ETHNOGRAPHY
A Descriptive Analysis of Yerava

KODAGU
THE STUDY AREA

District Boundary
Taluk Boundary
River
District Headquarters
Taluk Headquarters

KODAGU
linguistic composition
1871

KODAGU
376,291
KANNADA
40 16%
TAMIL
17 0%
MALAYALAM
10 7%
Tulu
0 5%
INdian Other
17 4%

KODAGU
ETHNO-LINGUISTIC VARIATION 1901-71

Karnataka
Andhra Pradesh
Tamil Nadu

YEAR
1901 1911 1921 1931 1941 1951 1961 1971

Number of Yerava-Speaking Thanes of Population

Location of Kodagu

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CHAPTER I
ETHNOGRAPHY

1.1. Introduction

Brief ethnographic descriptions of Yeravas are found in several published works such as Memoir of the Codagu Survey Vol. II by Connor (1870), Ethnographical Compendium on the Castes and Tribes found in the Province of Coorg by Richter (1887), "Coorgs and Yeruvas" by Holland (1901), The Coord Tribes and Castes by L.A. Krishna Iyer (1948) and Archaeology of Coorg by K.K. Subbeyya (1978). Here brief ethnographic description of Yeravas based mainly on the data collected and analyzed by this investigator is presented.

1.1.1. Kodagu

The Yeravas are an important tribe of Kodagu district, popularly known as Coorg district. The Kodagu district is the smallest district in Karnataka and is situated in the Southern part of Karnataka. It is small both in area and in population.

This Kodagu district of 4104 square kilometres area is situated between 11°56' and 12°50' North Latitude and 75°22' and 76°12' East Longitude. The maximum length of the district from North to South is 96 kilometres and
maximum breadth from East to West is 64 kilometres. Within this area Yerava population is concentrated in the region between 11°56' and 12°15' North Latitude, and 75°45' and 76°12' East Longitude. The four Nads that come within this area are (see Map I) Srimangala Nad, Ponnampet Nad, Ammatti Nad and Virarajapet Nad. Out of these four Nads, the Yerava population is concentrated mostly in Srimangala Nad Ammatti Nad and Ponnampet Nad. This district is bound in North by Hassan district, in East by Mysore district, in West by South Canara district of Karnataka. And in South it is bound by Cannanore district of Kerala State. In South, Bramhagiri Hill serves as a natural boundary between Kodagu district and Kerala State.

1.1.2. Mountains

The Kodagu district is known as the district of mountains and forests. The Bramhagiri hills of South, the Bramhagiri hills of North and Pushpagiri hills of North West are some of the important hills to mention. The highest mountain is Tadiyandamole with the height of 5,729' from the mean sea level. There are two types of forests in Kodagu. The male ka:du and kanive ka:du, namely, the forests of mountains and the forests of
valleys and lower hills. The Madikeri (Mercara) town, the head quarters of the district, is 3809' above the sea level. The four Nads mentioned earlier are on the plateau of South Bhrangagiri hills. Srimangala, Ponnampet, Virarajapet and Ammatti are at a height of 2782', 2811', 2981' and 3061' from the sea level.

The Kodagu district experiences three seasonal winds. The West wind, the North-East wind, the South-West wind, during monsoon, after monsoon and during the rest of the year respectively.

The average maximum temperature of the district is 28.6°C or 83.5°F and the average minimum temperature is 17.8°C or 64.0°F. The Kodagu district has an average rainfall of 2725.5 mm annually and the Virarajapet taluk has an average rainfall of 2671.8 mm annually.

1.1.3. Rivers

The river Kaveri originates at North Bhrangagiri and flows out of Kodagu in an Easterly direction towards Mysore district. Another important river of Kodagu, important in South Kodagu, is Lakshmanatirtha. It takes the form of water falls of nearly 100' at Kurchi, a village, 7 kilometres from Srimangala. In addition to Barapole, a small river, there are innumerable streams in Kodagu. The rivers overflow during monsoon period and their level
would be normal during other seasons.

1.1.4. Flora

The important timber of Kodagu are, Agil, Aini, Heb-halsu, Krupu, Kirelboghi, Kalpaimi, Chonapaini, Yenne-mar, Velthapaini, Dupa, Pali, Poon, Kuve, Ebony, Noga, Gandagarige, Teak, Biti, Jack, Atha, Naga sampige, Mango, Belangi, Pandapaini, Halmaddi, Mathi, Uluve, Haluve, Nerale, Buruga, Pale, Jantala, Neeruenteak, Chalé, Arsinatega, Chattuvamara and Sampige. Some other timber are Perumara, Kat-kumbala, Palmani, Karpar-mar, Lavungapettemara, Gerumara, Cheem, Kadalpara and Bage.

1.1.5. Fauna

The Kodagu forests are infested with elephants. Other important animals found in the forests are bison, tiger, leopard, bear, tiger-cat, black jungle cat, civet cat, loris, wild dogs, sambar, spotted deer and barking deer. The bird world of Kodagu has hornbills, vultures, kites, parrots, pigeons, water-fowls and jungle cocks. The rivers and streams consist of lady fish, mohser, black cat fish, black murl and black dhot in Kodagu. The three important worms are coffee borer, leaches and glowworms.
1.1.6. Crops

In Kodagu plantations, coffee, cardamom orange and pepper are cultivated. In addition to these crops banana and arecanut too are grown. With the help of rain water rich paddy cultivation is done in the plateau. Rice is the staple food of Kodagu population. The Yeravas of this study are a major labour force employed in the cultivation of these crops.

1.1.7. History

The history of this region can be dated back to 2nd century A.D. It was ruled by dynasties such as Cholas, Hoysalas, Nayakas and Haleri Rajahs. From 1834 A.D. to 1947 A.D. it was a part of British India. After 1947, the Coorg was declared as part 'C' State. On 1st November 1956, (Coorg) Kodagu merged with the then Mysore state and the present Karnataka state.

1.1.8. People

In Kodagu, Brahmins, Coorgis, Lingayats, Devangas, Bilimaggas, Bants, Vokkaligas, Heggades, Muslims, Christians, Jains, Agasas, Airis are found. In addition to these people, the people belonging to Scheduled Castes such as Adi Dravidas, Adi Karnatakas, Adiya, Balagai, Holeya, Madiga, Muchi,
Mundala, Samagara, Panchama, Peraya and Pale and Scheduled Tribes such as Korama, Kudiya, Kurumba, Meda, Martha and Yerava are also found.

1.1.9. Variation in population in Census 1871-1971

The population variation of the district since 1871, the first Census, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>1,68,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>1,78,302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1,73,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1,80,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1,74,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>1,63,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1,63,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1,68,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>2,29,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3,22,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>3,78,291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The density of population in Kodagu as per 1971 Census is 92 persons per square kilometre, whereas the state average for Karnataka is 153 persons per square kilometre. Note that the population of the district
registered decrease from 1911 to 1941 and remained more or less constant during 1921 - 41. Note also the tremendous increase in population from 1951 onwards. Reasons are beyond the scope of this investigation.

1.1.10. Major mother tongues

The Yerava mother tongue speakers form nearly 3% of the total population of the Kodagu district and 0.04% of the total population of Karnataka state. The major of these mother tongues according to the 1971 Census are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother tongue</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kannada</td>
<td>1,51,873</td>
<td>40.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malayalam</td>
<td>67,110</td>
<td>17.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodagu</td>
<td>64,461</td>
<td>17.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulu</td>
<td>30,473</td>
<td>8.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>22,165</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yerava</td>
<td>10,867</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>10,836</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.1. Yerava groups

There are some discrepancies regarding the groups of Yeravas or types of Yeravas. Richter (1887), Krishna Iyer (1948) and Subbayya (1978) list four types of
Yeravas in Kodagu district. They are Paniya, Panjiri, Kaag(j)i and Badava Yeravas. The 1871 Census lists two, Paniya and Panjiri, the 1881 Census also lists two Paniya and Panjiri with eight and twelve exogamous sections respectively.

In order to find out the exact number of groups of Yeravas and their names and to collect information on them, the present investigator made extensive tours of South Kodagu. He failed to locate a single Kaag(j)i Yerava. It seems that Kaag(j)i Yeravas are not there in South Kodagu. Even if they are there their number should be very small. Similarly he could not locate the Badava Yeravas. But he found Panjiri Yeravas being identified as Badava Yeravas by most of the Kodavas and identified as Panjiri Yeravas by self and by Paniya Yeravas. Hence, it may be said that Panjiri Yerava and Badava Yerava are synonymous.

So, in South Kodagu only two groups of Yeravas, Paniya and Panjiri are there. The investigator chose the Paniya Yerava for detailed study and at times and wherever necessary, information regarding language and ethnography of Panjiri Yeravas was also sought and provided in the dissertation.
1.2.2. **Informants**

The linguistic and ethnographic data for the present investigation is collected from the following informants.

