

CENSUS OF INDIA
1971

SERIES 19 - TAMIL NADU
PART VB - ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES

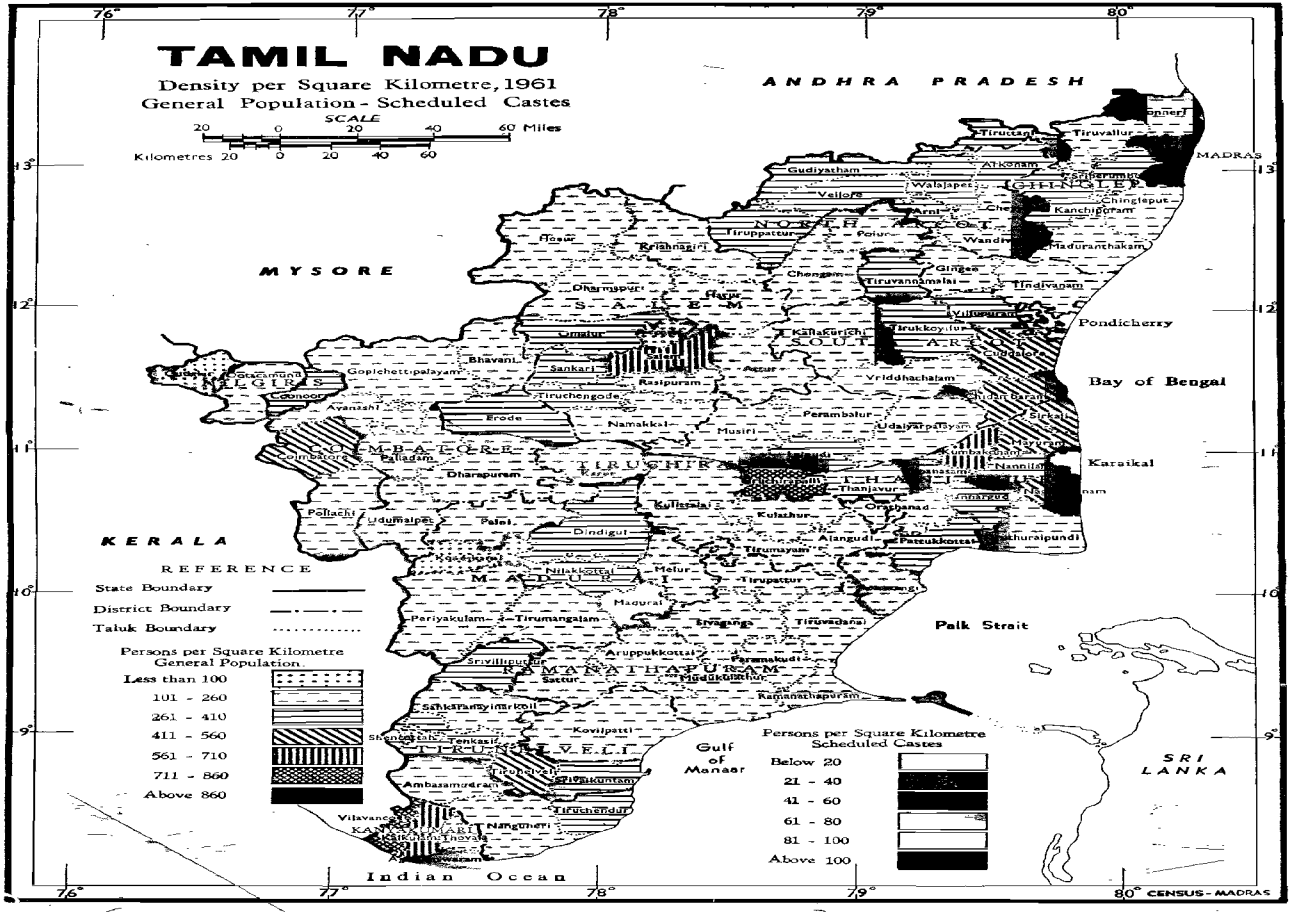
SCHEDULED CASTES OF TAMIL NADU

(VOL II)

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF
CENSUS OPERATIONS, TAMIL NADU
MADRAS

CONTENTS

		Page Nos.
1.	Foreword	(i)-(ii)
2.	Preface	(iii)-(vi)
3.	Introduction	(vii)-(ix)
4.	Dombar	1-127
5.	Holeyas	129-231
6.	Madigas	233-397
7.	Mala	399-503


