu has of late attracted the attention of the media and thereby has its impacts keenly felt in the State level.

Of course relatives and friends come forward to help monetarily those who are in distress. This is the underlying motive of Moy Virundhu but it may be explained that a good amount extended to the needy at a proper time without interest, paves the way for an improved way of life of the individuals.

At the same time the amount acquired hugely without interest often precariously results in wretched condition than before. What is acquired as a boon tends to be a bane if it is not handled properly.
The bitter truth in this mode of transactions is that the black money holders make use of this festive occasion for transacting their unaccounted money into white.

Even women are not barred from the collections of Moy in the guise of Kumbidu Panam. In the Moy Virundhu invitations, their names figure forth with the note that the amount would be collected under their names. Their receipt mostly would be in lakhs.

Formerly Moy Virundhu was conducted on account of marriage, ear boring, life circle ceremonies and such happy occasions. Now a days, the trend seems to have undergone changes as evident in the collection of Moy even during tragic occurrences.

A particular time duration is considered to be auspicious for Moy Virundhu function.

Actually, so much of commercial considerations have entered into the very fabric of Moy Virundhu occasion resulting in evil effects.

It has also been pointed out in this study, that Mukkulatthors form part and parcel of the Kallar, Maravar and Ahamudaiyar trio otherwise called Thevar. They slowly are developing in
educational and economic spheres. Consequent of the festival occasion particularly Moy Virundhu, the above noted educational and economic developments have led themselves to marked changes.

The solid communal structure is preserved by all means due to the ceremonies and other traditional customs. Widows remarriage and Polygamy are prevalent but monogamy is kept with high regard.

The custom of Moy Virundhu has started spreading slowly far and wide. Taking this as the unique opportunity for getting loan free of interest, informed persons exploit this for the furtherance of their progress. At the same time many others emulate the custom, perform it, and acquire money, but become bankrupts at the end, the reason being improper management of the collected amount. Resultantly Moy Virundhu at times is conjectured to be a curse.

Information as to the evil effects of Moy Virundhu is considerable. Ignoring even the cautious wordings in this regard by the Ahamudaiyar’s Sangam, people fall prey to it.

It is understood that the custom of Moy Virundhu is not basically harmful. It has both good and bad faces. What is
regrettable is that people are not always taking cognizance of only the munificent side of the custom.

The study also highlights the religious beliefs of the people of the Peravourani region—rituals, festivals, and historical sketch of the temples and also the major and minor deities and the worship connected with them.

The origin and historical sketch of Moy Virundhu is traced to a certain extent. Not only Mukkulatthors but also Muttharayars, Dalits and Narik kuravars, now a days have resorted to conducting of Moy Virundhu.

The multidimensional perspectives of Moy Virundhu namely economic origin, mobilization, part played by the Ahamudaiyar Sangam, the beneficial and the evil effects of Moy Virundhu and the psychological implications caused by it on the part of the individuals, are all furnished.

Inspite of the insurgence of the mass media, Peravourani people have not altogether lost faith in such festivals and therefore the uniqueness of their cultural life is stressed.

It is obvious that the traditional customs and the consequent celebrations add spice to the lifestyle of the people. They help
share the delight and distress with fellow beings, particularly in the related and communal sphere. They provide a kind of impetus and solace to the folks.

Taken against this background Moy Virundhu stands as a unique custom prevailing in the larger level with the Ahamudaiyars of the Peravourani Taluk of Thanjavur District. It therefore necessitates elaborate and deeper studies to deal with the economic, social and psychological perspectives of such customs. It is hoped that the present study will lead to further research in this regard.

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