**Paniya Yerava:** Sri Bolka  45 years  Santapura  
Sri Kariya  55 years  Santapura  
Sri Bera  45 years  Santapura  
Sri Kaaku  40 years  Kakuru  

**Panjiri Yerava:** Sri Thirunada  55 years  Chikkiri  
Sri Kashi  32 years  Chikkiri  

Only Sri Bolka and Sri Kashi are literates. All the informants know Kodagu and Kannada in addition to their 'tongue' and are from Srimangala Nad.

1.2.3. **Name of the tribe**

This tribe is identified as 'Yeravas' in the literature connected with the Census, ethnography, Linguistic Survey and history, but no attempt is made to analyze the name of the tribe. All available sources indicate that Yeravas came from outside Coorg. "Yerava" appears to be a name given to the tribe by the Kodavas. It appears that when this landless and nomadic people entered the Coorg province either on their own or by
Coercion they were dependent on Kodavas. In Kodagu language the word *era* means 'beg', *era-v-a* 'the beggar'. So, the Kodavas might have called this tribe as *erava* 'the beggars' a cover term. This is substantiated by the fact that when a Panjiri Yerava talks about an Yerava of another group, he always adds the group name as an adjective to the noun Yerava, thus identifying him as Paniya Yerava. Also Connor (1870) says that "the caste of people consigned to praedial slavery in Codugu proper are known generally under the term Yeravaru".

The present form the 'Yerava' is an Anglicized version of the name 'erava'. The other Anglicized versions are 'Yerrowur' 'Yaraba' (File No.IB:1834) and 'Yerrava' (Connor:1870). Even the names of the groups of Yervas are spelt in different ways. The Badava Yervas as 'Burigah Yerowur', Kaag(j)i Yervas as 'Kaky Yerrowur' Paniya Yervas as 'Punnee Yerrowor' and 'Panjiri Yervas as 'Punjayree Yerrowur' (File No.IB:1834).

1.2.4. Origin and Migration

There are two different views expressed by scholars regarding the history and migration of Yervas. The Yervas are considered as migrants from Waynad in Kerala by Census (1871, 1881), Connor (1870), Richter (1887) and Krishna Iyer (1948). They are considered as
aborigins of Coorg like Jenukurubas and Bettakurubas by Krishnayya (1974) and Kariyappa (1981). As regards the period of migration Krishnayya (1974) indicates that the Yeravas would have migrated from Waynad before the beginning of the Christian era. Recently Subbayya (1978) has presented a different proposal regarding their migration. According to him all the four groups of Yeravas have migrated to their present settlement area from different places. He suggests that Paniya Yeravas migrated from Waynad in the middle of 17th Century and Badava Yeravas and Panjiri Yeravas from Mysore and other districts.

Since no inscrptional record of this tribe could be found, only Connor's Survey conducted during 1815-17 and published in 1870 is the earliest recorded evidence available regarding the presence of Yeravas in their present region.

There is a legend connected with the origin of Paniya Yeravas. According to this legend, an old lady anjilamuttu who was unable to walk or get up was found by a god in a hill in one of his routine trips. He blessed her to be immortal and asked her to settle in ippimale. By god's blessings the old lady became an young boy and an young girl. They settled in ippimale, but did not have any shelter. A leader tambira saw the naked boy and girl
roaming around. He provided them with shelter and a mola cloth to cover themselves with. They covered themselves together with the same cloth. Since they wore the same cloth from either side, it was not possible for them to do anything. They saw birds flying, and tore the cloth into two and got separated. When they grew up into the marriageable age, nobody around them was ready to marry them. So, they decided to be husband and wife below the waist and brother and sister above the waist. Thus the population of the community started multiplying. The lady who was responsible for the birth of the tribe became their goddess and was stationed at ippimale.

Another legend connected with the origin of Panjiri Yeravas is also interesting and important. The Panjiri Yeravas consider themselves as descendants of three gods, pu:kan mage, karicate and ka:lappe. While calling the respective gods, they ask the karale:di (Head of the Panjiri Yeravas) to sing the song and request the god to get their wishes fulfilled. The song narrates the story of an intelligent child kuni tambira, his growth, his education and his marriage. The kuni tambira gets different types of education from different teachers. He gets the education of writing from elutacce, the reading education from cu:da:ce and singing by pa:ta:ce. The purpose of learning these three skills needs to be noted
According to this song, \textit{kuni tambire} learns Kannada writing of Kannada N\=ad, Cudra reading of Cudra N\=ad, and Malayalam songs of Malayalam N\=ad.

It may be noted that this song is not of recent origin. This is a song closely linked with a religious ritual of fundamental importance to the tribe. The recognition of the importance of the language skills -- reading and writing -- by a preliterate tribe in surrounding literary languages is worth noting. This recognition however has not led to spread of literacy among the Yeravas. The song reveals the realization of the tribal group that they are people living in an area where Kann\=ada and Malayalam are spoken or required for their survival. It is however not possible for the investigator to say
anything regarding the reference to Cudra Nad. Only a detailed analysis of folk literature of both the Yerava groups can throw light on the tambira referred to by Paniya Yerava legend and kuni tambira referred to by Panjifi Yerava legend.

The demarcation of land as Waynad, Kodagu, etc., is merely a political line drawn on a geographical continuum. And since the recorded history to date, Yeravas are confined to one particular track of Kodagu, that is, Virarajapet taluk area which is adjacent to irpu (a place) and since they are not at all mobile, they can be identified as people of that land, may be aborigins of that area which is a geographical continuum and not a political boundary.

1.2.5. Yeravas as slaves

The recorded history of Yeravas by Connor (1870) Richter (1887) and File No. IB:1834, indicates Yeravas as slaves, i.e., praedial slaves attached to the land. It is also indicated that "their bondage must either have been originally derived from voluntary submission on their part to become slaves of cultivators, in order to obtain a livelihood; or that cultivators purchased free persons for the purpose of assisting them in their cultivation at cheap rates (File No. IB:1834)". They were considered
lowest in the social hierarchy. They were also owned like land by the cultivators. They were sold when the land was sold, transferred along with the property to the new owner. The owners encouraged the marriage of young slave men, to acquire an additional hand for work. None of the slaves was paid. Some clothing and some food were given.

In 1817, an young Yerava capable man was valued at 7 pagodas. In 1834, a Paniya Yerava or a Panjiri Yerava couple was valued at 6 ganteroi pagodas.

1.2.6. Yerava population

The Yerava tribe is recorded as a distinct group even from the first Census of India in 1871. The following is the population variation and numerical strength of the tribe since 1871 upto 1971, in hundred years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>11,148</td>
<td>5,926</td>
<td>5,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>13,855</td>
<td>7,214</td>
<td>6,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>14,209</td>
<td>7,376</td>
<td>6,833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>14,586</td>
<td>7,510</td>
<td>7,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>15,338</td>
<td>7,918</td>
<td>7,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>14,008</td>
<td>7,312</td>
<td>6,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>12,810</td>
<td>6,763</td>
<td>6,047</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In all the above years, the male population has outnumbered the female population. Note the insignificant increase in the population.

In the 1871 and 1891 Census the information on group population is also available. According to 1871 Census Panjiri Yeravas are 10,516 and Feniya Yeravas are 632. But as per 1891 Census Feniya Yeravas are 10,003 and Panjiri Yeravas are 3,345. Note the inconsistency and/or the dilemma of the Census enumerators.

1.2.7. Distribution of population

South and North Kodagu

The majority of Yeravas live in Vira raja pet taluk, South Kodagu. The distribution of Yeravas in South Kodagu and North Kodagu, i.e., Somavarapet taluk and Medikeri taluk as per 1941 and 1961 Census is indicated below. The distribution clearly shows that Yeravas are settled mostly in South Kodagu.
1941

Total population of Yeravas: 12,674
Males: 6,724; Females: 5,950

Total population of Yeravas in South Kodagu: 12,510
Males: 6,632; Females: 5,878

Total population of Yeravas in North Kodagu: 164
Males: 92; Females: 72

1961

Total population of Yeravas: 14,926
Males: 7,689; Females: 7,237

Total population of Yeravas in South Kodagu: 13,677
Males: 6,573; Females: 7,104

Total population of Yeravas in North Kodagu: 1,225
Males: 1,103; Females: 122

Even now, the major portion of Yerava population is settled in South Kodagu only.

The Panjiri Yeravas are concentrated in Tittimatti Nad and the Paniya Yeravas are concentrated in Srimangala Nad. Both types of Yeravas are in Ponnampet Nad. All these three Nads are part of South Kodagu.
Urban and Rural

Another interesting feature as revealed in the 1961 and the 1971 Census is that the maximum Yerava population is in rural areas and only a negligible population is in urban areas.