TAMIL NADU
Density per Square Kilometre, 1961
General Population - Scheduled Castes
SCALE
20 0 20 40 60 Miles
Kilometres 20 0 20 40 60
ANDHRA PRADESH
MYSORE
KERALA
MADRAS
Pondicherry
Bay of Bengal
Karaikal
Palk Strait
Gulf of Manaar
SRI LANKA
Indian Ocean
REFERENCE
State Boundary
District Boundary
Taluk Boundary
Persons per Square Kilometre
General Population
Less than 100
101 - 260
261 - 410
411 - 560
561 - 710
711 - 860
Above 860
Persons per Square Kilometre
Scheduled Castes
Below 20
21 - 40
41 - 60
61 - 80
81 - 100
Above 100
NORTH ARCOT
SOUTH ARCOT
SALEM
COIMBATORE
TIRUCHIRAPALLI
THANJAVUR
MADURAI
RAMANATHAPURAM
TIRUNELVELI
NILGIRIS
Vellore
Krishnagiri
Dharmapuri
Tiruvannamalai
Villupuram
Cuddalore
Perambalur
Pudukkottai
Sivaganga
Virudhunagar
Tuticorin
Kanyakumari
Coimbatore
Erode
Salem
Namakkal
Karur
Dindigul
Madurai
Periyakulam
Tirumangalam
Sivaganga
Aruppukkottai
Sattur
Kovilpatti
Tenkasi
Ambasamudram
Tiruchendur
Nanguneri
Thovala
Nagercoil
Gudiyatham
Walajapet
Arni
Chengam
Tiruvannamalai
Gingee
Tindivanam
Vriddhachalam
Musiri
Udaiyarpalayam
Thuraiyur
Nannilam
Kumbakonam
Thanjavur
Orathanad
Kulittalai
Kulzhur
Alangudi
Pattukkottai
Tirumayam
Tiruppattur
Melur
Nilakkottai
Andipatti
Palni
Udumalpet
Pollachi
Dharapuram
Kangayam
Gopichettipalayam
Bhavani
Sankari
Tiruchengode
Rasipuram
Avanashi
Coonoor
Gudalur
Ootacamund
Ramanathapuram
Mudukulattur
Paramakudi
Ramnathapuram
Sankaramyilmarkoil
Shenkottai
Srivilliputtur
Chengam
Polur
Wandiwash
Gingee
Tiruvallur
Tiruttani
Ponneri
Chingleput
Kanchipuram
Madhuranthakam
Sholinghur
Arkonam
Ranipettai
Krishnagiri
Hosur
Dharmapuri
Omalur
Attur
Yercaud
Kallakurichi
Tirukkoyilur
Gingee
Vellore
Tiruppattur
Polur
Arni
Chengam
Tiruvannamalai
Gingee
Tindivanam
Villupuram
Cuddalore
Vriddhachalam
Perambalur
Udaiyarpalayam
Musiri
Thuraiyur
Nannilam
Kumbakonam
Thanjavur
Orathanad
Kulittalai
Kulzhur
Alangudi
Pattukkottai
Tirumayam
Tiruppattur
Melur
Nilakkottai
Andipatti
Palni
Udumalpet
Pollachi
Dharapuram
Kangayam
Gopichettipalayam
Bhavani
Sankari
Tiruchengode
Rasipuram
Avanashi
Coonoor
Gudalur
Ootacamund
Ramanathapuram
Mudukulattur
Paramakudi
Ramnathapuram
Sankaramyilmarkoil
Shenkottai
Srivilliputtur
Aruppukkottai
Sattur
Kovilpatti
Tenkasi
Ambasamudram
Tiruchendur
Nanguneri
Thovala
Nagercoil
Gudiyatham
Walajapet
Arni
Chengam
Tiruvannamalai
Gingee
Tindivanam
Vriddhachalam
Musiri
Udaiyarpalayam
Thuraiyur
Nannilam
Kumbakonam
Thanjavur
Orathanad
Kulittalai
Kulzhur
Alangudi
Pattukkottai
Tirumayam
Tiruppattur
Melur
Nilakkottai
Andipatti
Palni
Udumalpet
Pollachi
Dharapuram
Kangayam
Gopichettipalayam
Bhavani
Sankari
Tiruchengode
Rasipuram
Avanashi
Coonoor
Gudalur
Ootacamund
Ramanathapuram
Mudukulattur
Paramakudi
Ramnathapuram
Sankaramyilmarkoil
Shenkottai
Srivilliputtur
Aruppukkottai
Sattur
Kovilpatti
Tenkasi
Ambasamudram
Tiruchendur
Nanguneri
Thovala
Nagercoil
76°
77°
78°
79°
80°
13°
12°
11°
10°
9°
CENSUS - MADRAS

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 ethnographic 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, Officer on Special Duty, Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit, assisted by Shri A. M. Kurup and Shri N. G. Nag, Research Officers, is co-ordinating all these studies at the Central level. At the State level, the Superintendent of Census Operations and his staff are collaborating in conducting the field investigations and preparing the report. Sri T. B. Bharathi, Deputy Superintendent of Census Operations, supervised the study at the state level and Sarvashri C. T. Rajan and T. S. Rajaram, Investigators, carried out the field investigation on these communities and prepared the draft. I avail of this opportunity to extend my warm thanks to all 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 Operations, 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 picture 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 & 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 and 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, (1) bulk of the Bauris were cultivators and by a process of degeneration of their economy have become agricultural labourers, (2) 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 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 to the diversification in economic life have to be examined. It is also to be examined whether in spite of diversification of occupation., the ethos of a particular 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 coordinate 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 offices 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 Units 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 were held at Kurseong and Hyderabad, where personnel 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 these Study Camps, an integrated frame for preparation of ethnographic notes was discussed and adopted. In addition to the studies in respect of each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe 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 Santhal 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.

