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PANIYAN OF KERALA

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FOREWORD

The Constitution lays down that "the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation".

To assist States in fulfilling their responsibility in this regard, the 1961 Census provided a series of special tabulations of the Social and Economic data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are notified by the President under the Constitution and the Parliament is empowered to include in or exclude from the lists, any caste or tribe. During the Census operations, the enumerators frequently face the problem of identifying the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In the President's notification, though in some cases, the names of the sub-castes and sub-tribes and synonyms are given, there are many cases where such names have not been provided in the list. The Census enumerators, therefore, require guidance about the acceptance or rejection of claims that they come across during the operations of some communities to be treated as sub-castes or sub-tribes of the notified Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. For this purpose, the Census Organisation has thought it wise to undertake detailed ethnographic studies in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India. This is also in conformity with the past Census tradition of presenting authentic ethnographic account of Indian communities.

For conducting the enthnographic studies, a number of ancillary operations are undertaken by the Social Studies Unit of the Office of the Registrar General, India, as well as the staff of the Superintendents of Census Operations in the various States. These ancillary operations include: (*i*) compilation of available information on each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and preparation of bibliography in respect of them; (*ii*) preparation and interpretation of maps showing distribution of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes over time and space; and (*iii*) special studies on cultural, technological and economic changes taking place among the various tribal communities.

Dr. B.K. Roy Burman, Deputy Registrar General, India, Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit, assisted by Shri A.M. Kurup and Shri N.G. Nag, Research Officers, in co-ordinating all these studies at the Central level.

In north Kerala, fringed by the western ghats, luxurient greenery and lofty mountains, the Wynad plateau forms the important tribal belt. Here lives the curly haired, dark complexioned, short statured Paniyans in perpetual penury. Though not conclusively proved they are reported to be of African origin till the turn of the century "they were a savage tribe living in caves and thick forests, coming out only at night and feed on paddy and other crops". The Wynadan Chettis are reported to have trapped and tamed them and used as slaves. Even today they are recruited by the agriculturists to work for them round the year, when they assemble at the Valliyoorkavu temple. The Paniyans speak a debased form of Malayalam. Their inherent inertia for literacy coupled with discouragement of the local Chettis account for the low literacy rate. Lack of education and proper leadership, according to them, are the main causes of their backwardness. The high influx of the people from the plains towards Wynad and the action oriented reform and welfare methods adopted by the State Government have not yet contributed much towards their amelioration. The present monograph attempts an analysis of the Paniyan culture against the back drop of their socio-economic conditions.

The preliminary field investigations were made by the Research Staff of the southern zone (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Mysore and Andhra Pradesh) as a part of the field training conducted in 1966, under the guidance of Shri A.M. Kurup, Research Officer, Office of the Registrar General, India, and the first draft was prepared by the Kerala Census Office. Later in 1968, Shri M.S. Prakasam, of the Office of the Registrar General, India made an intensive survey and enlarged the scope of the report. The report was then revised by Shri A.M. Kurup of the same office and was finally edited by Shri A.M. Kurup and Dr. B.K. Roy Burman.

I avail of this opportunity to extend my warm thanks to all of my colleagues who have undertaken various studies on different aspects of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India.

A. CHANDRA SEKHAR
Registrar General, India.

PREFACE

As an adjunct of 1961 Census, preparation of ethnographic monographs on a number of selected Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and ethnic groups with special status and ethnographic glossaries on all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been taken up by the Census Organisation.

In India the Census Organisation has a long tradition of undertaking ethnographic studies. Besides, there are certain reasons why, for its own operational purposes, it is necessary for the Census Organisation to take up such studies. During census operation, the Census Organisation is required to make a complete enumeration of all the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country. The ethnographic studies are required to establish the identity of the various communities including their segments. The social boundaries of various communities are not always rigid, they are in a state of flux. Ethnographic studies are required to keep track of these changes as well, otherwise comparison of consecutive census figures would give altogether wrong in respect of them. There is another aspect of study in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in which the Census Organisation, as well as the welfare and planning agencies are interested—it is ethno-demography. In 1961 Census, separate tables were prepared in respect of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the following items:

(*i*) Industrial classification of persons at work and non-workers by sex.
(*ii*) Age and marital status.
(*iii*) Education.
(*iv*) Religion.
(*v*) Persons not at work classified by sex and type of activity for Scheduled Castes.
(*vi*) Persons not at work classified by sex and type of activity for Scheduled Tribes.
(*vii*) Mother tongue and bilingualism for Scheduled Tribes.

The data available in these tables are to be analysed in respect of each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, so that the historical and cultural factors responsible for the demographic pattern can be identified and the impact of the emergent demographic pattern on the social structure can be determined.

The insight gained by the Census Organisation, through ethnographic studies of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will be useful for interpretation of the demographic pattern for the country as a whole. Recent studies show that in India even now, it is difficult to correctly appreciate the various social and economic processes without reference to caste. On the other hand, in the interest of ultimate national goal, caste is not being recorded in census except in case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The insight gained through ethno-demographic studies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is, therefore, of invaluable help for census.

At the same time, such study is very much useful for planning of development activities among the castes or tribes concerned. For instance, if the Census shows that great deal of diversification of occupation has taken place among the Parayans of Kerala, it is important for the planners to know whether the community consists of a number of disconnected segments or whether it means that a great deal of individual mobility is taking place where the main focus of community is other than traditional occupation. Again, when among the Bauris of Orissa, it is found that a very high proportion of the population is engaged in agricultural labour and next to them a high proportion is found in cultivation and also that there is considerable diversification of occupation, the following questions of sociological and practical importance arise:

(*a*) What is the historical relation between the agricultural labourers and the cultivators among the Bauris of Orissa? The census data suggests one of the two possible developments, namely, (*i*) bulk of the Bauris were cultivators and by a process of degeneration of their economy have become agricultural labourers, (*ii*) on the other hand, it is also possible that the bulk of them were agricultural labourers and through a process of improvement of their economic condition, many of them have become cultivators.

(*b*) The fact that a considerable diversification of occupation has taken place, suggests that the economy has not remained in a stagnant condition. Here, it is to be examined whether the diversification is the result of upward mobility, or downward mobility, or even horizontal mobility, and what is the actual process by which the diversification has taken place.

(*c*) The social dimensions corresponding the diversification in economic life have to be examined. It is also to be examined whether in spite of diversification of occupation, for instance, agriculture, continues to be dominant. In that case, diversification might have created problems of adjustment in values and attitudes.

Instances can be multiplied, but it is not necessary. What have been stated above, are enough to bring out the significance of ethno-demographic studies for planners.

The above dimensions of ethno-demographic studies have evolved through stages. In 1960, at the instance of Shri Mitra, Registrar General of India, a questionnaire for collection of ethnographic data was circulated among the Census Superintendents. In October 1961, the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit was set up in the Office of the Registrar General of India, to co-ordinate the ethnographic studies and a few other ancillary studies, like village surveys, handicraft surveys, etc. In December 1961, a Study Camp was organised in Delhi, where the personnel engaged in ethnographic studies, handicrafts studies and other social investigations in the Office of the Census Superintendents, participated. In the Study Camp, it was considered that the ethnographic notes would mainly aim at making an objective assessment of the state of development of the different Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the context of the changes taking place in technology, economic organisation and total culture pattern of the country. It was further suggested that the primary focus of the study should not be on the exotic elements of the cultures of the different castes and tribes. It should be on the efforts of the communities concerned, to adjust to the modern conditions of life. In the light of the above decisions of the Study Camp, rapid ethnographic studies have been carried on by the staff of the Superintendents of Census Operations as well as by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit of the Office of the Registrar General of India, in different parts of the country. These rapid surveys have brought out a number of methodological and operational problems. In May and June, 1966, two Ethnographic Study Camps have held at Kurseong and Hyderabad, where personnels from the Office of the Registrar General of India as well as from the Offices of the Census Superintendents participated. In the Study Camp held at Kurseong, the Secretary, Tribal Welfare, West Bengal, and Director, Tribal Welfare, West Bengal, also participated. In this Study Camp, an integrated frame for preparation of ethnographic notes was discussed and adopted. A copy of the same may be seen at Annexure. In addition to the studies in respect of each Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes separately, a number of subsidiary studies were undertaken by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit of the Office of the Registrar General of India, for gaining insight into a number of problems of general nature, which have bearing on the different aspects of the lives of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the country. These subsidiary studies are as follows:

1. Shifting cultivation in Santal Parganas of Bihar and Garo Hills of Assam.
2. Pattern of rehabilitation of displaced tribals of Rourkela.
3. Socio-economic survey of the Scheduled areas of Rajasthan.
4. Socio-economic developments among the hillmen of North-East India.
5. Social structure and cultural orientation of Christians converted from Scheduled Castes.
6. Traditional rights of scavenging as claimed by scavengers in urban areas.
7. Grouping of castes and tribes with reference to occupation and inter-group and intra-group comparative study on the basis of the data available in earlier censuses.
8. Social mobility movements among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

On the basis of each of the subsidiary studies indicated above, a separate monograph is under preparation. It is also proposed to prepare separate monographs on a few Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and ethnic groups with special status in each state. Besides, ethnographic glossaries are proposed to be prepared in respect of all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. For this purpose about one lakh references have been indexed.

The present report on the Paniyan is one of the monographs proposed to be brought out by the Census Organisation. This study was initiated as a field work orientation survey in connection with the field training of the investigating staff of the Southern States held at Wynad during November-December, 1966. The first draft was prepared by the Census Organisation, Kerala. Afterwards, in 1968, under the guidance of Shri A.M. Kurup, Research Officer, Office of the Registrar General, India, an intensive survey was conducted by Shri M.S. Prakasam of the same office. A draft report was prepared by Shri M.S. Prakasam and revised by Shri A.M. Kurup. It was finally edited by Shri A.M. Kurup and myself.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to all the colleagues who collaborated in the project.

Shri H.L. Harit, Investigator, who is looking after the compilation of information from published sources in respect of all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other special ethnic groups of India deserves mention.

Shri A. Mitra, Registrar General of India for 1961 Census, whose farsighted initiative is responsible for Social investigations in a large number of fields including ethnography, deserves thanks of all students of indology. I have been benefited not only by his inspiration, but also by his valuable suggestion in connection with the ethnographic studies as well as the other studies, conducted by the Handicrafts and Social Studies unit.

The tradition built by Shri Mitra, has been continued by A. Chandra Sekhar, the present Registrar General of India under his guidance, the scope of the Social Studies by the Census Organization has been further expanded. In spite of his other preoccupations, he has gone to rough the final drafts of the ethnograph notes and given a number of valuable suggestions. I avail of this opportunity to express my gratefulness to him.

B.K. Roy Burman

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THE PANIYAN

I. Name, Identity, Origin and History

Living in the Wynad Hills of the former Malabar district of Kerala State, amidst lush green forests, meandering streams and golden paddy fields, is a community of simple, poverty stricken, agricultural labourers called Paniyans. They are reported to be of African origin, though it has not been conclusively proved. In the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lists modification order 1956, Paniyan is listed as a Scheduled Tribe in the Malabar district of Kerala State. They are also listed as a Scheduled Tribe in parts of Madras and Mysore States*. During November-December, 1966, a field study of the Paniyan tribe was made in Chulliote and Chingeri villages of South Wynad Taluk and Korom village in North Wynad Taluk. A further probe was made during May, 1968 at the above mentioned villages and also among a few Paniyans of Sultan's Battery, the Taluk Headquarters.

The name *Paniyan* appears to have been evolved from the word *Pani* which in Malayalam, means work. Thus Paniyan is a worker or labourer. Luiz (1962, 218) considers that "the name Paniyan is a modified form of a Malayalam word *Panikkar* (Labourer)". In the Malayalam-English dictionary, compiled by Herman Gundert, Paniyan is described as "a caste of cultivators in hilly districts" (1872,567). Francis labels them as a Malayalee caste of agricultural labourers (1901, 172). Whatever may be the derivation of the term, the Paniyans eke out their livelihood by cultivation or by agricultural labour. They call themselves Paniyan and they are addressed and referred to as *paniyan* (male) and *panichi* or *Paniyathy* (female) by others. The plural form of the term is *Paniyar*.

Regarding the origin of the tribe, different views are held by different authors. Paniyans themselves believe that their original abode was *Ippimala*, the exact location of which is not known to them, though some people consider it to be near the Tamarachery ghat. The *Nayar* landlords of the same region also believe that the Paniyans have come from *Ippimala*. They substantiate their belief by pointing out that when taken aback or alarmed, the Paniyans call out 'Ippi'—'Ippi', which they believe is a place from where they have come. According to Thurston, "Kapari (Africa or the Cape?) is also sometimes mentioned as their original habitat, but only by those who have had the remarks of Europeans communicated to them" (1909, VI, 58). An old *Chetti* of Wynad narrated a fascinating story, according to which the Paniyans were living in the interior of Wynad hills, and used to come very close to the habitats of the plains people. On festive occasions they used to assemble for collecting the refuse from discarded leaf plates, but on seeing the plain's folk would flee to the nearby forest uttering loudly the word 'Ippi-Ippi'. Once the *Chettis* decided to trap them. They, therefore, fixed string nets around the area and articles of food were kept in plenty at places where refuse used to be thrown. As usual, these Paniyans entered the place, unaware of the trap, and tried to collect the food and flee with the same. Suddenly the *Chettis* closed the net and trapped them. They were later on domesticated and used for agricultural operations.

According to Rai Bahadur C. Gopalan Nayar (he was Deputy collector of Malabar) "they were savage tribes living in caves and thick forests, coming out only at night and feed on paddy and other crops. A *Gounder* land owner finding their crops always destroyed by these "black beasts" managed to secure a number of them by means of nets, known in Wynad as *Thandati*, and in six months taught them the language and to go on errands. These domesticated Paniyans induced their friends of the forests to join them and gradually they spread from place to place until we find them in parts of Coorg and Mysore and in Wynad and the hilly tracts of the neighbouring taluks and the plains" (1911, 101).

According to Panoor, Paniyans were considered as experts to transform themselves into invisible men *Jinnu* when by uttering a magical word, 'sippi-sippi', they turned into smoke. The women of the neighbouring communities look upon the Paniyans with much awe as they believe that they can transform themselves into bulls and dogs and attract sleeping women with their magical powers. Whosoever was so attracted and enjoyed by a Paniyan, found dead after two or three days. These vizards were, therefore, isolated by the people from the plains. The Paniyans owing to the fears from the trouble of local people kept themselves aloof in the thick jungles (1963, 96).

As per an old folk song prevalent among the Paniyans they were living in the thick jungles as *Jinnu*. Once their head *Mooppan* was caught by

*In Madras, they are scheduled in Chingleput, Coimbatore, Madras, Madurai, Nilgiris, North Arcot, Ramanathapuram, Salem South Arcot, Tanjore, Tiruchi rapalli and Tirunelvelli (except Shenkottah taluk) districts. In Mysore State, the tribe is scheduled in South Kanara and Kollegal taluk of Mysore.

the *Vallyoor Achan* of *Valliyurkava* and after an agreement they became his slaves and shifted to the plains (1963, 97).

According to another local belief, centuries back they were brought to Wynad by the local Raja and when the Raja's family was massacred by his enemies, the Paniyans accepted the *Chettis* as their masters and started working with them.

Gopalan Nair considers the Paniyans as aborigines being the original inhabitants of the area. He gives the following information regarding their origin. About *Paniyars* "it is stated in a local gazetteer that they are the most characteristic representatives of the Dravidian type being probably the original types of the population of India, now modified to a varying extent by the admixture of Aryans, Scythian and Mongoloid elements". Another theory is that the Paniyans are the descendents of the Negroes brought from Zanzibar by Moors trading with the Malabar coast. A third and the most interesting theory is that there existed a "submerged continent of Lamuria extending from Madagascar to the Malay Archipelago linking India with Africa on the one side and with Australia on the other", a theory which points to the affinity between the aborigines of Australia, the Negroes of Africa and the aborigines of Southern India.

All those who have recorded the customs and manners of the Paniyans have stated that they were very little removed from that of a slave, for, every Paniyan is some landlord's man and though he is, of course, free to leave his master, he is at once traced and good care is taken that he does not get employment elsewhere (1909, 58).

In the middle of the last century when planters first settled in Wynad, they purchased the land with the Paniyan living on it, who were practically slaves of the land-owners. Thurston, further reports that they were employed as Coffee thieves like the Badagas of the Nilgiris. If domesticated and well paid, the Paniyans are fit to be entrusted with responsible duties. They were also engaged in committing robbery and murder. Instances of Paniyans engaged in killing have been reported by Thurston. He cites an example of some Paniyans being employed by a Maupla (Mohammadan) to murder his mistress who was pregnant and threatened that she would voice his responsibility for her condition. The crime was later detected. The two Paniyans and the Maupla were sentenced to be hanged.

II. Distribution and Population Trend

The Paniyans of Kerala State, inhabit mostly in the Wynad plateau, which is an extension into Malabar of the highest part of the Deccan plateau in the region of the Nilgiris, with their concentration in the Tellicherry and North Wynad taluks of Cannanore district and Ernad and South Wynad taluks of Kozhikode district. These four taluks themselves account for 94.90% of the total Paniyans. The North and South Wynad taluks together account for 72.2% of the total Paniyan population of the State. Taliparambu, Quilandy and Kozhikode taluks together have returned only 4.92%. There maining 0.18% are returned from the three districts of Palghat, Trichur and Ernakulam.

During the 1961 Census, 37,068 Paniyans have been returned from Kerala State comprising 18,545 males and 18,523 females. The district wise and taluk wise distribution is given in the following table:

Table 1

Population of Paniyans according to 1961 *Census*

Name of District		Persons	Males	Females	Name of Taluk	Persons	Males	Females
1. Cannanore	T	14,309	7,061	7,248	Taliparambu	819	423	396
	R	14,308	7,060	7,248	Tellicherry North	4,925	2,521	2,404
					Wynad	8,564	4,116	4,448
	U	1	1	..				
2. Kozhikode	T	22,703	11,451	11,252	Badagara	273	136	137
	R	22,695	11,445	11,250	Quilandy	75	36	39
					Kozhikode	658	326	332
					Ernad	3,488	1,680	1,808
					South Wynad	18,201	9,267	8,934
	U	8	6	2				
3. Palghat	T	40	24	16				
	R	40	24	16	Perintalmanna	4	1	3
					Ponnani	17	9	8
					Chittur	19	14	5
	U	..	..	..				
4. Trichur	T	14	9	5				
	R	14	9	5	Chowghat	14	9	5
	U	..	..	..				
5. Ernakulam	T	2	..	2				
	R	..	..	..				
	U	2	..	2				
Total Population		37,068	18,545	18,523		37,057	18,538	18,519

In the same Census, 4,779 Paniyans have been returned from Tamilnadu State, of which, except two persons, all are inhabitants of Nilgiri District, an area adjoining the Kozhikode district of Kerala. Though the Paniyans are listed as Scheduled Tribes in Mysore State, none has been returned during this census.

When compared to the total general population of the State the Paniyan population is negligible which works out to 0.22%. But they form 17.42% of the Scheduled Tribe population of the State. If the total Paniyan population, comprising Kerala and Madras is taken together the tribe in Kerala account for 89.35% of the above total.

Population variation

The present habitat of the Paniyans in Kerala State has so long been a part of Madras State except in the 1961 Census, when, as a result of the States reorganisation, this area had been transferred to the present Kerala State in 1956. Separate figures, therefore, for Malabar district, are not available except for 1961. For the sake of comparison of population variation the total figures for Kerala and Madras have been taken together. As tribe wise figures have not been published in 1941 and 1951 the same have also not been given. Table given below gives an idea of the population variation in the different censuses:

Table 2

Population Variation

Census year	No. of persons	Variation	Percentage variation
1891	33,282	—	—
1901	29,245	—4,037	—12.13
1911	34,574	+5,329	+18.22
1921	36,328	+1,754	+ 5.07
1931	32,410	—3,918	—10.79
1961	41,487	+9,437	+29.12

Except in 1901 and 1931, there is a steady growth of population. During these two decades Paniyan population has shown a decrease of 12.13% and 10.79% respectively from the previous population. The possible explanation for this phenomenon may be that the habitat of the Paniyans being endemic areas of Malaria, it might have taken a heavy toll of their lives during these two decades.

The 1961 Census figures throw much light on the population characteristics of the tribe. Paniyan is essentially a rural community as 99.97% of them are returned from rural areas and the rest from urban areas. The sex-wise population shows that 50.03% are males and 49.97% are females. The sex ratio works out to be 999 females per 1,000 males. When classified under the different age groups 41.82% fall under the 0—14 age group, 43.11% are returned under the age group 15 to 44 while 15.07% are recorded under the age group 45 and above. In the 0—14 age group 51.51% are males and 48.49% are females. In the 15 to 44 age groups, on the other hand, 46.83% are males and 53.17% are females. In the 45+ age group, however, 55.09% are males and 44.91% are females. In other words, if we take all the males together 43.06% of them fall in the 0—14 age group while 40.35% and 16.59% respectively fall in the 15 to 44 and 45+ age groups. The position of females in the above mentioned age groups is 40.59%, 45.86% and 13.54% respectively. The sex ratios in the different age groups of the Paniyans very much resemble those obtainable for the general population of the region.

Physical feature of Wynad

The description of the physical features of Wynad, where the Paniyans are highly concentrated, as given by Gopalan Nayar, by and large, continues to hold good even today.

"Wynad, as its name signifies, is the land of forests. The correct name is Vana-nad (Forest country) which, by lapse of time, is pronounced Vayanad or Wynad, as it is now spelt.

It is a mountainous country, with a general elevation of 2,000 to 4,000 feet with ranges of hills, some with peaks over 7,000 feet high. To the west and south are the low-lands of Malabar, to the east rise the Nilgiri hills, to the north-east lies the Mysore plateau, while to the north-west the chain of ghats stretches away into the Coorg area.