1961

Total population of Yeravas in Rural areas: 14,902
Males: 7,676; Females: 7,226

Total population of Yeravas in Urban areas: 24
Males: 13; Females: 11

1971

Total population of Yeravas in Rural areas: 13,689
Males: 7,060; Females: 6,629

Total population of Yeravas in Urban areas: 54
Males: 27; Females: 27

1.3.1. Somatoscopic observations

The Yeravas are described as dark in colour, having curly hair rarely cut, thick and slightly coverted lips, distinctively platyrhine noses, low stature, comparatively long feet, long forearms, wide span and
1.3.2. Anthropometric measurement

The average measurement in centimetres of Yeravas are given below. This measurements were published by Holland (1901). No recent measurement is available, thus making it impossible to correlate the tremendous social and cultural influences undergone by the tribe in recent times with these measurements.

Stature: 158.7
Span of arms: 167.3
Span of arms relative to stature (100): 105.4
Chest girth: 79.5
Chest girth relative to stature (100): 50.1
Height, sitting: 79.4
Height, Kneeling: 177
Left forearm (cubit): 45.5
Cubit relative to stature: 28.6
Left foot length: 24.0
Length of left foot relative to stature (100): 15.1
Length of middle finger: 10.9
Cephalic length: 18.2
Cephalic breadth: 13.4
Cephalic index: 73.6
Bigoniac breadth: 9.4
Maxillary - Zygomatic index: 73.4
Facial angle: 65.7°
Nasal height: 4.52
Nasal breadth: 4.05
Nasal index: 89.6
Bimaxilar breadth: 9.9
Naso - malar breadth: 11.4
Naso - malar index: 115
Vertex to intersuperciliary point: 9.5
Vertex to tragus: 12.2
Vertex to chin: 21.0

1.3.3. Racial Affinity

Regarding the racial affinity, the Yeravas are placed with "Kurumbas, Irulas, Paniyans and Kadirs, who are the South Indian cousins of the Kols and Gonds living on the Central High lands" by Holland (1901).

1.4.1. Subgroups

The 1901 Census only indicates the existence of 8 sections in Paniya Yeravas and 12 sections in Panjiri Yeravas. But it does not name a single section.

However, during the field work, the present investigator identified the following 21 subgroups in
Paniya Yeravas and 28 subgroups in Panjiri Yeravas. It may be noted that members of the same subgroups do not intermarry.

The Panjiri Yeravas and Paniya Yeravas do not intermarry. But the presence of anjiliye subgroup in Paniya Yeravas and anjila subgroup in Panjiri Yeravas cannot be a coincidence. It indicates some relation that has taken place some time in their past.

1.4.2. Paniya Yerava subgroups

There are 21 groups in Paniya Yeravas. They are:

- Pænegandiye (cembandiye)
- kuvvaliye (panjiyombe)
- ilangute (be:ngeriye)
- cundepatiye (kambala:de)
- bolliyanne (mængaliye)
- culliyo:de (kottaliye)
- te:veniye (tuverombe)
- kalleriye (cokkambatti)
- ambeliye (pu:diriye)
- anjiliye (a:riyiye)
- kammadate
1.4.3. Panjiri Yerava subgroups

There are three broad groups having affiliation to three gods. There are many subgroups under each god. They are:

1. God \( \text{pu:kari mæge} \)
The seven subgroups are:
- \( \text{bada:kumanju} \)
- \( \text{pu:da}dî \)
- \( \text{anjila} \)
- \( \text{pa:vûde} \)

2. God \( \text{karicate} \)
The three subgroups are:
- \( \text{podurmanju} \)
- \( \text{e:vila} \)
- \( \text{bellica:lu} \)

3. God \( \text{ka:lappe} \)
It is claimed that there are 23 subgroups. But the informants could recall only 18 subgroups. They are:
- \( \text{ula:nguttu} \)
- \( \text{kademale} \)
- \( \text{kallila} \)
- \( \text{ca:nde} \)
- \( \text{na:la}pæ:di} \)
- \( \text{ma:da}cæ:ri} \)
- \( \text{ma:da}cæ:ri} \)
- \( \text{ilemale} \)
1.4.4. **Family descent**

There is a contrast in the family descent of Paniya Yeravas and Panjiri Yeravas. The Paniya Yeravas have the system of patrilineal family descent and the Panjiri Yeravas have the system of matrilineal family descent. The same is diagramatically shown below.

**Paniya Yerava family descent**

```
  panegandiye          cokkambetti
     (M)              (F)
        |              |
    panegandiye       panegandiye
     (M)            (F)
        |              |
  kottaliye         panegandiye      anjiliye
    (F)            (M)              (F)
        |              |                |
  panegandiye       panegandiye
    (M)            (F)
        |              |
  anjiliye         panegandiye
    (M)            (F)
```

The names indicated above are the names of the subgroups.
The names indicated above are the names of the subgroups.

1.4.5. Names of Paniya Yeravia

The Paniya Yeravia have the tradition of naming their children with the names of their own grandparents. Some of the names of Paniya Yeravia males are kurma, cotta, bolka, to:le and of females are bolle, ka:ke. It may be noted that the names indicate the physical features, like white, crippled, skinny etc., of the people. A family tree is as follows.
In the above diagram, it is interesting to note the change taking place in naming of the children of the present generation. It may also be noted that prakaca and lacmi are names of Hindu gods and are the names prevalent in surrounding communities.

1.4.6. Names of Panjiri Yeravas

Like Paniya Yeravas, Panjiri Yeravas too have the tradition of naming their children with the names of their grand parents. Some of the names of the Panjiri Yerava males are mā:re, co:ma, tiruna:da, etc., and females are kā:li, mā:re, co:mi, etc. It may be interesting to note that the Panjiri Yeravas name their children mainly with the names of gods.

Like in Paniya Yeravas in Panjiri Yeravas also it is interesting to note change in the naming of the children of the present generation.
1.5.1. Organization of Yeravas

The Yeravas have a well knit organization, which serves as a social, political and judicial body to look after the administration of the tribe. Such organizational structure is found in their own hamlets rather than in plantation settlements.

The previous ethnographic literature has identified the head of Panjiri Yeravas as kanaladi and of Paniya Yerava as mupa. The exact names are kanala:di and mupa. The two important members of Paniya Yerava organization are mupa and cammi. The old person of the settlement is mupa, the elderly man. If one mupa dies or leaves the settlement, the next old man assumes the charge.
Great values are attached to the instructions of nu:pa. Cammi is the head of the subgroup. The members of a subgroup may live in several hamlets. However, they are all governed by a single and same cammi.

There are five members in the Panjiri Yerava organization. They are kañala:di, kunjukare, commakare, karimi (1) and karimi (2). The kañala:di is the general head of the hamlet. His word prevails among the people of that hamlet. He is the person who knows all the rituals connected with their life cycle. When a kañala:di dies or goes out of the settlement, the next kañala:di is selected on the basis of his knowledge of kañala 'marriage', ca:vu 'death', titi 'death ceremony', bellattu 'calling the god' and pe:ya:tu 'driving away the devil'. He should be able to recite the songs connected with the ceremonies. The second in the order is kunjukare, that is the person who came and settled in the present settlement before the arrival of others, the first one to arrive. Like cammi of Paniya Yeravas, the commakare of Panjiri Yeravas is head of a subgroup. The karimi (1) who is connected with the ceremonies of death belongs to the ka:lappe god's descent and is of na:1a - pa:di group. The karimi (2) connected with all the priestly rituals can belong to any subgroup except anjila.
These persons of the organization and old men of the settlement form the council which takes decisions. All types of quarrels, problems between husband and wife, between father and mother come before this council. The council, after hearing the case, imposes a maximum fine of Rs.5/-.

The fine amount thus collected is distributed between mu:pe and concerned cemmi in Peniya Yeravas, and among kañala:di, kunjuka:re, karimi (1), karimi (2) and the concerned cemmakare only among Panjiri Yeravas. It is said that even in public elections, the kañala:di or mu:pe decides the person to whom the voters of the hamlet should vote.

1.6. Material culture

1.6.1. House

The typical Yerava house, described by Krishna Iyer (1948) as thatched hut, with walls of split bamboos plastered with mud, has vanished with time. Now, the plantations in which the Yeravas work provide them with 'lines', that is, a row of low cost one room houses. An Yerava can stay in that house as long as he works in the concerned plantation. The Yeravas who work in forest as labourers under the forest officials are provided with 'Janata' house, which is also an one room house. Both, 'Janata' and 'line' houses have tiled roof. However, the
Yeravas in the forest are in the habit of heaping dry paddy grass on the tiled roof. This practice may be due to the fact that they are unable to replace the broken tiles if any. But Yeravas of 'line' houses do not do so. This may be so because the owners of their houses are capable of replacing the broken tiles.