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 suggestions in connection with the ethnographic studies as well as other studies, conducted by the Handicrafts and Social Studies unit.

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

B. K. ROY BURMAN

INTRODUCTION

This volume contains a study of four important scheduled castes in Tamil Nadu. What a scheduled caste is and other relevant material to appreciate this study will be found in "Census of India, 1961, Volume IX, Madras—Part V-A (i) Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Report and Tables)".

In 1961 Census only 67 (sixty-seven) castes have been returned, out of which the following 35 only are numerically important. They are arranged in the descending order of numerical importance.

Numerically Important Scheduled Castes of Tamil Nadu

Rank of numerical importance	Names of Scheduled Caste arranged in descending order of the size of Population	1961 Census population	Percentage to total Scheduled Castes
1	2	3	4
1	Adi Dravida	1,763,000	29·06
2	Paraiyan, Parayan (Sambavar)	1,513,627	24·95
3	Pallan	950,266	15·66
4	Chakkiliyan	778,076	12·82
5	Kudumban	247,822	4·08
6	Samban	136,818	2·25
7	Arunthathiyar	99,947	1·65
8	Kuravan, Sidhanar	78,470	1·29
9	Valluvan	62,450	1·03
10	Madari	60,015	0·99
11	Thoti	41,129	0·68
12	Pagadai	19,299	0·32
13	Adi Andhra	18,269	0·30

1	2	3	4
14	Devendra Kulathan	15,963	0·26
15	Adi Karnataka	12,448	0·21
16	Pannadi	10,745	0·18
17	Tiruvalluvar	10,077	0·17
18	Puthirai Vannan	9,696	0·16
19	Koliyan	5,680	0·09
20	Vettiyan	3,541	0·06
21	Vannan	3,383	0·06
22	Madiga	3,198	0·05
23	Mala	2,060	0.03
24	Dom, Dombara, Paidi or Pano . .	1,977	0.03
25	Cheruman	1,884	0·03
26	Holeya	1,826	0·03
27	Kadaiyan	1,750	0.03
28	Paravan	1,550	0.03
29	Thandan	1,105	0.02
30	Pulayan or Cheramar	907	0.01
31	Panniandi	642	0.01
32	Ayyanavar	632	0.01
33	Vetan	630	0.01
34	Bharathar	513	0.01
35	Uraly	385	0.01
	Individual caste unclassifiable . .	205,430	3.39
	All other castes reporting negligible proportions	2,117	0.03
	All Scheduled Castes	6,067,327	100.00