It is the sanitorium of Malabar from October to the end of February when the climate is dry, cool and salubrious. March, April and May are the unhealthy months due to the prevalence of malaria fever. Its fertility is unsurpassed and its scenery is picturesque. When Sir M.E. Grant Duff, Governor of Madras, visited the District, he is said to have asserted that had Wynad been in Europe its fortune would have been made as a pleasure resort; it would be the favourite haunt of the landscape painter and views from it would appear in every picture gallery" (1911, 3—4).

After the reorganisation of states and of the districts in Kerala the former Wynad taluk has been bifurcated into two, namely North Wynad falling in Cannanore district and South Wynad in Kozhikode district. There are large and extensive paddy cultivation in both the Wynad and a Paniyan settlement can invariably be seen near the paddy fields.

III. Physical Characteristics

The Paniyans have hitherto been described as "a dark-skinned tribe, short in stature, with broad noses and curly or wavy hair" (Thurston, 1909, VI, 57). It appears that their physical appearance has partially contributed to the theory of their African origin. A lot of data, both recent and old, on the somatology, anthropometry and genetics, of the tribe is available.

In connection with the field study in Wynad somatoscopic observations have been made both among the males and the females which are presented below:

Among the males their stature has found to range from 144.78 cms. to 157.48 cms., the mean being 153.13cms. The stature of the females, on the other hand, are found to range from 132.08 cms. to 154.94 cms. and the mean is 141.22 cms. The observations show that the skin colour ranges from dark-brown to brown, the former being in preponderance. Hair form vary from low waves to curly.

Out of the 29 cases observed ten each were low-wavy and medium wavy, six were with deep waves and only three were found to be curly. Shallow nose bridge was observed in 16 cases while the rest were categorised under medium. In 12 cases flared nose wings (alae) were reported while the rest were normal. In all the cases eye slits were straight and epicanthic fold completely absent. In majority of cases, face was round but in six cases oval face was reported while in seven cases broad faces were observed. Medium chin was reported in all cases. In all but one case medium lips have been observed. However, one case of thick lips has been reported. No alveolar prognathism* has been observed. Medium cheek was observed in 26 cases while in three cases it was prominent. The above observations, by and large, agree with those of Das (1955).

Some of the most important somatological observations made by Das** are indicated below.

The male stature ranges from 166.7 to 138.2 cms., thus bringing them in the category of very short to the upper limit of the medium tall according to Martin's classification. The female stature varies from 156.3 to 136.0 cms., thus including the groups from the very short to slightly over the upper limit of the medium tall. Skin colour distribution has been found largely in the dark brown category. Except in one case, where it was blue eyes, all the individuals were found to be in the range of dark-brown eyes. Hair colour was also found to be dark brown.

Earlier, Aiyappan found their average stature to be 157.40 cms., Cephalic Index 72.90 cms. and Nasal Index 89.80 cms. (Iyer, 1968, 33).

In the early part of this century Thurston made some observations on the physical characteristics of the tribe. He says that the average height is 157.40 cms. and the nasal index is 95 (maximum 108.6) and average distance from the tip of the middle finger to the top of the patella was 4.6 cms. relative to stature—100, which approximates closely to the recorded results of measurements of long limbed African Negroes (1909, VI, 71). While commenting on the Dravidian head Thurston states, "on examining 25 heads it was found that 24 having Cephalic index of 74 cms. and 1 exceeding 80 cms. Dolicocephalic heads were 15, subdolicocephalic 8, Mesocephalic 1 and sub-brachycephalic were 1 in the same sample. Average cephalic length was found to be 18.4 cms. and average cephalic breadth 13.6 cms". (1909, 79—86). The comparatively tall stature of the Paniyans is attributed to "the vigorous functioning of the pituitary glands at higher elevation," by Iyer (1968, 54).

Blood group analysis of the Paniyans has been done by Aiyappan, Sarkar, Lehmann and Cutbush and Das to find out the ABO pheno type frequencies and gene frequencies. In all the studies it has been found that 'A' group frequency is the predominant phenotype. The Biochemical index (calculated from the formula $\frac{A \text{ plus } AB}{B \text{ plus } AB}$) has been found to be 2.40 (Iyer, 1968, 52). MN Phenotype frequencies and gene frequencies have also been studied by Lehmann and Cutbush (1952) and Das (1954). M has been found to dominate, followed by MN and N.

ABO phenotype frequencies and gene frequencies

Name of the author	Sample	Group	Frequency	Percentage		Gene frequency		
		0	A	B	AB	p	q	r
Aiyappan (1936)	250	20.0	62.4	7.6	10.0	0.468	0.085	0.447
Sarkar (1950)	313	22.4	64.2	7.7	5.7	0.453	0.070	0.477
Lehmann&Cutbush (1952)	60	19.7	62.3	13.1	4.9	0.434	0.096	0.470
Das (1954)	240	25.3	59.5	0.4	6.8	0.429	0.079	0.501

Basing the physical characteristics, different views have been put forward on the racial affinity of the Paniyan tribe. In "physiognomy", Innes (1915) states, "they are of an almost negroid type with black skin, curly hair and broad noses". Guha (1944) thinks that the tribe has close relations with the Australians or rather a proto-australoid element (Nishads) with some admixture with Negrito element Montague (1951) tends to agree with Guha. But he thinks that social factors play an important role in the formation of the genotypes. "Paniyan Social life", Montague (1951) says, "is very simple. Close breeding is prevalent, prohibition degree is rather narrow. The Paniyans do not usually select their partner from distant localities. The families living nearby form a group or zone which is at least partially isolated reproductively from others. Slow miscegenation with extra tribal population which is encouraged under the economic conditions and occasional migrations of families from one reproductive group to another disturb the genetic compostion of the groups and the genetic equilibrium is affected". Montague's theory of "close breeding finds support when Iyer (1968, 48) comments on the high percentage of 'A' blood group due to inbreeding. He (*ibid*, 51) also explains the prevalence of low percentage of O among them owing to their habitat at high altitudes of 2,000 ft above sea level. On the derm at oglyphic pattern, Iyer (*ibid*, 38) considers that of having more whorls than loops, and ratio of 60 to 40, foun in the Paniyan is deemed to be a common feature of the Kadars, the Paniyans, the Semangs, the Achas and the Pygmies of New Guinea.

*75% of moderate degree of prognathism was found by Aiyappan.

**Detailed anthropometric measurements covering 17 items separately for males and females in two age groups as reported by Das are given in the appendix.

In the absence of any definite clue to throw light on the history of origin or migration of the tribe, it is hazardous to arrive at conclusions on the racial affinity basing only the physical characteristics.

IV. Family, Clan, Kinship and other Analogous Divisions

Family among the Paniyans is usually simple consisting of the father, mother and unmarried children. "The Paniyans", says Aiyappan (1936, 30) "have developed extreme individualism in the matter of residence. As soon as a man is married he moves into a new hut which he has made for himself exclusively. This new hut is usually near those of his father and brothers, so that with the founding of the new family the intensity of other kinship bonds is not at all lessened. The solidarity of the settlement lies in the fact that most often it is kinship group." In case there is only one son, he continues to stay in his paternal house even after his marriage. A few instances of joint families, consisting of the father, mother, married sons with their spouses and the unmarried children living under the same roof, have also been reported. These are, however, very few in number.

Paniyan families are generally small. The average size of the family observed, in the villages where this study was made, worked out to be 4. Out of the 20 households in one village 15 of them had only 4 members or less than that, in each family. In another village the minimum and the maximum membership ranged between 2 and 6.

The inheritance is patri-lineal and residence patri-lo al. Two of the earlier authors have put forward contradictory views about the inheritance among the Paniyans. Francis (1908) has reported that they "follow the Makkathayam (patri-lineal) law of inheritance", whereas Gopalan Nair (1911) maintains that "Paniyans follow Marumakkathayam" (matrilineal inheritance). None of the recent studies, (Luiz, 1962; Devassy, 1961; Aiyappan, 1936) including the present study, has shown the prevalence of matrilineal inheritance among this tribe. As per practise the hut is inherited by the eldest son while the material possession, if any, has to be divided equally among all the sons. In the absence of a son the hut goes to the eldest son-in-law. In case the eldest son does not opt to accept the hut and if he shifts to one of his own, it may go to the next son, or in the absence of any son, to one of the sons-in-law. Such a contingency arises very rarely as the construction of a house involves lot of expenditure, and so, the claimant always avails his right. One of the informants, Poya, *Chemmi*, of the Chulliote settlement, however, claims that in the absence of a son to inherit the house it has to go to the eldest son of his sister, an opinion which has not been subscribed by anyone else.

As regards the inheritance of the household movable property, much importance is not attached as it endured little economic significance to the claimants. It may consist of a few earthen cooking and eating vessels, a few aluminium plates and tumblers. There may also be a few cheap ornaments which might have been left behind by the deceased female folk. These may be shared by the daughters. A couple of case studies would better elucidate the point.

Koravan of Chingery Government colony belonged to Cheeral before coming over here. He left his house at Cheeral due to the pressure of the officials of the Welfare Department who wanted him to take the lead to settle in the newly established Government colony where he was promised all facilities. In his *padi* at Cheeral he was staying with his parents and elder brother. After the death of his father his elder brother, Kumbilu, had inherited the hut. Koravan continued to stay there but after his marriage he established a hut of his own. The movable household articles in their house, consisted only of a few earthenware and eating vessels and, as such, Koravan did not bother about them and left them with Kumbilu.

Ramdas of Sultan's Battery was schooled up to sixth class and thus is a 'knowledgeable' person among the Paniyans. His elder brother Onan, a mentally retarded person, against the wishes of all others, opted to settle in his wife's village and has never returned. Consequently the house was inherited by Ramdas, being the only son. He stays there along with his father, wife and children.

Land is rarely possessed by the Paniyans. Poya of Chulliote is perhaps the only Paniyan possessing 4½ acres of land which he had acquired through the Welfare Department of the Government of Kerala. When asked about what he would like to do with his land he readily showed his desire to divide it among his sons.

Paniyans are endogamous. The tribe is not divided into sub-divisions or clans. In the 1891 Census, however, nine sub-divisions* have been returned. But the correctness of this information is doubted by the Census Commissioner himself when he observes, "most of these are not real, and none has been returned by any considerable number of persons". (Quoted in Thurston, 1909, VI, 57).

For the purposes of marriage, however, the Paniyans follow a sort of village exogamy which in their case may be termed as *Padi* or *Kunnu* exogamy. The Paniyan settlement is known as *Padi* and normally it is situated on or near a particular *Kunnu* or hill. A *padi* may consist of many *Chalas* (huts) where individual families (*Kudumbam*) live. All the *Kudumbams* of a *Padi* belong to the same kin group

*1. Agrahara, 2. Banajiga, 3. Dasan, 4. Lingadhari, 5. Muppan, 6. Panikkan, 7. Parayan, 8. Parivasam, 9. Umbar (C.I. 1891 Vol. XV, Madras Caste Index, p. 79).

2/Registrar/70—3

and therefore marriage among them is not possible. Marriage, therefore, takes place between persons belonging to different *Padis* or *Kunnus*.

Kinship solidarity is very strong among the Paniyans. All the *Kudumbam* members living in a *Padi* consider themselves to be brothers and sisters. The kinship solidarity among the members of the *Padi* is reflected from the following example. When Poya, the *Chemmi*, got 4½ acres of land allotted by the Government at Chulloite Government settlement, he, along with the 14 *Kudumbams* of his former *Padi*, shifted to the new site. He, being *Chemmi*, allotted separate plots of land for all the 14 families to construct their huts.

A close look at the kinship terminology, among the Paniyans, reflects all the essential characteristics of a classificatory system. Father is addressed as *Appa* and mother *Amma* or *Bola*. Father's father and mother's father and those above them in both the lines are addressed as *Valiappan* or *Muthappan*. In the case of mother's mother or father's mother and all others above them in both the lines are addressed *Valiyamma*. Father's elder brother is addressed as *Valiappan* and the younger brother as *Yelappa*. Mother's elder sister is *Valiamma* and the younger one *Yelamma*. Father's elder brother's wife is *Valiamma* and the younger one *Cheriyamma*. The mother's brother is addressed as *Ammaman* or *Mamman* and his wife is *Ammayi*. Younger brothers and sisters are addressed by their respective names while the elder brother is *Yettan* and the elder sister *Valiyapengal* (*Pengal* is a term commonly used to denote sister). Wife's and husband's father are addressed as *Ammavan* and wife's brother and sister's husband are addressed as *Aliyan*.

V. Dwelling, Dress, Food, Ornaments and other Material Objects Distinctive of the Community

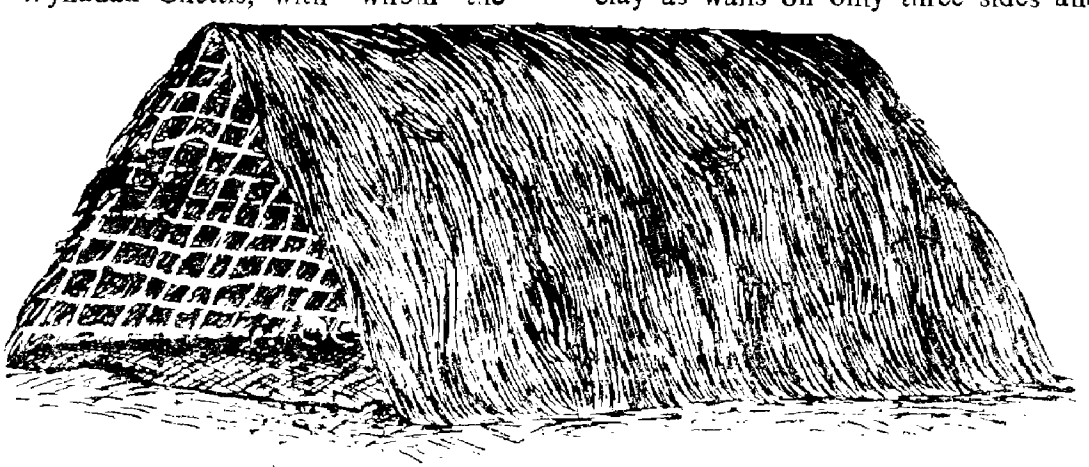
Traditional Paniyan settlements, the *Padis*, are normally located on the down-slopes of hills or in the valleys, but usually by the side of paddy fields owned by the Wynadan Chettis, with whom the Paniyans work. *Padis* are constructed at varying levels on the hill slopes. At one level there may be a cluster of a few huts (*Chalas*), the number ranging from, say, three to twenty. In the Wynad area, besides the traditional settlements, there are Government sponsored colonies, the composition and location of which may vary according to the extent conditions.

The traditional settlements are generally on the land of some land-lord with whom the members of the settlement work and occasionally on the *Porampoku** land. In the former case they are often asked to shift from the area, which they have got developed, to an undeveloped one, or they are even evicted according to the whims of the land-lord. A recent piece of legislation of the State Government, under which evictions are prohibited, has evinced some confidence in these hutment dwellers. In the Government colony of Chulliote, each family is provided with a small house, built according to the Government specifications, and some land near about for cultivation.

Normally, the Paniyans love to have a secluded life away from other castes and communities. All the traditional *Padis* of the area are found exclusively inhabited by the Paniyans. In the Government colonies, on the other hand, they are made to stay along with the other castes, much against their wishes.

The huts (*Chalas*) in a *Padi* are scattered without assuming any particular plan or layout. The huts, by and large, are surrounded by coffee plants, plantain trees, pumpkin and cucumber creepers and other wild vegetation. Every hut is independent of the other having a courtyard and a backyard of its own. The huts are connected by narrow footpaths which pass through the wild vegetative growth.

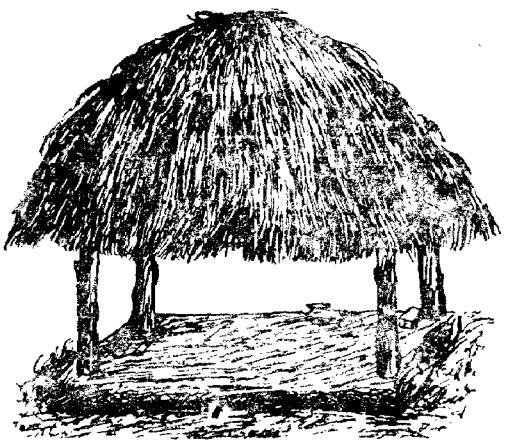
Paniyan huts are generally "flimsy structures having bamboo wattle work plastered over with clay as walls on only three sides and clay flooring



A POOR PANIYAN'S HUT

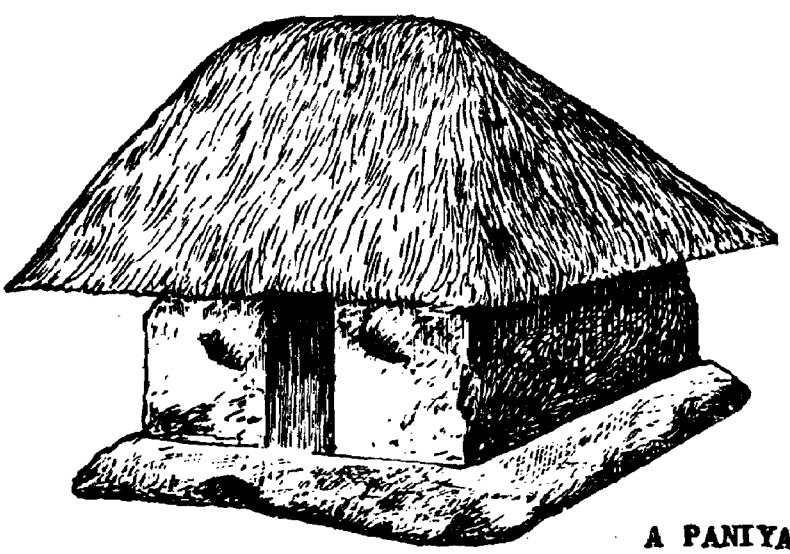
*These are waste lands which do not form a part of the revenue village and as such land revenue is not payable.

smeared with cow dung" (Aiyappan, 1936). Most of the huts are one roomed with or without a small covered *verandah*. It is not very difficult to locate quite a number of huts which are a little bigger than a poultry cage and without any side wall. One such, so called, house is owned by Mirathy. She is in her eighties. This single room hut (7′ × 4′) is a fragile structure, with a small *era* or an open *verandah* about a foot wide. At one corner of the open *verandah* is a hearth of its crudest form. There is thatching, but is only for name sake. Walls of any description are totally absent. Her only protection from the cold winter winds is the *Kommakota* (a kind of a conical umbrella woven out of bamboo splints and leaves).



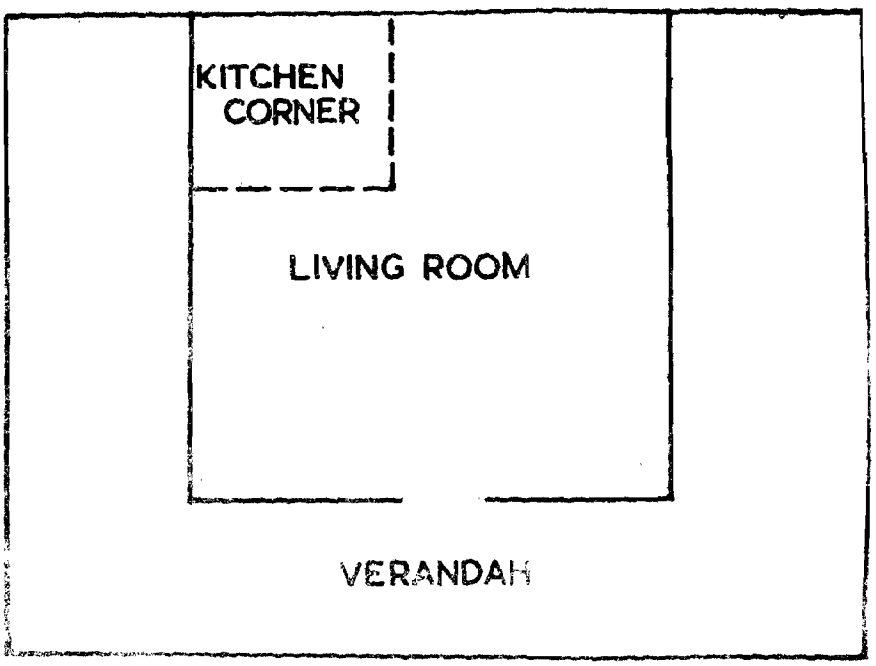
A POOR PANIYAN'S HUT

An average Paniyan hut may have a mud plinth and a levelled floor of about 10′ × 15′. The walls are made either entirely out of mud or bamboo wattle work plastered over with clay. The roof is made of bamboo poles and thatched with straw or grass. Usually, there will be only one door, the frame of which may be of hard wood and bamboo wattle work. Ventilators of any description are absent except in some cases where a few holes are made on the wall. Rarely are the houses made into



A PANIYAN HUT

compartments as the inmates are satisfied with one room. The hearth is generally at one corner around which can be seen a few earthen pots used for cooking and serving food. "Almost in the central part of the house is the domestic fire near which the members of the family sleep partly as a protection from the biting cold especially of the winter" (Aiyappan, 1936).



GROUND PLAN OF A HUT

House Construction

The *Chemmi* (head of the *Padi*) selects the site for house construction. Selection is made looking to the convenience of the family concerned. One of the consideration is that the new hut should be very near to the parental household. No hard and fast rule is followed regarding the facing of the house to a particular direction. However, one prefers to have their house facing the paddy field where they are required to work often.

The first pole is fixed ceremonially by the *Chemmi*. He digs four pits at the four corners of the site selected for the construction of the hut. In one of the pits at the southern side, a *panam* (a quarter rupee coin) and a few grains of paddy or rice are put before the *Chemmi* fixes the pole. Rest of the poles are fixed by others. The *Chemmi* gets one *Panam* in recognition of his services.

The four poles, which may be of either bamboo or rough hewn tree branches, of equal length are connected at the top with bamboo poles by tying them together with coir strings. These act as beams. If at all walls are to be made they reach up to these poles on all the four sides. Two bamboo poles are tied perpendicular to the two breadthwise beams at their centre. Another beam is fixed at the top connecting the two perpendicular poles at either end and the one planted at the centre. Rafters are arranged at intervals on both the slanting sides connecting the top beam and the lengthwise beam. These rafters are joined at intervals with bamboo splints, thus making a framework to contain the straw thatching.