The Paniya Yeravas call their house as pire and Panjiri Yeravas call their house as kullu. A kullu is smaller than a pire. A kullu may be made of only split bamboos without mud plaster or made of only unburnt bricks. But pire is normally made of unburnt bricks. The kullu with only split bamboos is still smaller than the one with bricks.

The investigator had an opportunity to observe the process and materials that go into the construction of a pire at Santapura. A platform of nearly 20 feet length and 15 feet breadth is constructed first with mud, which is nearly of 1 to 1½ feet height. Four hard pillar like wooden poles are erected on the platform, leaving 3-4 feet vacant space in front of the house. After this, with supporting horizontal wooden poles, the ceiling is covered with dry paddy grass (hay), for 3"-4" thickness. The ceiling covers also the open pavement left outside. A wall around the pire for nearly two feet is constructed with hand made unburnt bricks. The hard clay is dug and
mixed with water to prepare a brick like element of nearly 10" x 9" x 4" thickness. The same is dried for a week. Since only the family members devote time and labour for the construction of the house, at a time they can prepare only 20-25 bricks. The 2 feet wall around the pire is constructed by placing bricks one above the other, using clay mud as plastering material, the family moves into the house once the construction of the brick walls reaches a height of 2-3 feet. As and when the time is found, the bricks are prepared, and slowly the house is completed. Yet nearly one foot of the wall is left unbuilt on the top. One foot space is left between roof and the wall for air and light passage. There are no windows in the pire. Inside the pire a partition wall of 3 feet height is built to separate a part of the house for cooking purpose. The pavement outside the house is used by Yeravas to sit, chat, relax and for sleeping.

In the 'lines' or in the hamlets, Yeravas live secluded. Even the Paniya Yeravas and Penjiri Yeravas do not stay together in the same line or in a single hamlet. In many instances, normally only one group of Yeravas would be working with one plantation owner. They live in groups. Rarely one can find a solitary pire or kullu of an Yerava.
Depending upon the taste of the family living in the house there exists a small garden in front of the house, where banana saplings, pumpkin creepers, snake-gourd and betel leaf creeper are grown. The open place in front of the house is used by the children for playing, for women to sit and pick and squeeze the louse. On the days of joy the same place is used for dance by Yeravas, and the pavement would be the place for the person with ci:ni (a musical instrument) to sit and blow. The pavement consists of a small pit of ½ foot depth and 1½ feet round, this is used to keep fire in the night time to scare elephants away and to warm their own bodies in winter. Always a mat would be available on the pavement. The door of the house is in the middle, separating the pavement into two sections.

The other two important items of an Yerava pire are an ammikally and pa:ndikally. The former is placed inside the house and is used to pound the paddy and grind the masala. The latter is used for making dry rice flour and is placed outside the house. The people of kully have community e:tte (husking stone) to pound the paddy. Krishna Iyer (1948) noted that the Yeravas used earthen pots and dishes. Now, aluminium dishes have replaced the earthen pots. However, earthen pots continue to be used for cooking purposes along with the aluminium.
pots. Another important item of the kitchen of the fire is udi hung from the roof; a three rope thing used to keep eatables away from the sight and reach of cats and ants.

The young couple sleeps inside the house. The old men, women and children sleep on the pavement of the house. Yeraves avoid sleeping in the open place because of the threat of the elephants. Behind the house, Yeraves keep the firewood collected from the forest. They cut it there and the cut ones are brought in and used. The cattle, if any, are also kept behind the house.

1.6.2. Dress

The Yerava men and women along with their children working in plantation are normally provided with two pairs of dress of the choice of the plantation owner once in an year. The pair includes one dhoti, one shirt and one towel for men and two sarees for women. If they require any more clothing, the individuals have to buy them on their own. The male children use shorts and shirts. The men wear the dhoti or wrap dhoti around the waist so that it covers the calf muscle. The women also wear the saree or wrap the saree around their waist so that it covers the calf muscle. Here, it is very easy to distinguish a Paniya woman from a Panjiri woman by seeing the way they have tied the saree. The Paniya woman brings
one end of the saree from behind and ties the upper edge
of it to a part of the saree that comes on the shoulder
in the right hand side. The Panjiri woman brings one
end of the saree from front and another end from the back
and both are tied on the shoulder on the right hand side.
If one looks at a Paniya Yerava woman from her right side
he can see only one end of the saree visible back side
and for Panjiri Yerava woman both ends of the saree would
be visible for him from the right hand side, one from her
back and another from her front. Men, while working, tie
the towel around their head to protect their head from
sun and protect their hair falling on their face. Women
are found to use cheap beads kalle around their neck
bought from shandy. Some other ornaments made out of
cheap metal worn by Yerava women are kadaka for ears,
bale for hands, ka:ly mo:dare for fingers of the legs,
mo:dare for fingers of the hand etc.

Connor (1870) describes the Yerava with his
"hair tied in a knot on the top of his head", but this
is no longer found. Most of the Yeravas have their hair
cut, but rarely cut; simply they allow their hair to fall
from their head. Yerava women tie a thread to their hair
and leave them behind. They do not have long hair --
hardly one foot or one and a half feet long, neither
black nor brown; curly hair. Even girls of age 10 - 12
years can be seen with small sarees wrapped around like
elder Yerava women.
The Yeravas working in places other than the plantations buy clothes from the market. Most of the Yeravas are found without chappals. Yeravas do not weave their cloth. Weaving is conspicuous by its absence in this tribal community.

1.6.3. **Daily routine**

The Yeravas get up before sun rise. The women-folk cook *kāṇi* 'rice porridge' for them. They eat the food at about 7.30 in the morning and go to the forest or the plantation for their work. All the able bodied men, women and children go to work and are paid accordingly. Only the women who have given birth to the child and *mire:vī* 'old man' and *mirati* 'old woman' remain at home. These people look after the children and look after the paddy field in the government land opposite to the house and the cattle if any. They tie *kodake* 'wooden bell' to the neck of the cattle and leave it for grazing. This helps them to keep a close watch on the movement of the cattle.

The Yeravas employed in forest work finish their work around three O' clock in the afternoon and move back to their home, which may be 4 to 5 kilometres away from their work spot. Since forests are infested with elephants, the Yeravas try to reach their houses well before dusk.
Once it becomes dark, nobody goes out of the settlement. The children, who do not go for work, go for fishing in the streams with 'fishing basket'. Some of them go for the collection of eatable roots available in the forest, but not away from their home.

On weekly holidays, most of them go to nearby 'shandy', to spend time, to buy things for the family, to drink 'arrack'. The working people, who do not go to 'shandy', would spend their time in clearing the creepers, small plants, etc., that block their sight while moving in the paths for work and obstruct them from locating the elephant.

The daily routine of the Yerava working in plantation differs a little from that of the Yerava working in the forest. He, along with his family, goes to the plantation for working in the morning or at a time given by the owner, some times the owner gives the morning food and some times not, and once he finishes a part of the work he eats either at the owner's place if food is provided there, or comes back home to eat the food, and returns to work. They return home at night from the work.

1.6.4. Entertainment

When the Yeravas feel happy, during the weekly holiday, the festival day, the day of marriage or any
other day of celebration, they dance and play music on
the instruments. Most of the Yeravas living in the
forest are adept at these.

They use two musical instruments, a blow pipe
3 to 4 feet long and a small drum. The Paniya Yeravas
call the drum *tuti* and the Panjiri Yeravas call the same
as *tudi*. Both of them call the blow pipe as *ci:ni*.
These two are part and parcel of their culture.

After food, most of the Yerava men and women of
the hamlet assemble in front of one of the houses which
has a bigger open ground before it. They would light
fire in the middle of the ground. One side of the fire
place is for boys and another side of the fire place is
for girls. The boys and girls form separate circles and
stand in a position to dance. Three drums and one blow
pipe are essential for the programme. The man with *ci:ni*
sits on the pavement of the house. One of the drummer
stands in the middle of the boys' circle, other two form
a part of the boys' circle. The audience, that is, the
people who are not joining the dance, would sit on the
pavement and observe. Both instruments are played once.
Often the dancers keep shouting all at once *he, he, he*.
It continues till late midnight and even early morning
hours, depending upon the mood of the participants.
When a person feels tired he can come out of the circle and relax and join again whenever he or she intends to rejoin. Boys and girls do not mix and dance. Rarely one can find a Yerava house without the musical drum. But, one or two ci:ni only would be available in a hamlet. In Panjiri Yeravas it is the duty of the father to procure one tudi for every son and give it to him.

The diagram given below explains the positioning of the groups of dancers.

