CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Human beings are meaning seeking, symbol making, and meaning assigning creatures. In a non-literate or literate society, they seek meaning, create symbols, and assign roles for their existence and express them through art forms like music, dance, and drama. The functional relationship between art and culture is discussed widely today among cultural anthropologists, folklorists, and ethnomusicologists. Ernest Grosse (1894) recognized the indispensable social elements in artistic behaviour among non-literate people. Scholars like John L Fishcher, Alvin W. Wolfe (1969), Paul Schiller, and Desmond Morris (1961) have done studies on the relationship between art and various aspects of culture (Otten1971: xi-xii).

In pre-literate society, the art-symbols are considered as fact, that is, they simultaneously represent, define, and manifest the corresponding referent. In such cultures art materials and performance events serve as media for information storage or communication. In art, there are many categories, like music, dance, drama, handicraft, drawing and painting, etc.

Ethnomusicology is the study of music in its specific cultural context. It considers music and its performance known as music making, as important aspects of culture. Music is considered as the self-expression of a community’s life, its dreams, aspirations, social behaviour, belief system, values, and worldviews. Ethnomusicology is defined by Alan Merriam as the study of music in culture. Some of the studies in this field are: Merriam, Alan P.1964 The Anthropology of Music, Myers, Helen ed.1992 Ethnomusicology: An Introduction, Blacking, John 1973 How musical is man?, Jairazbhoy, NA.1984 “Ethnomusicology in the Indian Context”, Roseman, Marina 1993 Healing Sounds form the Malaysian Rain Forest. Here I study the relationship between an art form called vattakali and its impact on the culture of that society where it belongs.

Vattakali is a musical dance performance of the Paniya tribe in Kerala. It is performed during puberty rites, marriage ceremony, and other village celebrations of
the Paniya tribe as a ritual and as a community entertainment. From the field observation, I noticed that this musical dance performance has a tremendous impact on the Paniya life and culture. In order to understand the role of this performance to the construction of Paniya life and identity, an ethno musicological research is undertaken. This study is interdisciplinary in nature using folkloristic and anthropological theories for detailed analysis.

A. PROBLEM FORMULATION

1. The Research Problem

While participating in one of the Paniya marriage ceremonies, I was attracted by their music and dance performance. I noticed that when a particular tudi tune and kuzhal rhythm\(^1\) were played, the women folk spontaneously began a special dance called Vattakali and the children and the men folk joined them. When the tempo of the kuzhal music and tudi rhythm went up to the heights the whole community was drawn in to this music world and they became one with the dance performance. Everybody was swinging his/her body, lifting hands and moving feet in a perfect, harmonious and meditative fashion. I experienced a real musical symphony in the natural village setting. At the heights of the performance some went into trance, some others were howling and yelling...and the whole group was vibrating with the tudi rhythm. The performance, which took place at night, went on for hours and finally when the tempo of the music came down, the rhythm of dancing slowed down. The group slowly vanished away from the courtyard and took rest in the shades of the darkness.

The people who were strangers and stood apart in the beginning of the performance became emotionally one with the larger community at the end of the performance. They were timid and shy in the beginning but they turned out to be free and out-spoken in the end. A group which was tensed and worried due to certain unwanted events became relaxed and peaceful after the performance. They started talking and sharing their murukan (betel leaves and areca nut) with one another. They experienced community togetherness and companionship there. This captured my

\(^1\) Tudi and kuzhal are the musical instruments of the Paniya tribe. Tudi is a membranophone and kuzhal is an aerophone.
attention towards these people and it kindled in me certain questions with regard to their life and culture.

One of the important questions which came to my mind was: what is the role of *Vattakali* music dance performance in the construction and preservation of Paniya life and identity and in what way this performance would help to understand the culture and world view of this community?

2. Objectives

a. General Objective

To study the significance of a folk musical dance performance on the life of a tribal society and to explore how they construct and preserve their culture and identity through this performance and how this performance unites and strengthens the community.

Specific Objectives

1. To find out the role of Paniya musical dance performance in the construction and preservation of Paniya culture and identity.
2. To make a detailed study on the musical instruments used by the Paniyas.
3. To find out the significance of the Paniya musical dance performance in relation to their life and culture.
4. To search the uniqueness of the Paniya musical dance performance in contrast with similar forms in other societies.
5. To explore the impact of the Paniya musical dance performance and its musical tradition on the performers and the audience at the personal and community level.
6. To find out how the Paniya society constructs, develops, and maintains its performance traditions.
Many scholars have done scientific studies on folk music and song. Among them Alan Lomax's study, *Folksong style, and culture* (1968) gives a set of tools for ethnomusicological analysis. The method proposed by him is called **Cantometrics**, which means measure of songs. It is a method of systematic and holistic study on the general features of a song-performance (Lomax 1968:34). It is not a musical analysis in the classical sense, but a study of music in its cultural context.

About tribal songs (primitive music), he says that 'song among tribal is usually a joint communication often combined with dance, that links the whole community in a concerted action' (ibid. p.14). The prime function of music and song appears to be group building. Much of the songs are related to ritual performance where culture-perpetuating needs of the society is dramatized.

He defines song as an often-repeated stretch of communication passed on through the life of a people. Song is a multi-leveled communication (ibid.p.28). It communicates the feelings, aspirations, wishes, and the past and present life of a community. Based on music traditions, Lomax divided the whole world into six culture zones such as South America, North America, Oceania, Old high culture, Africa and Europe (Tribal India, Artic Asia and Australia are considered as isolates).

Cantometrics aims at the establishment of a structurally and historically meaningful classification of the world's folk song styles. He has coded 2557 songs. Fifty-six culture areas are grouped into six style regions. Lomax used songs as the measure of culture. A song style is an agreement by members of the culture to conform their vocal behavior to a certain model. The function of the song style is to produce social consensus at a minimum level so that the members of the community can vibrate and respond to the community singing and take pleasure from the performances. Song style is a learned behaviour. The search for meaning is not only culture oriented but also song style oriented. It is an integral part of each culture and it repeats its basic and common forms of human relationship (ibid.p.121).

Song text gives a clear expression to the level of cultural complexity. Folk song is more redundant than folk tale. Hence, it discloses the culture clearly. Music performance characterizes a culture in terms of basic structure such as political
structure, economic structure, social stratification, and sexuality. Dance performance looks at culture in terms of dynamic components of its interaction pattern. Songs and dances are sacred rituals. Both are expressive and evocative. All art symbolizes human behaviour. Song is the shortest beat, the quickest establishment form, the maximum regularization, and it is the summary art of all (ibid.p.307).

Lomax’s says that ‘a song style is a pattern of learned behaviour common to the people of a culture. A song style is an excellent indicator of a cultural pattern. ‘As people live so do they sing’ (Lomax1968:4). Therefore, through a music performance or song style we can study the culture and life style of a community.

John Blacking, in his study How musical is Man? (1973), sets a theoretical frame in ethnomusicology. It is the study on Venda tribal music, where he claims that all music, structurally and functionally, is ‘folk’ music because it is transmitted and has meaning only in association with the folk (people). There is a folk element in all type of music whether it is tribal or rock music and this music gets its meaning only in a cultural context. Ethnomusicological studies aim at this aspect of music namely, the study of music in culture.

Blacking says that music is ‘humanly organized sound’ (Blacking1973: 10). It is the product of the behaviour of human groups. It expresses human reality in a metaphorical expression of feelings associated with the way society really is (ibid.p.103). Music is a reflection of and response to social forces particularly to the consequences of the division of labour in society (ibid.p.104). It is very true in the case of simple societies. Their songs are the real expressions of their everyday life; they reflect the pulse of the people.

Anthony Seeger’s study, Why Suya’ Sing? (1987), gives a detailed account on Suya’ music and its role in social process. He says that music is much more than sound. It is an intention as well as a realization; it is emotion and values; it is structure and form. Music is an emotion that accompanies the production of, the appreciation of, and the participation in a performance. The reason why Suya’ sing is sought in Suya’s social process and values and in the process the relationship between the music and the socio-cultural context of its performance (Seeger1987: p.xv), is clarified. Seeger considers music making as a social process. Singing is a social activity. All the
social actions are creative and re-creative. Singing creates musical relationship between various songs, movements, groups etc. To understand the social process that takes place in a musical performance, we need ethnographic data of that community.