Plinth and the walls are made after the superstructure is prepared. A mud plinth of about 1½ high is made and the floor levelled and daubed with cow-dung before the walls are erected. Bamboo wattle (*Alaku*) or wild reeds (*ola*) are planted on the ridges and secured properly by coir strings, leaving some space wherever doors are to be fixed. The bamboo wattle is plastered with clay on which cow-dung paste is daubed. Door frames made out of rough-hewn tree branches are fixed wherever necessary. Door leaves may either be made of wooden planks or bamboo wattle.

Most of the odd jobs connected with the construction of a house, such as, making the plinth, erection of the bamboo frame, preparation of the wall, etc., are all undertaken by the members of the family, especially the males. Specialised tasks like plaiting of bamboo wattle, making of wooden door-frames and leaves, etc., are undertaken by outsiders who are specialised in this job and are paid for it. The cost of an average hut, according to their rough estimates, works out to be Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/- excluding their labour charges. If in case the required amount of bamboo and reed are collected free of cost from the jungles it will be less expensive. Hundred bundles of straw required for thatching, alone costs Rs. 30/-, according to them.

Before occupation of the house a house-warming ceremony is performed in which the members of the *Padi* are invited. The *Chemmi* keeps a portion of the food prepared at the four corners of the house and invoke the spirits of the dead to taste the food and bless the inhabitants. Later all those invited are

treated to a feast. The following night is spent in singing and dancing accompanied by drums and pipes.

Chittal, a menstruation hut, is sometimes prepared a few yards away from the newly constructed house, in case, a common one is not already present. In the past, a *Chittal*, as big and substantial as a Paniyan hut, was intended for a few families and as such the construction of the same was a co-operative effort. Now-a-days independent *Chittals* are rarely constructed. If at all one is made it is a flimsy temporary structure made out of a few bamboo splints and thatched with plantain leaves. It is conical in shape with a central bamboo pole of about 5 to 6 feet high. A few bamboo splints are tied to the top of the central pole with the formers' other ends reaching the ground around and a few feet away from the central pole. This conical structure having enough space to accommodate 3 or 4 females at a time is thatched with plantain leaves having the leaf stalks tied at the top of the central pole leaving the other ends touching the ground. Such structures are found only in the traditional settlements. In the Government colony at Chulliote Paniyan women are reported spending the menstrual period on the *verandahs* of their huts.

Cattle sheds of any description are rarely found. If at all a family has one or two heads of cattle, either the same is accommodated in a part of the hut itself or a side *verandah* is erected by the side of the hut for the purpose. No separate structures are constructed to serve as privy or bath. The open slopes of the hills, away from the house, are utilised for attending to nature's call while they take bath in a nearby stream or pond. Drinking water is a problem, especially during the summer months, when the small unprotected pits dug by the side of the paddy fields meant for drawing water dry up. Each settlement has a worshipping place called the *Kulithara* or *Deivathara*, a raised platform under a tree, on which are installed a few uneven boulders, representing the different deities and spirits.

Dress

The Paniyan garment is simple and needs no tailor's service. The male garments consist of two pieces of white cloth, one bigger than the other, known as *Mundu*. The bigger *Mundu*, (loin cloth) which is about four cubits long, is the principal garment and is wrapped around the waist. The smaller *Mundu* of about 2 cubits long is a multipurpose garment and is usually worn loosely over the shoulders covering the body. When engaged in some physical tasks, the latter is wrapped around the waist as a loin cloth and the bigger one is used as a turban. When returning from work the smaller *Mundu* serves also as a receptacle to carry paddy or rice and other provisions, either bought from the market or received as wages for the day.

The dress of the Paniyan women is unique. It consists of like the males, two *Mundus*, one bigger than the other. The bigger one is wrapped on the loins and the smaller one is wrapped above the bosom through the arm-pits leaving the shoulders bare. Some women use the bigger *Mundu* to serve both the purpose, in which case, the bigger *Mundu* is wrapped above the bosom, thereby eliminating the smaller piece. In either case, a red or black scarf known as *Urumal* is tied around the waist securing the lower garments. This scarf is a characteristic mark of a Paniyan woman which distinguishes her from the other local women.

Hair Style

Another characteristic identification of the Paniyan females is their hair style. They keep bobbed hair, or occasionally grow them long, but in either case a few locks at the forehead are trimmed so as to avoid them from falling on to the face while at work. Long hair may be rolled into a bunch which they call *Konda*. Except the male members of the younger generation, who crop their hair, other male members grow their hair long extending up to the shoulders. On the hair style of the Paniyans Gopalan Nair (1911, 101) says, "The Paniyan shaves off his beard on festive occasions, his wife, the Panichi, acting as the barber and he shaves off the long curls falling on the wife's forehead".

Seldom does a Paniyan go to a barber's shop for dressing his hair, for, the job being done normally by themselves extending mutual assistance. The instruments needed for the purpose, sharp choppers and razors, are purchased from the local blacksmiths. Recently, it has also been reported, a few persons, particularly belonging to the younger generation, use shaving blades.

Ornaments

The Paniyans, both males and females, use a few cheap ornaments which are either purchased from the market or made by themselves. The urge for using ornaments is very much in them, particularly, among the females. Their economic conditions, as they put it, do not, however, permit this 'luxuary'. Below are given the more important ornaments worn usually by the women folk.

1. Kalla

Kalla is a general term used for neck-chains of any description made out of glass beads or cheap agates. This may either be purchased from the hawkers or made by themselves. In the latter case, beads and strings for the purpose—beads costing about 50 paise per hundred—are purchased from the market. The price of beads depends upon their size and quality. The women folk are experts in making excellent *Kallas* of different designs and sizes. At times a brass locket of the shape of a *Tali* may also be attached to the *Kalla* when this is called as *Tali-mala*. An average readymade *Kalla* costs about a rupee and a half.

2. Mala

A *mala* is a neck chain made out of cheap metals like aluminium, brass, etc. *Mala* of various designs and hues are normally purchased from the hawkers. The cost of a *mala* ranges from 75 paise to two rupees depending on the design and quality of metal used.

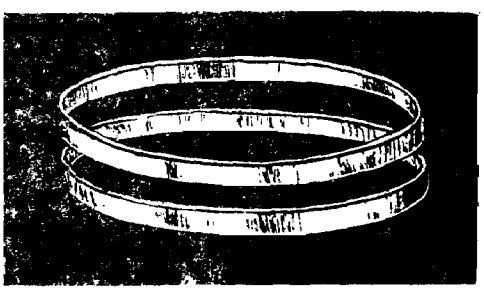


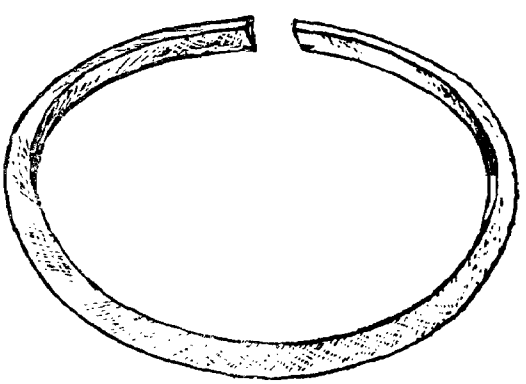
3. Mothiram

Mothiram is a ring worn on fingers particularly on the thumb and first finger. It may be made of brass or aluminium. A set of eight rings costs about 50 paise, if purchased from a hawker.

4. Vala

Valas are bangles and may be either made of brass or glass. They are purchased from the market. Depending upon the size and the material used a dozen of them costs between 50 paise and rupees two.





5. Ola or Chootu

This is an ornament made out of pandanus leaf serolls. The scrolls of about one to two inches in diameter is coated on one surface with a thick matrix of bees wax. Abrus seeds are set spirally all over the surface of the wax matrix exposing their red surface. This is worn in the dialated ear-lobe. Simple *ola*, without ornamentation are also very popular. Both the varities are prepared by women out of the materials available locally.

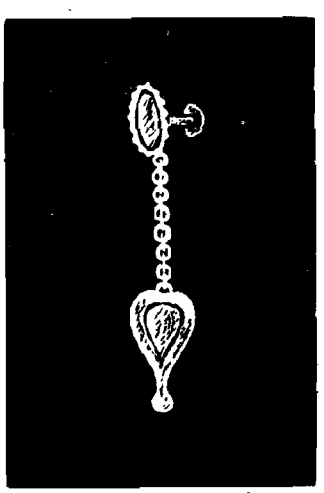
6. Tandavala

There are two types of *Tandavala* (Bangles), one is, one and half a centimetre thick and the other one and a half cen imetre. The broader one is decorated with a few wavy lines engraved on its surface. Both are 'C' shaped and made out of brass and worn around the upper arm. The smaller one costs 25 paise while the broader one costs 75 paise.



7. Mookkuthy

This is a nose ornament and is very rarely used as it is made of gold and costs about 10 rupees. Normally, it is prepared by the goldsmith through their *Genmi* (land-lord). It consists of a small circular gold plate with a decorated edge and is attached to a copper screw at the back by means of a thin pipe. On this pipe is hung a gold chain of one inch long, the tip of which is attached to a leaf shaped gold plate called *Patta*.



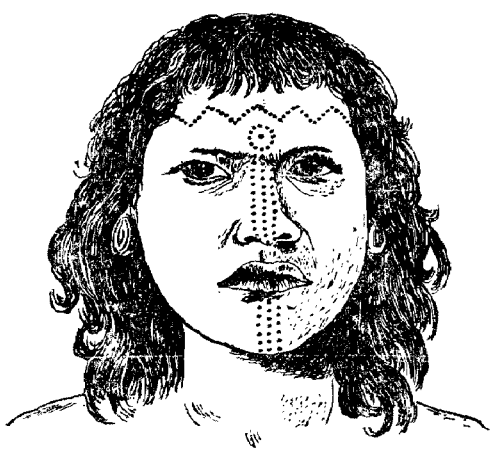
8. Katukkan

This is an ear ornament normally used by the males and are made by themselves. A portion of the aluminium *Vala* is cut and shaped into a small ring. This ring is worn on the pierced lobe.



Tattooing

Tattooing or *Nettimel Kari Vekkal*, as they call it, is done on the face of women while they are young. Occasionally young boys also get their face tattooed. Normally, it is done just before or after puberty. The technique of tattooing, is known to all women but there are only a few who are masters in this art and are often asked to do the job.



The process is very simple. The area where tattooing is to be done is cleaned and smeared with a paste of charcoal powder or ink. With the help of a thorn or pin the required design is made by pricking on the skin. This helps the carbon particles or ink to enter the tiny holes formed by the pricks and later, when dried up, the colour continues to remain.

In the case of females three parallel lines, each half a centimetre apart, are made on the forehead. A set of three vertical lines starting from the root of the nose may extend up to the nasal bridge. Similar vertical lines may also be made on the chin. Another common design is a single wavy line on the forehead extending up to the nasal bridge. The common design for boys is a small circle with a dot in the centre, made in between the two eye brows.

No ritual or magical significance is attached to tattooing except that it "adds to the beauty of a person", as they put it.



Food and drink

Rice is the staple food of the Paniyans which may be supplemented occasionally with tapioca, ragi, forest roots and fruits and flesh of wildan imals.. Tapioca, as a diet, has recently been introduced in the Paniyan country by the Christian settlers from Travancore area. Leaves of various plants, fruits of cucumber, etc., are also used. Not much of change has taken place in the food habits of Paniyans since Aiyappan reported in 1936 (p. 30). "Paniyan diet consists of crabs, snails, birds and other small game snared or shot with the bow and arrow, the use of which the Paniyans have learnt from the Kurichiyans. Rice is supplemented by wild roots gathered every day and ragi which is one of the subsidiary crop in this area. Vegetable dishes of cucurbitaceous fruits are also usually prepared either from fresh or dried stock".

Beef and buffaloe meat are tabooed to the Paniyan; so also the flesh of jackals, snakes, vultures, lizards, rats or other vermins. "They eat land crabs reports Thurston (1909, VI, 59), in lieu of expensive lotions to prevent baldness and grey hair."

No uniformity is observed with regard to the cooking and serving of food, which largely depend on the availability of victuals. In the morning the left over rice, if any, of the previous night converted into gruel may be consumed. Those living near the urban area of Sultan's battery, particularly the men, frequent tea-shops early in the morning before they start for the day's work. Lunch consists of rice gruel and some vegetable dish which may be either carried to the work spot or supplied by the landlord with whom a person works. The square meal of the Paniyan is his supper. It consists of rice, tapioca, and some vegetable or non-vegetarian dishes. Some of the dishes distinctive of the community are as follows:

Jandu Curry—This delicacy is prepared out of small land crabs caught from the paddy fields and banks of canals. Crabs are cleaned, appendages removed and smashed into a paste with the help of pestle and mortar. The paste is then put into a basket kept over a pot and water poured in small quantity over the paste. The decoction is collected in the pot and the residue thrown away. The decoction is cooked with salt and chilies into a syrup and consumed.

Chappu Curry—This is yet another common dish relished by the Paniyan. Leaves of some marshy plants, locally known as *Chappu*, are collected and cooked along with condiments.

Kollilatalu Curry—Kollilatalu or more popularly known as *talu*, is a wild plant of the colocasia group found grown abundantly on the sides of canals and paddy fields. The leaf and stalk of the plant are collected, cut into small pieces and cooked with condiments to form a delicious side dish for the rice gruel or tapioca.

By and large, Paniyans are not addicted to beverages like tea and coffee. Yet, quite a number of them, particularly those living in and around urban and semi-urban areas are habituated to taking of tea or coffee. Such persons get black coffee or tea prepared either at home or procured from the tea shops. Paniyan's love for liquor is proverbial. Thurston (1909), reports the distinct partiality of the Paniyan for alcohol. Many of them have been found to be addicted to a local variety of illicit liquor, known in the local parlance as *Kottuvady*. Smoking of country cigarettes (*beedi*) and chewing of *pan* is very common among both males and females. A specially prepared screw-pine bag (*Puttal*) or a cotton bag serves as a receptacle for carrying the ingredients for chewing such as arecanuts, betel leaves, tobacco leaves and lime.

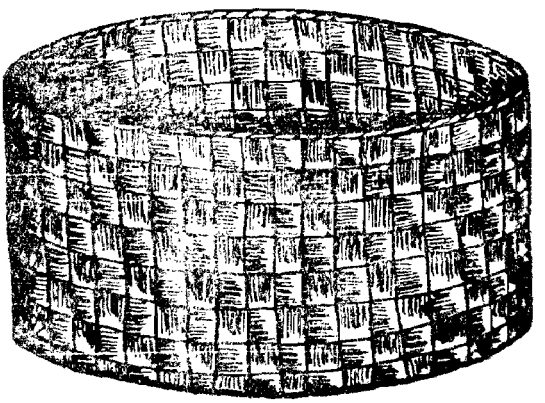
Household Equipments

Excepting a few household equipments, which can be considered distinctive of the community, the Paniyans use many of these commonly in vogue in the area. Following are the most important household equipments used by the Paniyan.

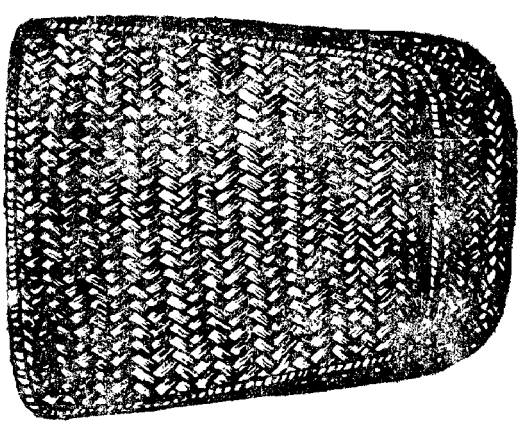
1. Chata—This is a conical or scoop shaped fish trap made out of bamboo or reed splints. The *chata* is fixed against the current of water in canals and narrow rivulets. The trapped fish are removed at intervals by opening the rear end of the contrivance. *Chata* is made by themselves.

2. Kommakota—It is a kind of scoop shaped umbrella, used for protection both from rain as well as from the sun. It has a concave as well as convex surface and while in use the latter surface is held away from the body. First, a triangular skeleton is prepared out of bamboo splints over which a couple of layers of arrowroot leaves are fastened to make it waterproof. Another similar bamboo skeleton may be kept over the leaves and the two (skeletons) secured properly. Both males and females prepare this.

3. Ketta—It is a type of circular basket used for carrying things. It is usually prepared with bamboo splints by the women folk of the community.



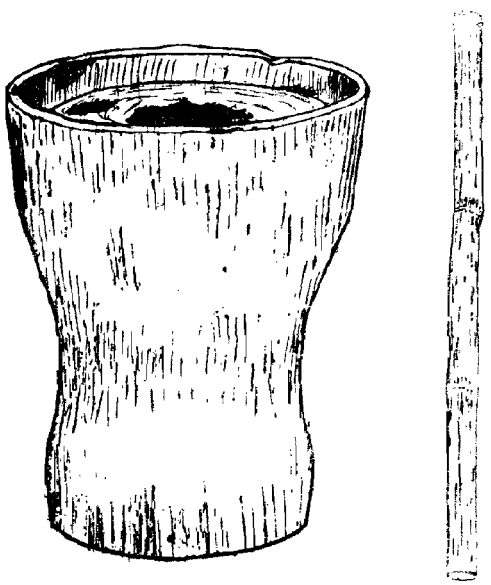
4. Moram—This is a scoop shaped winnowing fan made out of bamboo strips. It is normally purchased from the market and it costs about a rupee.



5. Tiriya—It is a circular pad made out of pandanus leaves and is used while carrying heavy loads like water pots. It may be prepared by anyone in the community.

6. Ural and Ulakka—Ural is the wooden mortar which is prepared out of a cylindrical block of wood with a height of about two feet. This is usually purchased from the market at a cost of approximately five rupees. *Ulakka* is a cylindrical wooden pestle of about six feet in length. It may also sometimes be made out of hard bamboo. The *Ulakka* is purchased from the market for about Rs. 2. The Paniyans use another miniature type of *ural*, made by

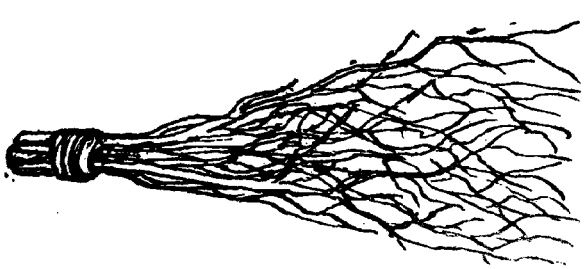
themselves, to grind betel leaves and arecanut meant for the elderly members. It is about five inches high. This *Ural* is made by scooping out one side of a block of wood. A cylinderical piece of stone or a piece of iron may be used as pestle.



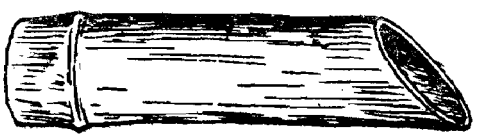
7. Mani—This is a broom-stick, made by themselves, out of a kind of grass known as *Manipullu* collected from the forest. The *Mani* is generally used for sweeping the interior part of the house.



8. Choolu—It is yet another kind of broom-stick made by themselves out of small twig of shrubs or mid-ribs of cocoanut leaves and is normally used to sweep the courtyard.



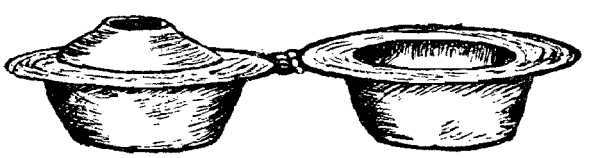
9. Pala—It is the spathe of arecanut leaf and is put to different use by the Paniyans. A number of *Pala* are stitched together to serve the purpose of a mat. This may also be made into a receptacle, either to draw water from wells or to carry water. Sometimes, a *Pala* may be stitched into a container to store dry fish, seeds, etc.



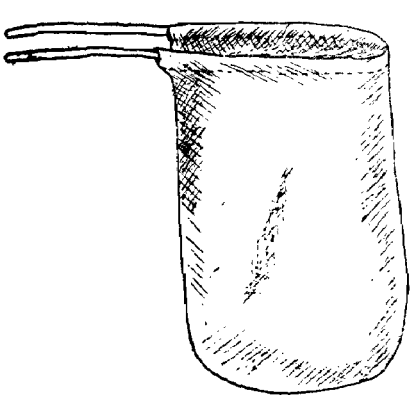
10. Mulamkutty—Different sizes of this contrivance are used as receptacle. A *Mulamkutty* is made out of internodes of hard bamboo with its upper end open. It is used for keeping salt, paddy, oil, etc. The size may differ according to the purpose to which it is put.

11. Talangona—A block of wood shaped to be utilised as a pillow is known as *Talangona*. It is prepared out of a rough hewn block of wood.

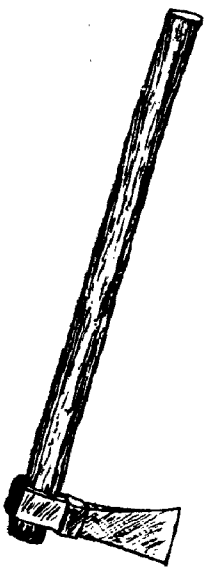
12. Korandam—This is a brass container, with a lid, used for storing lime meant for chewing. This is normally purchased from the market. Improvised *Korandams* made out of small tins are also in vogue.



13. Sanji—It is a small cotton bag used to keep chewing material like arecanut, betel leaves, tobacco, *Korandam* (lime container), etc.



14. Kotali—Kotali is an axe normally used to fell trees. It has an iron blade and a wooden handle. It costs about Rs. 7½ and is normally purchased from the market. Very rarely it may be got prepared from the black smith.



15. Kaikottu—It is a spade used for digging purposes. It consists of a blade and a long wooden handle. The blade is purchased from the market for about Rs. 5 and a handle, made by themselves, fixed to it.