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\[ \text{Diagram showing the positioning of groups of dancers} \]
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It is necessary here to indicate the relevance of these two musical instruments to the life of Yerava. The musical instruments are part and parcel of Yerava life and death. Use of these instruments for entertainment is only one aspect.

These two instruments are used mainly on four occasions, with a tune specifically set for each purpose.
There are four tunes for four occasions. The occasions are:

i. the occasion of joy and entertainment as explained above,

ii. the occasion of marriage and connected ceremonies like dancing, and offering of pu:ra by kaːrapa 'bride' at the drinking well,

iii. the occasion when an individual is possessed by a spirit and is given to speaking tongues, and

iv. the occasion when a person dies and all the ceremonies connected with death such as the conveyance of death news to others, carrying of the dead body to the burial ground and death ceremonies performed later.

It was possible for the present investigator to listen and observe the first three tunes and dance. When asked about the fourth tune, the informants said that it was a bad omen to show and play when the occasion had not arisen. The three tunes are recorded on tape and are to be analyzed by a musicologist only.
The musical instruments are made by the members of the tribe themselves and not bought from the market. The musical drum is made with the dry skin of the monkey.

1.7. Life cycle

1.7.1. Birth

The woman keeps going to work until the 8th month of pregnancy. Also until that time she sleeps with her husband. During the period of pregnancy she does not have the habit of going to the doctor. Only in case of trouble in pregnancy she would go to the hospital.

As the time of delivery approaches, an old experienced lady i:ceka:rat in case of Paniya Yeravas and be:ti:ka:rat in case of Panjiri Yeravas is brought home to have the child delivered. On the third day of the child birth it is said that the a:tal, Paniya Yerava priest comes home and holds a cock on the head of the child and sings.

ippimale teyya:te
kuṭṭattu kāringa:liya:te
e:de: ca:vundy
bi:re kallurutiya:te, kānu
beccindela buttu
na: konja koryina
do:re kuticicu
'Ippimalai's god or Kutta's Kali or any Chamundi Bire Kalluruti, if you have an evil eye on the child, you should leave it by drinking the blood of this cock. It is my responsibility to give the toddy, curry, etc., in the next eight days'. By saying this and by sacrificing the cock, he wards off any evil eye the goddesses may have had on the child.

The pollution created by the child birth lasts for 11 days for both Paniya and Panjiri Yeravas. On the 11th day of the child birth the baby and the mother are given bath and in the night Paniya Yeravas conduct the pe:rudu and Panjiri Yeravas perinde 'naming' ceremony. In Paniya Yeravas, the i:ceka:rati names the child and in Panjiri Yeravas any woman can perform the act of naming. The same day, the mother of the child is taken to the well to perform pujas to the water and bring water in the new pot. The Panjiri Yerava women go to the place where placenta was buried, and place some cooked rice on a banana leaf, offer puja and return.

The i:ceka:rati or be:ti:ka:rati is given an honorarium of one ce;ru rice, arecanut, betel leaves,
half a bottle of castor oil, one coconut and two small pieces of washing soap on the 11th day ceremony.

1.7.2. **Puberty**

When a girl attains puberty, she is kept inside the house and not allowed to see any men, not of the family for 15 days. The ceremonies connected with puberty are conducted after a month or two or three depending upon the finances available. The Panjiri Yeravas, on the day of the ceremony connected with the puberty, sing the first part of the **ćoːbəːne paːtu**, a puberty-cum-marriage song. An interesting point may be mentioned here. This **ćoːbəːne paːtu** is a single piece of narrative legend of the birth and growth of a girl and her marriage later after puberty. This song functions as a puberty-cum-marriage ritual song in the sense that the portion of the legend upto the girl attaining puberty and a few other incidents thereafter would be sung for the puberty ceremony and the rest as marriage song. The song is sung by **ka naːlaːqi**.

1.7.3. **Marriage**

It is interesting to note that Paniya Yeravas always prefer to conduct the marriage of the girl before she attains puberty and the Panjiri Yeravas prefer to conduct the marriage after she attains puberty.
The age of marriage among Yerava boys is 18 - 20 years and among girls it is 16 - 18 years. But the age of marriage is reduced under several circumstances. One is the family need, that is, if a woman is required to look after the household work. Another one is the economic need, that is, if additional person is required to earn additional income by working in the forest or plantation. Sometimes, the plantation owners too encourage the young Yerava boys to get married, so that they need not go in search of additional kuulis to work in their plantation.

The married boys are considered superior to the unmarried ones and are considered more responsible, both by Yerava society and the parents. In case of both Paniya and Panjiri Yeravas, the marriage is permissible only outside the subgroup. And also Paniya Yeravas and Panjiri Yeravas do not intermarry. It is strictly not allowed.

The four types of marriages that take place among Yeravas are explained here.

The marriage by arrangement

When a boy attains the age of marriage, his parents approach a friend or a relative to look for a bride. Once the contact person finds a bride, he
informs the parents. Then the parents go to the prospective bride's house, they take some betal leaves and arecanut. If they accept the proposal the boy is sent to the girl's house to see the girl. If he too agrees, the parents of both the parties negotiate the marriage and decide the date of marriage. The, Panjiri Yeravas prefer their me:mE 'maternal uncle' to search the bride. To see the prospective bride, they go along with their ka:nela;di and cammakare. At the prospective bride's residence too the ka:nela;di and cammakare of their side participate in the discussions.

One month before the marriage day, the people of groom's side, except the groom, go to the home of the bride. The younger sister, or the elder sister, or the wife of the elder brother of the groom ties a coin to the saree of the bride proposed. This is a betrothal ceremony. In Panjiri Yeravas, the elder or younger sister of the groom would insert a silver ring to the girl's finger to mark the betrothal. There will be a feast on this day. Once the engagement has taken place, further negotiations of the proposed bride's people with any groom other than the one to whom she is engaged is strictly prohibited.

After one month of this ceremony, in order to develop good rapport with the girl, the boy has to take three times one pare (10 seer) paddy, one patti betel
leaves and arecanuts to her house. Also, he should carry a big bundle of firewood from the forest to her house. After keeping these materials in her house, he cleans himself and bows to her parents. The bride feeds him. He sleeps outside with her brothers or men in her house and returns the next day. It seems, that this aspect, attached to the marriage, seeks proof of the economic viability of the groom and his physical strength. But in Panjiri Yeravas, the boy has to take one pare (10 seer) paddy, salt, chilly and other things required for one girl to eat and goes once in a week to her house until he marries her. After the engagement she is considered to be his wife and he has to look after her. And one week before the marriage day he has to take one batti paddy and three rupees to the parents of the girl. Then the marriage day is fixed.

The groom's side has to give a bride price of ₹250 - 300 to the parents of the bride. When asked for the reason for paying bride price it is stated that as the parents of bride are loosing an earning member, compensation is to be given in some manner.

On the marriage day, kañala 'marriage' takes place for bride and bridegroom at their respective residences. After the completion of the marriage at
groom's house, the people from the groom's side go to the village of the bride along with the groom. Normally, the journey takes place in the night. The Panjiri Yeravas would hold potte 'locally made torch' in their hands and are led by kañala:di.

They sit outside the village. The bride's party receives them and takes them to the bride's house. A feast is arranged for all. In Panjiri Yeravas after the marriage ceremony, the kañala:di sings the second part of the do:ba:ne pa:tu and after the meal the both cammaka:rera of both bride and groom hold their hands and make them to cross the marriage pandal.

On the next day of kañala, both the bride and groom are brought to the village of the bride groom. The bride is taken to the to:du 'stream' to perform puja to the water. She carries a pot of water on her head from there up to a banana plant, pours it there and bows. Now she is allowed to enter the house of the groom. The nuptial is celebrated at groom's place. The next day, bride, groom and some others go to the bride's house and stay there for a day or two and return. Then onwards their married life begins.

One important aspect of marriage, of which now only relics are found among Yeravas, is that of na:ya.
ma':dinje. When the marriage ceremony goes on, or before
the ceremony begins or immediately after the ceremony, if
any mistake or misuse of words is committed by any body
from either side, the na:ya begins after the marriage but
before the feast. None of the people would go for food
before the na:ya is completed. The elders assemble, and
start discussing the mistake that has taken place. Some
times, it is said that it takes seven to nine hours to
settle the dispute. At last when an agreeable solution
is found out, the concerned would pay aypuve 'fine' as
decided by the elders and take an oath that the mistake
would not be repeated; then all will dine. At present
an Yerava marriage costs for the bride's people around
Rs.400 to Rs.500 and for groom's side Rs.150 to Rs.200.
Throughout the marriage ceremony, the marriage tune can
be heard from Yerava musical instruments.