Gerard Behague summarizes the study of musical performance as follows. 'Ideally, the study of musical performance as an event and a process should concentrate on the actual musical, and extra-musical behaviour of the participants, and the rules or codes of performance defined by the community for a special context or occasion' (ibid.p.83).

Keith Howard in his study on Korean folk music says that music is a social fact and needs to be studied in a way that considers both context and sound, that is, both process and product. In this study, he attempts to bridge the gap between folklore and music. By giving an ethnographic picture of the Chindo community, he explains its traditional band performance called nongak. It is a combination of music, dance, and theatre performance. There are three types of nongak, namely, chwado, udo, kyonggi kut. Each one is different in its style of performance. Band performance is used for farming, fishing, entertainment, and ritual purpose (Howard 1990:36). In a band set, there are musicians and dancers, actors and the organizers. The musical instruments they use are small and large gong, barrel drums, hourglass drum, and small drums. Earlier women were not allowed to participate in the band dance. Now they also take part in it. In the past, a band set is considered as the village property. Now the system has changed. Individuals are the owners of the band system. It is quite expensive to maintain a band group.

This study deals with the features of Chindo music and its role in shaping Chindo life in its totality. It also deals with the origin of Korean folk music. It is evolved in military, religious, farming contexts. It is a compact study on the music tradition of a particular region in the southwest tip of Korean peninsula, which gives a model for ethnomusciological study in the Asian traditions.

With regard to the relationship between music, culture, and society, Alan Lomax found out that there is one to one correspondence between song style and productivity (economics) of the community. He developed a five-point scale of subsistence to analyse various societies (Lomax 1968:122). He found that complex
producers' song styles are text oriented and explicit in style, whereas simple producers' song styles are repetitious and non-explicit. Class structure emerges with the measure of production. In simple culture, society employs fewer components in songs than complex society. This is an important insight with regard to the study of simple societies. The following table explains the relationship between song style and productivity of the community. There is a clear difference between the music style of the simple producers and complex producers. It is given in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple production</th>
<th>Complex production</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Group song</td>
<td>1. Individualized song</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Slurred enunciation</td>
<td>2. Moderate voice</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Repetitious</td>
<td>3. Less repetitious</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Wide melodic interval</td>
<td>5. Short melodic interval</td>
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In political administration, also Lomax found five patterns, which are equivalent to five styles of the following musical performance given below. (ibid.p.156).

1. Interlocked style: democratic leadership, feminine, partly independent society.
2. Simple social unison: tribal society, societies where less authority is exercised.
3. Overlapping style: leader is there but the subjects are more stronger and free.
5. Solo explicit: autocratic and complex society.

Where two levels of leadership rule society, there exist Poly-rhythm in music performance (E.g. African music). In addition, where women are excluded from the food production activity, there they are not actively participating in the music and dance performance. Hence, there is a relationship between production role and song performance. In agriculture- society, women do have a role in cultivation. Therefore, they have an active participation in their expressive tradition (dance, drama and
Polyphony is very common in tribal society than complex societies. Here women have equal status with men. Hence, vocal tension, tight voices, and strong nasality are lower in these societies (ibid. p.169).

There is a direct connection between musical performance and sex life of particular community. In whichever community where sexual life is more relaxed, their music is performed in a wide voice and in a clear, relaxed and less nasal sound. The opposite effect is seen where sex life is very restricted and controlled (ibid. p.195). Raspy singing is associated with masculine culture for assertion. Women sing with more rasps than men do wherever they dominate the production activity and ritual activity. There is one to one correspondence between social solidity and vocal solidarity. Social solidarity of the singing group is affected by the two varieties of masculine dominance. One is direct assertion and the other is control of feminine sexuality. In a society where man - woman relationship is balanced and smooth there, the singing also is wide, clear, relaxed, and less nasality. Where feminine labour is crucial in production, there tension between sexes is reduced, voices are reduced, and vocal solidarity emerges. Synchronic dimension is less where there is more masculine assertiveness, rigid stratification, and male domination over production, and repressive control over feminine sexuality.

Lomax observed that music that got direct influence on the sociological, political, psychological, and physiological aspect of human life. He found that societies in which infant stress was more, there the music is more forceful (accent oriented), adaptive, bolder and with wide range. Whiting (1964) made a study regarding music style and range and accent with infant stress. (ibid. p. 213)

Blacking’s another book namely, Venda Children Songs (1967) is a detailed study of the music and cultural significance of children songs among Venda Society in South Africa. It is an ethnomusicological analysis on Venda musical tradition and society. Here the author proposes a model for ethnomusicological analysis. He tries to explain the structure of the music in the context of Venda culture.

Music performance is essentially a social activity (Blacking 1967:17), not an individual exercise. It belongs to a community. It is a visible and audible sign of the social and political grouping in Venda society. Music is an expression of the cultural
realities (ibid.p.145), so we cannot have uniform norms to analyze various musical traditions.

Each song is culture-specific. So to understand the music making process of a community we have to analyze in depth its culture. Moreover, a cultural analysis of musical sounds will help us to understand better the relationship between life and music. This will give a satisfactory answer to the question (ibid.p.198). What is music to life and vice-versa?

By explaining the Mouse ceremony\(^2\) of the *Suya* community in South America Anthony Seeger describes the features of *Suya* musical performance and social life. He discusses the origin of music, the creative role music plays in social process, and the reasons for a ritual pitch rise in unison songs. He asks the question ‘why *Suya* sing?’ The question remains open even at the end of study. He says that the *Suya* sing because they are happy; singing makes them happy; It is creative, innovative, non-repetitive and interesting. (Seeger 1987.p.xvii).

Singing is a creative social activity. Music is more than sound and cosmology. The members of the community in certain place and time perform it, often with an audience composed of other members of the community. Music means the entire process of conceptualization, realization and evaluation of the music. ‘Each performance re-creates, re-establishes or alters the significance of singing and also of the persons, time, place, and audience involved’ (ibid.p.65). It expresses the status, sex and feelings of the performers and it brings them to the attention of the entire community that interprets them in a variety of ways. What does singing to the individual, society, and social relationship? Singing creates socially defined space and time; it creates and recreates persons, community, and social events. Here he says that *Suya* village is a concert hall, *Suya* society is an orchestra, and the *Suya* year is a song (ibid.p.78). During the Mouse ceremony the head of the group introduce the concept of a *Suya* personhood through singing. There are three components in *Suya* concept of person. One is the body associated with the individual parent; the second

\(^2\) It is a children's ceremony. It is all about the socialization of the boys into the ways, groups, and the music of the community. According to the *Suya*, songs have been originated or introduced to the community in three different ways such as, songs in a myth, songs form ‘men without spirit', or a witch, songs form outsiders.
one is the social identity. By receiving name, one becomes a member of a clan or society and the third one is the sprit or ‘shadow’ that is entirely individual (ibid.p.81).

Lomax developed the concept called choreometrics for the study of dance (body movement). Choreometric means the measure of dance in a culture or dance as a measure of culture. Dance expresses the needs and behaviour pattern of a community. Therefore, by understanding the dance pattern and emotion we understand the culture of the society. Dance is a derived communication in life. It is considered as a representation of the cultural pattern and an expression of human emotion. It is also an effective organizer. In simple society dance is related to work and production activity. In some societies where men dominate the production activity women do not participate in their dance. They are only onlookers (Lomax 1968: 224). People of certain culture dance as they move in every day life. In complex societies, dance patterns are elaborate, decorative and complex and vice versa. There are many styles in dance such as simple reversal, circular, angular, rotation and curved, etc. In simple society, we see all these patterns. There the body movement too is simple and slow but there are exceptions to this style. The author developed *choreometric-coding book* to analyse dance in a culture.

