With the transit of time, significance of social research is getting popularity not only in India but all over the world. The main cause of its popularity is the raising appreciation and acceptance of the values and the findings of social research by public, newspaper editors, social planners, political leaders in the efficient functioning of a Government. This is very important for the proper understandings of the mechanism of social life thereby getting a greater measure of control over it. This form of study is of prime importance for acquiring scientific knowledge about human culture and civilization. Probably, it is the main reason that social research activities have expanded at an exceptional rate within a few decades. These have been accepted as a basic function of a democracy in some democratic countries. During and since the second world war, social scientists have paid increasing attention to getting detailed knowledge of the local conditions in the various parts of the world.

India is a plural society with different religious groups and tribes. Several of these societies or communities
have been subjected to empirical, descriptive and analytical research.

In Karnataka, we find a number of interesting and colourful tribes which are of Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Mangoloid and Aryan origin. Some of these are the Gondhali, Bagadi, Budubuduki, Killekyatha - all marathi speaking groups and are found to be inter-marrying groups. These are economically backward, remain half-clad and resist progress. Education is very poor, and most of them are illiterate. Most of them are non-agriculturists, and subsist on petty works like ploughing for farmers, unskilled labourers, and collecting forest produces. Thus we find variety in communities of Karnataka. Though most of them are economically backward, they can boast of their ancient and glories culture. The inhabitants of the river sides too have a colourful history. They are simple, honest and straightforward folk who have preserved in all its purity the greatness of racial tradition. Among these groups the Killekyathas are distinctly different from others, who had adopted the profession of preforming leather puppet play for different purposes. It was considered helpful to select one of the groups which spoke Marathi as the mother tongue, and also knew the regional language. These considerations made researcher to select the Killekyathas for an emphatic study.
UNIVERSE OF STUDY

The researcher contacted the concerned authorities and enquired as to the existing location of the Killekyathas in the various areas of Karnataka. The choice of the field of study, was made after considering several things. Since Killekyatha community is scattered throughout Karnataka the entire State was first divided into five component areas.

Karnataka is generally regarded a composite of five regions because of their different historical and geographical differences. The five regions are Bombay Provience, Hydrabad State, Madras State, Princely Mysore State and Kodagu which are non-overlapping areas and form geographical clusters. Then out of each component area, villages, where Killekyathas were residing were listed. Then from each list, one village was randomly selected for the study. Similar strategy was followed to select the remaining four villages from other component areas. The five villages chosen are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village chosen</th>
<th>Present District</th>
<th>Component Parts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Amarnathpur</td>
<td>Dharwar</td>
<td>Bombay Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Surdi</td>
<td>Raichur</td>
<td>Hydrabad State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Agatoor</td>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>Madras Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bommagaripal</td>
<td>Kolar</td>
<td>Princely Mysore state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kushalpur</td>
<td>Kodagu</td>
<td>Kodagu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POSITION OF KARNATAKA IN INDIA

Boundary, International
Boundary, State/Union Territory
Capital of India
Capital of State/Union Territory

Kilometres
100 200 300 400

The administrative headquarters of Chandigarh, Haryana and Punjab are at Chandigarh.
FIVE COMPONENT PARTS OF KARNATAKA

- Princeley Mysore State 1799-1947
- Kodagu
- From Madras Province
- From Coorg Province
- From Hyderabad State

BELLARY DIST. WAS ADDED TO MYSORE STATE IN 1973.
Karnataka State is situated between 11° 31' and 18° 45' North latitude and 74° 12' and 28° East longitudes, and lies in the West-Central part of peninsular India. Its maximum length from North to South is about 700kms. and from East to West 400kms. It is bound on the North by Goa, on the East by Andra Pradesh, on the South and South-East by Tamilnadu, on the South-West by Kerala and on the West by the Arabian sea (Karnataka Gazetteer, 1982:480).