The Panjira Yerava married women wear ka:lu-
mo:dira in the second finger in both the legs. These
rings are made out of silver. The Panjiri Yerava married
women wear ka:lpilli in the middle finger in both the
legs. These rings are also made out of silver.

The marriage by selection

In this type of marriage, some times, the
parents of the boy ask him to go and search a bride
for himself. He goes in search of her, once he finds a girl suitable for him and desires to marry her, the boy starts wooing her. In order to do so, he collects a big bundle of fire wood from the forest for her house. He offers her betel leaves to attract her. The parents of the girl would feed him. In a way he would be assisting their family. Once a mutual understanding takes place between the boy, the bride and her parents, he would return to his parents and inform them about his search. Then his parents would contact her parents and arrange the marriage.

**The marriage by elopement**

If the parents of either side do not agree for a selection that has taken place among Yerava boys and girls, the boys and girls would run away into the forest or some other place. They return after six or seven days to their village. Then under these unavoidable circumstances the parents agree to their marriage and perform the same. There will not be a big celebration; but only a small ceremony confined to the respective families takes place.

**The marriage by kidnapping**

If the boy likes the girl and the girl does not like him, the boy would kidnap her to a place away from
their hamlet. He lives with her for some time and returns to the village after both of them have reached an accord. They would marry and live together, then onwards. No celebrations would be there. All the formalities are confined to the family only.

The widow remarriage

The widow remarriage among Paniya and Penjiri Yeravas is permitted. But it is not called as kanala 'marriage' but as ku:dali a 'union'. The people of the groom would go to the bride's house; the groom would tie the taːli and all the people would dine. Then they would return to the groom's village.

Divorce

The divorce is permitted. It is easier for the man to divorce his wife than for a wife to divorce her husband. The case, in order to get legal sanction for the separation, comes before the organization and the members decide. The husband or wife may leave the spouse and goes away, but it does not have a legal approval of the organization of the tribe.

1.7.4. Death

When death approaches, the people around the person on the death bed, break open a coconut and pour
the water sip by sip into the mouth of the person facing death. Once the person dies, the legs and hands of the dead person are made straight. With bamboo the relatives of the dead prepare a kattu 'litter', and place hay on that. The dead body is given bath and placed in sleeping posture on a banana leaf spread over the hay. The body is covered with a new cloth. During all these the death music is sung; and the message of the death is sent to friends and relatives.

In case of Panjiri Yeravas, karimi (l) gives bath to the dead body and puts new dress and decorates the same as it is done in marriage. On this occasion kanala:di gives a token of expenses of Re.1 and one pa:yu rice to the bereaved family. The karimi (l) prepares kattilu 'litter', if the dead body is to be carried in sitting posture and paranjelu if the dead body is to be taken in the sleeping posture. A token wage of Rs.2 or Re.1 is given to the karimi (l) for preparing the kattilu or paranjelu respectively. The decision regarding the posture in which the dead body is to be carried depends upon the family members of the deceased.

Among Paniya Yeravas, if the unmarried die, they are carried in sleeping posture; if the old or married die they are carried in the sitting posture. While all
Arrangements are being made to take the body to citele 'burial or cremation ground', the women-folk sit in front of the body and sing weeping.

\[ \text{co:mi ...} \]

bettele i: bu:miku bandu
banda bu:mili
etteneyo: ketta natta pattu
cattu po:yiriyo: co:mi
   akke, tange, anne, tammerole buttu
   ponnu makkalokke buttu
   makkalokke kireva ku:ti
   co:ru, ni:ru okka buttu
cattu po:yiriyo: co:mi
   karumbu po:le medira:yicu
   ba:ye po:le bagginadandu
engalokka buttu
cattu po:yiriyo: co:mi
   ittare kolla ciricu kelicu
   katti mattu kaili pudicu
   peccamme po:le ca:ki
cattu po:yiriyo: co:mi
   cuva:nda ko:te cutti
   co:mi bu:mi malenju bande
ta:yile:ndangi po:yiriyo: co:mi
cattu po:yiriyo: co:mi
"Sir... you came to this world naked. In this world you faced many difficulties and died. Leaving sisters, brothers, children, women weeping, food, water, everything, you died. Being sweet like sugarcane, by walking smoothly like banana plant, leaving all of us, you died. These many years, laughing, dancing, holding the sword and sickle in the hand, by looking after us like mother, you died. You went round the red fort, earth, heaven and now you are going to hide in the mother, you died. In the death bed, while death was approaching, you did not do or say as 'alas, I am dying', you died.

Once they lift the body from the spot, the aitali, the Paniya Yerava priest, would go around the house of the dead person pouring rice. He asks the demons not to enter the house after the dead body is taken away. A few women also go with the dead body. The aitali accompanies them. When they reach the spot, a pit appropriate to the size of the dead body is dug and the body is placed in the pit. The head of the body will be towards Kodagu and the legs to the Waynad. The body will be
kept in sleeping posture sideward. The face will be towards West. The Panjiri Yeravas also keep the body in the pit in the sleeping posture but the head will be kept towards Waynad, legs towards Kodagu and face will be towards East. And in Panjiri Yeravas, the women do not go to the burial ground. From house they go nearly 200 yards along with the dead body and pour a little water into the mouth of the dead and return home. All the people would throw water and soil and close the pit and return home after taking a bath.

In Panjiri Yeravas the karimi (1) digs the grave and does all the work connected with burial. If a pregnant woman dies, the foetus is removed by karimi (1) by cutting the womb and both mother and the foetus are buried in the same pit.

Yeravas normally bury the dead. But under the circumstances of unnatural death, such as death by falling from the tree, by bullet-hit, by elephant, by tiger attack, by snake bite, etc., they burn the body in the forest.

In Paniya Yeravas, there are two ceremonies immediately connected with death. One is on the seventh day of the death, named ka:kepile and the other one is on the eleventh day of the death, named baliya pile. The death pollution lasts for 11 days only. It is
assumed that the dead person would be returning to earth
as a small boy on ka:kepile day and as an elder on baliya-
pile day.

On the ka:kepile day, a small pandal is erected
in front of the dead man's house. The a:tali would tie
coraga 'a small bundle of items connected with the death
rituals' to the pandal -- one coraga for the people who
died long ago payage coraga and the pudiye coraga for
the one who died recently. The women having their periods
should not enter the pandal.

For Panjiri Yeravas, the pollution caused by
death lasts for 11 days and people affected are the
family members. The wife of the dead person wears a white
saree from the day of death until the 11th day ceremony.
The kunju kare is the person who looks after the arrange-
ments for this day. On the 11th day ke:re:di sings the
mourning song in memory of the dead. The present investi-
gator did not have a chance to listen to the song. This
informant ke:re:di declined to recite, since such a
recitation is seen as a bad omen.

1.8.1. Livelihood

As stated earlier, Yeravas were praedial slaves
in the olden days. Those who were not slaves, worked in
plantations as kulis. At present, based on their employment, Yeravas may be classified into two groups: those who work in the forests as assistants to the forest officials and those work in the plantations.

The forest activities involve felling of trees, weeding of plants, setting fire and controlling of the fire from spreading, heaping of the timber and loading of the same to the trucks. They work under the supervision of the forest guards. They are paid the daily wages @ Rs.7=50 a day for a male worker and @ Rs.6=00 a day for the female worker. Once in a week the payments are made to them by the officials. This is done normally on the shandy day. During the week, some times, the Yeravas may take some advance money from the official in 'kind', mainly rice. While paying cash to the Yerava at the end of the week the advance money paid to him is deducted from his wages and the rest is paid. With that money, he buys supplies like betel leaves and arecanuts, vegetables, oil, and other essential commodities required in the house for the next week. Most of the Yerava men and women spend their money in drinking arrack. One can see Yeravas on shandy days, shouting, quarrelling and coming home in the late evening in a fully drunken state. They are found not to save anything for any purpose. The concept as well as practice is not found. Whenever a need arises, like
marriage or death, they appeal to their employers.

Normally, children of 12 - 14 years also go with parents for work. They are paid ₹3 to 4 per day. The children at home or people who fail to go for work for fishing. If the catch is good all would eat; if it is less, before others come, they roast the fish in the fire and eat. Similarly the children and those who do not go to work collect roots and wild fruits from the forest for eating. However, this in no way supports the livelihood of the family. Yeravas claim that in earlier times they were good at hunting the animals like deer and wild goat. And now, the art of hunting is almost forgotten by the community. They cannot hunt now because of forest regulations. However, if they find an opportunity to catch a forest cock or a rabbit, still try and succeed.

Another important activity contributing to their livelihood is paddy cultivation. The forest Yeravas normally live in a place where there is water source; they live in places where two hillocks join. The plains there are used for paddy cultivation. In these government lands Yeravas grow paddy through rain-fed irrigation, once in a year. The old people who do not go outside for any work look after the paddy cultivation. All the members of the family work in the paddy field for sowing,
etc., and at the harvest time also. The children keep birds away from the paddy. In many instances the government has given he-buffalos to Yerava families for cultivation purposes free of cost.