16. Cheriyakathi—It is a kind of knife with a slightly curved blade and a long wooden handle It is used for cutting or slicing vegetables and can be had from the market for about one and a half rupees.



17. Kachatakathy—This is a sickle having a 15 inch long 'C' shaped serrated blade and short wooden handle. This can be had from the market at a cost of rupees two.



18. Vettukathy—It is a heavy chopper with a broad blade having a sharp cutting edge and a short wooden handle. It is used for cutting hard wood and can be had from the market for about four rupees.

19. Kuntham—This is a spear locally known as *Kuntham* and is used for hunting. Most of the tribes of Wynad use this instrument during hunting, locally known as *Narikuthu. Kuntham* is a 12 feet long, one inch thick, cylindrical wooden piece having a pointed metallic piece fixed at one end. The metal spear-head may be got prepared from a local blacksmith and fixed on to a handle made by themselves.

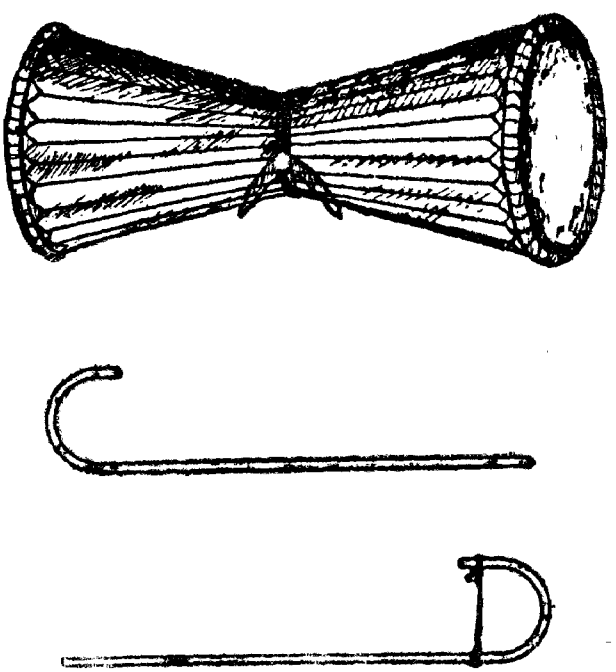
The other equipments of the Paniyan household consists of a few earthen pots, plates and tumblers used for cooking and serving food. Cocoanut shell spoons and aluminium or enamel plates are also used. Furniture of any description are totally absent in all the Paniyan huts. A few of the Paniyans were seen using grass mats or wooden planks for sleeping purposes. In a few houses, near the urban area, torch lights, sun-glasses, safety razors, framed photographs, tin trunks, etc., were also seen.

The Paniyans use the following equipments usually for religious and ritual purposes:

1. Deiva-Kudam—This is also known as *Poya* or *Kutta. Deiva-Kudam* is a basket-shaped receptacle with a lid, made out of Pandanus leaves. It has a slit at the top through which coins can be inserted during festive occasions such as *Onam, Vishu,* etc. The *Poya* is kept hanging from a hook fixed on to the roof at one corner of the house. This is supposed to be the abode of the mane of the *Karnavan* and therefore is reverred very much. Nobody touches it unless he or she is ritually pure. At Chulliot, the *Chemmi* has constructed a slightly raised platform out of the laterite and clay below the *Poya.* He uses it to keep offerings to the ancestral spirits during festive occasions. He calls it *Deivathara* (God's platform).



2. Tudi—*Tudi,* otherwise known as *Urumatudi,* is a drum used during festivals and rituals. The wooden piece for the *Tudi* is purchased from the market and the two ends are covered with treated monkey skin. Both the ends are connected with strong cotton strings all over, which are tightly secured at the middle. A small thin one-foot long bamboo splint, known as *Kollu* is used for beating the drum.



Kuzhal—This is also known as *Chinal.* It is a musical instrument almost of the shape of a clarionet and is played along with *Tudi.*

Before the advent of the modern age in Wynad Plateau, the Paniyans made fire with the help of a contrivance made out of bamboo pieces. This method of fire making is locally known as *Malay.* The contrivance consists of two bamboo pieces. One piece of bamboo with two nodes is split into two halves. On one half a sharp edge is cut with a knife. The other piece is split up to about two thirds of its length into which is inserted a piece of cloth. It is then held firmly with the feet with its convex surface upwards. The cutting edge of the first piece is drawn to and from across it by two men with accelerating frequency till the cloth is ignited by the incandescent particles of wood in the groove cut by the sharp edge. The cloth is then blown ablaze and is used for igniting fire-wood or *bidi* as the case may be.

The traditional method of fire making has fallen into disuse with the popularisation of safety-matches. However, here and there, are a few people, belonging to the elder generation, who make fire. They believe that, for ritual purposes, it would be sacred to have fire prepared in the traditional way.

VI. Environmental Sanitation, Hygienic Habits, Disease and Treatment

The Paniyan settlement, generally speaking, is neat and tidy. The Panichis, their female folk, spare no pains to clean the surroundings periodically. The courtyard and the interior parts of the dwelling unit are swept once everyday if not both in the morning and the evening. Periodically, say at least once in a month, the interior of the house is daubed with cow-dung paste.

The refuse and garbage are dumped far away from the house. Waste lands and barren hill sides around, but away from the settlement, may be used for attending to nature's call. Small kids may use the courtyard for this purpose, but the same will be removed immediately after defecation.

The personal cleanliness and hygiene of the Paniyan however, is far from satisfactory. Irrespective of age they take bath only once in a while. Except, when they work in the muddy agricultural fields they seldom feel the necessity of taking bath. Cleaning of teeth does not appear to them very essential and they resort to it only occasionally. Very seldom do they wash the clothes or change the same. Due to constant use they look very dirty. The Panichis do not appear to pay much attention to their hair and allow them to get matted. The men cut their hair short extending up to the neck while the Panichis, as mentioned earlier, trim the frontal tresses to avoid them falling on the eyes.

Partly due to the unhygienic conditions and partly due to malnutrition, the Paniyans suffer from aneamia and scabies. A decade back an outbreak of cholera ravaged their settlements and took a heavy toll of their life. Still earlier, many of them had succumbed to the virulent attack of malaria. Thanks to the National Malaria Eradication Programme, the disease has almost disappeared from the Wynad plateau.

The Paniyans believe more in the *Mantravadi* (magician), the witch doctor and the medicine man. An ailing person is first shown to the *Mantravadi*, who, by invoking the numerous deities and spirits, detects the cause and the cure of the ailment. According to his 'diagnosis', the person concerned is called into act. *Mantravadi* is both a magician and a medicineman. The paniyan *Mantravadi* is an object of awe not only for his tribesmen but also for the neighbouring communities. He claims to possess the knowledge of certain panaceas for ailments but does not disclose. There is a common belief that eating of land crabs prevents baldness and grey hairs.

Modern medicines have made their inroad in the treatment of diseases of the Paniyan tribe. When a *Mantravadi* fails to deliver goods, a Paniyan may think of consulting an Allopathic physician. Those who live near the urban areas may take the patients to the nearby dispensary. The doctors of the Sultan's Battery hospital reported that the Paniyans bring their patients only in advanced and hopeless conditions. According to them, many a time the relatives never bothered to claim the dead body, perhaps, due to heavy expenses that might have to be incurred for disposal.

There is an Ayurvedic Government dispensary attached to the Chingeri tribal settlement. According to the *Vaidya* incharge of the dispensary, Paniyans bring their patients quite often but only when they fail in their magical cures. Their faith in the modern medicine, however, is increasing day by day. Once or twice, during the field investigations, they had accepted some pain relieving tablets for ordinary fever and headache and the efficacy of the same has been acknowledged.

VII. Language and Literacy

The Paniyans speak a debased form of *Malayalam* with a peculiar accent less comprehensive to an average *Malayalee*, which a few of them call the *Pania* language. George Grierson has included the *Pania* language under *Malayam* and classified it under the Dravidian family. Thurston (1909, VI 58), describes the Paniyan language as a debased *Malayalam* patois spoken in a curious nasal sing song, difficult to imitate. Those working in the estates also speak *Kanarese*.

The language data thrown by the 1961 Census from Kerala show that 99.42% of the Paniya tribe returned their mother tongue as *Malayalam*, the lingua franca of the region. *Pania* language, as mother tongue, has been returned by 0.22% while 0.35% claim *Kannada* as their mother tongue. Commenting on the census returns Devassy (C.I. 1961, VII, part I A(1),(391), states "The chances are that *Pania* is the primitive form of *Malayalam* spoken by Paniyans and most of them have now taken *Malayalam* proper with few exceptions". On the other hand, Tamilnadu had returned during the same census 99.04% of the Paniyans as speaking *Pania* language while only 0.23% was returned *Malayalam* as their mother tongue. *Tamil* and *Telgu* as mother tongue have been returned by 0.50% and 0.23% respectively. Another reference about *Pania* language is available in the 1931 Madras Census report (Yeats, C.I., 1931, XIV, 305) wherein 205 persons were reported to have returned from Vizagapatnam district (now in Andhra Pradesh) as speaking this tongue. As it could not

be ascertained whether there were Paniyans in that district in 1931, nothing could be said about the authenticity of the language returns. At present, however, Paniyans are not included in the list of Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh and as such there were no returns in the 1961 Census.

Information from the Nilgiri hills shows that the Paniyan living there speaking the same language as that of their brethren of Wynad. It has already been indicated that the Wynad Paniyans speak a debased or crude form of *Malayalam* and therefore it can be concluded that *Pania* language spoken in Nilgiris is the same crude or debased *Malayalam* of the Paniyan of Wynad.

It appears that the Paniyans have an inherent indifferance about literacy and education. This, coupled with the discouragement of the local *Chettis* and other employers make them all the more disinterested to get their children educated. The position, however, is being improved as a result of the concerted efforts of the administration.

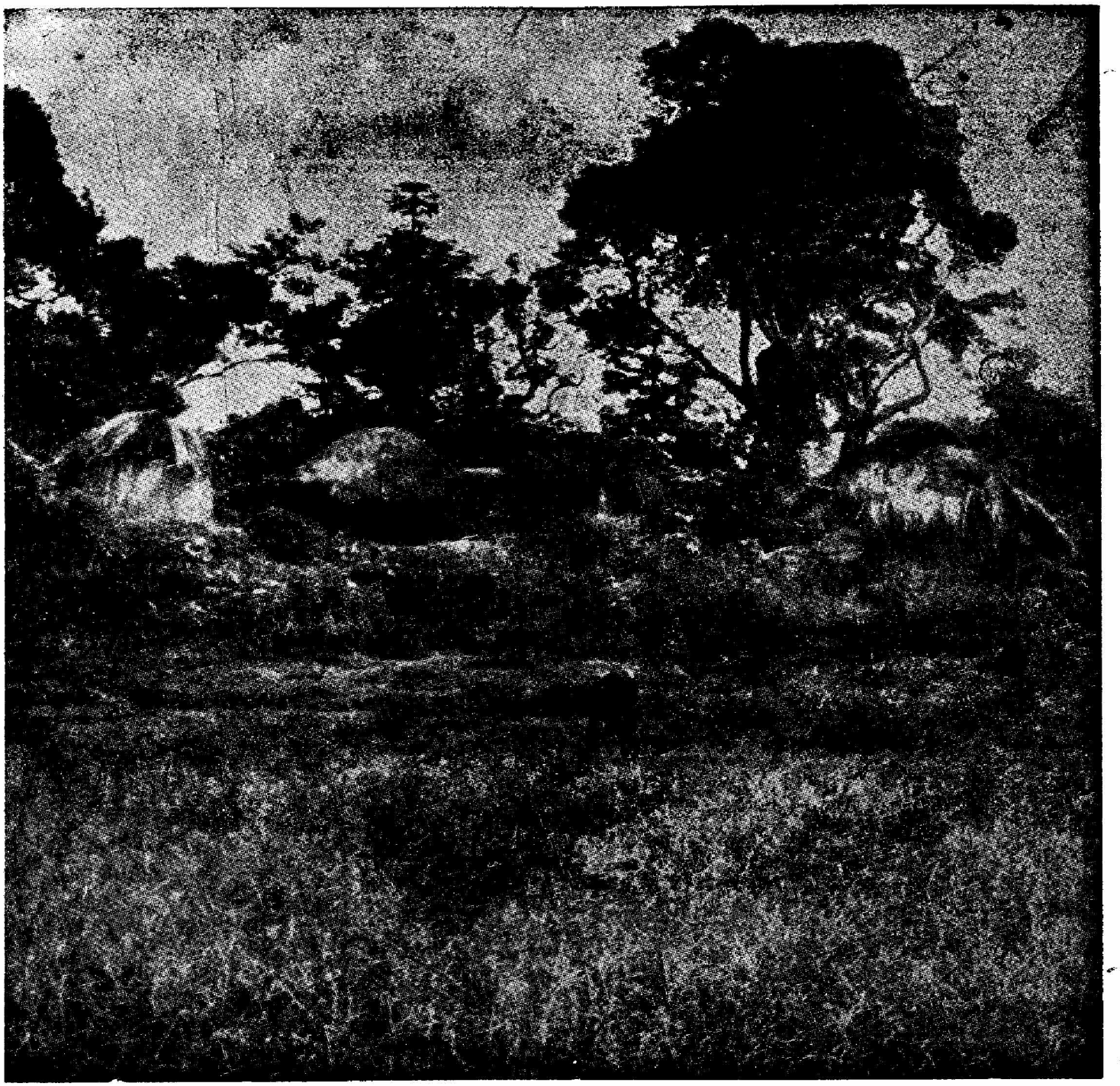
Census of India, 1961, has thrown much light on the literacy rate and educational level of the Paniyans. In Kerala State only 2.77% of the tribe is literate in contrast to the average literacy rate of the scheduled tribes being 17.26%. In a state with average general literacy rate of 46.85% the Paniyan stand in a very deplorable position. Of the 1026 literates, 787 (76.71%) are males and 239 (23.39%) are females. In other words only 4.24% of the males and 1.29% of the females are literate. This is in contrast to the sex-wise average of all the scheduled tribes of the State with 22.63% of males and 11.92% of females. Thus, it is seen that literacy rate among the Paniyan women is shocking.

An analysis of the levels of education shows that almost negligible percentage of Paniyan are literate with some educational level. Out of the 4.24% male literates, 3.42% are literates without educational level. Only 0.79% males are returned under primary or junior basic level of education and 0.03% have attained the level of matriculation or higher secondary. If we see the females, out of the 1.29% literates, 1.12% belong to literates without educational level, while only 0.17% fall under the primary or junior basic level. In other words, out of the 2.77% of literate Paniyan, 2.28% fall under the category of literates without educational level while, only 0.48% belong to the primary or junior basic group and 0.01% under the matriculation or higher secondary stage.

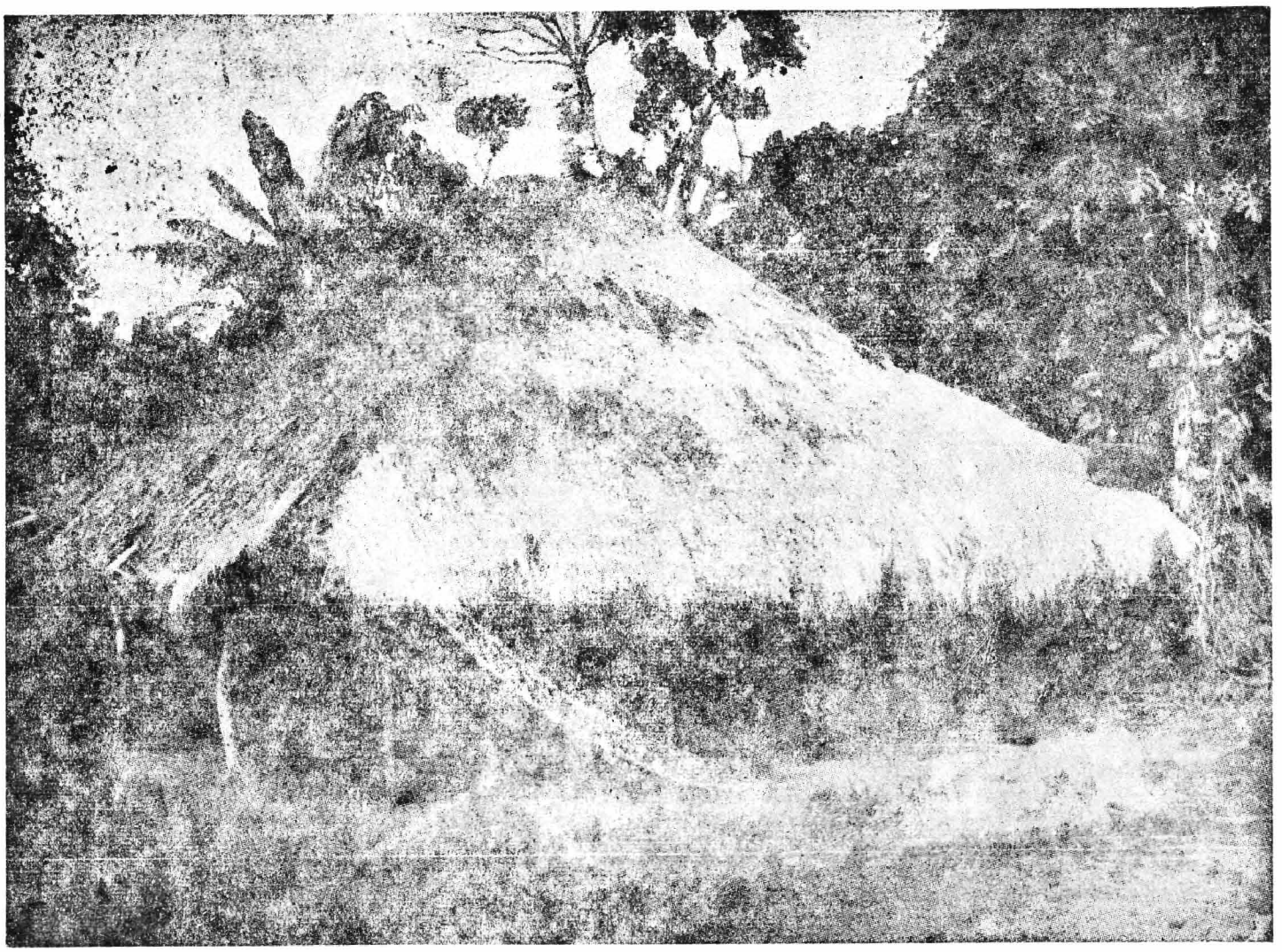
If the extent of school going students among the Paniyans is examined, it is seen that only 2.34% of the total Paniyan population has been returned as full-time students consisting of 708 males and 159 females. 8.98% of male non-workers and 1.07% of female non-workers among Paniyans are full-time students. The corresponding percentage for scheduled tribes for the State are 27.8% and 14.2% and for the general population 42.7% and 21.9%. The above figures go to prove the educational backwardness of the Paniyan. It is also partly due to the fact that both boys and girls start working for the landlord at a very early age. The lack of educational facilities in the interior parts of the Paniyan country can also be considered as a contributory factor for this state of affairs.

In contrast to the position in Kerala, the average Paniyan of Tamilnadu stands at a better position. According to the 1961 census returns, 18.43% persons consisting of 19.51% of males and 17.28% of females are literate. Even in the educational levels there is much improvement; 9.12% persons are returned under literate without educational level while 9.31% are primary or junior basic. The statistics given above does not actually convey a rosy picture of the Tamilnadu Paniyans in general. The inflated percentage of literacy is due to the urban dwellers who form 33.15% of the total Paniyan of the State. Among the urban dwellers 51.14% are literates of which 23.08% are literates without educational level while 27.34% are returned under category of primary or junior basic. To put it in other words, out of the total illiterates among the Paniyan, the urban illiterates form only 19.86% or 91.94% of the total literates are from the urban sector. Thus, the rural Paniyan of Tamilnadu stands almost on the same position as that of their brethren of Kerala.

During a discussion with some of the leading persons, teachers and other officials of the Paniyan area, it has been pointed out that the lack of interest to educate their children is mainly because their economy leaves no scope for it. The employers, owing to their fear of the dearth of agricultural labour, discourage, ridicule and even threat the parents. Above all, the reluctance on the part of the parents to send their wards away to the boarding schools too contributes to the present day educational backwardness of the Paniyan.