In a simple, ethnic society, singing and dancing share a major part of symbolic ritual activity of the communal gathering, which is proper and important for its continuity. Songs and dance style symbolize and summarize attitudes and way of handling situation upon which there is the highest level of community consensus. ‘Singing is a community directed, group oriented communication.’ (ibid.p.15). This is an important insight with regard to music performance. In a folk society, all musical performances are community activity as well as group building activity. Lomax proposes two models for song performance such as individualized performance and integrated performance. The features of this division are given in the table below.
Table no.2 Features of the two models of song performance

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Solo</td>
<td>1. Choral</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Textually complex</td>
<td>2. Repetitive text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ornamented</td>
<td>5. No ornamentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Precise enunciation</td>
<td>7. Slurred enunciation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pattern A is seen wherever political activity is highly centralized. So-called civilized societies are example for this pattern. It is a single individual who is a performer in such a pattern. Pattern B is seen among simple folk societies. It is a group performance that is more integrated in style. Cantometric coding system is developed from this model by Granner (1963) (ibid. p. 16).

Martin Stokes says that music and dance do encourage people to feel that they are in touch with an essential part of themselves namely, their emotions, and their community (Stokes ed. 1994: 13). Music, musical instruments, and performances define rank, hierarchy, and gender (ibid. p. 22).

The study by Mohan Khokar (1987) offers an intimate survey of the rich and colourful dance tradition of Indian peoples. Dances are essential part of Indian life. For ceremonies, for social gatherings, for religious and magical reasons, for recreation, it is used in a wide range. About folk and tribal dance, he says ‘the dancing of folk and tribal people is spontaneous and true but it does not mean that they dance anywhere, anyway or any time. There is certainly a method in it: a rhyme and reason even if not a consciously created one’ (Khokar 1987: 14). There are certain stimuli that inspire one to dance. Through dance, the community expresses the feelings of joy and sorrow. In dance, joy is the core emotional experience, common to all living being. Love is the primal passion of human heart which is another stimulus for group dancing. Erotic themes are quite common in tribal dance and songs. What is the function of this dance? He says that it is to promote social harmony and cohesions. Dancing being a
collective activity brings social unity. Another function of the dance is related with fertility cult. For farming, harvesting, and for getting good rain they have ritual dances. It is to evoke the gods and spirits of fertility. Tribals have particular dances for fishing, hunting, and war game.

In some societies dancing is recognized as exercise of prayer. In this context, it becomes a profound God-experience. The aim is to communicate with the divine through the mediator (dancer) in the forms of invocation, supplication, or propitiation (ibid. 18). Dancing is sacred and is functionally related to magic. Curing ceremonies, Shamanistic rites, etc. involve dancing of the priest and community. This study also narrates with examples and photographs on various patterns of dance, its costumes, and ornaments. Dancing is accompanied by music. Rhythm is a vital element in every dance. Each form of tribal or folk dance is governed by a mode and a style. Various types of musical instruments also are used in dance performance (ibid.p.30).

Victor Turner (1982) observes that whenever human spirit is free people celebrate. Periodically human community sets aside the work and worry of everyday life and blossom into festivity. Sometimes even in the face of cultural domination and economic deprivation (Turner1982:7). He also says that when a social group or community celebrates a particular event it also celebrates itself. That is, it attempts to manifest in symbolic forms, what it conceives to be its essential life (ibid.p.16). Therefore, through celebration we can understand a community at a deeper level. In celebration, private space is socialized uncultured social space is made private. Celebration leads a community into 'meta-experience' of culturally stimulated action (ibid.p.19).

According to Turner, ceremonial objects in a celebration draw our attention to the religious, social, or political systems of the community and these systems give the actual picture of the community or group in a particular historical context (ibid.p.7).

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3 It is a ritualistic practice prevalent in agricultural society. As part of this ritual people pay special homage to mother earth by giving paddy, rice, coconut, various fruits of the trees and flowers. Nira, ponkala, vishu and uchal vela are some of the festivals related to fertility cult. (Vishnunamboodiri.2000: 89)
Any celebration has meanings at three levels such as operational meaning, exegetical meaning and positional meaning (P.20). Celebration leads to communitas (ibid.p.29). Any celebration has two aspects, namely the ritual aspect and the play aspect.

J.J. Pallath's study on *Theyyam* (1995), a myth and folk ritual performance of North Malabar region in Kerala, is an analytical study of the folk culture, wisdom and personality of Pulaya Community. In this work, he says that the crisis of modern human being is the uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources causing destruction of ecological balance. The only solution to this problem he proposes is a complete return to mother Nature and promote, and safeguard folk cultures.

Referring to Victor Turner (1979), he says that human being is a self-performing animal and his performance is reflexive (self-revealing). Therefore, by the study of a performance of a society we can study that society (J.J. Pallath 1995:17). In the analysis of *Theyyam* ritual, he says that there are two types of rituals: a) Life crisis ritual b) Calendrical (seasonal) ritual. The former leads to status elevation (e.g. birth, marriage, and puberty rituals) and the latter leads to status reversal (e.g. Theyyam performance) (ibid.p.19). He observes that *Theyyam* performance has taken the performing community to catharsis through liminal and lucid ways and it creates certain critical consciousness on life situation (ibid.p.187).

Marina Roseman (1993) in her study observes that the patterned sounds of *Temiar* ceremonies are socially constructed, performed, and interpreted. They constitute ‘humanly organized sounds’ (Blacking 1973:16). *Temiar* performance does not merely reflect an egalitarian social structure rather they play an integral part in diffusing social and sexual stratification (Roseman 1993:128). The music of the beating tubes mediates between the rainforest pulsating sounds and the body beating heart, bringing the nature spirits into conjunction with the human spirit, collapsing the boundaries between nature and culture (ibid.p.183).

Richard Bauman (1977) observing performance enables us to look at contemporary praxis in the light of its relation with historical past (Bauman 1977:185). Performance brings a community together (ibid.p.2). It is an important insight in this field. In performance, there are two elements, the artistic action, and the artistic
event. The artistic action is the actual performance. The artistic event is the performance situation that includes the performance, audience, art form, and setting.

He introduced a new concept in this field that is performance as a ‘frame’ which means a defined interpretive context. In linguistic frame, performance is a way of speaking, a mode of language and a mode of communication. Similarly in a folkloristic context, performance is a mode of communication (ibid. pp.10-11).

There are four dimensions in a ‘frame’ (context). They are: (a) the cultural context. It is a cultural knowledge related to the genre, (b) The performance context. It is the location of the performance. (c) The individual context. It deals with the role of performers and their nature. (d) The comparative context. It is the comparison with similar forms of performance in other culture (ibid.pp.39-40).

In folkloristics, performance approach differs from structuralism approach. It is a context sensitive approach, which does not deal with the text alone. It also deals with real world events. Here the totality of performance is taken for the study. (The performers, social setting, audience, and the performance itself). Performance approach gives importance to ethnographic method too. It will help the researcher to understand the detailed context of the performers, audience and the performance itself.

Peter J Claus and Frank J Korom claim that performance centered approach focuses on the actual performance in a particular context. Therefore, it is a context-sensitive approach. It gives importance to ethnographic method that helps one to understand the context and the performance better.

Each performance in a performance tradition is a performance event (Claus. J. 1991:160). It is the actual text for our analysis. The most important performance context in a community is the cultural performance. There are two kinds of cultural performance. One is scheduled, public, elaborate and structured performance and the other are unscheduled, private, spontaneous and unstructured one. The structure of performance event is the product of many factors like the setting, the act sequence, cultural themes, and ground rules etc. The elements of performance are the performers, the participants, and the audience. They are all related to one another (ibid.p.29). Performance can be seen as part of the social life of a community. Performer controls the audience (social structure). The role of the performer in a society is to transform
its social structure and act as an agent for social change (ibid. p.45). To sum up we can say that performance is an event; performance is an activity; performance has a role in the society and performance is a folklore genre as well as a process.

Organological study is a branch of ethnomusicological discipline. The study of a musical instrument in its cultural context is called organology. It includes its origin myth, its role and function in a particular society, its technique of construction, etc. It is also known as the science of musical instruments. Thomas Vennum Jr. (1982) made a detailed study on the Ojibwa dance drum following this methodology. Ojibwa community belongs to the North American Indian culture, which are widely dispersed over a large area surrounding the Western Great Lakes (USA). They were engaged in fishing, hunting, and trapping for their livelihood. In the beginning they followed shamanism and later in the early 18th century they joined Christianity. The European started fur trade there, where this community works as intermediaries.