The greatest menace to paddy cultivation is the rogue elephant. At times the herds of elephants also pose a big threat. Through noise in the day and through fire in the night the elephants are scared away. In many instances Yeravas have been killed in the process by the elephants.

Not all the families possess paddy fields. The paddy grown is used by the family and is never sold. The hay is used as feed to the buffalos.

Whenever the Yeravas employed in forest work do not have work in the forest, they go to plantations for work. Also when the plantation work is in the peak season, the plantation owners, at higher wages avail the services of Yeravas. This happens normally during coffee, orange and cardamom picking seasons.

The plantation activities involve picking, weeding and trimming of shade plants. The plantation owners have, in addition to coffee plantations, paddy fields. The Yeravas who work under plantation owners are supposed to
work in both the places. The contract of work with the plantation owner is for one year. The daily wages and other terms and conditions of work are fixed and agreed to by both sides in the beginning of the year itself. Once an Yerava accepts the terms he does not leave the plantation in the middle. It is important to note that the wages are paid only for the days of work and not for holidays. If work could be given by the owner, the Yerava is not supposed to go elsewhere and work. He can go out elsewhere for work, only when the owner could not engage him that day.

The male worker in a Yerava family is paid @ Rs.6=00 a day, the female worker @ Rs.5=00 and the boy-girl of 12 - 14 year age @ Rs.4=00 a day in the plantations. For a family of husband, wife, mother and two working children, he gets a loan of one pare (10 seer) of paddy; for each pare the owner charges Rs.8=00. The owner calculates the total number of people who have worked in the week and the number of days that they have worked and pays the wages by deducting the advance taken from him either in cash or in kind.

In the beginning of the year, before joining the plantation itself, the Yerava takes a loan of Rs.100-200. The money is deducted from his weekly payments
towards this loan. No interest is charged. Once in an
year the annual accounts are settled. If he has cleared
everything he can go to any other plantation or remain
in the old place. Since most of them fail to pay back
these loans, either they take fresh advance from the same
owner and pay the old loan and continue to work or go to
another planter who agrees to pay more wages and more
advance money, and get the advance from him to clear the
old planter's loan. After clearing all the loans he
would join the new plantation. This helps the Yeravas
not to stick to one estate but switch from one estate to
another in search of more wages and more advance money.

There is Labour Act, etc., to regulate the salary
bonus, etc., but in most of the cases the regulations are
not observed.

The days on which there are special occasions in
the homes of the planter, Yeravas are fed by the planter.
Also, the left overs of the food are offered to Yeravas
by their masters.

1.8.2. Bonded labour

Many Yeravas, before the abolition of bonded
labour, were working as bonded labourers. During that
period, they were paid an annual labour cost of 5 batti
paddy (one batti is equal to 80 seer), mayeku oru cuttu batte 'one pair of cloth for rain' and buluku oru cuttu batte 'one pair of cloth for crop'. On the days of work men were given 2 seer paddy and women were paid 1½ seer paddy along with other items needed to prepare the food.

At the end of the year the master used to deduct all the wages he has paid in kind and other payments he has paid in cash from the consolidated annual salary of 5 batti paddy. If he had paid the Yerava in excess, the Yerava was expected to continue to work with the same master.

1.9. Religion

The Yeravas are animists for a long time. The Paniya Yeravas worship, karanqa:li of Kutta, goddess of jippimale and a goddess erected by them in the form of a stone of some shape and placed below a tree at the entrance of the village. The Ranjiri Yerava folksongs connected with various rituals begin with a remembrance of the gods, the gods thus remembered are pillu 'grass', pu:mi 'land', kallu 'stone', cu:rya 'son', candra 'moon' and ka:made:va 'god of love'. In addition, as already pointed out, they worship pu:karimage, ka:lappe and karicatte.
Some of the pe:yi 'devils' that are considered to cast an evil eye on Yeravas are bi:re, kalluruti, kulive, kuttiva:te.

Thus, Paniya Yeravas normally worship goddesses and Panjiri Yeravas worship the gods. Both the groups sacrifice male goats and cocks to their gods, goddesses and devils.

The Yeravas celebrate the festivals of the region, or rather we can say that they join in the celebration of the festivals of the region, such as, puttari, cankramana and kailmu:nta. These are celebrated by Kodavas.

1.10. Ethnic groups and interrelationship

In Virarajapet taluk of Kodagu in addition to Paniya Yeravas and Panjiri Yeravas Kurumbas are found. There is not much interaction between Yeravas and Kurumbas. They live in separate hamlets far apart. Since they are busy in earning a livelihood, which further restricts their mobility, there is less opportunity for any encounter. The children of both tribes study together in tribal schools.

Different hierarchies are attributed to each group living in this area. The Kodavas consider Yeravas
lower than other Kannada speaking so-called "untouchables" and Kurumbas living in their area in that order. Krishna Iyer (1948) has placed Banjiri Yeravas on the top of the social scale over the Paniya Yeravas. The Paniya Yeravas claim to be superior to Banjiri Yeravas; similarly Banjiri Yeravas also claim to be superior to Paniya Yeravas. The Kodavas consider Paniya Yeravas as superior to Banjiri Yeravas.

1.11. Family and kinship

1.11.1. Family

The Yerava family is a joint family consisting of the progeny in the male line living under one roof. When a girl gets married she is no more a member of her parents family. The eldest living man is the head of the family. His decisions are accepted in the social and other matters. He decides on changing the master or remaining with the same master, the wages to be negotiated, the loan to be taken, etc. In such dealings he normally consults his married sons living with him. When they change the master, en bloc they shift. Only when there is a serious difference in the family, or when a son desires to go on his own for the rest of the life, when he is asked to go away by the parents, separation takes place. In such a case, both son and father do not work with the same master.
The head of the family looks after the economic needs of the house. Some times, the sons collect money from the master as wages and spend it. But it is rarely done. Even after the son going out and having his own establishment, he keeps in touch with the parents. He respects them. Once they become old and it becomes impossible for them to work, the sons would provide food and shelter and look after their parents. Among Yeravas, rarely women are taken into account while taking a social and economic decision. However, with love or through quarrel they try to influence the decision.

1.11.2. Kinship

The elder kinsmen and women are highly respected by the youngsters. When an elder meets an younger one, the younger one bows down and touches the feet of the elder. The elder asks makka okke ca:yile ulas:ro:, 'Are all at home happy?' The younger one answers ulas:ru 'yes, they are'.

The kinship terms identified in Yerava are classified into those of consanguinal and affinal. The consanguinal are subclassified into those of ascending and descending generations.
Consanguineal kinship terms
Kinship terms of ascending generations
Third ascending generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relation</th>
<th>Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fa Fa Fa, Mo Fa Fa</td>
<td>uttappe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa Fa Mo, Mo Mo Mo</td>
<td>uttamme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the seniority is indicated by prefixing utt- to the terms of first ascending generation appe 'father' and amme 'mother'.

Second ascending generation

| Fa Fa, Mo Fa | ca:ce |
| Fa Mo, Mo Mo | ca:ci |

First ascending generation

Male terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fa</th>
<th>appe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fa el Br</td>
<td>baliyappe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa yo Br</td>
<td>ceriyappe cicce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa Si Hu</td>
<td>mæ:me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo el Br, Mo yo Br</td>
<td>mæ:me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>amme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fa el Br wi, Mo el Si</td>
<td>baliyamme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mo yo Si, Fa yo Br Wi  ceriyamme  uma
Mo Br Wi  ma:mi
Fa el Si, Fa yo Si  ma:mi

Terms of ego generation

Male terms
el Br  ayye  e:te
yo Br  aniye
el Si Hu  ba:ve
yo Si Hu  meytuna
Fa yo Br So  ceriyappena mage
Mo yo Si So  ceriyammena mage
Fa el Br So  baliyappena mage
Mo el Si So  baliyammena mage
Mo Br So  me:mena mage

Female terms
el Si  akke
yo Si  tange aniyati
yo Si, yo Si  penga
el Br Wi  meytini
yo Br Wi  acci
Fa yo Br Da  ceriyappena maga:lu
Mo yo Si Da  ceriyammena maga:lu
Fa el Br Da  baliyappena maga:lu
Mo el Si Da  baliyammena maga:lu
Mo Br Da  me:mena maga:lu
Kinship terms of descending generation

First descending generation

Male terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So</td>
<td>mæge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da .Hu</td>
<td>munna:yka:re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yq Br So</td>
<td>aniyena mæge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el Br So</td>
<td>ayyena mæge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e:tena mæge</td>
<td>pe:ra mæge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Da</td>
<td>mægæ:lu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So Wi</td>
<td>munna:yka:rati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yo Br Da</td>
<td>aniyena mægæ:lu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el Br Da</td>
<td>ayyena mægæ:lu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e:tena mægæ:lu</td>
<td>pe:ramægalu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second descending generation

So So, Da So | pe:re |
So Da, Da Da | pe:rati |

Affinal kinship terms

Male terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hu</td>
<td>ura:le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hu Fa, Wi Fa</td>
<td>kudiye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to express the relation established when children are adopted the following terms are used.