A Paniyan Settlement



A Typical Paniyan Hut



An Incomplete Paniyan Hut



Paniyan Houses in a Government Tribal Colony

A Typical Paniyan Youth



Front



Profile



Back



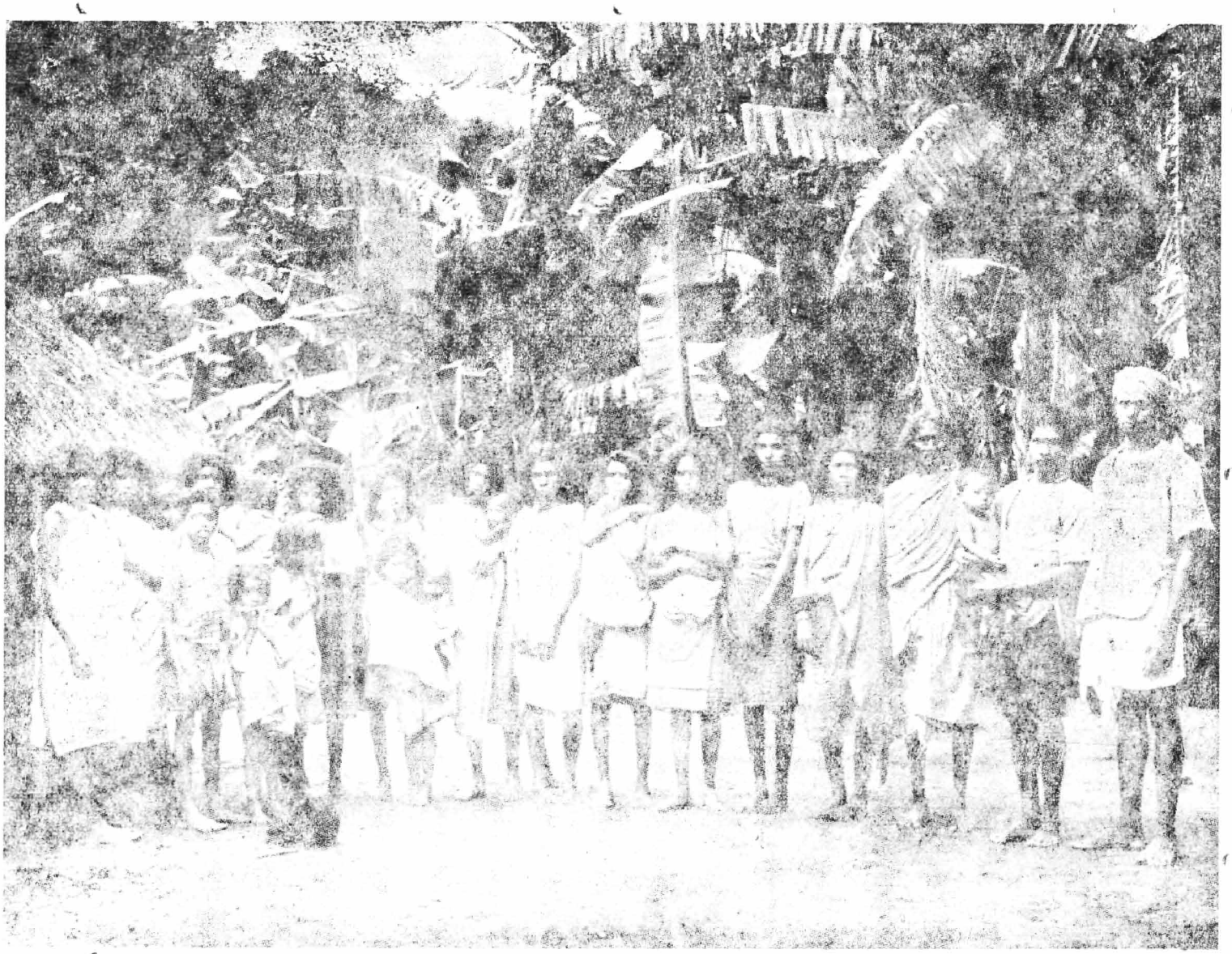


Paniyan Females

(Note the different hair style and Ornaments)







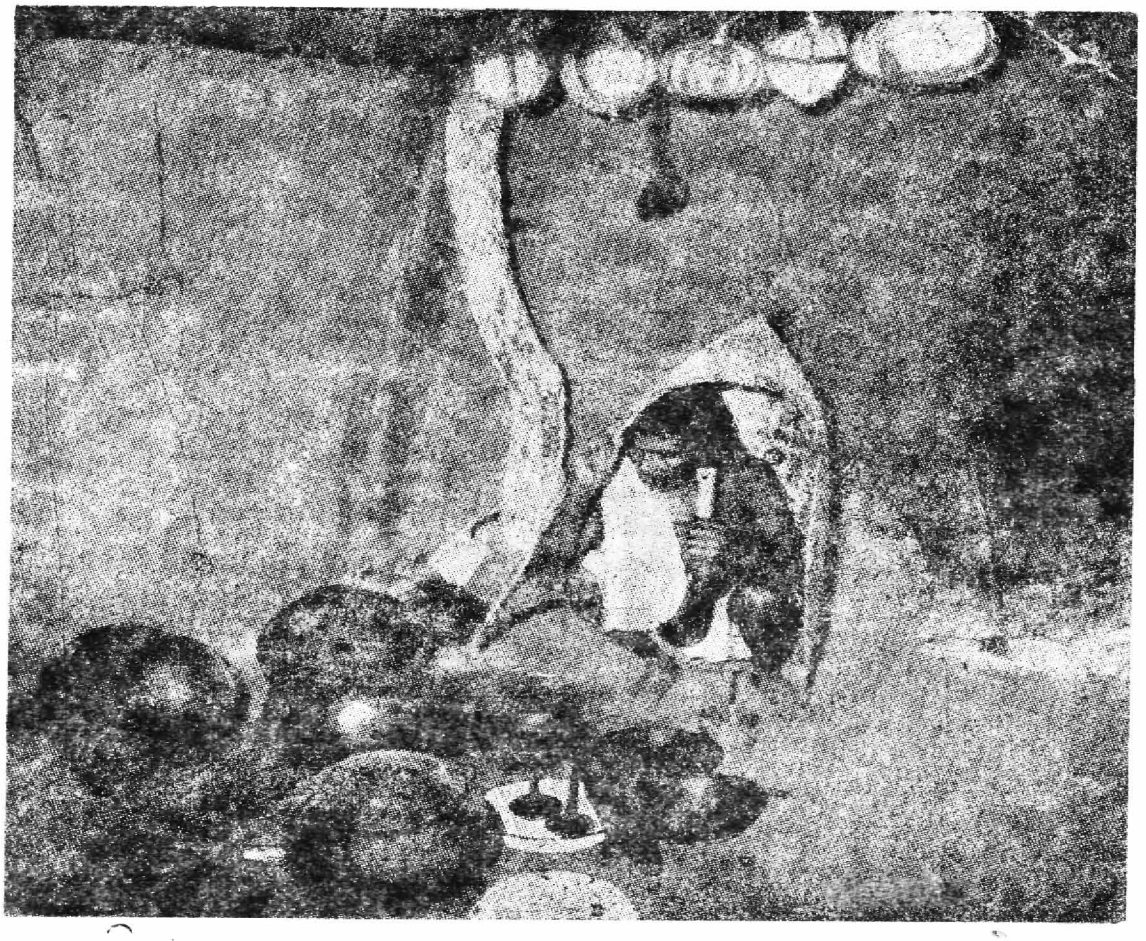
A Group of Paniyans



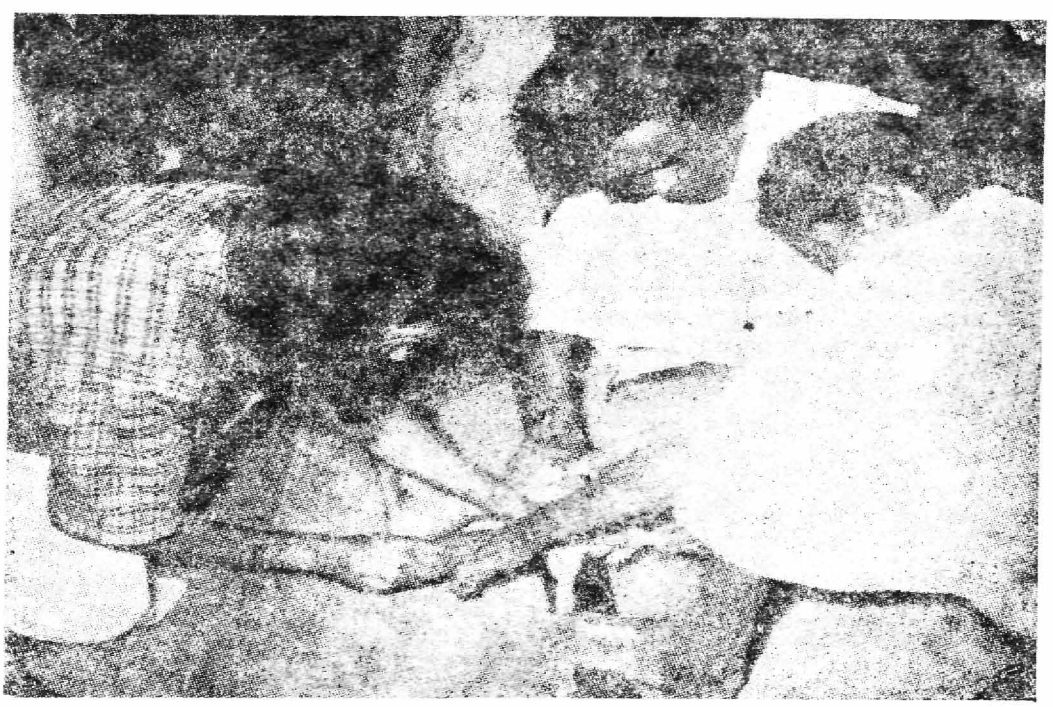
A Paniyan Female in her traditional dress. The 'Kommakota' over her head protects from rain



A Paniyan Couple in front of their janmi's house



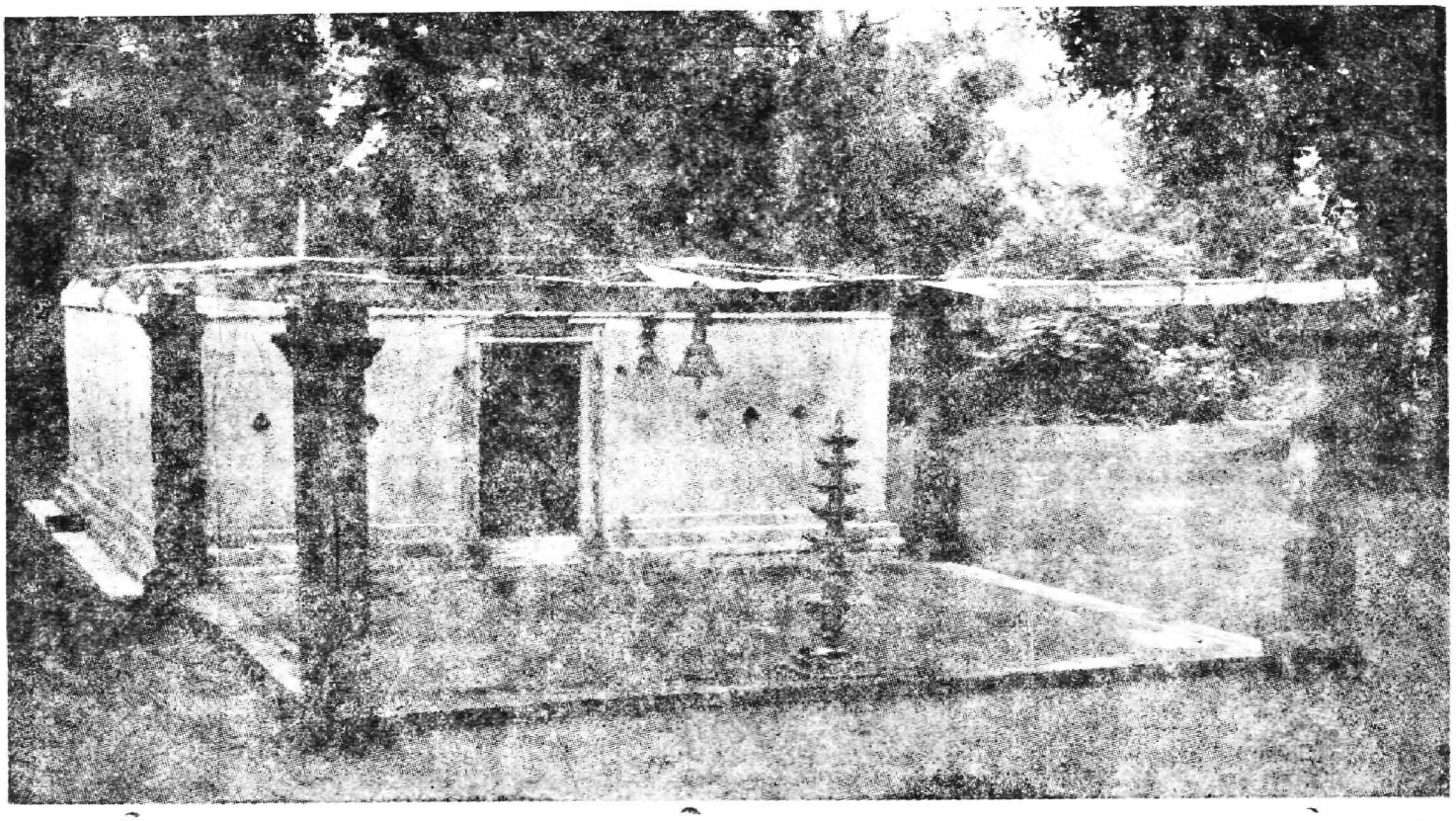
Kitchen Corner of a Paniyan Hut



Fire making



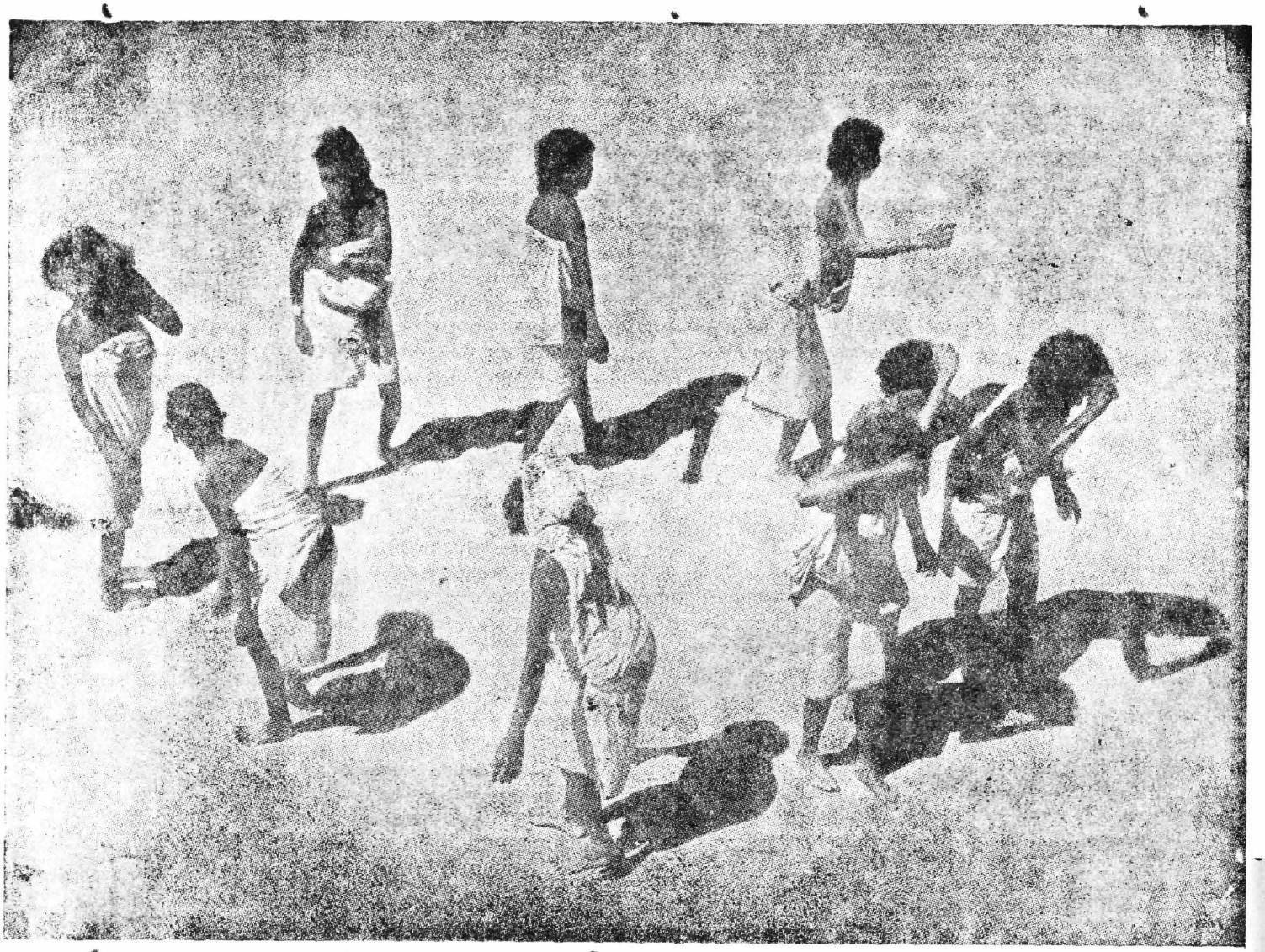
Winnowing Paddy



'Valliyoor Kavu' Tample



Paniyan Chemmi, the traditionl leader



A Typical Paniyan Dance

VIII. Economic life

The very name of the tribe springs from the term *Pani* (labour) and they believe that traditionally they were labourers, a claim which has been supported by their present day occupational pattern. Their position has been described as "very little removed from that of a slave" (Thurston, 1909, V, 58); "predial slave class and agricultural coolies" (Gopalan Nair, 1911, 49); and "aboroginal agrestic slaves of the soil" (Luiz, 1962, 218), by different authors. It has been agreed on all hands that the Paniyans are clever agricultural labourers without whom paddy cultivation in Wynad would have been difficult. They have also been found to fair well as plantation labourers. A few of them work as Mahouts and forest watchmen.

Paniyans are literally the sons of the soil. In earlier days, before they became the agricultural labourers of the *Wynadan Chettis*, *Mappilas* and others, they practised shifting cultivation. "Like most of the hill tribes", Innes states, (1915, 135) "they cultivate hill rice in patches of forest which they clear by burning and shifting from year to year". "In the fifties of the last century", writes Thurston (1909, 58), "when planters first began to settle in the Wynad, they purchased land with the Paniyans living on it, who were practically slaves of the land-owners". He further says, "though he (a landlord's Paniyan) is, of course, free to leave his master, he is at once traced and good care is taken that he does not get employment elsewhere". Till in the recent past, it has been reported that the Paniyans were bought and sold as slaves. Though much change has taken place in their condition today, vestiges of the past slavery are still lingering on. In some parts of Wynad the practice of recruiting Paniyan labourers on contract basis is in vogue. The labourers, thus recruited, are to serve their masters for the whole year. This kind of contract is concluded on a large scale in front of *Valliyooramma*, the presiding deity of *Valliyur Kavu* temple, near Mananthodi during the time of the annual festival in the month of *Meenam* (April-May). As a token of the contract, an advance amount ranging between Rs. 5 and Rs. 25 is paid by the landlords to the Paniyans through their headmen, called *Chemmi* or *Kuttan*. The advance vary with different categories of workers. Every adult male member is paid Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 and female Rs. 5 to Rs. 15. The amount thus received may be utilised for purchasing all that is needed for the next two to three months from the *Valliyur Kavu* fair organised in connection with the festival. The headman of the respective family acts as the witness and mediator. He sees that the contract is executed without fail and in case any estrangement developed between a Paniyan and his landlord, he interferes and settles the case. The reasons for choosing the time and place for entering into the contract are very significant. Their awe in *Valliyooramma* restrain them from breaking the contract till the full term is over.

In areas away from *Valliyur Kavu*, the recruitment of labour, the conclusion of contracts and the payment of advance may be done during *Uchal*, the festival denoting commencement of agricultural operations. It may also be done on *Vishu* day at some places. Gopalan Nair says that they receive some quantity of paddy from the landlord and those receiving paddy during *Vishu* (*Malayalam* new year) day are not expected to leave his master for the year (1911, 104).

The labourers, thus recruited, known as *Valliyal* (wage labourer), are given shelter or places to construct hutments. In former days Paniyans and other tribes were permitted to use land according to their requirements; but later with the changes made in land legislations of the State, the landlords tightened the help rendered to them, with the result it has become difficult to get the landlord's permission to construct a new hutment. Since the recruitment of Paniyans is a periodical affair, the fittest of the previous year's employees were selected and allowed to continue to stay in the same places, whereas those who fail to get selection had to vacate the place even if they had put in considerable years of service. The convention, which is almost enforced as law by the landlords and observed by the labourers, was that the *Valliyals* should be available always for work as long as the landlord required their services.

The Paniyan possess almost no land since they are agrestic serfs and mostly reside in the land of the landlords. Recently, under the Government sponsored colonisation scheme, a few families have been provided with some land. Under this scheme every rehabilitated family is provided with a hutment and about a couple of acres of land near about the colony. Being a new scheme, it is not yet time to review its results.

Attachment of Paniyan to the forest is traditional. They have conventional rights to collect minor forest produce like fruits and tubers, bamboo, fire-wood, etc. They may use these either for consumption or, in rare cases, for sale. Though it cannot be considered as an important economic pursuit, many of the Paniyans indulge in occasional hunting. They are supposed to be good tiger trackers and marksmen. They may also engage themselves in fishing and catching of land crabs. They are known for catching fish by poisoning water with the help of barks and roots of certain herbs. Wilson (1907) has dealt with in detail the mode on fishing by the Paniyans in his report on the "Methods on capture and supply of fish in the rivers of Nilgiri district." They may also use fish traps for the purpose.

Like Pulayans of the low-land country, the Paniyans form the major agricultural labour force in the Wynad plateau, the other tribe being Adiyans who are in much smaller number. Statistics collected during 1961 census throw much light on the occupational

pattern and mobility of the Paniyan tribe. As much as 54.706% (2027 persons) of the Paniyans are workers which constitute 28.8% males and 25.9% females. The male workers constitute 57.47% of the total males and the female workers constitute 51.91% of the total females of the tribe. Census figures also reveal that their main means of livelihood is agricultural labour in which 75.15% of the workers are engaged. They include 70.36% of the male workers and 80.47% of female workers. Only 1.87% of the Paniyan workers are returned as cultivators which incidentally also indicates the extent of land possessed by them. Under mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, etc., is engaged 6.63% of the Paniyan workers which include 4.7% males and 1.9% females. Those working in the plantation are covered in this category. It may be mentioned here that Paniyans form the major labour force of the coffee plantations of Wynad. Under the category "other services" is returned 15.46% of the working force. This category includes persons working as elephant mahouts, watchman in forest department and other casual labourers.

Both the Paniyan and his wife share the responsibility of earning bread for the family. There is no strict division of labour among the males and the females. However, hard jobs like ploughing, ridge making, etc., are done by the men folk, while comparatively lighter jobs, like transplanting, weeding, etc., are done by the females. Almost all the adult members of a household go in search of work excepting women with young babies to look after. Grown up children help their parents either by looking after the younger children, when the latter are at work, or by attending to household tasks. A few of them may also go for grazing cattle, collecting manure, etc., at the landlord's house for which they get a token payment.