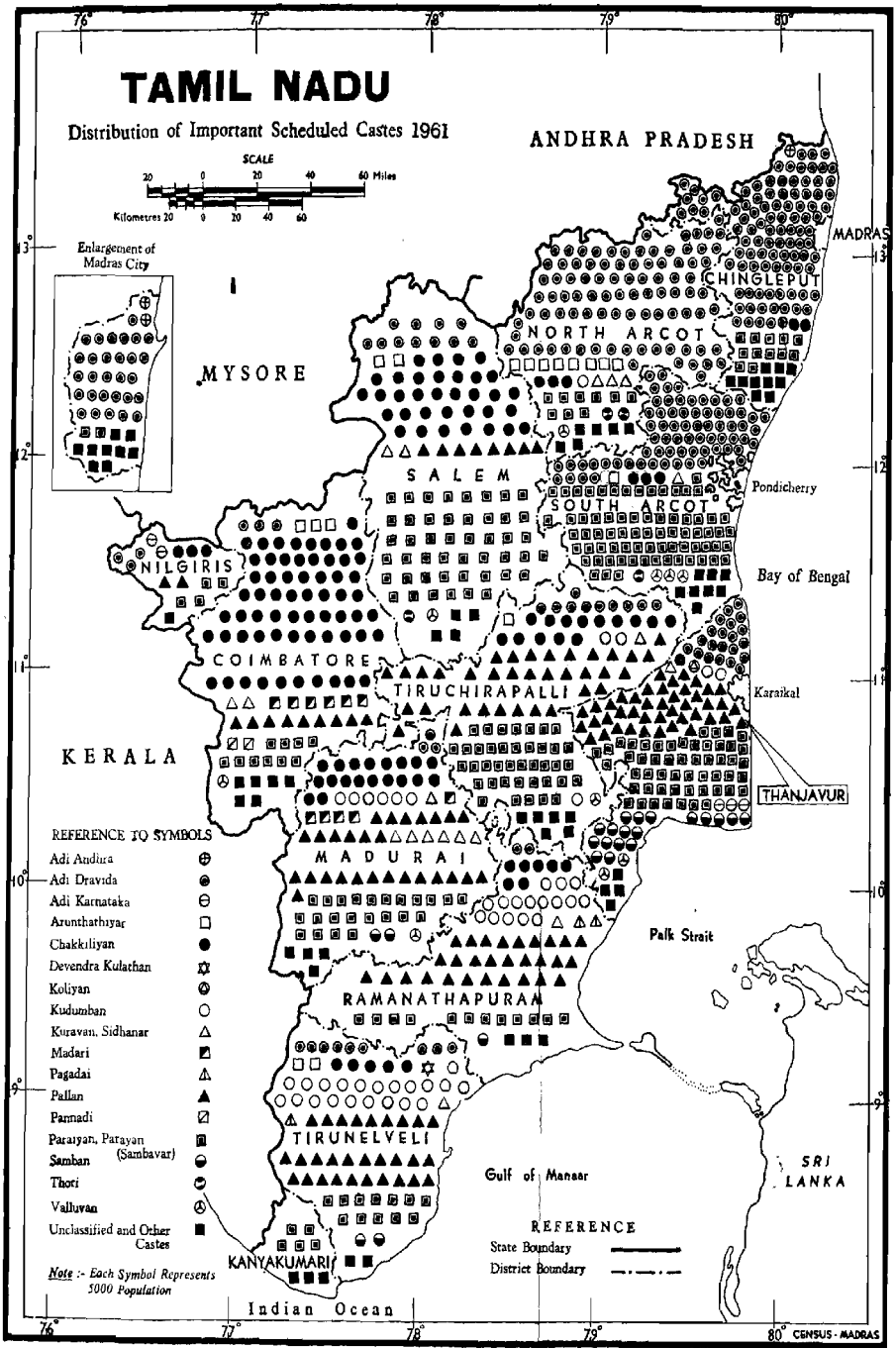
In 1961 Census, special tables have been prepared in respect of each Scheduled Caste and Tribe in the State. They cover information on religion, age, marital status, education, mother tongue, bilingualism and economic activity. In Tamil Nadu supplementary Tables have also been prepared together with a report giving a comparative study of the general characteristics of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. These have already been released as Census of India, 1961, Volume IX, Part V-A (i) and Part V-A (ii).

So far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, Todas are considered to be the most aboriginal tribe. A detailed report on them has been published as Census of India, Volume IX, Part V-C. Another detailed report about seven more Scheduled Tribes has been released as Census of India, 1961, Volume IX Part V-B (1). A report on four Scheduled Castes of Tamil Nadu is contained in the present Volume Part II, while Part-I published already contains similar reports on eight Scheduled Castes of Tamil Nadu.

Dr. Roy Burman, Officer on Special Duty in the Office of the Registrar General, will be preparing more detailed and extensive reports on all the numerically important Scheduled Castes of all the States. Adi-Dravida, Parayan, Pallan, Chakkiliyan, Kudumban, Vannan/Mannan, Thandan/Uraly etc., are the major Scheduled Castes of Tamil Nadu on which detailed reports are proposed to be released by the Registrar General's Office, Delhi.

This volume is not, in a strict sense, an ethnographic study, nor may it interest the anthropologists. It is a study on such of those Scheduled Castes who are neither numerically very large nor insignificant from an essentially Indian point of view giving as much authentic information as possible about them. This study has been facilitated by the cooperation rendered by each of the community living in the sample village selected for the purpose. Sri T. B. Bharathi, Deputy Superintendent of Census Operations, was in complete charge of the survey, while Sarvashri C. T. Rajan and T. S. Rajaram, Investigators, carried out the field investigation on these communities and prepared the draft. Dr. Burman has also scrutinised the notes and made very useful suggestions. Most of the points indicated by him have been covered.

P. K. NAMBIAR


TAMIL NADU
Distribution of Important Scheduled Castes 1961
SCALE
20 0 20 40 60 Miles
Kilometres 20 0 20 40 60
Enlargement of Madras City
ANDHRA PRADESH
MADRAS
CHINGLEPUT
NORTH ARCOT
MYSORE
SALEM
SOUTH ARCOT
Pondicherry
NILGIRIS
Bay of Bengal
COIMBATORE
TIRUCHIRAPALLI
Karaikal
KERALA
THANJAVUR
REFERENCE TO SYMBOLS
Adi Andhra
Adi Dravida
Adi Karnataka
Arunthathiyar
Chakkiliyan
Devendra Kulathan
Koliyan
Kudumban
Kuravan, Sidhanar
Madari
Pagadai
Pallan
Pannadi
Paraiyan, Parayan (Sambavar)
Samban
Thoti
Valluvan
Unclassified and Other Castes
Note :- Each Symbol Represents 5000 Population
MADURAI
Palk Strait
RAMANATHAPURAM
TIRUNELVELI
Gulf of Manaar
SRI LANKA
KANYAKUMARI
REFERENCE
State Boundary
District Boundary
Indian Ocean
76° 77° 78° 79° 80°
13° 12° 11° 10° 9°
CENSUS - MADRAS