Step/adopted mother  po:camme
Step/adopted father  po:cappe
Step/adopted son  po:cumage
Step/adopted daughter  po:cumaga:lu

All the kinship terms so far listed belong to one of the categories of primary, derived or descriptive terms.
1.12.1. **Number of Yeravas and number of Yerava speakers**

Since 1901 Census, the Census reports have recorded a significant difference in the total population of the tribe and the total population that speaks Yerava tongue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yerava Tribe</th>
<th>Yerava tongue speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>14,586</td>
<td>7,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>15,338</td>
<td>7,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>14,008</td>
<td>7,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>12,810</td>
<td>6,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>14,927</td>
<td>7,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>13,743</td>
<td>7,087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between the total Yeravas and the total Yerava tongue speakers is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1,417</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>2,784</td>
<td>1,535</td>
<td>1,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>2,876</td>
<td>1,460</td>
<td>1,416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To explain the cause for such a difference, the 1931 Census states that "either the language figures or population figures are somewhat inaccurate". But this difference is found not only in the 1931 Census, but also in some of the previous and the following Census enumerations as seen above. The table above indicates that, not all the Yerava tribal population speaks Yerava. There appears to be a correlation between the increase in the rate of literacy among Yeravas in literate languages and the decrease in the number of mother tongue returns under Yerava. This is, however, only hypothetical and the situation requires a much deeper study.

1.12.2. Language

The first Census of India (1871) identifies Yeravas as people speaking a language of their own. The 1881 Census classifies the speech of Yeravas as a wild dialect. And the 1891 and 1901 Censuses identify Yerava as a 'tongue' of the tribe of that name and a dialect of Malayalam. The Linguistic Survey of India too identifies Yerava as a dialect of Malayalam. The 1921 Census identifies Yerava as one of the peculiar languages of Coorg. Similarly, the 1931 Census too identifies Yerava as one of the principal indigenous languages of Coorg. The 1971 Census indicates Yerava as a mother tongue of the tribe of that name and a dialect of Malayalam, but it advises further verification in this regard.
1.12.3. Folk literature

The present investigator did not come across folk tales in Yerava. There are, however, many folk narrative songs in Yerava. The folk songs of Paniya Yeravas are different from the folk songs of Panjiri Yeravas. Normally, the a:tali of Paniya Yeravas and ka:nala:di of Panjiri Yeravas are proficient in singing the songs. These songs are part and parcel of the rituals connected with various ceremonies. The song, irrespective of the occasion to which it is associated, begins with a note of respect to the gods the tribe worships. The note of respect has the same wordings but sung with different tunes. After this note, the song narrates a story and ends. For example, the Panjiri Yerava song connected with bellattu narrates a story of an intelligent child doing all the good things. And a song connected with pe:yattu narrates a story of a person who does destructive work only.

The co:be:ne pa:tu, bellattu and pe:yattu folk songs are recorded by the present investigator on tape. Rich information is hidden in the folk songs of Paniya Yeravas and Panjiri Yeravas. These need collection, analysis and preservation.
1.12.4. Bilingualism

According to the 1961 Census, 14,926 Yeravas are there in Kodagu, Males 7,689 and Females 7,237. Out of this number 3,774 are reported as bilinguals, Males 1,075; Females 2,699. Out of this 3,774 bilingual Yeravas, 2,473 are bilinguals in Kannada, Males 867; Females 1,606 and 1,259 are bilinguals in Kodagu, Males 194; Females 1,065. The rest are bilinguals in Tamiḻ, Malayalam, Konkani and English.

It is to be noted that 1961 Census reports more number of Yeravas as bilinguals in Kannada. It is also to be noted that Yerava females outnumber Yerava males in bilingualism according to the Census report. But the present investigator has found during his field trips in South Kodagu that more Yeravas are bilinguals in Kodagu rather than in Kannada. And he has observed that more Yerava women are bilingual in Kodagu rather than in Kannada. He has, however, no means to make a statistical survey to substantiate further this observation. The situation deserves a deeper analysis. In any case, the following hypothetical reasons may be given for the type of statistical information obtained by Census. The first reason is that Yeravas may like to identify themselves with Kannada, because Kannada is the language of education, administration and mass communication in Karnataka.
including the district of Kodagu. The second reason is that the enumerators might have presented the languages in the order of Kannada, Kodagu, etc., and the Yeravas might have nodded 'yes' to that order.

1.12.5. Literacy

The literate Yeravas are literate in Kannada. It is easier to give statistical information on the illiteracy than on the literacy of Yeravas. In the 1891 Census, out of 7,376 male Yeravas and 6,833 female Yeravas, 4 males and one female was found literate. In the 1931 Census, out of 6,763 males and 6,047 female Yeravas only 15 males and 8 females were literate. The 1931 Census records an important information about opening of an Yerava school in 1925 and also the closure of the same because of lack of attendance.

The literacy statistics for the year 1971 is as follows:

Total Yerava population: 13,743

Males 7,087; Females 6,656

Total literate Yerava population 611

Males 438; Females 173

Percentage of literacy: 4.45%
In order to compare the National, State and District literacy figures with the literacy figures for Yeravas, the following information is provided as per 1971 Census.

**National average**

Average: 29.45%; Males: 39.46%; Females: 18.70%

**State average**

Average: 31.52%; Males: 41.62%; Females: 20.97%

**District average**

Average: 51.12%; Males: 57.62%; Females: 43.88%

**Yerava average**

Average: 4.45%; Males: 6.18%; Females: 2.60%

1.12.6. **Communication pattern**

A brief sketch of intergroup, intertribal and non-tribal communication pattern of Yeravas observed during the field trips is given here. The following are the communication situations that a Yerava comes across in his daily routine in the order of an overall frequency. The following is generally applicable to Yerava adult male.
i. Paniya Yerava communicates with Paniya Yerava, Panjiri Yerava communicates with Panjiri Yerava.

ii. Paniya Yerava/Panjiri Yerava communicates with Kodava.

iii. Paniya Yerava/Panjiri Yerava communicates with Kannadiga or Malayelees.


v. Paniya Yerava/Panjiri Yerava communicates with Kadu/Jenu kuruba or Bette kuruba.

Within a group of Yeravas, they speak in their tongue only and never use any other language that they may know.

The male Yeravas know Kodagu well. While speaking to Kodavas, they invariably speak in Kodagu. However, some of the Kodavas say that they speak with Yeravas in Yerava. But the present investigators observation indicates the following in these contexts. When a Kodava questions or answers to an Yerava, the Kodava picks up the words of Kodagu and suffixes of Yerava and speaks with that combination. And sometimes he combines Yerava words and Kodagu suffixes to speak to an Yerava. All this
depends upon his understanding or knowledge of Yerava tongue. One notices a mixed language of Yerava and Kodagu, especially when a Kodava speaks to an Yerava.

Next to Kodagu speakers, Yeravas come across Kannada speakers more often, though native Kannada speakers are numerically less in these parts. However, Kannada being a school and state language it is spoken also in the environment of Yeravas. Hence, Yerava menfolk have more acquaintance than the Yerava womenfolk with Kannada speaking environment. (The bilingualism statistics given by 1961 Census gives an opposite picture as already pointed out). The womenfolk have only a nodding acquaintance with Kannada. Among Yerava men also persons around 45 years and above have very little acquaintance with Kannada. But the people of younger generation, namely those of 20 - 35 years have a good knowledge of spoken Kannada. However, one notices differences between the Kannada spoken around the young Yerava and the way he speaks Kannada.

The shops, hotels and other business establishments around Yeravas are run by Malayalee Mapillas. Because of mutual dependence, the Yeravas and Malayalees understand each other's language to the extent that the transactions demand such an understanding.
The *e ± ava of one group comes across the Yerava of another group in work place, shandy, etc. In such a context, if he desires to communicate, the Yerava uses his own dialect for the purpose. Because of the mutual intelligibility, Yeravas of both the groups do not face any difficulty in understanding each other.

Note: 1, 2.
The existence of these songs was first pointed out to the investigator by Shri B.D. Subbeyya. He provided the investigator with a version. The version presented here is the transcription of the poem as sung by the informants of the investigator. This native version differs from the former in several respects.