Those who do *Vallipany* (contract labour) are generally paid in kind. Men get two measures* of paddy while the women get one and a half measures. Besides wages, they may also get a mid-day meal known as *Kadi Kanji* in the local parlance. A part of the wages may be exchanged for purchasing articles like dry fish, condiments, oil, etc.

The *Valliyal* enjoy certain privileges. At the time of harvest, standing crop of a particular area may be given which they themselves harvest and utilise. During festivals like *Onam*, *Vishu*, *Uchal*, etc., some present, either in cash or in kind, may be given to each family. These presents may include new clothes, paddy, cocoanut, etc. Whenever some important function takes place at the house of the landlord, their Paniyans get presents.

Those who are not engaged in *Vallipany* may go in for daily wages. Being experts in agricultural operations, they are mainly engaged in paddy cultivation. One has to work from early in the morning till dusk for which a male worker gets Rs. 3 to Rs. 3½ while a female one gets Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2, a day. Some employers provide lunch, consisting of rice, gruel and some side dish. In case of harvest, 2 measures of paddy for the males and 1½ measures for the females are given. Besides agricultural operations, some of the Paniyans are also engaged in coffee plantation. Work in the coffee plantation is mainly on contract basis. One paisa is paid for every coffee seedling planted. For plucking coffee seeds, 25 paise is paid for every 10 measures of seeds plucked. The former is normally the job of the males and the latter is mainly done by female folk. For other odd jobs the males get Rs. 3 per day while the females get Rs. 1½.

Very recently, with the establishment of a few tribal settlements, some of the Paniyan work in the reclamation scheme sponsored by the Government. The male workers are paid Rs. 4 while the females get Rs. 3. After the land is reclaimed it is proposed that 2 to 4 acres of land may be given to each famiy for cultivation. According to the Agricultural Department, the main idea of engaging the Paniyans in reclamation and agriculture work is to impart training to them in cultivaing ginger, coffee taploca, etc.

On the whole the Paniyan economy may be described as one of "hand to mouth", and they depend mostly on the local agriculturists and estate owners and little on the forest resources for their livelihood. Theirs is an economy midway between the modern and the primitive. Aiyappan (1936, 29-30) describes their economic life as follows:

"The psychological characteristic of the Paniyans is typical of the primitive in the twilight between the old pre-economic and self-sufficient tribal life of food gathering and new life of competitive economies, increasing wants and resultant disappointment rancour and mal-adjustments. When he has earned enough to sustain himself for a couple of days the average member of the tribe remains at home lazy till he is in want again".

Efforts of the administration in the economic amelioration of the Paniyan have started bearing fruits. A few of them now own lands and pucca houses; some of them are better dressed; a few send their children to schools; in short a little "prosperity" is in the horizon of the Paniyan life. This "prosperity" is being nullified by the activities of the money lender. Months in advance of harvest the money lender advances money according to the needs of the instable Paniyan who parts with his hard earned produce during the harvest in lieu of the money taken on loan and its exhorbitant interest; thus pluging him again into perpetual penury.

*One measure is approximately equivalent to 1½ Kilograms.

X. Life Cycle

Birth—Birth of a child in a family is considered as the gift of Almighty and as such welcomed by the Paniyan. The physiological significance of marriage and its consequent conception is known to them. The stoppage of menstrual flow in a woman after marriage, therefore, is considered as the beginning of pregnancy.

Much care is not taken during the early stages of pregnancy. Except in advance stages, the pregnant woman continues to attend to her normal household duties. She might as well go for outdoor work. No special food or medicine is given to her during the pregnancy period.

During the 5th or 6th month of pregnancy, *Kettiyattam*, a ceremony to ward off the evil spirits and manes which might have entered the body of the pregnant woman, is celebrated. For this purpose, she is made to stand in front of a *Komaran* (magician), who after some rituals, enters into trace and dances around the woman, simultaneously shouting at the *pretam* and *pisachu* (manes and evil spirits) to come out. He then chants some spells and 'takes out' the evil spirits in a strip of plaintain leaf and keeps it at the foot of a tree. He also breaks a cocoanut and sacrifices a fowl, the blood of which is sprinkled over the head of the woman. The woman is now supposed to be away from the influence of the evil spirits and manes.

As is found among other communities of the region, the first delivery of a Paniyan woman takes place at her house. Lately, it has been found that this observance is losing much importance. Normally, the pregnant woman is escorted to her house by her husband and her parents during the 7th or, in some cases, 9th month. Koravan and Poya of Chingeri inform that 9th month is normally preferred. The husband may or may not stay at his in-law's place during the period of child birth. In any case, he has to meet all the expenses connected with the child birth.

Unlike in the former days, when confinement took place in the *Chittal* (menstruation hut) now-a-days delivery takes place in the dwelling unit itself for which a corner of the room may be used. An elderly woman of the same caste acts as a mid-wife. She is locally known as *Pettukurathi* or *Valliyamma*. In case of protracted delivery or other difficulties, offerings are promised to the different deities and spirits. After the delivery the umbilical cord is severed with the help of a knife by the *Valliyamma*. The new born baby and the mother are washed in warm water. The mother is given a paste made out of the bark of certain trees and jaggery in order to "kil," the pain suffered during child birth. Near about the urban areas, *Jathy Marunnu*, as the mediein is locally called is normally purchased from the market, the cost of which is about two to three rupees. The new born child is breast-fed. The post-natal convalescence lasts for 40 to 60 days if the child is a female one, and 60 to 90 days if the child is a male one. This difference, according to them, is because of the fact that the male, being a bread winner, requires more care and attention for a longer period than the female one.

Pollution due to child birth lasts for 40 days. On all these 40 days the confined woman is attended to by the *Valliyamma* who is given food every day and some token payment at the end of the period of confinement. On the 40th day the woman and the child are ritually purified. Along with this the house where the delivery took place is also purified by daubing cow-dung paste. It has been reported that the pollution period is very much reduced in the case of urban dwellers. Ramdas, from Sultan's Battery, reports that the pollution lasts for 10 days and on the 9th day the woman is washed by the *Valliyamma* and dressed in clean clothes to mark the end of pollution period.

Those working with the landlords may have to inform the latter of the child birth. In case of a male child, the landlord gives two measures of rice, a piece of new cloth and some cocoanut oil. In case of a female child, no present is given by the landlord as they believe that the female child after attaining age and after her marriage goes to work with another landlord and therefore would not be of any use to him.

Naming

No special ceremony or ritual is associated with naming. Either on the fifth or on the tenth day. after the birth of the child, both *peridal* (naming) as well as *charadukettal* (tying the thread around the groin) are done. Normally, the *Chemmi* does both the jobs. In some places, it is reported, the child is taken to a near-about temple for the purpose. Generally, a fair complexioned child is named Vellan (if male) and Vellathy (if female), meaning one who is "white". Similarly, the dark one may be named as *Karuban* and *Karumby* respectively for male and female. If in case the child has any resemblance to any dead one of the family that name may be given. The common names of males met with are, CHORIYAN, CHIPPAN, VALLAN, KURUKKAN, KULLAN, PANGHIKKAN, etc., and the females named, KUNGI, CHUNDA, VALLACHY, CHANNA, KONGACHY, KARIMBY, ONDATHY, etc. In recent times, both for males and females, some of the modern names have been adopted. Thus, VELU, CHANDRAN, SANKARAN, APPU are some of the names given to the male children of the Chulliote Government settlement whereas CHANDRIKA, RADHA, MADHAVI etc., are but a few names adopted for the female children. Urban influence and contacts with outsiders have mainly been responsible for the changes taking place in the traditional nomenclature. In some cases, it has been observed, the teachers

finding it difficult to identify their pupils because of the same traditional names put to many, have given names of their own choice. This has also resulted in a child being known by one name at home and by another at the school.

Ear Boring

Ear boring is performed at the age of five or six. It is done, on an auspicious day, normally by the mother's brother of the child which is followed by a feast to those close relatives who are invited on the occasion. *Thulam pathu* or the 10th of *Thulan* (October—November) is believed to be the most suitable day for this purpose. No uniformity is observed regarding the person who pierces the ear lobes. In some areas, as in Sultan's Battery, it is done by the father's elder brother while in some other places it is performed by the maternal uncle's wife or in her absence the Chemmi's wife. The operation is very simple; both the ear lobes are pierced with bamboo needles after applying a little lime over the area. After the process is over the extensions of the needle on either side are severed allowing a part of it to remain in the hole. Some oil and turmeric paste are used for healing the wound. For dilation of the ear lobe, in the case of a female child, the bamboo piece may be replaced by leaf-scrolls of different sizes at intervals.

Puberty

Coming of age among the Paniyans, as is among other forest tribes, is a very important event. Now onwards the girl is supposed to be both physically and mentally mature. She is watched of her activities by her parents and they may even start marriage negotiations.

On attainment of puberty the girl is segregated for a week in a *Chittal*, an improvised structure made of bamboo pieces and plantain leaves. The information is transmitted to near relatives and the *Chemmi*. The *Chemmi*, along with his wife, arrives on the 7th day of puberty to conduct the purification ceremony. It is presided over by the *Chemmi* while his wife plays a prominent part in the ritual. She conducts the girl to a nearby stream or pond to have a ritual purificatory bath. After the bath, the girl is adorned with new clothes supplied by her mother's brother. The Puberty ceremony known as *Vayasari Kalyanam* comes to a close with a feast to the invited kiths and kins.

Slight variations in the rituals are reported from different places. At Sultan's Battery the pollution lasts for four days only. Here, on the first day itself, the girl is got washed by her mother and the wife of the *Chemmi*. The girl is then seated in one corner of a room. On the fourth day the girl is taken to a nearby stream or pond and got bathed with the help of her mother and the *Chemmi's* wife. For the services rendered, the *Chemmi's* wife is paid a couple of rupees. Depending on the economic conditions, a feast is arranged on the fourth day after having completed the purificatory bath.

At Chingeri, on the other hand, the purificatory bath is performed on the 7th day but a similar bath is also taken on the first day as well, after which the girl is seated in the corner of a room and fed with *Chama* (a kind of millet) cooked with turmeric. On the day of purification, another ritual known as *Puttutheettal* is undergone, in which the girl is fed with *Puttu*, an indigenous dish prepared by steaming a mixture of rice flour and cocoanut scrapings.

Subsequent menstruations are not celebrated, except that the girl is segregated for four days in a corner of the house, after which she undergoes a purificatory bath and becomes ritually pure.

Marriage

The solemnisation of marriage among the Paniyan appears to be informal. "The marriage life", remarks Aiyappan (1936, 27), "among the Paniyans is very loose. Even in their dreams their anxiety of elopement of one's wife with another person is reflected. Instances of a woman changing partners several times have been reported".

Adult marriage is the norm, the boys marrying above the age of twenty and the girls above eighteen. However, a few instances of child marriages have been reported. This is supported by the fact that according to the 1961 Census 0.32% of the 0—14 age group have been returned as married.

Unrelated persons are considered ideal for becoming man and wife. Near relatives on either side and those living in the same settlement are prohibited to be taken as spouses. Absolute uniformity is not maintained with respect to the prohibited degrees of relationship. It has been reported at Chingeri that one's father's sister's daughter can be married while mother's brother's daughter is tabooed. Those living near Sultan's Battery, however, claim that both the above said relations are eligible for marriage. A person may not marry his elder brother's widow. Monogamy is the rule of the society though a person can have more than one wife if he is capable of supporting both. Divorce is easily allowed and widow remarriage is practised on a large scale. In the 1961 census returns only a negligible percentage of 1.77 is shown as divorced or separated.

A bride is generally selected for a young man by his parents. Other methods of acquiring spouses include elopement and marriage by service. Elopement is resorted to when the young man does not possess proper means to pay the bride price and stand a feast to his kiths and kins. In former days the incidence of acquiring mates by this method was very high. Aiyappan (1936) states "In a group of about 200 men into whose matrimonial condition

my enquiry extended it found even half the number had wives obtained by elopement." Now-a-days, however, it has been observed, that "run-away-marriages" are looked down upon and only very seldom resorted to.

In the case of elopement a boy along with his girl friend may slip away to the forest and remain there for 3 to 4 days living on the forest fruits and roots or small games snared by them. The self imposed "exile" over, the couple returns to the boy's place where they start to live as man and wife. The girl's parents, however, will impose a fine on the boy from whom the *Kanam* (base money or bride price) of Rs. 15 is realised by the *Chemmi*, a part of which is used to serve refreshments and betel and nuts to the people of the *Padi*. The ritual is known as *Tettum Pizhayum*, after which they live as socially recognised husband and wife.

Marriage by service is rarely practised these days. About this type of marriage Innes (1915, 184) states, "The marriage customs of Paniyans are typical of those of the jungle tribes in general. The consent of the headman (*Kuttan*) has to be obtained and for thirty days the bridegroom has to bring rice and firewood to the bride's house".

The regular type of marriage is agreed upon after mutual consultation between the people of the two parties. Initiative for negotiations starts from the boy's side. After having received the preliminary informations through some friends or relatives, the boy's father along with his brother-in-law and the *Chemmi* visit the girl's *padi* for negotiations. The first visit is generally casual in character. If during this visit they are able to get the consent of the girl's father a second visit is made later to obtain the consent of her mother's brother. During the third visit of the boy's party they invite the girl's people to see their 'house and hearth'. The party consisting of the girl's father, mother's brother and the *chemmi* of the *padi* calls on the boy's *padi* on an appointed day when an *acharam* (advance) of a *panam* (25 paise coin) is paid to the girl's party, followed by a feast.

All these formalities are undergone well in advance of harvest so that the marriage ceremony could be conducted just after the harvest when they have sufficient time and grains to spare.

It used to be a custom among the Paniyan bride-room-elect after betrothal to carry a bundle of fire-wood every day to the house of the fiancee for six months (Thurston, 1909, V, 64) or at equal intervals until the wedding day (Francis, 1908, 160). This custom has not been in vogue for at least the last twenty years.

As soon as the marriage is settled the *jenmi* is informed, who gives some presents in kind and cash. Two pieces of cloth and a cash amount of Rs. 10 is given in certain areas while in some other places some 50 measures of paddy and Rs. 5 is paid. In former days "when a Paniyan decides on marrying, his master gives him 10 *Kolakams* (25 seers) of paddy 5 yards of cloth and 12 annas of which 4 annas is paid on the settlement of marriage—the balance 8 annas called *Kappala panam* being sent through the *Muppan* (headman) of the bride's party to her master" (Gopalan Nair, 1911, 109).

An auspicious day is fixed for the marriage in consultation with the *Chemmi* and the same is communicated to the girl's parents. Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays are considered to be auspicious days. Night time is preferred to day time.

The boy has to make arrangements days before the wedding day. He purchases a couple of *dhoties* and scarfs, a *Kallu mala*, few glass bangles and a *tali* got prepared out of some cheap metal in the absence of which a 25 Paise coin with a hook attached would serve the purpose. *Tali* does not appear to be a necessary item in the Paniyan marriage as the investiture of the same was not in vogue in former days. The trait has its inroad in the Paniyan culture as a result of contacts with Hindu society.

On the day of marriage the bridegroom, after a purificatory bath, dressed in new cloths (consisting of a loin cloth and a second cloth worn on the shoulder) proceeds to the bride's *padi* accompanied by his father, maternal uncle, brother-in-law, *Chemmi* and a few (not exceeding twenty) men of his *padi*. The brother-in-law carries the groom on his shoulder for some distance and subsequently he (the groom) walks along with the party. Playing on *Tudi* and *Kuzhal* add charm to the procession. The procession stops at a distance from the girl's *padi* waiting to be welcomed by the bride's party. The *Chemmi* of the girl's party along with those assembled receives the groom's party. The bride's brother, in his absence a person standing in that relation, now escorts the groom to the *pandal*. In the *pandal*, is performed *Mattukodukkal*, in which a *panam* (25 paise coin) tied on one of the corners of a towel is presented to the bridegroom's *Chemmi* by the bride's father. This is followed by the presentation of 3 cubits of cloth in two piece , a *Kallu mala* (*talimala*) 4 glass bangles and a black or red scarf to the bride by the groom's *Chemmi*. With the help of the female folk the bride adorns in the traditional manner the new dress presented by the *Chemmi*. The bride and the groom are now made to stand on a plantain leaf kept over a bag of paddy when the *Chemmi's* wife or bride groom's sister ties the *Talimala* invested by the groom on the neck of the girl. Gopalan Nair (1911, 102) reports that in former days "they (the bride and the groom) step down and her bag which is smaller, is then tossed to the bridegroom, who tosses it back. This goes on for a few minutes and it is considered inauspicious to let it fall". This ritual has now been dispensed with

Tali tying over, the bride and the groom are made to exchange betel leaves supplied by the *Chemmi*, the boy given two and the girl three.

The couple chew the leaves along with arecanuts and lime and spit separately. Elderly members forecast the success of the union from the colour of the spittle. The ideal colour is supposed to be dark red.

In the meantime some water is brought in a small vessel in which a *panam* is dropped and the water thus sanctified is sprinkled over the couple by those assembled. In another small vessel twelve rupee coins (formerly Rs. 1½) are kept by the *Chemmi* on behalf of the bridegroom, which the *Chemmi* of the girl's party takes inside the house to be kept before a lighted lamp. This is the bride price or *Kanam*, as is locally known. In some places, as in Sultan's Battery, the *Kanam* amount is Rs. 15. This is followed by the 'bridal feast' in which the couple eat from the same leaf, the bride being made to sit on the left side of the groom. Those assembled for the wedding are all treated to a vegetarian feast. The feast is followed by a revelrous dance accompanied by music and musical instruments in which the young couple may also participate. The next morning the bridal party leaves for their *padi*.

Soon after marriage the couple call on the bridegroom's landlord in his house to introduce the newly wedded *Panichi*, who becomes an additional hand in the labour force of the *Jenmi*. The *Jenmi* presents the woman with a piece of cloth, 2 measures of paddy and half a rupee and blessess her by pouring some oil on her head. The couple may also be treated to a feast.

On the fourth day, after marriage, the couple along with the *Chemmi* and a couple of other persons visit the girl's house for *Virunnu* (first feast). On this occasion the girl's mother is presented with Rs.5. by the groom. The couple returns the next day.

For the services rendered the *Chemmi* gets 5 *kolaga* (local measure approximately equivalent to 12.5 seers) of rice and two rupees.

After marriage a person has to pay *Thalappattam*, literally means head lease, or annual fee to the parents of his wife. During the first year it is 30 *Kolaga* of paddy to be given on the *Uchul* day in the presence of the *Chemmis* of both the *padis* and other members of the settlement. In subsequent years the man has to give a token present of one and a half rupees. The *Thalappattam* has been interpreted by some (informants) as a part of the bride price paid in instalments while others consider it as a sort of annual tax levied by the parents of the woman. In any case failure to give *Thalappattam* may entail the recall of the woman by her parents.

A Paniyan jealously guards his wife and moves with her wherever she goes. He is well awar of the large expenditure involved in acquiring a wife Yet divorces are not absent. Infidelity, barrenness, etc., are considered sufficient reasons for a divorce of a wife while a woman can seek divorce on the basis of ill-treatment. In the *Chemmi*, vests the authority for allowing divorce which he does after consultations with both the parties. In case of divorce the *tali* and the *Kanam* amount are returned. If there are issues in the union they may stay with the father, but can visit their mother if need be.

1961 Census Data

Data thrown by the Census of India 1961 give very interesting particulars of the marital behaviour of the Paniyan. The marital status shows that 50.25% are never married, 42.48% are married, 5.49% are widowed and 1.77% divorced or separated. When considered age groupwise, 0.32% of the 0—14 age group are married, indicating the prevalence of child marriage, majority of them being females. Married category under 15—44 age group accounts for 72.85% consisting of 66.63% of males and 78.33% of females. In the age group of 45 and over 72.64% are married. The persons in the 'never married' category in this age group falls below 1%. Widowed accounts for 2.41% of male and 8.57% of female Paniyans. Of the widowed cetegory31.01% are in the 15—44 age groups whereas the percentage rises upto 68.94% in the age group of 45 and above. Females are more in the widowed category especially in the 45 + age group who account for 45.38% of the females whereas the males account for only 8.6% under this category. This may be due to the fact that more widowers remarry when compared to the widows. In the divorced or separated category falls 1.77%. Here again the females outnumber the males with 1.26% of males and 2.30% of females. It is observed that 0.02%in the 0—14 age group are divorced(all females) whereas 0.31% in that age group are married. This would mean that among Paniyans 'early marriage' and divorce co-exist. 83.59% of the divorced are from the 15—44 age group and it declines to 15.96% in the age group of 45 and over.

Death

The dead among the Paniyans is usually buried except in case of important persons like the *Chemmi*, who is cremated. In former days, reports Francis, (1908, 161) "Young folks are buried and the rest cremated".

A sinking man is given a few drops of water and a *panam* is put in his mouth. As soon as the death takes place, any member of the *Padi* is asked to convey the message to the relatives, the *Chemmi* and the landlord—or the *Muthalali*. On hearing the news the latter sends one bundle of betel leaves, one cocoanut, 25 arecanuts and a new cloth. In some places, as in Chingeri, besides the above a '*Kaikottu*' a spade to dig the pit is also sent.

The relatives having arrived, the dead body is washed in warm water and annointed with oil. The *Chemmi* and his wife initiate by sprinkling a little water over the corpse and the process is completed by other's present. Sandal wood paste is applied on the forehead and on the appandages of the corpse and it is drapped in the new cloth sent by the landlord. Incidently, there is a strong belief among the Paniyans that new clothes are to be used only for the corpse, and as such, a portion of the new cloth is soiled with mud before using it as a dress (Panoor, 1963, 107). The corpse is now taken inside the room where the *Chemmi* performs certain rituals at the end of which he throws out a *Kaikottu* and a *Kathy* (Knife) to be used for digging a pit for burial. The implements are collected by the dead person's sister's daughter to be handed over to the *Chemmi* who later initiates digging of the pit.