DOMBAR

Name, Identity, Origin and History :

According to a note on the Dombo in the Census Report of 1881, the same man is called Paidi by the Telugus, Dombo by the Savares and Pano by the Khonds. Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order 1950; and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists Modification Order, 1956 lay down "Dom, Dombara, Paidi or Pano" as a Scheduled Caste throughout the State except Kanyakumari district and Shenocottah taluk of Tirunelveli District; and "Domban" as a Schedule Caste in Kanyakumari District and Shencottah taluk of Tirunelveli District. There is a feeling that the difference in spelling does not connote any social or material difference between them but both refer to one and the same caste. The first one is also scheduled in parts of Andhra Pradesh which formed part of Madras State prior to the formation of Andhra State and the second in parts of Kerala, which formed the erstwhile Travancore Cochin State before the States Reorganisation in 1956.

In fact, both of them have been grouped along with thirteen more castes of different names like Bhanjra in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, Dumna Mahasha or Doom in Punjab etc. and made into a single category since same caste is found to be represented by different names in different States and Union Territories (Census of India, Paper No. 2, 1960-Introduction and Sl. No. 135 on pp. 42-43). A reference to this grouping will indicate that one of the 15 subdivisions is scheduled in at least one whole or part of a State or Union Territory except in Assam, Manipur and Tripura. Thus Dombars are distributed all over the country. The present case study was made in Palayapadi of Udayarpalayam taluk in Tiruchirapalli District, Dharapuram of Coimbatore District, suburbs of Tiruvarur in Tanjore District and Ambalathadi in Madurai Taluk. Domban of the territories transferred from the erstwhile Travancore and Cochin State has no synonym. But Dom, Dombars, Paidi or Pano has 13 synonyms (viz.) Domb; Domba; Dombar; Dommara; Mirigani; Kabiriya; Odiya; Sodabisiya; Mandiri; Andiniya; Kalaikuttadi; Dombaravan and Jogi. Besides, Dombar itself is considered as synonym for Chakkiliyan. (Census of India 1961, Vol. IX, Part V-A (i) pp. 436-437). The first Synonym Dombs, with suffixes like Andhiya, Audiniya, Chonel, Christian, Mirgani and Oriya and prefixes like Ponaka, Telaga and Ummia, were Backward Tribe as per Thirteenth Schedule to the Government of India (Provincial Legislative Assem-

bly) Order, 1936. Dommars, perhaps the fourth synonym, were returned in 1931 Census as Criminal Tribe of North Arcot and South Arcot Districts, on the findings of the Criminal Tribes Act Enquiry Committee Report 1949-1950. Similarly, Jogi the 13th synonym, also known as Jogulas were returned in 1931 Census as criminal tribe of North Arcot, South Arcot, Chingleput and Madras districts.

'Dombo', which appears to be a synonym, but is not referred to as such so far, along with paidi or pano, was a Scheduled Caste according to the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936 throughout the State except Kanyakumari district and Shencottah taluk of Tirunelveli district. They were also returned in 1931 Census as Depressed Class throughout the State except Kanyakumari district and Shencottah taluk of Tirunelveli District. Besides, Dombo and Pano were also termed as Primitive Tribes in 1931 Census and Dombo as a Scheduled Caste in any special constituency constituted under the Government of India Act, 1935 for the election of representative of backward areas and backward tribes to the Legislative Assembly of the State. (Census of India, 1961, Volume I, India, Part V-B(i) pp. 26-97). It is also said that a few years back, Dombars of places like Karur in Tiruchirapalli district, who belonged to Thottia Naick sect, met in Conference and passed a resolution that they should change their agnomen from Dombars to Kattu Naickens, which is a Scheduled tribe. Again, Arya Koothadi popularly known as Koothadi another sect of Dombars and lived round about Tiruvarur and other places of Thanjavur district seemed to have been returned in 1961 Census as Samagara or Arya Samagar, another Scheduled caste.

Dombars, who performed in public, made a great deal of din and noise with drums and loud shrieks to attract a large crowd of spectators. This kind of clamour is called 'Dombi' in Kannada (Canarese), but whether 'Dombi' meaning a tumult or tumultous rabble is derived from Dombar, the name of the caste, is not easy to determine.