This study deals with the history of the Ojibwa community and their musical traditions; especially the Ojibwa dance drum and its technology of construction. They consider this drum as their identity indicator. They call the drum as 'our grand father' (gimishoomisinaan) (Vennum Jr. 1982: 13). In this study the spiritual and physical value of this drum is discussed in an elaborate manner. Ojibwa drum touches all aspects of Ojibwa people's life such as spiritual, cultural, political, social, and economical aspects. The rhythm of the drum is the very foundation of Ojibwa sound tradition. Since they are exposed to this dance drum form childhood onwards, its rhythm is ingrained in their body. It plays a key role in the death ritual of the community. The drum accompanies the deceased to the grave. The journey of the deceased to the land of dead takes four days. During the journey, the soul of the departed will be dancing to the beat of the drum.

The study mentions two other instruments namely rattles and medicine drums. The women folk also perform these instruments. They believe that these instruments have supernatural powers and are used exclusively by medicine men or women in the curing ritual (ibid. pp.36-37). The origin legend related to this drum is also given in
this study. (Tail feather woman’s story). It is interesting to note the attitude of the Ojibwa people towards their drums. “Well, we treat (the drum) as a person. That is the way we (Menominee) were preached (by the Ojibwa)... they even make special beds for that Drum. Keep it as a person. We Indians do that just for the sake of God; appreciate, take care of that Drum good, because of that’s his power. That’s why we decorate that Drum, makes it look pretty, clean because it’s from God” (ibid.p.61). They consider the drum as a living person; as a sacred object. The sacred attribute helps them to keep up the importance of this drum even today. There are many beliefs spread among the people regarding the misuse of the drum and its results. (ibid.p.62). It all reveals that the drum enjoys special status in Ojibwa community.

The movement of the drum as told by tail feather woman’s revelation. According to the direction of the Great Spirit (God), the drum moves from village to village, tribe to other tribe, to establish inter tribal peace and unity (ibid.p.70). Ceremonial drum and all other drums are originated in a dream of the tail feather women.

A detailed study on the technique of drum construction is given in this book. From the orgonoloigical point of view, it is an important section in this study. Minute details regarding drum construction and the beliefs related to each one of them are described in this section (ibid pp.156-249).

Ali-al Daw and his friends attempted to study on traditional musical instrument of Sudan (1985). In geographical areas in Sudan, there exist various societies, various traditions, and various musical styles. The major function of this book is to inform the reader on various types of musical instruments, their features, the areas where they found, their tuning and how they are played. They have divided the instruments into four categories mainly the idiophones, the membranophone, the chordophone and aerophones.

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4 A Sioux woman, who fled United States soldiers who were killing her people, hid in a lake for four days. During this time, she was visited by the Great Sprit who instructed her to make a large dance drum and taught her the songs and ritual details for their use. The drum was then built as an instrument of peace and was meant to be copied and passed on to other tribes to bring and end to bloodshed. (Thomas Vennum, Jr.1982 : 44-46).
Blacking in his study on *Venda* music places certain basic questions on ethnomusicology. He asks: Why do we sing? Dance? Or make music? It is a sociological, psychological, anthropological, and political question that discusses the role and function of music in a particular society. For *Venda* society, it was a resistance form against the White's domination (Blacking 1973:38). It was also for building up their community consciousness as well as to regularize their daily life. *Venda* says 'man is man because of its association with other men' (ibid.p.27). *Venda* music is not an escape from reality but an adventure into reality, the reality of the world of spirits. It is an experience of becoming. Here individual consciousness is nurtured within the collective consciousness of the community and it becomes the source of rich cultural forms (ibid.p.28). Here the role of ethnomusicologist is to find the structural relationship between music and social life (culture) (ibid.p.53). Music is the product of culture and society. It is evolved from the nature (habitat) and it expresses social reality and cognitive process. The form and effects of music are created by the social experience of the human beings in different cultural context. Therefore, music is culturally and biologically conditioned and species-specific (ibid.p.100).

The chief function of music in a society and culture is to promote soundly organized humanity by enhancing human consciousness (ibid.p.101). Music is for the well being of humanity not only for the humanity but also for the whole Cosmos. It is to establish an order in things especially in human beings, to lead a sound life (ibid.p.25). Since music covers all aspects of human life, its function also applies to the total transformation of human beings and his or her world. Kierkegaard says that music prepares man to love (ibid.p.103).

Who perform music? It varies and depends upon the socio-cultural situation. For example, in *Venda* society, womenfolk play the drum, men play the flute, and the whole community takes part in the musical dance.

Martin Stokes (1994) examines the significance of music in the construction of identities and ethnicities and suggests ways to understand music as social practices. He stresses the role of music in the construction of national and regional identity. In one of the articles 'Musical Anthropology' (1987: 140) Seeger shares his experience in working with *Suya* community in Brazil. He says that it is through the performance of
dance and music the fundamental aspects of *Suya* social organizations are recognized (Stokes 1994: 2).

Music is socially meaningful because it provides means by which people recognize identities, places and boundaries, which separate them (ibid.p.4). Music is also used by politicians, rulers, parties, and communities to claim their identity, to control their group and to unite their members. Music is a community activity that brings people together in specific alignments: whether as musicians, dancers, or audience (ibid.p.12). He discusses in detail the role and function of music in society. A musical dance performance is the best occasion in which a community becomes one emotionally, socially and space wise too (E.g. *Tischiknon* dance of *Venda* tribe).

Marina Roseman (1993) explains how musical ideas and practices are to a way of knowing and imagining the world, to a way of transforming ordinary experience and to a penetrating belief system more broadly. She discusses the role of sound in ‘*Temiar* healing performances’. Musical performance can heal a person or community both bodily and mentally. For *Temiar* society, illness means losing the path (way) for a person. When the person’s head soul gets lost in the ‘jungle’, he/she gets sickness. The cure for this sickness is, by singing a ‘way’ and helping the head soul to find its way back to home.

In *Temiar* society, in this particular music performance, (singing of dream song by the (spirit guide) medium), the songs are paths that links the spirit medium, female chorus, members, trance - dancers, patients, spirits of the jungle and settlements (Roseman 1993:8). She proposes a cosmological theory in this study that is, meaningfully patterned sounds and movements set the cosmos in motion, releasing spirits in their bounded forms; so that they can interact with humans (ibid.p.15).

Regarding the role of music in *Suya* society Seeger (1987) asks the query: Why *Suya* sing? *Suya* would sing because through singing they could restore certain kinds of order or pattern in their society, and create new kinds of order in it. Singing is an experience of the body and of the social person, and a means of reproducing society. Singing is also intimately linked with material production and social identity. *Suya* sang because singing was an essential way of articulating the experience of their life with the process of their society (Seeger 1987:128). *Suya* cosmology is expressed
in the design of the village, the use of space, the ornamentation and use of body (ibid.p.132). In order to understand the musical performance of the Suya’ community we have to understand the socio-political context of the community. The author says, Suya’ sing for their survival. Being alienated from their life and habitats due to impact of modernization, they sing or make music to create social identity, to establish political identity and to face the challenges of modernization.

Various scholars have undertaken serious studies on tribal communities in India. Some such scholars are Pande (1991), Pasayat (1998), Singh (1993), and Haimendorf (1982). Paul Hockings (1989) gives a detailed account on various tribal communities that inhabit in Nilgiri region. The bio-geographical features of this hilly area call our attention. This book covers the most of the diverse ethnic groups, such as Kotas, Todas, Badagas, Kurumbas, Irulas, and Mullukurumas in the district. Anthony R. Walker’s account on the Todas is the first to point out that polyandry is an institution of the past and that their economy is no longer dependent on buffalo pastoralism, but primarily on land and cash.