The corpse is now brought out of the house and laid on a bier prepared out of bamboo poles and *Chully* (twigs). The *Chemmi* ties on one corner of the new cloth, spread over the corpse a few paddy and rice to be used by the dead man during his journey to the other world. The grief stricken wife of the deceased brings out the material possessions he had acquired during his life time and shows to the relatives. The dead body is now carried on the bier to the burial ground, usually situated on the north of the settlement. The brotners, sisters' husbands, and wife's brothers jointly constitute the pall bearers. *Chemmi* leads the funeral procession carrying a lighted lamp. Women do not accompany the procession.

In the meantime a loin deep grave of 9′ × 3′ is made in the north-south direction with a cellar made on the western side bottom, big enough to receive the dead body. The dead body is placed on a mat and laid upon its left side with the head pointing to the south and the feet to the north into the cellar. Some betel leaves and nuts are also placed near the head. The cellar is closed with a bamboo screen and the grave filled with earth. A sickle used by the deceased Paniyan or a cooking pot used by the panichy, as the case may be, is placed near the grave. A little *Kanji* (rice gruel) is kept in a separate small pit, on a plantain leaf, a few feet away at the head end of the grave continuously for three days. This is known as *Kaka Kanji* (literally meaning crow gruel) supposed to be meant for the spirit of dead. A few paddy grains are broadcasted and a small fencing out of a twiner called *muthuvally* is made around the grave. All these help to keep the *Kalan* (the God of death) at bay lest he should molest the mane. First he sees the *Kanji*, which he consumes next he keeps himself busy by picking up all the paddy grains strewn around. By now, day breaks and Kalan has to go back. If in case there is still time and he attempts to go into the grave the fencing would not let him go.

Leaving the burial ground all have a purificatory bath before reaching home. At the spot where the person breathed his last, is placed some *Kanji* in a plantain leaf cup covered by a winnowing fan over which is kept a flower brought by the *Chemmi* while returning form the burial ground. All watch anxiously for the possible movement of the winnowing fan or some sound. In that case it is believed that the dead man's spirit known as *pena*, has come back to the house. As the winnowing fan is removed simultaneously, the leaf cup unfurls itself which is believed to be an act of the mane anxious to have his share of *Kanji*. At this, all assembled weep and wail at the fate of the deceased. Next day morning this *Kanji* is given to crows which are supposed to possess the *pena* of the dead. In case of no sound or movement noticed in the winnowing fan, the spirit is believed to be still hovering here and there.

Pollution lasts for seven days. On all the seven days some *Kanji* is taken to the grave by the *Chemmi* and thrown to the crows after inviting them by clapping hands. This is known as *Kakka Kanji Kodukkal* (crow feeding with gruel). On the night of the seventh day *Kakkapula* (crow pollution) is celebrated. Expert *Pattukaran* (singer) is invited who enter into trance and dances to the accompaniment of tom-tom and *Kuzhal*.

The Paniyan looks at the manes with awe and he calls them back annually to appease and propitiate. Thurston(1909, VI, 57-71) vividly narrates how those who lost their relatives during the year or before appease the spirits. "In the month of Makaram, the Noombukarans or mourners (who have lost relatives) begin to cook and eat in a pandal or shed set apart from the rest of the village, but otherwise go about their business as usual. They wash and eat twice a day, but abstain from eating meat or fish. On the last day of the month, arrangements are made, under the supervision of the Chemmi, for the ceremony which brings the period of mourning to a close. The mourners, who have fasted since daybreak, take up their position in the pandal, and the Chemmi, holding on his crossed arms to winnowing sieves, each containing a seer or two of rice, walks around three times and finally deposits the sieves in the centre of the pandal. If, among the male relatives, of the deceased, one is to be found sufficiently hysterical or actor enough to stimulate possession and perform the functions of an oracle, well and good; but should they all be of a stolid temperament, there is always at hand a provisional respondity to the Komalran or Velichaped of other Hindus. This individual is called the Patalykaran. With a new cloth (Mundu) on his head, and smeared on the body and arms with a base made of rice flour and ghee (purified butter) he enters on the scene with his legs gird with bells the music of which is supposed to drive away the attending evil spirits (Payanmar). Advancing with short steps and rolling his eyes, he staggers to and fro, and sawing the air with two small sticks which he

holds in either hands and works himself up into a frenzied set of inspiration, while the mourners cry out and ask why the dead have been taken away from them. Presently a convulsive shiver attacks the performer, who staggers more violently and falls frustrated on the ground or seeks the support of one of the posts of the pandal, while he gasps out disjointed sentences which are taken to be the words of the God. The mourners now made obeisance and are marked on the forehead with the paste or rice flour and ghee. This done, a mat is spread for the accommodation of the headman and Chemmi and the Patalykaran from whose legs the bells have been removed and put with the rice in the sieves, takes these in his hands, and, shaking them as he speaks, commences a funeral chant, which lasts till dawn. Meanwhile food has been prepared for all present except the mourners, and when this has been partaken of, dancing is kept up round the central group till daybreak, when the pandal is pulled down and the Kakapolay is over. Those who have been precluded from eating make up for lost time, and relatives, who have allowed their hair to grow long, shave."

X. Religion

Paniyan religion revolves round their belief in manes and malevolent deities. They have vague and crude ideas about religion. Long standing and continued seclusion from the Hindu society has reaffirmed their faith in their own pantheon.

Kattubhagavathy or according to some, *Kuli*, a malignant and terrible being of neither sex, whose shrines take the form of a stone placed on a *thara* (raised platform) under a tree, or sometimes a row of stones, form the presiding deity of the Paniyan. *Tharas* known as *Kulithara*, dedicated to *Kuli* are found in all Paniyan settlements. Rough hewn stones representing other deities like *Kuttichathan, Guliyan, Bhadrakali*, etc., are also sometimes kept along with *Kuli* on the *Kulithara.*

Kattubhagavathy is the goddess of woods who provide an unending flow of forest wealth, in the form of wild fruits and roots, games, etc., besides protecting the Paniyan from wild beasts. Faith in this deity is so fervent, particularly among the elder ones, that no one embarks on any mission without dedicating oneself to *Kattubhagavathy.*

Manes are "preserved" at home, by some, in a small bamboo basket called *Poya*, kept hung on to a rafter. A few have made a *thara* (raised platform) at one corner of the house below the *Poya* wherein offerings meant for the manes are kept. The contents of the basket are neither shown to an outsider nor divulged to any. However, it is said to contain some coins made as offerings as well as strips of clothes belonging to the dead. The *Poya* is very much venerated by the Paniyan.

In recent years, however, there has been a change in the religious belief of the tribe, particularly among the younger generation. Their close contacts with the local Hindu landlords has resulted in the belief in some of the local temples. Near the Chulliote Paniyan settlement, in South Wynad, there are two temples. One of them which is dedicated to *Bhadrakali*, has no superstructure and is enshrined on a raised platform under a tulip tree. A long old curved sword placed near a clay-lamp represents the deity. A few feet away is a granite stone representing *Guliyan.* The other temple is dedicated to Siva. It has a superstructure and a compound wall. Both the temples are managed by a board of trustees selected by the villagers. All the three trustees belong to the Chetty caste. A *Nambootiri Brahmin* functions as the priest.

All the people in the area including the tribal communities belonging to the Paniyan, Adiyan, Kurichiyan, etc., attend the festival. The Paniyan and the Adiyan are not allowed to go near the temple precincts though they make their contributions for the expenditure of the temple festival. They also put in manual labour in cleaning the temple premises. A Malayan devil dancer, wearing his conventional dancing costumes, perform dance on the festival day. Offerings of cocoanuts, plantain bunches, etc., are made by the devotees including the Paniyans.

The two functionaries in the realm of religion are the *Chemmi* or *Kuttan* and *Mantravadi. Chemmi* is more a social leader than a religious one. He performs religious functions in connection with social ceremonies such as marriage, death, child birth, puberty and so on. *Mantravadi* is both a medicine man as well as a magician. He is supposed to possess divine powers with which he can have communion with God. *Koravan*, a known *mantravadi* of Chingeri settlement, describes how he does his magical performances. "When a client approaches me for favour of divination, either in connection with someone's disease or some misfortune I fix up a convenient date. On the appointed day, I take a purificatory bath, wear clean clothes and make offerings before a lighted lamp in the front courtyard of his house. Then I enter into trance and have communion with God and subsequently reveal the cause of the disease or malady, as the case may be, and suggest remedies for the same." Paniyans have fervent faith in the *Mantravadi* and his abilities and as such approach him when they are in trouble, may it be illness or some other misfortune. Sometimes charms and amulets are also prescribed as a method of cure.

Many a stories are afloat about the black magic of the Paniyan. "Some Paniyans", says Thurston (1909, VI, 63), "are believed to be gifted with the power of changing themselves into animals, and there is belief among the Paniya dwellers in the plains that if they wish to secure a woman whom they lust after, the man gifted with special power goes to her house

at night with a hollow bamboo, and encircles the house three times. The woman then comes out and the man changing himself into a bull or dog works his wicked will. The woman, it is believed, dies in the course of two or three days."

The Paniyan celebrate, besides their own festivals associated with manes and malevolent deities, *Onam* and *Vishu* of the Hindus. To them the real importance of these Hindu festivals are not very much aware, but consider them as days of feast and merriment. In connection with *Onam* they clean the premises and daub the hut with cow-dung paste and red ochre. On the *onam* day a sumptuous feast is partaken, for which the provisions come from the landlords. The festival in honour of *Kuli* is the most important for the Paniyan. In the month of *Edavam* (May-June) on a previously fixed date all belonging to the same Padi assemble at the Kulithara. The mantravadi observes three days' fast and pious observances before presiding over the celebrations. He, on that day, wearing white clothes and a red scarf tied on his loin, gets into trance and start revelations. This is followed by dance and songs accompained by tom-tom and clarionet. All those young men and women who are proposing to enter into wedlock the following year please the Kuli by making offerings, including sacrific of fowls. Such offerings, they believe, would usher in a prosperous married life.

Kakkapuia is another occasion celebrated like a festival. *Uchal*, falling in the month of *Makaram* (February-March) is yet another festival for the Paniyan. This day is also celebrated by the *Chettis* and others in Wynad. It is on this day that the agricultural labourers are recruited for the ensuing season.

It is a big festive occasion for the Paniyan living in and around Mananthody to celebrate the festival at *Valliyoor Kavu*. The origin of this temple is associated with Paniyan, a belief which is supported by the fact that even today they are the temple servants incharge of cleaning the temple premises, vessels meant for pooja and also provide flower for worship. It is the privilege of the Paniyan to errect the *Paniyathara*, a pandal meant for worship of the deity on the day of the festival. The following legend is current in the area regarding the association of Paniyan with this temple. As a Paniyan woman was digging roots and tubers, her sickle inadvertently struck against a stone which started exuding blood. The panic stricken woman reported the matter to her landlord who brought a Nambootiri Brahmin to the spot. The latter finding it an idol consecrated the same and installed it at the spot where a temple was constructed later. The belief of the Paniyan in the *Valliyooramma*, as the deity is known, is so ardent that as mentioned earlier, he dares not to break a contract entered into with a landlord in the name of the deity.

Paniyan of Wynad consider themselves as Hindus. During the 1961 Census 99.94% of them returned their religion as "Hindu". In recent years a few of them have embraced Christianity. In 1961, therefore 9 males and 11 females are returned as Christians. The converted members continue to retain their association with their brethren. But for the religious belief, they continue to observe their traditional customs and manners. In the same Census, there is a solitary case of a male converting himself into Muslim.

XI. Leisure, Recreation and Childplay

Leisure and recreation in the true sense of the term is unknown to the Paniyan. He has to toil from dawn to dusk to make his both ends meet, may it be in the paddy field or in the thick of the jungle. Having reached home after the day's task he finds little pleasure in recreation of any sort. The position of the Panichy, his wife, is not different, if not worse. She has the additional burden of cooking food and rearing children, besides, helping her husband in contributing her mite in the economic pursuits.

The otherwise drab life of the Paniyan is broken by occasional singing and dancing accompanied by musical instruments like *Tudi* and *Kuzhal*, resorted to by the men and women of the *padi*. Whenever they are more free, particularly after harvest, the more romantic among them, assemble at a common place, say of the *Chemmi*. While the men sing songs and play on the *Tudi* and *Kuzhal*, the women partake in folk dance, the theme generally being one connected with their economic pursuits, such as, agricultural operations, digging of roots and tubers or hunting. In one of the numbers, the women stand in a row and move forward and backward in unison, stooping at intervals and jesticulating as if planting paddy saplings or harvesting it. The dance is accompanied by folk songs. On the Paniyan dance Thurston (1909, VI, 68) remarks as follows:

"In fact, the nearest approach to a dance that they ever attempt (and this only on festive occasions) resembles the ordinary occupation of planting rice, carried out in dumb show to the music of a drum. The bodies of the performers stoop and move in time with the music, and the arms are swung from side to side as in the act of placing the rice seedlings in their rows. To see a longline of Paniyan women, up to their knees in the mud of a rice field, bobbing up and down and putting on the pace as the music grows quicker, and to hear the wild yells of Hou! Hou! like a chorus of hungry dogs, which form the vocal accompaniment as they dab the green bunches in from side to side, is highly amusing".

In former days the people belonging to the Wynad area including the Paniyan used to perform a ceremonial hunt, known in the local parlance as *Narikuthu*. This is done particularly when the tiger menawce is on the increase. On an appointed day a number of men along with their spears assemble in

the nearby forest. At one end of the jungle a coir net is laid and fixed strongly on to the bushes. The men forming a ring yell at the top of their voice and beat the bushes with sticks to scare off the tiger towards the direction of the net and finally entrapping it. The *Chetti* who is also a member of the hunting party present at the scene enter into a trance and decide whether the tiger is to be freed or not. It is freed only if, according to the oracles, it belonged to their deity, the *Kali-Mata*, and others are done to death. The hunting expedition having over, all assemble at a place to cook their food, the materials and the provision of which are carried from their homes. The whole night is spent in songs and dance and by daybreak they return to their homes.

Paniyan children, till they join their parents in some economic activity, spend most of their time in playing a variety of games. They can be seen swinging on swings, playing hide-and-seek and so on. Thurston (1909, VI, 67) reports, "A long strip of cane is suspended from the branch of a tree, and a cross bar fixed to its lower end. On the bar a boy sits, and swings himself in all directions. In another game a bar, 12 to 14 feet in length is balanced by means of a point in a socket on an upright reaching about 4½ feet above the ground. Over the end of the horizontal bar, the boy hangs and touching the ground with the feet spins himself round". Little girls mime cooking using cocoanut shells and broken pieces of earthen pots as cooking vessels.

XII. Inter-community Relationship

Paniyans do not live in isolation though their settlements are normally unitribal. In their neighbourhood live the *Vynadan Chettis* (supposed to be one of the earliest inhabitants of the area), Muslims (Mauplas), Christians (Chettanmar), Nairs, all belonging to the land owning class and tribal communities like the *Kurichchan, Mullu Kuruman, Adiyan, Uraly Kurumans* and *Kattunayakan* (*Naikan*). Paniyans have symbiotic relationship with theland owning-group in the realm of economy. Their relationship with other communities is also cordial. No connubial relation, however, exists with any other community.

As agricultural serfs and plantation labourers Paniyans enjoy certain conventional rights and expected to perform certain duties. Besides performing agricultural operations for which they are paid, either in cash or in kind, Paniyans are supposed to perform certain services at the house of the landlord during social occasions like marriage, death, birth, puberty, etc., and on festival occasions like *Onam* and *Vishu*. On the occasion of marriage the premises are to be cleaned while the female folk may help in dehusking paddy and perform other odd jobs. When a death occurs the Paniyan has to run errands and dig the grave or collect wood meant for pyre, as the case may be. During other social occasions also he has to perform all odd jobs as required by the landlord. For all these, some special rewards are given. During *Onam, Vishu* and *Uchal* Paniyan gets presents like provision for the feast and new clothes. It is the right of the Paniyan to get a *Kodi* (new cloth) to be used to drape the corpse when some one dies in his family. A newly wedded couple may be given ceremonial presents when they call on their landlord immediately after marriage.

Paniyans accept cooked food from all communities in the area indicated above, except the Pulayans and Kattunayakan, whom the former consider as inferior in social status. As beef is taboo they may not accept food from the Muslims and Christians (Chettanmar) in case beef forms one of the items. Similarly, except the Pulayan and the Kattunayakan none of the above mentioned community accepts food from the Paniyans. Though untouchability in its strict sense is not practised, Nairs and Chettis would not allow the Paniyans to enter their houses. Paniyans are also not permitted to enter the temple belonging to the higher castes.

Information was gathered from among a few members of the community on the changes brought about in their social status and it was reported that at present they are allowed, to enter public utility places like the barber shop and the tea shop. They are, however, not allowed, as in the past, to use bathing ponds and wells normally used by the higher castes. As reported by a few, the necessity of using common water sources does not normally arise as the Paniyans have their own sources in their respective *Padis*.

Except for a few urbanised youngsters, none takes the services of the barber or the washerman. Cutting of hair and shaving are done either by themselves or with the help of others in the community. Sometimes the Panichy helps her husband in trimming his hair. Sharp knives meant for the purpose are got prepared from the blacksmiths. The urbanised young men, however, get their hair cropped from the hair cutting saloons of the urban centres. A few of them also possess safety razors. They may also, at times, get their clothes washed by the launderers of the town.

XIII. Structure of Social Control and Leadership

Paniyan society is controlled by a dual set of leadership, one based on the traditional social structure and the other on the basis of economic dependence. Both these are complementary and influence their life not in small measure. The *Chemmi* or *Kuttan* and the *Mantravadi* fall in the former category while the landlord or *Motalali*, under whom the Paniyan works, falls in the latter.

Every settlement (*Padi*) has a headman known by different names in different areas. In South Wynad he is known as *Kuttan* while in the North

Wynad he is also called *Chemmi.* Panoor (1963, 95) states that the headman is known by the term *Muppan* and when he does the priestly duties he is referred to as *Muppan Komaran.*

The *Kuttan* is a title (*sthanam*) conferred by the *Nair Jenmi.* A person of the *Padi* who has all the qualities of a leader may be chosen for this purpose. The *Kuttan,* chosen by each landlord, has to supervise all the other labourers working with the latter. In former days, "The investiture of the *Kuttan* with the powers of office is celebrated with a feast and dance, at which a bangle is presented to the *Kuttan* as a badge of authority", reports Thurston (1909, VI, 64). The *Chemmi,* on the other hand, is a hereditory office held by the Socio-religious head of the Padi. Normally, the eldest nephew of the previous *Chemmi* inherits the office.

The *Chemmi* along with a few other elderly members (*Motalali*) of the Padi forms a tribal *panchayat.* The *panchayat* meets as and when necessity arises. It is convened by the *Chemmi* usually at his residence. In the local parlance the assembly is known as *Chittavaikal.* In the Chulliote settlement, there are four *Kuttans* of which one is head or the *Valia-Kuttan* and the others *Cheria-Kuttans.* Problems dealing with marriage, divorce or any other social problem affecting the *Padi* is discussed in the *panchayat* and decisions arrived at. Invariably, the parties to the conflict may be summoned and their views ascertained before taking any decisions. The following case came before the Chulliote *panchayat* during the time of the present investigations:

"A Paniyan woman, named Kongi, had a child as a result of illegitimate connections. Neither Kongi nor her parents disclosed the name of the person responsible for her pregnancy. However, it is said, that he belonged to a different caste, and as such, does not fall under the perview of the *panchayat.* After protracted deliberations, they fined Kongi to pay an amount of Rs. 7 as *pariharam* (fine) for the breach of custom. The amount was shared by all the *Kuttans* and offerings made to a local *Kuli* to pardon the woman for committing this sin."

Ex-communication is not normally resorted to by the *panchayat.* In case of marriage by elopement the couple could be apprehended and brought before the *panchayat* and ultimately approved of the marriage after imposing a fine. Such fines absolve the bridegroom's father from paying the bride price. In case, the parties belong to more than one *Padi* the *panchayats* of both the *Padis* sit for judgment at a convenient place in either of the Padi in question.

Another leader in the *Padi* is the *Mantravadi.* Nobody who has got the requisite knowledge of magic can become a Mantravadi. He is capable of going into trance and make communion with the deities and spirits, finds out causes of calamities and also suggest remedies for the same. He does not wield any secular power; but he is respected owing to his sacerdotal functions.

The other set of leadership rests with the landlord or *Motalali* under whom the Paniyans work. The Motalali confers certain titles on his Paniyan serf and also assign certain duties. If, in case, the settlement is in the lands of the landlord he has the final say in all matters. He has the power of eviction from his land (the recent land legislations initiated by the Government have however forestalled such actions). The landlord is informed of every birth, death and marriage in the *Padi.* After marriage, the newly wedded couple has to call on their landlord and seek his blessings. A *Kodi* (new cloth) is given by the landlord to drape the dead body. In case of the birth of a male child some presents are sent by the landlord. He also gives presents during *Onam* and *Vishu.*

At the regional level, there exists no association in the Paniyan society, so as to enable them either to provide leadership for their economic rights. No wonder, therefore, that the Paniyan has not produced any emerging elite at the Political level.

XIV. Social Reform and Welfare

Being for a long time a neglected forest tribe of slaves and agricultural serfs, the Paniyan show but little progress in their social and economic development. Even the ushering in of the National Government has not proved much beneficial to this unfortunate folk. Entrenched in perpetual penury the Paniyans take very little interest in the welfare measures adopted for them. The land owning section of the Wynad population, consisting mainly of the *Chettis, Nairs,* Christians (Chettanman) and Muslims, too are partly responsible for this stagnation, for, to them the socio-economic amelioration of the Paniyans means the depletion of their agricultural force. Thus, the interplay of the aforesaid forces kept the Paniyan almost at the same level as they were a few decades back.

Majority of the Paniyans (75.15% of the total workers according to 1961 Census) eke out their livelihood by agricultural labour. A good number of the rest of the workers (15.46%) are engaged in "other services" like, working as casual labourers, forest watchmen, elephant mahouts, etc. The fact that only 1.87% of the workers are returned as cultivators stand testimony to the index of economic prosperity achieved by the tribe. In the field of education, yet another index to gauge the progress of a community, the Paniyan did hardly any headway worth mentioning. In 1961, only 2.77% were returned as literate when compared to the 17.25% literates Scheduled Tribes in the State and 46.85% general literacy rate. These speak for themselves the social and economic progress achieved by the Paniyan.