After the fall of Tippu, the erstwhile Mysore State came into being in 1799 A.D. and consisted of seven districts in 1881, viz., Bangalore, Mysore, Kolar, Kadur, Tumkur, Chitradurga and Shimoga. In the year 1886, Hassan was carved out as the eighth district with seven taluks, and in 1939, Mandya, the ninth district with seven taluks. In 1950, there was no exchange of enclave areas between the old Mysore State and the then Madras Provinces under the Provinces and State (Absorption of Enclaves) Order, 1950, and these exchanges resulted in an increase in the area from 76.296 sq.km to 76.376 sq.km.

In the area of the State the next change was in October 1953, when Bellary district of Madras State excluding the taluks of Adoni, Alur and Rayadura was transferred to the old Mysore State when the Andhra State was formed. This resulted in an expansion of 9.897 sq.km to the area of the State. The
latest change in the physical boundaries and the area of the State was under the State Reorganisation Act, 1950. On November 1, 1956, under this Act, the present State constituted, comprised of the following territories:

1. The pre 1956 Part B State of Mysore (including Bellary district);
2. Belgaum district (except Chandgad taluk) and Bijapur, Dharwar and Uttara Kannada districts from the former Bombay State;
3. Gulbarga district (except Kodangal and Tandur taluks) Raichur district (except Alampur and Godwal taluks) and Bidar district (except Ahmadpur, Nilanga and Udgir taluks) from the former State of Hydrabad;
4. Dakshina Kannada district (except Kasargod taluk and Amindivi Islands) and Kollegal taluk of Coimbatore district from the former Madras State; and
5. The part of C State of Coorg.

No change has been in the area of the State between 1961 and 1971 except for the transfer of a small area of 0.03 sq.km of Abkavavipally in Bagepalli taluk of Kolar district to Andhra Pradesh (Karnataka Gazetteer 1982:5-6).
The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
It was thought that the samples of villages from these five parts of Karnataka could give the complete picture of the life of Killekyathas of Karnataka in general and five villages in particular. Hence, it was decided to study the villages mentioned in five parts of Karnataka to know whether the life and culture of these people varies from place to place, or whether it remains the same throughout the State of Karnataka.

The Settings: The villages viz., Amarnathpur, Surdi, Agatoor, Bommangaripal and Kushalpur (Pseudonyms) are situated at a distance of 8Kms from Navalgund, 21Kms from Manvi, 29Kms from Hadagali, 19Kms from Bagepalli and 2Kms from Shanivarsanthe towns respectively. The villages are multi-ethnic in character. They are well connected by buses. Among the nomadic people there are many groups which may not always take recourse to moving in one group. In such cases certain individual families may move while some individuals may lead settled life. Basing on ethnographic reports, Watanable (1968:73) observes "...Among many of the Northern hunters there are some non-moving sedentary individuals or families who occupy the same dwelling all the year, while there are others who shift their residence. Such variation of residential stability is correlated with differentiation in subsistence economy at the level of the individual or the family".
When researcher camped at villages, he noticed that the entire group of Killekyathas did not move. This may be seen from the following description of the Killekyatha settlement of the villages that there were non-moving Killekyatha families as well as several individual families taking recourse to moving.

The settlements are situated on the fringe of the villages this position, therefore, indicates that the Killekyathas were later immigrants to the villages. Some families whose members are living at other places since the heads of these families are in Government service are lying locked. When the household survey was done; out of the 150 families, 34 families gave informations to the effect that they lead nomadic life for some part of the whole year. 116 families stated that they been living at the villages for some years. But it is important to note that the classification into nomadic at settled families is not rigid as the families which move may suddenly switch on to settled life, and similarly, a settled one may start moving. Usually, old people and women show a tendency of living at settlements, and the younger ones are more prone to lead a nomadic life. For researcher's analysis here, he has considered those families which did not undertake moving in villages during the last three years (1986-1989) as settled,
families which spent some part or whole of the year moving in villages as nomadic families. The researcher may hasten to add here that the classification is done solely for the purpose of the present description, and such a rigid classification cannot be envisaged because settled families may become nomadic and vice versa.