Paul Hockings discusses how culture is influenced by environment (Hockings 1989:360). About the presence of Paniya tribe in this region R. Misra (1971) in her studies mentioned that in the far west of the Wayanad plateau, there in Erumadu village she identified the tribal communities like Mullukurumbas, Paniyas, Urlni, Kurumbas, Kattunaikas, and Wayanadan Chetti (Chetti is not enlisted in the tribal category now). Hockings also mentions that in the Wayanad lowland, we have found the Paniyas traditionally acting as a slave, or agricultural serfs on the land owned by Wayanadan Chetti farmers (ibid.p.368).

There are many studies on Toda tribe of Nilgiri region. (Marshall 1873, Balvastky 1893, Hardren 1932, Rivers 1906, Srainivas 1952, Rooksby 1951). Taking the study of Rivers (1906) (The Todas) as the basis Walker (1986) goes ahead analyzing the socio-economic and cultural changes that took place in Toda life for the past eighty years. The two important themes in the book are, first, Toda society is viewed with in the Hindu civilization of south India. Second, Toda society is far from static even in its most traditional ritualistic aspect (1986:9). Until the advent of the British (1799), the Nilgiri hill was a quite remote area of the south India. Many changes have taken place in this area and in the Toda life too, due to the impact of the
modernization and sanskritaisation. Yet, they follow some of their socio-religious practices like diary cult that uphold their heritage even today.

Mathur (1997) deals with various topics on tribals such as land alienation, bonded labour, indebtedness of the tribes, ethnography of the primitive tribes, residential schools for the tribals, status of tribal women in Kerala, tribal movements in Wayanad. It is a compilation of his articles that were written during the years 1973-76. About this book he says ‘these essays were written for laymen…. hence technical terms have been avoided as far as possible’. (Mathur 1977:xi). This study highlights some of the important issues related to tribal life. Chapters four, seven, eight and nine have direct reference to Paniya life. In chapter four, he explains the phenomenon of *kundal pani*, (bonded labour) that existed mainly among the *Paniyas, Adiyas, Kattunaikas and Wayand Pulayas* (ibid.p.95). This system made them slavish in nature both internally and externally. Though the bonded labour system was abolished still they are not free from the clutches of this system even today.

C.Gopalan Nair wrote the book, *Wayanad: its People and Tradition*, (1911) during the British administration of Wayanad under Madras Presidency. It gives a clear picture on Wayanad, especially the cultural tradition from an administrative point of view. Some of the topics dealt with in this book are: ancient history of Wayanad, political history, Kottayam Rajah reign, planting industry, people of Wayanad, shrines of Wayanad, legends and stories. In the sixth chapter, people of Wayanad, he gives, some important information regarding the tribes who inhabited in these regions. There were fifteen tribes of which many are not found today (Gopalan Nair 1911: 49-113). It gives a detailed description of the Paniya tribe also.

Luiz (1962) gives detailed picture of the tribal communities who inhabit in Kerala after independence. It gives an ethnographical description of the tribes who had inhabited in Wayanad region in the early 1950's. There is a section on Paniya, (Luiz 1962:218-221), which gives some key information regarding their past history.

*Mullukurumbarude kalipattukal* compiled by Manu Jose (2001) is a collection of Mullukurumba folk songs, which are sung as part of Vattakali or *Kolkali* dances. They perform these dances during marriage or their village festival occasion. Only men folk participate in these dances. It is entirely different from Paniya *Vattakali*
performance. The compiler collected 299 *Vattakali* songs and 78 *Kolkali* songs from *Erumadu*, and *Ayyankolli* in *Gudalur, Nilagiri* districts. These songs are sung in Malayalam and its themes are related to their gods, heroes, and other topics.

_Ghotra kala vadivukal_ by C.R. Rajagopalan (2001) is a study on folk aesthetics. Some of them are directly connected to tribal folklore, namely, tribal arts, tribal dances, and tribal culture. It is an analytical study on Kerala folk performing arts. On tribal dances, he says that they are ethnic and cultural performances that reflect the culture and worldview of tribal community. Dance and music go together in this performance. Generally, tribal dances are group dances (community dances) (Rajagopalan 2001:113-129). It is the group expression of a community.

There are two studies on the socio-cultural history of Wayanad. One is by Johny (2001), *Wayanad Rekhakal* and the other is by Mundakayam Gopi (2002), *Ariyapedatha Wayanad*. The first work concentrates on the local history of Wayanad. Presenting many archeological and ethnic evidences, the author tries to unveil the Wayanad cultural history in a scientific manner. It gives lots of information regarding various communities who lived in Wayanad since Mesolithic age, that is, BCE 14000 - 4000. It is not a detailed historical study but it touches some of the important aspects of the Wayanad history namely, the oral history of the tribal communities in Wayanad (Johny 2001: 24-28, 33, 36). Some of the topics included in this book are tribal culture, tribal language and education, legends related to tribes, tribal rules and rituals.

The second work also gives much information regarding the history of Wayanad and its people. By presenting various historical documents and inscriptions, the author tries to highlight some of the unknown facts with regard to Wayanad history. He says that from the linguistic and cultural evidences most of the tribal groups are not the original inhabitants of this region. They might have migrated from the nearby states. (Gopi 2002:176-193). It is a debated statement, which needs lots of research.

_Wayanattile Adivasikalude Pattukal_ compiled by M.R. Pankajashan (1989) is a collection of tribal folk songs with a small ethnographic note on each tribal community. He has collected a good number of Kurichiya folk songs, which includes *kumba pattu, nari pattu, kalari pattu, nellu kuttu pattu*, etc. It includes also a collection
of Adiya folk songs like a *gadhika pattu, okkalu pattu, pei pattu* etc. Kushava community’s (pot makers) folk songs also is included in this collection. Some of them are *mariamma thottam, karakattam, vidyadrambam sthuthi* etc.

The study by P.K. Prakash (2002) on the land issues of the tribals in Kerala elaborately analyzes the present socio-economic and political situation of tribals in Kerala. By presenting factual data and reports, the author tries to analyze the history and politics of the tribal land issues. Case studies are conducted at Wayanad, Attapadi and Idukki regions. The encroachments done by govt. and non-tribal agencies on tribal land made the tribals literally refugees in their land (Prakash 2002:11-12).

The screenplay *Guda* written by K.J. Baby (2004) throws lights on the belief and lives of the Kattunaika tribe. Guda is the small house that is built for the girl child to stay, when she attains puberty. It is the story of a Naika girl ‘Lechu’ who is confined to Guda because of her parent’s financial inability to do the necessary rituals attached to her puberty rites. This film clearly analyses the present situation of the tribal life in Kerala.

The book, *Mavelimantram* (1991) by the same author is an ethnic novel based on the lives of Paniyas and Adiyas. It gives lots of myths, stories, songs, and beliefs related to the Paniya and Adiya life. The author collected them from several tribal informants and put them into a novel form. This study narrates the real picture of a salve community who dream for a new society (*Mavelimantram*), which is filled with love, freedom, and mutual respect. The author is a writer, dramatist, and a social worker and runs a special school *Kanavu* for the tribal children in Wayanad.

Somashekharan Nair in his book *Paniyar* (1976) gives a cultural description of the Paniya tribe in Kerala, with a chapter on Kerala tribes in general. He wrote this book using Paniya language and usage to explain the socio-cultural, religious, and economic conditions of the Paniyas. As an introductory study, this book is useful for the research to get an entry into the world of Paniyas. This study throws light into the socio-cultural life of the Paniyas in the early 20th century. The myth related to their
origin *Ippi Mala myth or Ithi mala myth* ⁵, Valliyookkavu *Myth, andukettu* (bonded labour system) are explained in this study (ibid. pp. 34-36). Some samples of the Paniyas songs, proverbs, stories are also included in this work.

Somashekkaran Nair’s second book *Paniya Bhasha* (1977) contains a short description of the studies done on Paniya tribal language, grammar and rules of Paniya language and Paniya dictionary. It shows that though the Paniya was a wandering tribe, it kept up their language system in a better manner. It has become their identity marker. Through this study, he introduces Paniya language to a non-tribal community.

Aiyappan in his book *The Paniyas: An ex-slave tribe of south India* (1992) highlights the socio-economic condition of the Paniyas during the 20th century. He explains the enslavement situation of the tribe, which is prevailing even today in various forms. It is the outcome of his fieldwork in 1934 and 1970. From an ethnographic perspective, this study gives many insights on Paniya life. This study raises some questions on Paniya life. In an enslavement situation how do the Paniyas sustain their culture and life? In a dependent and exploitative (dominated) status what are the socio-cultural identities that they uphold in their lives today?