Reddi, Nayadu and Naick are the common titles used by Dombars. Thurston considered Dommara as a tribe of tumblers, athlets and mountebanks, some of whom wandered about the country, while others were settled as agriculture labourers or made comb out of horn and wood. Both men and women were considered skilful jugglers, very clever tumblers and tight-rope dancers. Some of them sold date mats and baskets, some raded in pigs while others settled in villages and cultivated lands. They were also said to receive into their community children of other castes and women of doubtful morals and to practice the custom of making dedicated prosti-

tutes. In 'History of the Criminal Tribes in Madras Presidency, 1929' E. Ramachandra Sastry wrote "Begging is their ostensible means of livelihood, but they pretend to live upon selling wooden combs and date mats and also profess to trade in donkeys, pigs and cattle. Their possession of a few cattle is used as a cloak for cattle lifting and is always put forward by them as a guarantee of respectability. The dommaras commit dacoity, robbery, burglary and also theft. They are experts in lifting cattle and sheep. The children at an early age are initiated into their parents art and are induced to gain experience to commit petty thefts at first. They get information either themselves or through their women. The women go out on the pretence of selling combs and mate get useful information. The Prostitutes too, find opportunities for getting information in the pursuit of their profession. Returning from looting expeditions, they are always ready with the excuse that they have been in search of stray pigs or donkeys. They are most obstinate in their protestations of innocence and they have seldom or never been known to confess a crime". However, the 1961 Census data indicate them to be professing either cultivation or cleaning and sweeping. Detailed discussion on their current occupation is made under their economic life.

There is no clear history about Dombars. There is a view that this caste appears to be an off-shoot of the very numerous outcast races of Northern India such as Kolaties and the Bereaks of Central India and the Domras of Bengal (Notes on Criminal classes of the presidency, Fredrick S. Mullaly, 1892). They were a wandering tribe, though like similar wandering tribes such as Korachas, many of them settled down in towns and villages (Mysore tribes and castes by H. V. Nanjundayya). A traditional account among the Telugu speaking sect runs as follows:

"A Reddi had, by his younger wife, it is said a son who was born without any limbs. Ever after, he was pursued by great misfortune. On consulting a sooth-sayer, the reddi discovered that the unfortunate child had brought ill-luck into the family and commanded his wife to do away with the child. Her maternal affection induced her to temporize and she hid the child in a manger. Cattle unaccountably died in numbers and a similar result was observed wherever the child was removed. In despair, the mother handed over the child to a wandering beggar, to be disposed of in some safe place, and the latter consigned it to a ruined well. The unwelcome brait had, however a rough life, and was not drowned. His cries attracted the attention of the Gods Parvathi and Parameswara, who, on learning his unfortunate history, miraculously gave him his limbs, and at his request, bestowed on him a right to obtain an earthen drum from a potter's house and doles of rice in each

house to which he might resort for alms. The boy was so pleased at getting his limbs that he jumped out of the well at one bound and cast himself at the feet of his divine benefactors. He was enjoined to add the profession of acrobatic performer to that of intenerant beggar. The Dombara are his descendants by a concubine he picked up in his wandering tours."

Another story is that a Reddi's wife delivered of a daughter in the field outside the village, whither she had carried her husband's mid-day meal. A hut was improvised for her accouchement, and after it was over, her husband's elder wife, out of envy, contrived that she and her child should be regarded as outcastes. The father gave all his lands and agricultural implements to the progeny of the other wife, and left to these a drum, a pole and a rope. They had to earn their living with these implements alone, and learnt acrobatic feats. No one would marry a girl playing in *public on a pole, and so the daughter, called Dombara Chinnasani,* became a prostitute. This is said to account for the custom of dedicating prostitutes, prevalent in the caste.

II. Distribution and Population trends

In 1961 Census, 1,977 were returned as Dom, Dombara Paidi or Pano in the Madras State (Census of India 1961, Vol. I, Part V-A (i) p. 214). But how many of them were enumerated synonymous with Chakkiliyan, Samagara or Kattu Naicken referred to earlier are not known. Twenty six persons were returned as Dombans and all the returns were from Kanyakumari District. (Census of India 1961 Vol. IX Part V-A (i) p. 378). They are the 20th Major Scheduled Caste of the Kanyakumari District and form 0.06% of the Scheduled Caste of that District. Of the 67 Scheduled Castes reported in Madras State during 1961 Census, the 1,977 Dom, Dombara, Paidi or Pano account for 0.03% and hold the 24th place in the State. Following statement indicates their distribution.

Districtwise Distribution of Dom, Dombara, Paidi or Pano

State/District	No. of persons returned in 1961 Census	Percentage to the State	Descending order of size within State	Percentage among all the Scheduled Castes	Rank among all the Scheduled Castes
1	2	3	4	5	6
Madras State . . .	1,977	100.00		00.03	24
Madras District . . .	112	05.67	VII	00.05	13

1	2	3	4	5	6
Chingleput District . . .	217	10.98	VI	00·04	10
North Arcot District . .	266	13.46	IV	00.04	12
South Arcot District . .	4	00.20	XII	N	..
Salem District . . .	42	02.12	X	00.01	22
Coimbatore District . .	389	19.68	I	00.07	20
The Nilgiris District . .	54	02.73	IX	00.07	17
Madurai District . . .	313	15.83	II	00.06	15
Tiruchirapalli District . .	297	15.02	III	00.05	16
Thanjavur District . . .	221	11.18	V	00.03	17
Ramanathapuram District .	6	00.30	XI	N	..
Tirunelveli District . . .	56	02.83	VIII	00.01	19

N — Negligible.

