CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The majority of recent anthropological studies in India are descriptive ethnographies. In this thesis an attempt has been made to present an analytical study of the cultural personality of Yanadi living in the Sriharikota island. More specifically, the study is focussed to describe and analyse the Yanadi social organisation, economic life, world view, and child rearing practices. In doing so, efforts have been made to identify cultural variables that affect the Yanadi personality.

The Yanadi under study live on the eastern coast of peninsular India in the Sriharikota island about 100 kilometers north of Madras city. It is located in south-eastern corner of Sullurpeta Taluka, Vellore District, Andhra Pradesh. Prior to 1970, the island could only be approached from the Tada town by boat. After 1970, when the island was taken over by the Indian Space Research Organisation, a seventeen-kilometer road has been constructed connecting Sullurpeta with the island. The spindle-shaped, undulated island of
Sriharikota falls in a tropical climatic zone, having two monsoons. It is covered with dense and evergreen forest which is rich in different kinds of edible fauna and flora.

According to the 1971 census, the island had eleven revenue villages with a total population of 3260. The Yanadi constituted about twenty per cent of the total population. According to the 1977 census taken at the beginning of the present study, there were 919 Yanadi living in eight settlements on the island. The focus of this study are those Yanadi who continue to live on the island at the time of the termination of the study in June 1981.

The field work was conducted for five years between 1976 December and June 1981, as a part of the Yanadi Action Research Project. In the initial stage, census and genealogies were collected. After establishing good rapport it was possible to develop a sense of equality and friendship with the Yanadi. During the field work the researcher participated in various economic activities like food gathering, fishing, hunting, and honey collection. The researcher also participated in
various ceremonies and festivals. In-depth data relating to their child rearing practices, dreams, folksongs, riddles, and life histories were collected along with ethnographic data.

The Yanadi of Sriharikota are a semi-nomadic tribe who move in search of forest work and fruits and roots, fish and small game on the island. The Yanadi, with their scanty material, culture and technology of earthen pots, few knives and a fishing trap (otha ), live in small, circular, dome-shaped huts (gudisalu) built of casuarina branches and thatched with palmyra leaves which are constructed on the spot. Their staple food is boiled rice supplemented with roots, fruits and frequently, fish, and sometimes small game. Their animal companion is the dog which follows them wherever they go and help in hunting.

The smallest socially recognisable, and productive unit among the Yanadi is the couple (jata), with their unmarried children. It would be difficult to find a single man and woman living alone. It is because of this reason that marriages take place at various ages among Yanadi. A couple is member of a
band (wanatham), which is a socially and territorially recognizable group, consisting of ten to fifteen couples. A band can be divided into two sets of relatives known as affines (Sambandulu) and consanguines (dayadulu), vis-a-vis to each other. Each of the two sets of relatives has more than one lineage (intiperu). An intiperu is defined as a family name, and includes several couples. One is expected to marry within the band but the spouse should be from another intiperu. The first preference is given to mother's brother's children. But it is essential that the spouse be from the intiperu of his/her sanbandulu. Marriage among the Yanadi takes place only when a girl attains puberty; the boy should be older than the girl. The mother's brother plays an important role in marriage and other ceremonies. Both boy and girl are equally free to choose their partner. The band manifests its solidarity on occasions such as birth, puberty, marriage and death. These are a few rare occasions when couples participate collectively.

As a semi-nomadic tribe, the Yanadi band moves from place to place during the year in search of food. The climatic cycle more or less decides their
movements in the island. Other factors affecting the movements include quarrel, death and sickness. On an average a band moves for about three to four times a year.

The means of survival of the Yanadi centres around food gathering, fishing, hunting and wage labour individually performed by a couple. Any collective activity in economic sphere of the Yanadi is uncommon. Prior to 1970 they got forest work like wood cutting, jungle clearance and forest produce collection. A Yanadi couple works and takes the wages together. The distribution of the surplus, which is rare, depends on the individual choice of the couple.

The Yanadi conceives the universe in dichotomous categories whether they be animals, human beings, gods or devils. According to the Yanadi, the world is divided into the visible world of human beings (analoka), and the invisible world (dibaloka) that lies above the earth and is inhabited by gods, devils and deceased ancestors. The Yanadi believe that the man has to journey between the visible and invisible worlds. Birth is considered as the process by which an individual
comes into the visible and goes into invisible world through death. Both the visible and invisible worlds are inhabited by benign and malign beings, who are superior to the Yanadi. Those who are benign help the Yanadi in many ways but also chide when they commit mistake whereas the malign beings continuously try to harm them. In order to maintain harmony, the Yanadi try to avoid malign beings and maintain close contact with the benign beings. This is well reflected in their day to day behaviour. In order to maintain this harmony, they avoid quarrels with anybody for if they quarrel, even their benign gods would punish them. In their opinion survival depends upon subjugation.

The Yanadi identify three periods in human life from birth to death. These are childhood, adulthood and elderhood. In the childhood period five distinct developmental stages are recognised based on significant physical developments in the child.

It is most desirable that a woman should bear a child soon after marriage. Male and female children are equally welcome. The value of a child is well reflected in pre-natal rituals like Xangam which
protects the foetus from malign beings. Such rituals continue even after birth as an infant is considered to be susceptible to malign beings. An infant is not taken to the deep forest to avoid malign beings of both worlds. If it is essential to take the child out, a piece of cane is carried along to scare the malign beings.