It was said that earlier even two to three families were found to have made a settlement of Killekyathas near a village. These camps were made by erecting thatched houses. Then the villagers were said to have encouraged the Killekyathas, who moved for major part of the year and used to return to the original villages at the time of the fair and festivals. Due to the population growth and migration from other parts of the State separate settlements have come into being. Most of the homes in the Vathar of villages are well built with mudroofs, usually found in the locality. There are some houses with thatched roofs also. Some Government servants built houses in 'Vathars' (localities) which they wanted to occupy after their retirement. There are a few sites owned by nomadic families in the 'Vathars' (localities) of the villages. Since these families were constantly moving and had not enough funds to build houses, the sites were remaining vacant. When these families returned to villages to attend annual fair, caste council
meetings, etc., they camp near the vacant places, with their kin and live in the vacant houses of the others.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researcher tries to avoid explicit hypothesis in order to allow maximum opportunity for explanations and theory to emerge (Glaser and Strauss (1965:5-12). Anyway in an intellectual vaccum no study could be conducted. Recognising this, the researcher kept in mind some specific objectives in order to give some goals for research. They are as follows:

1. To reveal the Historical perspective of these people.
2. To study the economic, socio-political and religious life of Killekyathas; and
3. To know the extent to which the community changes its behaviour under new conditions and the nature and extent of such change.

Method of Study

Keeping the above objectives in mind attempts were made by the researcher to study the community. Discussions were held with the University teachers and research friends at Dharwar. All of them expressed interest in the objectives, as the Killekyatha community had never been studied in Karnataka in the way the researcher proposed.
The researcher approached the villages one by one by introducing himself to the village leaders and then to the Killikyatha leaders, who promised the required help to the researcher in all possible ways.

In a community study much of the necessary information could be obtained from a relatively small group of individuals who were to be sufficiently involved to become active participants in the study. So the importance of study had to be explained to the potential informants through the community leaders. Entry into the Killekyatha community naturally meant establishing good rapport, first with the community leaders and influential persons who are in a way gatekeepers (Deutscher 1968:38). The researcher found that in each group he met, there was always a man who directed the activities of his fellows and whose words was an authority. Without his support, he was excluded from the group, with his support, he was accepted.

Realising the importance of leaders, the researcher met the leaders of various categories of the community. There were two kinds, viz., political leaders and heads of caste councils of Killekyathas. The researcher met them individually and the purpose of the visit of the researcher was explained. Meanwhile the researcher came into contact with a group of school and college students among
Killekyathas in every village and found in them active support for his research. They explained the researcher's purpose to the community elders and helped him in getting accepted. The doubts and suspicions raised in the minds of the community people against the researcher, largely subsided with the efforts of collegiate youth. In every village, the researcher stayed as a guest in the Panchayat room or in the home of the head of the caste council and this stay was used for establishing informal contacts with the people of all castes in the villages.

Tools and Techniques of Data collection

For storing and retrieving the information obtained in the field, the researcher many times used a tape recorder. Most of the information was kept in the form of field notes. Demographical data on age, sex and land particular were collected. Information which was collected through records was also kept in the form of field notes. The researcher also had a camera, and took some photographs of their material life events and of people related to this study.

Time Schedule

This field study was commenced in 1989 and completed in 1991. The villages were visited several times, and a number of persons were interviewed. Much of the material was
collected through field investigation. Library was made use of whenever necessary. Basically, participant observation was used as a method of data collection in this study, and informant interviewing as a part of participant observation. Becker defines participant observation as 'that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, either only in the role of the researcher or in some disguised role....' (Becker and Geer 1957:28). The researcher recognised the need to employ participant observation, interviewing and enumeration, and also participated in the daily life of the Killekyathas.

Living with Killekyathas provided the most valuable data. Here living with the people would be in vain without simultaneously making and recording careful observations. The researcher tried to ask questions which he felt useful for the subject. Caste council meetings were held in the community leader's home or some time in the temple, which took place during the period he stayed in the villages. He attended their family functions like marriages, betrothals, etc. Many particulars concerning Killekyathas, were paid special attention. Land particulars were properly maintained in the records.

In this way the scientific method was followed to study Killekyathas of Karnataka to depict their complete life and living in day today activities.