(*Basis:*—Census of India, 1961 Vol. IX—Part V-A (i) pp. 266-370).

The above table has its own limitations since it excludes such of those Dombars who would have been enumerated along with Chakkiliyans, Samagara or Kattu Naicken. However the statement will give the minimum limit. According to the above table, Dombars predominate in Coimbatore and Madurai districts followed by Tiruchirapalli, North Arcot, Thanjavur and Chingleput. The Distribution of the general population and that of Dombars in various districts follows more or less the same pattern except in the case of Salem and South Arcot. 11.29% of the general population are found in Salem District, whereas Dombars of Salem accounts for 2.12%. Corresponding figures for South Arcot are 9.05% and 0.20 respectively. In fact South Arcot District holds the maximum of 13.21% of the total scheduled castes of the State. The position is reversed in regard to Coimbatore and Madurai districts, where the proportions of Scheduled Castes are 8.78% and 8.08%, whereas those of Dombars are 19.68 and 15.83 respectively. In other districts, there is not much variation between the proportion of all the Scheduled Castes put together and Dombars.

Among the general population and all the Scheduled Castes put together, more people live in the rural areas, the percentages being 73.31 for the former and 84.74 for the latter. But only

37.78% of Dombars live in the rural areas. Their concentration in urban areas is due to a demand for them by local bodies like Municipalities and town panchayats to work as street sweepers and scavengers. Unlike the general population and all Scheduled Castes, there are more females among Dombars than males, the number of females per 100 males for the three being 99, 99 and 103. However, the deviation is not too much to get into more details. The sub-joined statement furnishes the percentage of population within various age-groups.

Percentage Age Distribution

Age-Group	General Population	Scheduled Castes	Dombars
All age-groups	100.00	100.00	100.00
0— 4	13.68	14.76	19.37
5—9	12.79	12.52	15.93
10—14	11.13	11.43	13.00
15—19	08.47	08.55	07.34
20—24	08.82	08.96	07.08
25—29	08.65	08.98	07.79
30—34	07.07	07.49	06.58
35—44	12.14	11·49	09.71
45—59	11.64	10.97	09.46
60+	05.60	04.84	03·69
Age not Stated	*00.01*	*00.01*	*00.05*

Basis : Appendix IV, Vol. IX Part V-A (i).

"With the exception of a age-group 5-9, proportion of Scheduled caste is more than the general population upto 34th year of age and then it is less. A definite trend is also noticed that the difference gradually decreases from the lower age group 0-4 upto 30-34 and then increases. This indicates that the life expectancy of Scheduled Caste is definitely less than that of the general population. The position deteriorates further in the case of Dombar, which records the largest percentage of population upto 14 years of age and the least afterwards, suggesting a lower expectation of life for Dombars.

III. Physical Characteristics

In his notes on criminal classes of the Presidency, Fredrick S. Mulloly observed early in 1892 that they were, as a class, tall and well made, with a complexion varying from different shades of copper colour to very dark. Dr. Shortt considered that the predominant type of countenance which they exhibited was Mangolian. He spoke of the somewhat pointed chin and absence of whiskers, large eye and cheek bones. Writing on the Mysore Tribes and Castes, 1928-36, H. V. Nanjundayya found Dombars as a strong muscular set of people in all shades of complexion. Tribesmen living in the vicinity of towns are better dressed and put on a better appearance. Those living in villages are found dirty in habits. The women of the former class are of average stature, better dressed and better ornamented, but the women of the vagrant class are dirty in appearance. The Dombar males are generally tall, stout, muscular and hardy.

IV. Family, Clan, Kinship and other Angalogus Divisions

The strength of Dombars at the river side village Palayapadi of Udayarpalayam taluk in Tiruchirapalli district is only 12 persons (6 males and 6 females) from three different households. The 244 Dombars observed in the municipal town Dharapuram of Coimbatore district hail from 53 households of following sizes.

Households size (Persons per household)	Frequency (households)
1	3
2—3	19
4—6	22
7—9	7
10 and above	2
TOTAL	53

The abstract indicates an average size of 2 to 6 persons in a household. In fact 36 families are simple families as against 7 joint families, the rest not coming under simple or joint family.

In spite of the too many synonyms, all the Dombars of Madras State fell under two divisions *viz.*, Telugu Dombar and Arya Dombar. Both the divisions practice pig rearing. The former is

more predominant but abstain from prostitution whereas the latter recognise prostitution by their women as customary. The latter also catch and eat crows. Arya Dombar class is also known as Mahratta Dombar from the fact of their language being a form of Mahratti. There is a speculation that some of them migrated from parts of Orissa and were known as Oriya Dombar and the rest migrated through Mysore, consequent of which they speak Kannadam mixed with Marathi. Being a distinct group, Arya Dombar is dealt with separately, the present discussion conforming to Telugu Dombars.