The Yanadi mother breast feeds her children. They offer the breast whenever the children cry. The care of children diminishes as a child grows in age. However, children spend most of their time with their parents till the age of five years. After that, they spend most of their time with other children away from the hut. The Yanadi take their children wherever they go, either for work or for food gathering. The children are allowed to participate in all activities. The children learn adult behaviour and skills by participation, observation and imitation. The parents say, "when the eyes see, the hands do".

The Yanadi parents do not beat their children as it brings wrath of the gods and subsequently punishment in the form of disease. In child rearing practices, there is complete freedom given to children; lack of
punishment; lack of coercion and strong disapproval to fight with others. Due to strong disapproval for using other’s tools, the Yanadi learn to respect individual possessions.

An ideal goal of Yanadi is to maintain harmony between self, visible and invisible worlds. This he tries to achieve through maintaining harmony between self and household members, the band, the non-Yanadi, the flora and fauna of the island in the visible world. In the invisible world, he tries to maintain harmony with gods, devils and deceased ancestors through rangen. To achieve such an ideal, two important characteristics observed in the personality of Yanadi are a strong sense of individualism and submissiveness to the superior beings, whether from the visible or invisible worlds.

The child rearing practices inculcate a strong sense of individualism. It is reinforced by the world view the Yanadi have and observed in almost all aspects of Yanadi life. A Yanadi individual makes all decisions - marital, familial, economic and religious, including the choice of a band in which he/she wants to live independently. In such decisions even parents are not
consulted. Such independent decision making ability is also reflected in the high level of self sufficiency manifested by the adult individuals in which the only interdependence continues between husband and wife until they decide to separate. Effort to create sense of individualism begins from the day the child is born. After birth the new born is dedicated to the custody of a god who is expected to remain his/her personal god throughout life. Though the child is protected from malign beings they are left to explore the world around on their own. Most of the learning of appropriate behaviour and knowledge about the universe comes through imitative behaviour and observation. By the time a child starts walking he/she is free to explore the environment around. At this point he/she is left to have meals independently, collect the food and sleep independently.

An adult Yanadi is observed to be quiet and submissive in front of any superior beings in the visible world whether benign or malign. In concrete terms, a Yanadi would avoid confrontation, quarrel or violence; instead he would submit or yield. If a husband and wife have difference of opinion or a liking for another,
instead of arguing or fighting or living in conflict on the issue they would prefer to go separate. If a couple has similar problems with the band, they will walk out of the band and join another. If a Yanadi does not like to work with a contractor, they leave him at the cost of hunger. If pressed hard, they would shift to some other place.

There is greater reliance on the invisible world and the same techniques are followed to maintain harmony with the invisible world also. During rangas they plead with the medium of ranka ranked for forgiveness and they continue to do so until their gods respond favourably. The above analysis reflects the harmony that is maintained between man, nature and god by the Yanadi and in order to achieve this it seems as if effort is made by the Yanadi from the day he/she is born.

Before examining the relationships between the socio-economic, child rearing practices and personality variables, the ecological context must be brought into focus. It is an island ecology in which hunting and gathering provide means for survival to the Yanadi. The search for food and later introduction of cash economy
through forced forest works, helped continuance of
semi-nomadic living and influenced on the Yanadi life
style.

The paradigm presented in the figure-8
shows that there is a lack of physical punishment of any
kind at any stage of child rearing. It has been
re-inforced due to belief that their personal gods in
the invisible world would be unhappy if a Yanadi is
beaten by any body. Such belief has generated a high
dependency on the invisible world.

The hunting and gathering economy and the
eyearly experiences of starvation encourages the children
to explore the forest independently for survival.
Equality between sexes, individual freedom in decision
making, and learning through participation and observation
leads to a strong sense of individualism in the Yanadi
cultural personality.

Due to higher dependency on benign beings of
invisible and visible worlds for survival and fear of
malign beings of both the worlds force the Yanadi to be
submissive in front of them in order to maintain harmony
in life. It is because of this reason that the Yanadi
Figure 8. Paradigm showing personality formation among the Yanadi.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND WORLD-VIEW VARIABLES

- Couple-economic unit for survival through gathering, fishing, and hunting
- Equality of relationships between sexes and freedom, dichotomous relationships
- Lack of group cohesion
- Dependency on invisible world and non-Yanadi

CHILD REARING VARIABLES

- Children are encouraged to explore the forest for food
- High reliance on invisible world to control child behavior and lack of punishment of any kind
- Learning through observation, participation, and imitation

PERSONALITY VARIABLES

- Individualism
- Harmony
- Submissiveness
having high sense of individualism become submissive in front of the non-Yanadi.

Based on this paradigm and the analysis presented so far the following hypotheses have been formulated which can be tested in the other semi-nomadic life style:

1. In the hunting and gathering economy where there is no surplus food, the viable social and economic unit consists of husband and wife and their unmarried children and in such culture, the child rearing practices inculcate high level of self-reliance.

2. Early experience of starvation by the child; learning through observation and participation leads to a sense of self-reliance and individualism in the personality.

3. High reliance on belief system for social control leads to lack of punishment and freedom in child rearing practices and thereby leading to high level of individualism in the personality.
4. The cultures depend upon the invisible world for their well-being when there is lack of any form of social control. In other words, the cultures where there is lack of social control depend upon the beings of invisible world for their survival.