*Penappattile Chettadian* is a monograph written by E.T. Raju (1999) on the death rituals of the Paniya tribe in Kerala. He has collected the ritual songs related to death rites. There are three main rituals related to death. They are *Karimpola* (seventh day), *Kakka pola* (second year) and *Adakampola* (third year). During this ritual, the priest (Attali) sings songs for hours narrating the ethnic history of the Paniya tribe. They also remember their ancestors in these songs and bring them to the ritual ground. This song is called *Penapattu*. Paniya belong to the *Chettadian* clan (kulam). Therefore, each Paniya is called *Chettadian* (Raju 1999:1).

Some of the other studies on Paniya and other tribes of Wayanad are: *Keralathile Africa* by K.Panur (1963) and *Kattarum Avarude kalamozhikalum* by A.R. Naryanan Nair (1980). Both these studies include an ethnographic account on Paniya tribe. Lots of changes have taken place in their lives since these studies.

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The study named *Political socialization of the Paniyar- An ethnographic study* gives a clear picture on how much this community is aware of the various political institutions and how far they are taking part in the political system and administration. This study gives a general discussion on the present status of the Paniyas in Wayanad. Situating the tribals in Wayanad context, it discusses the exact nature of the system of Paniya labour organisation called the *aandukettu* system (bonded labour). It also studies the political system like the traditional leadership of the Paniyas, democratic participation of the Paniyas, modern political roles, and their political consciousness. (Geetha 1993: 6).

**Other works**


**C. THEORIES**

1. *Ethnomusicological theories*

Ethnomusicology has always been compounded of two distinct parts, the musicological, and the ethnological. Perhaps its major problem is the blending of the two in a unique fashion, which emphasizes neither but takes into account both. Music sound is the result of human behavioural processes that are shaped by the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the people who comprise a particular culture (Merriam 1964). Many studies have been done in this field and some theories have developed in this discipline.

John Blacking while studying on the *Venda* tribe in South Africa says that all tribal music is structurally and functionally folk music and it has meaning only in a social context or in a culture (Blacking 1973:10). So by studying the music of a particular society in its socio-cultural context we can understand that society in a better
way. He also says that 'music is humanly organized sound' and it is the product of the human behaviour. It expresses human reality in a metaphorical expression of feelings associated with the way society really exists (ibid.p.103). Hence folk music is the real reflection of folk-life. The main function of music in a tribal society is to promote a 'soundly organized humanity' by enhancing human consciousness (ibid.p.101).

The role of ethnomusicologist is to find the structural relationship between music and social life. Music is the product of the society (culture). It evolves from the nature and expresses the social reality and its knowledge system. Hence music and its performance are culturally and biologically conditioned phenomena. (ibid.pp.53,89,100). Here Blacking affirms that the music of a community is related to nature, social situation and the culture of that particular society. Therefore, a folk musical performance is the real reflection of that folk society.

Alan Lomax also shares this idea by saying that song is a multileveled communication and it communicates the feeling, aspiration, wishes of the past and present life of a community (Lomax 1968: 28). He has analysed the musical features of a particular community based on its economic structure, political life, and social-family relationship. Song style is a learned behaviour. The search for meaning is not only culture oriented but also song style oriented. It is an integral part of each culture and it repeats its basic and common forms of human relationship (ibid.p.121).

With regard to the function of musical performance, Martin Stokes says that music is socially meaningful because it provides means by which people recognize identities, place, and boundaries, which separate them. He also shares the opinion that music and dance encourages people to get in touch with their emotion and their community (Stokes 1994: 3,13).

We use these ideas to understand the Paniya music and society. While studying Paniya musical dance performance in its socio-cultural context we try to understand the core elements and its preserving patterns of the Paniya society. The researcher by observing Vattakali, the Paniya musical dance performance at various contexts affirms that this performance does play a key role in the formation of a 'soundly organized humanity' among the Paniya community. It affirms the Paniya identity, strengthens
Paniya unity and promotes the Paniya’s self-image. Paniya music and dance do provide the community a space to get in touch with their core elements like, the spirits of the ancestors, clan gods, nature elements, and the kinship patterns. It also gives an occasion to express their inner most emotions and all other community dynamics and interactions. This way it forms natural resistance against the dominating powers of the modern society. Music is culture-specific and hence there is a dialogical relation between the music and culture of a particular society. So by understanding the music tradition of the community we understand its culture and vice-versa.

b. Performance theories

Performance is a concept employed particularly by anthropologists in the analysis of ritual and religion. All performance, like all communication, is situated, enacted, and rendered meaningful within socially defined situational contexts. Cultural performances tend to be the most prominent performance contexts within a community and they share a set of characteristic features. Perhaps the principal attraction of cultural performances for the study of society lies in their nature as reflexive instruments of cultural expression. (Richard Bauman, on performance in International Encyclopedia of Communications, vol.3.1989:262-266). Many studies have been done and theories have evolved in this area.

Richard Schechner discusses the relationship between ritual and performance. He says that rituals are performative: they are acts done; and performances are ritualized: they are codified, repeatable actions. The functions of performance and ritual are the same. The difference lies in context and emphasis. Rituals emphasize efficacy where as performance (theater), entertainment (Schechner1988:613).

Victor Turner observes that whenever the human spirit is free, people celebrate. Periodically the human community sets aside all the work and worry of everyday life, and engages in festivity. Sometimes even on the face of cultural domination and economic deprivation, people come out for celebration. (Turner 1982 :7). He also says that when a community celebrates a particular event it celebrates itself. (ibid.p.16). He holds the opinion that man is a self-performing animal and his performance is reflexive which means self-revealing.
Richard Bauman says that each folklore item is a performance and it brings a community together because it is a mode of communication too. A performance has two elements namely, the artistic action and the artistic event. The former is the actual performance and the latter is the performance context which include the social settings, audience and the art form (Bauman 1977 :2,10,11).

Anthony Seeger in his study on the music performance of the Suya’ community affirms that ‘each performance creates and re-creates the person, place, time and the audience.’ It expresses the status, sex and feelings of the performers; it creates a new space for each performance event. By the performance the whole community present there (the audience) undergoes changes in their attitude, feelings, and behaviour pattern towards the particular social event. Hence we could say that a performance event gives birth or creates a new community in its totality (Seeger 1987:65).

Performance, as a fundamental key to human action and culture, is often centered on the concepts of drama (Finnegan 1992: 91). Performance is one specific mode of human communication and action. Performance is a mode of language use, a way of speaking. Performance is also used to refer a concrete event in time. Performance is something complementary to, and opposed to, the script (text). In a performance, there are performers and audience. As a researcher one has to pay attention to all these factors. A performance media has three elements such as a) acoustic (verbal, musical, gestures), b) visual and material, c) body expression (ibid.pp.91-93). Keeping all the aforementioned theories in mind, the Paniya musical dance performance called Vattakali has been approached in our study.

D. METHODOLOGY

1. Ethnomusicological Approach

Ethnomusicology is a discipline that combines scientific and humanistic methods of research to study human musical communication. It takes into account the socially shared perception and definition of music makers. British philologist A.J. Eliss (1885) says that music is a social fact and a cultural variable. (John Blacking’s article on Ethnomusicology in International Encyclopedia of Communication Vol. 2, Oxford, 1989. p.114). Hence, by analyzing the music of a particular society we are getting insights and information about that society and its culture.
Ethnomusicology is defined as ‘the study of music in culture’, which means that it is made up of both the musicological and ethnological theories and methods. Music sound is the result of human behavioural process that are shaped by the values, attitudes and beliefs of the people who comprise a particular culture. Music tradition of a society is part of its culture. Therefore, by understanding the music we understand the culture of the society and vice versa. Ethnomusicology is unique in welding together aspects of social science and humanities in such a way that each complements the other and leads to a fuller understanding of both (Merriam 1964:3,6,7).