The Government is not unaware of the plight of this unfortunate people. In recent times, the Harijan Welfare Department of the Government of Kerala has undertaken a crash programme for the alround development of the Scheduled Tribes of Wynad, including the Paniyan. Educational institutions, to impart training in the three R's have been opened in the Paniyan country. These include primary, middle and tribal residential schools. To provide occupational bias to education, craft training centres have been established, where is imparted rattan work, mat weaving, wood work, etc. In all the educational institutions provisions for free dress, distribution of books, mid-day meal and stipends, for the students are made. Those in the residential schools get free lodging, clothing and other amenities. Monthly stipends are given to the period of training. In spite of all the facilities provided, it has been observed that the Paniyan are not very enthusiastic about these programmes.

In the field of rehabilitation, both in North and South Wynad, the Government have organised tribal colonies. In each colony provisions for housing and agriculture are made. Each family is provided with a dwelling unit having one room, a kitchen and a *verandah*. Two to four acres of reclaimed land is proposed to be given to each family for cultivation after the reclamation work is over. Till then, they are employed in the reclamation work. Provision for any Ayurvedic dispensary, a primary school and drinking water facilities are also made in each settlement. In the Chingeri Government colony, in South Wynad more than 100 families are settled, all brought from different parts of the Taluk.

In recent years some Christian missionaries have started working in Wynad. They are mostly engaged in catering to the needs of the Christian immigrants from Travancore areas (Chettanman) and as such have not made any impact worth mentioning on the tribal population including the Paniyan.

One wonders why, in spite of all these, Paniyans do not show much improvement both in their social and economic conditions. An analysis of the extent conditions show that the interplay of various factors has been responsible for such a stagnant conditions. In the first instance, there appears to be some lethargy inherent in the community against moving with the changing conditions. They are satisfied with their present lot and do not aspire to be more than what they are. The community has also failed to produce modern forward looking elite to give guidance and direction to its members. The vested interest of the landlords of the area was yet another factor responsible for the stagnation, as, they did not want to lose their efficient agricultural working force. Thirdly, the physical features of Wynad with its chains of hillocks and difficult terrains, unhealthy climate and endemic diseases like malaria, and above all, little or no communication facilities, kept the place and its people away from the pale of rapid progress. Last, but not the least important, is the rather late execution of the tribal welfare programmes in this area as also the arrival of the Christian missionaries.

BIOGRAPHIES

Biography –I

Fifty year old Koravan from the Chingeri Government Colony was born and brought up at a place called Cheeral about 10 miles away from here. He lived in his *padi* along with his elder brother and parents till he came to the present settlement. Koravan does not recollect vividly his child-hood days He, however, remembers that his father was the *adiyan* (Serf) of a Nair *Jenmi* (landlord). Later his brother too joined the *Jenmi*. Koravan's initiation in agricultural operations was at his father's *Jenmi's* household.

Koravan married at the age of 16, when he was already a full fledged *adiyan* of his father's *Jenmi*. He, therefore, got all the assistance from the *Jenmi* due to an *adiyan* during his marriage. His first child, Vellathy was born after 1½ years of his marriage when a *Vallyama* of his own tribe attended the delivery. The delivery, says Koravan, took place in a *Chittal* made for the purpose. During this child birth all the traditional customs, *viz.*, giving of *jatimarnnue* (indegenous medicine), burial of the placenta, observing of 40 days of pollution, etc., were meticulously followed. During subsequent deliveries too, all the traditional customs were strictly followed.

Endemic diseases like malaria, ravaged the area and took a toll of many lives from Cheeral. Koravan's father himself was a victim of malaria fever. Another common disease commonly met with was breathing difficulty perhaps due to the high attitude of the place. Koravan does not find much change in the customs connected with death. He has seen his tribesmen following almost all the rituals connected with death even to this day.

Koravan came to the Government colony at Chingeri at the instance of the Harijan Welfare officials. One fine morning, says Koravan, a few officials came to his house and explained to him to the Government Scheme and the benefit to be derived if he agreed to settle in the Government colony. Allured of promises he decided to go to Chingeri. Finding him sensible, the official requested Koravan to persuade others in the *Padi* to follow suit. Accordingly, he along with a few other of the same *Padi*, came to Chingeri. Each family was provided with a single room house with facilities for cooking, and varandah. These tiled *pucca* houses have been constructed with a small compound around.

Koravan and others were employed on daily wages in the experimental plantations run by the agricultural department in collaboration with the Welfare Deptt. of the Government of Kerala. Besides this, they also have cultivated some land provided to them in the viscinity of their houses.

Koravan appears to be happy about his present lot. He has come from a place which was solely inhabited by the Paniyan. Now in the Government colony different tribes reside and as such the problem of adjustment was difficult in the beginning. He has now adjusted with the changed conditions. Koravan feels too much happy about leaving the Jenmi's contract labour. He says "it was more a fetter" for them rather than a source of economy. Those who have come to the colony are free now. An advantage, Koravan finds in cash economy is his freedom of choosing things of his choice. Now he goes to market more often for making purchases.

In the social side Koravan finds a lot of change in their outlook. Formerly, pollution due to birth or death was very strictly followed. Now pollution period is often slashed to the bare minimum. Names of children are very much different from what they used to be; modern names are used. A few children now go to schools.

Koravan, however, laments about the inefficacy of leadership. In a multi-ethnic Government colony leadership is very much riven with strifes and as such social control becomes rather loose. Koravan said that he would be happy to see more and more children of his tribe getting education and seeking other employment opportunities so that they may not become victims of perpetual bonded labour.

Biography—II

Ramdas aged 21 is one of the few Paniyans staying in an urbanised area. He is also one of the few lucky Paniyans who are trained in the three R's. Ramdas stays with his parents on the fringes of Sultan's Battery, the taluk headquarters, where he was born and brought up. Their *Chala* (hut) is built by the side of the paddy field owned by his landlord with whom both his father as well as himself work.

As late as at the age of 9, Ramdas was compelled to join a nearby school. His parents unwillingly agreed to put him to school at the instance of the officials of the Harijan Welfare Department and teachers of the local school. However, as soon as he completed his sixth class his dis-interested parents "weaned" him away from the school. He then started learning agricultural operations from his father which he completed within a year. On the next *Vishu* day he entered into a contract with his father's *Jenmi* to work for him on daily cash wages.

After having settled in life, as Ramdas puts it, he married at the age of 17. The girl belonged to another *Padi*. It was an arranged marriage and all the usual traditional rituals were followed. Ramdas used a *dhothi*, shirt and under garments as his marriage dress quite contrary to the traditional loin cloth. In the heart of the heart he did not like to observe all the traditional rituals but his parents and others forced them on him. He was very much embarrassed when he was carried by his sister's husband in the first leg of the marriage procession as this ritual forms an accepted tradition.

Ramdas had his first child after an year of his marriage whom the *Chemmi* named, Vellayamma, on the tenth day. There was no *Chittal* in his *padi* nor attached to his *Chala* and as such the delivery took place at a corner of his single roomed hut. This custom is against the normal practice of sending the pregnant woman to her house during the first delivery. A *Vallyamma* of his own tribe attended the delivery. Pollution lasted for ten days, at the end of which a purification ceremony was held. The pregnancy *Kettiyattam*, a ceremony to ward off evil spirits from the expectant mothers, was conducted in which the Komaran presided.

Ramdas, being a literate person, has all praise for educating the Paniyan children. According to him, education, to put it in his own words, "open the eyes" of a person. He desires the young boys should use modern dress which, according to him, they like most. He is also against some of the outmoded customs.

It was interesting to note that a person who was vociferous about the changes taking place in his society preferred to keep silent over the suggestions he was asked to offer about the amelioration of his community. It appeared as if he was very much pessimistic about it.

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APPENDIX

A somatological study of Paniyan of Wynad—S.R. Das, Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology, Vol. IV, No. 1 January, 1955.

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Somatometric and Cephalometric results

	Age-group	No.	Average	Maxi.	Mini.	Mean.	Standard Deviation	Coefficient variation%
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			MALE					
1. Stature	20—29	33	24.8	1667	1382	1538.7	58.4	3.8
	30—54	67	38.1	1643	1401	1553.4	53.9	3.5
2. Sitting height	20—29	33	24.8	862	722	714.1	35.8	4.6
	30—54	67	38.1	848	718	781.6	28.5	3.7
3. Maximum head length	20—29	33	24.8	206	168	184.9	1.3	3.9
	30—54	67	38.1	201	171	186.0	5.7	3.0
4. Maximum head breadth	20—29	33	24.8	147	127	135.4	4.5	3.3
	30—54	67	38.1	140	122	136.4	4.8	3.5
5. Auricular head height	20—29	33	24.8	139	111	120.1	5.7	4.8
	30—54	67	38.1	135	106	120.1	5.5	4.6
6. Morphological face height	20—29	33	24.8	112	97	103.5	4.4	4.2
	30—54	67	38.1	122	96	106.1	6.4	6.1
7. Morph. Upface height	20—29	33	24.8	67	51	59.3	3.6	6.0
	30—54	67	38.1	68	53	61.2	3.8	6.2
8. Max. Bizygo breadth	20—29	33	24.8	136	118	128.6	4.4	3.4
	30—54	67	38.1	141	118	130.1	5.1	3.9
9. Bigonial breadth	20—29	33	24.8	105	82	90.4	5.9	6.5
	30—54	67	38.1	105	83	93.9	6.1	6.5
10. Ext. Bi-oc. Breadth	20—29	39	24.20	93	77	85.5	3.4	4.6
	30—54	67	38.1	95	77	85.0	3.8	4.4
11. Int. Bi-oc. Breadth	20—24	33	24.8	37	30	33.7	2.0	6.0
	30—54	67	38·1	40	29	33.6	2·3	7.0
12. Nasal Height	20—29	33	24.8	51	37	43.4	2.7	6.2
	30—54	67	38.1	51	37	45.0	3.2	7.1
13. Nasal breadth	20—29	33	24.8	42	34	38.1	2.2	5.7
	30—54	67	38.1	46	34	39.4	2.6	6.7
14. Nasal depth	20—29	33	24.8	17	9	12.3	1.8	14.6
	30—54	67	38.1	18	9	13.5	1.7	12.9
15. Bi-acrom Breadth	20—29	33	24.8	379	298	341.5	17.1	5.0
	30—54	66	38.0	388	289	350.2	18.3	5.2
16. Max. Hon. Circ. Head	20—29	26	24.8	575	500	532.5	15.2	2.9
	30—54	53	38.8	575	513	535.9	19.1	3.6
17. Chest girth	20—29	26	24.8	875	725	801.5	30.7	3.8
	30—54	53	38.8	884	714	806.6	40.3	5.0

APPENDIX—*Concld.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
				FEMALE				
1. Stature	20—29	41	24.4	1563	1345	1446.5	43.2	3.0
	30—54	45	38.8	1632	1360	1447.7	59.3	4.1
2. Sitting height	20—29	41	24.4	787	697	740.0	20.4	2.8
	30—54	45	38.8	886	697	738.9	29.4	4.0
3. Max. Head length	20—29	41	24.4	144	120	131.3	3.2	2.4
	30—54	45	38.8	140	123	131.0	5.6	4.3
4. Max. Head breadth	20—29	41	24.4	144	120	131.3	3.2	2.4
	30—54	45	38.8	140	122	131.0	5.6	4.3
5. Auricular head height	20—29	41	24.4	128	107	116.3	4·8	4.1
	30—54	45	39.8	126	99	115.4	5.8	5.1
6. Morph. face height	20—29	41	24.4	112	89	99.0	5.0	5.0
	30—54	43	38.6	111	91	9.7	5.2	5.2
7. Morph. Upface height	20—29	41	24.4	68	50	58.6	4.3	7.4
	30—54	43	38.6	69	51	58.9	4.7	8.0
8. Maximum Bizygo Breadth	20—29	41	24.4	135	115	122.6	4.1	3.4
	30—54	45	38.8	134	115	124.1	4.2	3.4
9. Bigonial Breadth	20—29	41	24.4	96	71	86.2	5.4	6.2
	30—54	45	38.8	95	76	87.0	5.0	5.7
10. Ext. Bi-oc. Breadth	20—29	41	24.4	99	75	83.7	4.6	5.5
	30—54	45	38.8	98	76	82.6	4.2	5.1
11. Int. Bi-oc. Breadth	20—29	41	24.4	41	28	33.0	2.4	7.3
	30—54	45	38.8	42	28	33.5	2.8	8.4
12. Nasal height	20—29	41	24.4	48.	37	42.1	3.0	7.1
	30—54	45	38.8	49	36	43.0	3.7	8.7
13. Nasal Breadth	20—29	41	24.4	39	30	35.3	2.1	5.9
	30—54	45	38.8	44	29	35.8	3.1	8.7
14. Nasal depth	20—29	41	24·4	14	9	14.0	1.1	9.5
	30—54	45	38.8	17	9	11.8	1.6	13.2
15. Bi-Acrom breadth	20—29	40	24.5	341	286	312.2	10.1	3.2
	30—54	40	39.3	358	269	312.3	14.4	4.6

ANNEXURE

Framework For Ethnographic Study

I. Name, Identity, Origin and History

1. Name, synonym, sub-caste/sub-tribe as in President's Order and as in other published sources such as Census reports, monographs, etc. Grouping with other castes & tribes during various Censuses. Affinity with other castes and tribes according to recognised authorities.

2. Etymological significance of the name; names by which the community is referred to by (a) other is and (b) itself.

3. Identification of the community by occupation or any other way of life.

4. Myths and legends connected with the origin and history of the community and its segments. Historical references and popular beliefs about history and migration of the community.

II. Distribution and Population Trend

1. Area where found; population and concentration in the State and outside. Physical aspects of the areas of concentration.

2. Numerical strength in 1961 and population variation from 1901-1961. Sex ratio, age-groups, and rural-urban distribution in 1961.

III. Physical Characteristics

1. Racial stock; appearance and affinity with other known communities.

IV. Family, Clan, Kinship and other Analogus Divisions

1. Family: size (observed & published), Types, residence after marriage, descent, lineage and its economic & religious function, and inheritance.

2. Clan/gotra and sub-clans: names, etymological meaning clustering of clans, belief and mythology about origin status among clans, clan and regulation of marriage (preference & prohibition) occupation & clan, clan and rituals, clan & food (restrictions, prescriptions) etc.,

3. Others: Phratry, Duel organisation like moities, etc., as in 2 above.

V. Dwelling, Dress, Food, Ornament and other Material Objects Distinctive of the Community

1. Settlement: Village site, location, settlement pattern (agglomerated, nucleated,dispersed, sprinkled, isolated, amorphous, star-shaped, horse-shoe-shaped, linear, rectangular, circular or ring-shaped, etc.) and variations; regional pattern *vis-a-vis* pattern of the community.

2. Neighbourhood pattern on the basis of religion, castes (Caste Hindus, untouchables) Tribes, etc., with segregations, if any, and the basis thereof.

3. Dwelling unit, compound, entrance, source of water, the use of different parts of the house (latrine, cattle shed, isolation huts, etc.). Shape (square, round, irregular, etc.) storeys, nature of floor, plinth, wall, roofing, thatching, ventilations and doors, materials used, decorations and embellishments; temporary structures.

4. Dress including head gear and foot wear-used ordinarily, on ceremonial occasions and special occasions & sex-wise and according to majority or minority. Dress of priests and office bearers-variations.

5. Ornaments: use, material used, from were obtained; variations according to Sex and age.

6. Personal decoration: tatooing; mutilations (chipping of teeth, etc.), hair cutting, how done, purpose, attitude and variation according to Sex and age.

7. Food & drink : materials (staple and others), prescriptions and prohibitions,fuel, utensils and mode of preparation; practices connected with serving and taking of food; preservation of food and rituals, if any.

8. Equipments connected with economic pursuits, religion and ritual; how procured, material used, construction, manipulation and purpose.

9. Other household equipments. As above.

10. Equipments connected with recording of time, space and weight and their methods of use. As above.

VI. Environmental Sanitation, Hygienic Habits, Disease and Treatment

1. Environmental sanitation, settlement, disposal of night soil, garbage, etc.

2. Hygienic habit: cleanliness of body, teeth, dress, houses, utensils, etc.

3. Diseases: incidence, local names, interpretation of the causes; symptoms, diagnosis and cure-persons and methods involved.

4. Modern systems of medicine and attitude of the community towards it.

VII. Language & Literacy

1. Ancestral language: classification according to Grierson, persistence of ancestral language and literature.

2. Mother tongue: classification according to Grierson; lingualism and multi-lingualism, regional language.

3. Information collected during 1961 on language and literature.

4. Education and literacy : Traditional and modern-attitude, information collected during 1961—literacy and levels of education.

VIII. Economic Life

1. Economic resources: Land, community land, individual ownership and types of land possessed and land utilization.

2. Forest wealth; Flora and foura; Nature and extent of right in the forest, forest utilization.

3. Fishery, Livestock and others.

4. Working force: Sex wise, Urban and rural variations and comparison of the same with the region.

5. Non-workers.

6. Industrial classifications: details as collected in the field and comparsion with that of the 1961 census figures, traditional occupation and changes in the pattern; Main and subsidiary occupations.

7. Forced labour, bonded labour, patron-client relationship (jajmani), mode of payment.

8. Seasonal migration connected with occupation: recruitment, formation of working groups.

9. Nomadic movement cycle and occupational pattern.

10. Shifting cultivation: method, implements and equipments, produce, participation, cycle of rotation, measure to regulate shifting cultivation and its impact.

11. Terrace cultivation: as above.

12. Income & expenditure: Sources of income, extent, expenditure on food, clothing, house, education, social functions and others.

13. Other aspects of economic life.

IX. Life Cycle

A. Birth

1. Beliefs & practices connected with conception, barrenness, still birth, miscarriage abortion, child death, regulation of sex, etc.

2. Pre-natal and natal practices: residence, diet, work, taboos, etc., delivery place, assistance, equipments used in delivery, position during delivery severance of umbilical cord (who does and how done), disposal of placenta.

3. Post natal practices. Confinement and segregation, ceremonial pollution, diet for mother and child, rituals.

4. Protection and care of child and training.

5. Attitude towards birth of child: Preference about sex, preference about number, segregation of sex, etc.

B. Initiation

1. Initiation ceremony, description.

2. Pre-marital sex relations within the community, outside the community, sanctions and taboos.

C. Marriage

1. Age at marriage for both sex, prohibited degrees of relationship preferences, widow remarriage (preferences & taboos).

2. Civil status and social status.

3. Type of marriage : monogamy, polygamy (polyandry and polygyny).

4 Selection of spouse : qualities valued (for bride and groom) mode of selection, procedure.

5. Modes of acquiring mate : by negotiation, force, intrusion, elopement, etc.

6. Terms of settlement : Payment of bride price, dowry service, exchange, adoption, etc.

7. Ceremonies connected with marriage : details including who presides over the marriage and services of functional castes.

8. Statistical data as per 1961 Census.

9. Divorce : Reasons and procedure.

D. Death

1. Concept about death, measures to ensure future well being of the soul, measures to avert harm by the spirit.

2. Methods of disposal, burial, cremation, exposure, floating on water, etc.

3. Preparations for disposal of dead, informing friends and relatives, treatment of the dead body, digging of pit etc., for disposal. How carried, who carry, who accompany, place of disposal, methodes of disposal, norms and taboos.

4. Ceremonies connected with disposal.

5. Monuments : Death rites, details.

6. Tombs, megaliths, etc.

7. Pollution : duration, restrictions in work, food, dress, shaving, hair cropping, sex life, etc., removal of pollution.

8. Mourning : mourners and duration.

X. Religion

1. Deities : supreme deity, benevolent deities, malevolent spirits, presiding deities of village and other aspects of life including occupation, clans, gotras etc.

2. Place of the deities in the regional pattern and Brahmanical and othe traditions.

3. Rituals and concepts connected with the pantheon.

4. Spots associated with the deities, pilgrim centres and methods of worship.

5. Religious functionaries.

6. Calendar of festivals and their observance.

7. Concept of soul, hell, heaven, rebirth, transmigration and soul, etc.

8. Sects and denominations : name, distribution, beliefs and practices, etc.

9. Statistical information.

XI. Leisure, Recreation and Child Play

1. Use of leisure time : (male, female, children and adult) seasonal variation in leisure time.

2. Recreation their mode and extent, for males, females and children.

3. Leisure and recreation with reference to work.

XII. Relation among Different Segments of the community

Recognised Segment—name, basis (territorial, ceremonial, social, prestige, religion, sect, education, age, etc.) Interrelation-ship among various segments; status of the segment, status of women.

XIII. Inter-community Relationship

1. Ceremonial relationship : Service by Brahmins, traditional service by castes like barbers, washermen, etc.

2. Pollution by touch or proximity to high caste Hindus use of well, admission to temple.

3. Secular relationship : model for other communities; dominance due to economic resources, political status, social status, etc.

4. Bridge role, buffer role, alliance and antagonism of the community.

XIV. Structure of Social Control, Prestige and Leadership

1. Social control : levels of Social control, community level, regional level, hereditary, special functionaries etc., social control by other agencies.

2. Mode of acquiring offices.

3. Control exercised by traditionally recognised leaders, functionaries of statutory bodies of the region, powerful individuals belonging to the community, etc., at the regional level and local level.

4. Relationship between spheres of social control and agencies of social control.

5. Leadership : for social change, for technological change, for political action and for other organised activities in the community level, regional level and local level.

6. Social prestige : method of gaining social prestige (by performing ritual, merit of feast, associating with historical association, etc., symbols of social prestige.

XV. Social Reform and Welfare

1. Social reform movements : intensity; reasons (for raising social status, establishing traditional norms, for westernisation, etc.) History and importance of the movements.

2. Social welfare : agency, religious organisation, community as a whole, Govt., official and non-official, Role of the Social welfare measures and impact.

XVI. Biographies

XVII. References cited and other Bibliography.

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