Traditionally ethnomusicology aims at the study of the music of a particular society in its cultural context. Therefore, the focus of the study is on the music tradition, its features, and style of performance, type of music, structure, form, etc. In my study, I give importance to the community, its features, behaviour, worldviews, and life issues. Music is used as a tool to understand the society and its inner dynamics in a deeper way.

Ethnomusicology is different from Musicology or Comparative musicology. Musicology is concerned about various features, styles, and categories of music. It gives importance to the music genre. Comparative musicology aims at the study of music of different societies but Ethnomusicology looks for the intrinsic and extrinsic features of a community expressed through its music tradition. It is similar to performance approach in which the text for analysis is not an idealized or abstract one. Nevertheless, the concrete music event is studied in its socio-cultural context.

Marina Roseman proposes a methodology for ethnomusicological study as “go to the people, live with them, join in their music performance, follow their path...always being alert to the link between daily life and virtual activity. These links are the threads that give coherence to a culture.” (Roseman 1993:8).

Ethnomusicology aims at the study of music as an approach to the study of social processes in general. Some points to be rememberd in this approach are:

1. Ethnomusicologists should not study only those forms that resemble what our society calls music. They should examine the entire speech-music continuum, and in some cases the interrelationship of different performing arts such as
music and movement, or movement and drama, in order to see what makes music different from non-music for its performers and audience.

2. Attention must be paid to ideas or stories about the origin of music, composition, and the introduction of new musical forms. These concepts are part of what music is and they are involved in any musical event.

3. Musical performances are not only sounds but the contexts of which those sounds are a part.

4. Considerable care should be taken to avoid pre-determinining what is music and what is not through recording technique.

5. Fieldwork should not be separated from the analytic process and academic presentation (Seeger 1987:138-139).

2. Performance approach

Performance approach represents a new movement in folkloristic, a movement away from idealism, inherent in many of the structuralist studies, to concrete life experience. It is a context-based and context-sensitive method. While studying a performance in detail, the socio, economic, political, and cultural contexts of the particular performance and the community attached to it also are studied.

Performance is a mode of communicative behaviour and a type of communicative event. While the term employs in an aesthetically neutral sense to designate the actual conduct of communication, performance usually suggests an aesthetically marked and heightened mode of communication, framed in a special way and put on display for an audience. The analysis of performance highlights the social, cultural, and aesthetic dimensions of the communicative process. Performance is reflexive in a social-psychological sense. The performer becomes an object for itself and for others. (Richard Bauman, on performance in International Encyclopedia of Communications, vol.3, 1989:262-266).

By performance, we mean not only the ‘verbal art’ but it embraces all aspects of our life namely social culture, material culture and symbolic culture. So folk arts like dance, music, drama, and social customs like life cycle ceremonies, festivals and fares,
rituals and beliefs and material aspect of life like agriculture, handicraft making, folk medicinal practices, etc, are treated as performance.

It is a shift from the text-centered study to performance-centered study. It focuses on actual performance and the context in which it is performed. Hence, the primary data we collect on a performance is not from the library but from the field. The text for our analysis is 'the performance in action'. It is neither generalized nor idealized but concrete and particular. The interaction between the text (performance) and the context are observed and recorded by the researcher himself.

The observation and analysis of performance is being done in the 'native point of view' (emic). The researcher tries his/her level best in taking the cues from the native interpretational tradition (Reflexivity). There are five elements in a performance event. They are: 1) the setting 2) the social context 3) the performers 4) the audience 5) the performance medium (dance, music, drama, oral discourse, etc.). ‘A performance is a live presentation which is never repeated identically’ (Claus, Peter J. and Frank J. Korom 1991:159). So each performance is a unique event and it has to be understood in its unique cultural context. Some of the terms used in this approach are:

**Performance configuration**: It is the description of the performers and the acts they perform. The researcher takes note of the name, age, occupation, of the performers and the role of each performer, and the name of the village.

**Performance context**: It is the physical, social, and cultural setting of the event. A detailed ethnographic presentation of the ‘event context’ is expected here.

**Performance tradition**: It is a concept like genre which identifies a given performance event as an instance of a particular kind. It is an abstract term, but it should attempt to match a native abstraction (Ibid.pp.160-161).

Performance approach does not look at the text in isolation. The text is analyzed in context. It deals with real world events. The totality of the performance event is taken for the study. The setting, the social context, the performers, the audience, and their interactions are made use for this method. In the performance method, the researcher is always give special attention to the performers and their performance. Here he will take the role of a participant observer. In order to get
accurate data, many cases of the same type will be taken for observation and study (ibid.p.167).

Since this method is directly dealing with communities and people, it seeks the assistance of professional ethnography. The researcher here tries to explain the event as 'here and now', that is, in space and time not as something happened in the past. Anthropologists call this as 'ethnographic present'. Here the ethnographer refers to the social or cultural system of the people studied in generalized present tense, without specifying the historical moment to which his observation is applied.

3. People

The people chosen for this study is the Paniya tribe. They inhabit the Western Ghats of Kerala, some parts of the Nilgiris (Tamilnadu) and Coorg (Karnataka). In kerala they are found in Wayanad, Calicut, Kannur, Malapuram, and Kasargode districts. They speak Paniya dialect that is a mixture of Malayalam, Tamil and Tulu. The Paniyas are agricultural labourers. They go to work in coffee plantations, pepper and other cash crops plantations, paddy fields and other household cultivations which are owned by Hindu, Christian or Muslim landlords. During season they get six days work in a week and at other times they get two days work per week. Due to the fall of crops' prices for the past four years they have not been getting regular employment. As a result of this most of the Paniya settlements faces grave starvation. They do not have even one meal a day.

They live in small tiled or thatched houses, which are set up by the government agencies in colony style. In a settlement, there are five to twenty families of which most of them belong to the same clan (kulam). The literacy rate of the community is 33.92% (male 39.1% and female 26.9%). Older generation is non-literate people, middle aged group had studied maximum upto primary education. Younger generation go to school. There are schools which function near these settlements. Some settlements are five to seven kilometers away from the high school.

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6 A convention that is common in ethnographic writing. It involves the suspension of historical consciousness for the purpose of reconstructing an image of a traditional society as a functioning whole at a given point of time.
Tribal residential school and hostels are there in Wayanad district, where they get free educational facilities. Yet there are dropouts among them (20 to 40%). Due to various reasons like lack of proper orientation and environment for education, lack of proper method for learning and the socio-cultural situation in most of the settlements are not conducive for their children to study.

At present the paniya villages are in the clutches of the liquor maffia. As a result life in the families and community is affected negatively. Family quarrels and disputes are very common now. The neighbours of the Paniyas are other tribals like Kurichiyas, Mullu kurumbas and Kattunaikas and non-tribal communities like the Hindus, Christians and Muslims. Due to the close contact with these groups the socio-cultural life style of the paniyas is changed considerably. But the changes are taking place only at the peripheral level. This we could see in their food pattern, dress pattern and socio-religious practices. (More details are given in chapter II)

4. Area of the study

The area chosen for the study is Wayanad district in Kerala state of South India. There are sixty five thousand Paniyas living in this area. The households of the Paniyas are spread in three Block Panchayaths namely Mananthavadi, Kalpetta, and Sultan Bathery. The case studies are mainly done in Panamaram Panchayath where exists the largest number of Paniya settlements. There are 86 Paniya settlements in this Panchayath that consists of 1165 houses of which male population is 2444 and the female population is 2146 (source: 1991 census). I has done fieldwork in twenty Paniya villages. Their names are: Nellickal, Chundakara, Naduvil, Veetimoola, Thoongadi, Puzhakkal veedu, Koonamel, Malamkara, Arinjermala, Athirathil, Veetikunnu, Ettukayam, Panniyodi, Narakakandy, Kallummotta, Alumthatta, Kurumbalakotta, Madakunnu, Pallikunnu, Anappara. All settlements are about 22-30 kilometers away from Kalpetta, the headquarters of Wayanad district.

E. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

I have chosen four methods for data collection namely (1) Participant observation (2) Unstructured interview (3) Case study and (4) Focus group discussion. During festival seasons or the ceremonial contexts (performance) I visited the village, joined in their group (community) conversation and started informal discussion on the
performance and related rituals. The elders and children were very enthusiastic in sharing their experience and knowledge related to the performance. Generally, this people are not out-spoken but they are shy and fearful, and they would not speak to a stranger (non-tribe). They are afraid also to speak before a formal group. The Mooppans (village head) of the Oorus (village) were good informants with regard to this study.

Here during the fieldwork I conducted four focus group discussions. The groups selected were the women folk, children, youth, and the village community in general.

1. Data Collection

I have contact with this community for a period of eight years, it was easy to establish rapport with them. During the research period, an intensive fieldwork was undertaken for four consecutive years (4 months each in a year) during their festival seasons (Feb – May). I took part in their ceremonies, ate with them, lived in their villages, and shared their lives by participating in their ceremonies, village festivals, and joining in their workfield. When ever there is some special function in nearby villages people used to come and invite me for the programme. I closely observed their Vattakali performance during marriage ceremony, Vishu celebration, and TUDI festivals.

I have taken three cases for in-depth study. They are:

1) Vattakali performance in a marriage ceremony context.
2) Vattakali in a ritual celebration context (Vishu celebration)\(^7\)
3) Vattakali in a village festival context (TUDI festival)\(^8\)

\(^7\) It is the harvest festival of the Kerala which is considered as a fertility cult celebration. Paniya tribe also celebrates this festival. For details see chapter three of the thesis.

\(^8\) TUDI (Tribal Unity for Developmental Initiatives) is a cultural movement of the tribes in Wayanad, Kerala state. It started in Panamaram Panchayath in the year 1996. It organizes tribal festival annually to promote tribal folklore and culture.
For the first case, I went to the bridegroom’s house as a guest of the groom’s in-law (brother-in-law Raju Naduvil). Therefore, I was well received by the groom’s party and the villagers. To make acquaintance with the social context I visited the village four days before with Mr. Raju (the contact person). We met the village head (Mooppan) and the relatives, parents of the bridegroom. They invited me for the marriage and asked me to take photo of the ceremonies for them too. During the marriage day, while taking photo of a group, one person named Kumaran tried to capture my camera. There was some quarrel in the bridegrooms’ house between some relatives and he was involved in it. He thought that I was photographing the quarrel scene. However, other relatives who stood there stopped him and saved me from the awkward situation.

For the second case, I went there as a person who was interested to know their rituals and celebrations related to Vishu festival. Mr. Chandran (35) the contact person, from the same village helped me, guided me during the celebration. To this village also I made prior visits and made a rapport with villagers. Since the performance was late at night on the hilly place, we did not have electricity facility to record the programmes fully on video.

For the third case, I was a constant participant in their festival for the past seven years. Every year during the month of May they organize this TUDI festival. Along with other folk performance, they had Vattakali performance too. Many Paniya villages used to participate in this performance wearing their traditional dress and ornaments.

In all the cases, the data were collected by using field note diary, tape recorder, and a video camera. Field notes were prepared immediately after the performances. Interview responses were also taken down in a personal diary, which was written elaborately later when the researcher got free time. I recorded their songs and a ritual prayer in a small tape recorder, videographed marriage ceremony, vishu celebration, and TUDI festival. Photography was extensively used in documenting vattakali performance. Occasional resentment from the crowd was there while taking photos of the performance. The difficulty I faced in the field was that I did not get a proper field assistant for all these field trips.
2. Selection of the informants

It was not easy to get ‘active informant’ regarding this performance. While doing the fieldwork, I was lucky to get three village heads (Mooppan). They have sufficient knowledge regarding Paniya rituals and customs. Their names are: Polan Mooppan (75), Velukkan Mooppan (61) and Chimban Mooppan (80). Sri Chimban (80) is a treasure house with regard to Paniya life and culture. I have selected three types of informants namely the senior people; the middle aged ones, and the youth and children. These groups could provide me reliable data regarding the past and present status of the Paniya life and the experience they have in vattakali performance. Non-Paniya tribals and non-tribals are also included in the list. The list of the informants is given in appendix-II.

Being known to many villages, I had merits and demerits in conducting the fieldwork. The merits were an easy entry into the village, warm welcome by the people, and able to talk to them as a friend. The demerit was the difficulty of taking the role as a researcher because I had come across to them as a social worker, teacher, and religious priest belonging to the social organization called TUDI.

3. Collection of Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected from published books, research thesis, and standard journals both in English and Malayalam. Various libraries and documentation centers were visited and gathered data related to Paniya tribe and tribes in general were collected. Folklore museums, archives, and resource centers were also used extensively for reference work. Discussions and clarifications with teachers, social workers, research scholars, non-tribes who are settled in Wayanad since 1940’s, and other scholars from various parts of Kerala and India also helped the researcher to collect a lot of data on this subject. The visit and stay in tribal settlements in Attapady (Palakad dist) and Devikulam (Idukki dist) also helped me to get a holistic vision on the tribal situation in Kerala. I had the occasion to live in a Santal tribal village named Kodma, (Jharkhand state) for a month in February 2003. This also helped me to get further exposure to the tribal world.

In performance there are four elements such as, 1) The setting/context 2) The performers 3) The Audience 4) The performance. All these four factors have to be
observed and analyzed in detail. Here we consider the performance (vattakali) as a communication. It has got a special impact on the community both on the audience and performers. In addition to this, vattakali has a symbolic and ritualistic significance. This has to be analyzed considering the socio-religious context of the performance.

To analyze the music making process and its impact on the people through this performance, ethnomusicological method is used. In addition, organological method is made use of understanding the musical instruments tudi and kuzhal, and its relation to the society. The myth and beliefs related to these instruments, its construction techniques, and its role in Paniya community also are analyzed using this tool.

Allowing the text, here the vattakali performance, to speak for itself it will have many things to tell about the Paniya society, its inner dynamics, worldview, values and culture. Paniya self-image is portrayed through these performances.

F. THESIS PLAN

The whole thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is general introduction, which consists of problem formulation, survey of literature, theories and methodology, methods of data collection, data analysis, and thesis plan. Ethnomusicological and folkloristic theories are discussed in this section. The second chapter covers the ethnographic profile of the Paniya tribe. It includes a general description of the Wayanad region in Kerala, tribes of Wayanad and the ethnography of the Paniya tribe in detail. The socio-economic-political-cultural and religious life of the Paniya society is explained in detail in this chapter. It gives a clear picture of the present status of the Paniya tribal community.

The third chapter discusses the various aspects of Vattakali performance. It deals with performance description, case study, community discourses, field observation, and Vattakali in other societies. Case studies of three different contexts namely life cycle ceremony (marriage), religious festival (Vishu celebration) and social gathering (Tribal village festival) are taken up for the analysis. Observations regarding vattakali performances of various cases are also included in this section. A section is allotted to discuss the features of vattakali as a dance genre.
The fourth chapter deals with Paniya music and songs. It consists of ethnomusicology, tribal music in general, Paniya music and songs. In this section, a detailed classification of the Paniya music tradition is made with illustrations. The features and the functions of the Paniya music are also discussed in this chapter. An ethnomusicological analysis is being done on different type of Paniya songs like entertainment songs, vattakali chollukal, nattipattu, lullaby songs, and kathapattu. The fifth chapter is on tudi and kuzhal. It contains the sections like, organology, tribal musical instruments, tudi and kuzhal making, classification, and functions. A new methodology for understanding and analyzing society is introduced here namely organology. Through the detailed study of myths, stories, rituals, and beliefs related to tudi and kuzhal we come to know more about the Paniya community at a deeper level.

The sixth chapter contains the findings and conclusion of the research. It includes an ethnomusicological analysis on Paniya music tradition in general, Vattakali music, kuzhal and tudi music, major findings and conclusion. By analyzing the Paniya music and performance in its socio-cultural context we try to understand the role and significance of them in the making of Paniya society, culture and identity. It also discusses the core- elements of Paniya culture and its preservation pattern in a performance context.

In this chapter we try to identify and situate the problem of our research. We also discuss various theories and methodologies to understand and analyse the research problem using folkloristic and ethnomusicological tools. The next chapter gives an ethnographic profile of the Paniya community.