Telugu Dombars are divided into several sub-sects, Chief among them being Reddi Dombars or Kudi Dombars and Thottia Naicker Dombars. Reddi Dombars were studied at Palayapadi village of Tiruchirapalli district and Thottia Naick at Dharapuram of Coimbatore district. Reddi Dombars of Palayapadi village are divided intofour exogamous septs *viz.*, Sathukudiyan; Kavadaiyan; Kozhimuthan and Irusan. The first two are considered brother septs. So also the third and fourth are brother septs. Similar sept names are found among Dobbai Korawars, Serukkuvadu, Semmaravadu, Koonduruvadu, Arivilodu and Sirappuvedu are the five septs among the Thotti Naick Dombars of Dharapuram. Here again the first two belong to a brother sept and the next two belong to another brother sept.

V. Dwelling, Dress, Food, Ornament and other Material objects

Caste Hindus consider Dombars as untouchables. They therefore live in a single settlement on the outskirts of the village. Their huts in rural areas are, low roofed and shabby in appearance. The thatched roof is made of palmyrah or sugar-cane leaves. The huts has one room for the use of human beings and another one with separate entrance serving as a pig-sty. A change is, however noticed in the residences of Dombars at Dharapuram. 24 of the 53 households in Dharpuram live in tiled houses. A fairly good number of 42 households contain mud flooring while the rest have switched over to cement. Walls are either of mud or stone plastered with mud. Pig sty is detached from the main living room to which is annexed a verandah covered on all sides. The change in the dwelling pattern is perhaps due to better income.

Dombars are not allowed to take water from public wells of caste--Hindus. They have no separate well for their use but depend on streams and canals. In urban colonies like the one at Dharapuram they have their own wells. In dress and ornaments, Dombars appear no different from people of other low income groups. Generally, men wear dhotis of 4 cubits. However, those in the

urban areas and mostly engaged in scavenging are seen mostly in shorts. They cover their bodies with unwashed banians or half-sleeve shirts. Women wear sarees varying in length from 6 yards to 9 yards. The style of wearing the saree follows the local pattern. Sometimes, the saree is in two pieces, one wound round the waist and another thrown across the shoulder to cover the body. The 'Pallav' or end of the saree is always thrown over the left shoulder. Youngsters wear blouses with bodice, whereas the old women contend themselves with only a saree.

Dombars do not wear costly jewels. They are very fond of wearing plenty of glass bangles and string of glass-beads. They wear cheap stone-studded ornaments in ears and noses. Married women wear a small 'pottu-Thali', which is in the shape of a disc hooked to a string of black beads. A few, who have saved something, invest in jewels like Kammal, Mattal, Koppu, neck-chain, Kolusu, Minji, Bangles etc.

Generally males crop their hair except a very few with tufts. They have long moustaches and unshaven faces. Some have even beards. They have to depend on themselves for shaving and haircuts. Women part their hair in the middle and tie into a slanting knot (Kondai) at the back. They are very fond of wearing flowers. Some have tatoo marks on hands, chest and forehead. Many have tatoo marks on the forehead in the shape of a single vertical line in the centre of the forehead.

In view of their general poverty, they cannot choose their food, but are accustomed to consume whatever food they could get. Staple diet depends upon the season and may be in the shape of either rice or millets. Generally the food grains are procured by the women as a wage in kind for their agricultural labour. Normally they cook only once a day, that too in the evenings. After taking a hot meal in the night, the cooked food is preserved for the next day in water.

Dombars are, invariably, non-vegetarians. However, they do not take beef or the flesh of dead animals. Whenever they get an opportunity, they catch rats and squirrels and eat them. Their favourite dish is pig. They slaughter one or two pigs on festive occassions. Occasionally, they take chicken, which is a luxury for them. Smoking, chewing and drinking illicit country liquor are widely prevalent among them. Frequent visits to tea shops have become the fashion of the day.

VI. Environmental Sanitation, Tygienic habits, disease and treatment

Dombars appear to be very backward in environmental sanitation. Usually, their settlements are low-lying and water-logged. Drainage water stagnates in cess-pools. The position gets further deteriorated by the pigs which revel in puddling through the gutter water. Pig-castings, are in good demand as a manure. So the pig-castings, are stored in pits close to the dwelling huts, which produce stinking smell. Thus the environment becomes filthy.

Dombars claim to take both frequently, but their appearance and clothes make one doubt their claim. They appear to be unclean and wanting much in personal hygiene. In all its probability, they take bath only once or twice a week. Their clothes are dirty. Those living in the vicinity of towns are better dressed and put on a better appearance. They appear to be hale and healthy. They do not seem to suffer from any disease endemic to certain areas.

VII. Language and literacy

It has been indicated earlier that Dombars are not indigenous. As such their ancestral language is not Tamil, even though the present generation has acquired sufficient knowledge to use the regional language of Tamil in their day to day life. They use the regional language with outsiders but within themselves they speak their ancestral language which is either Telugu, Marathi or Kannadam mixed with Marathi depending on their sub-division discussed in detail under family, clan, etc.

Of the 1,977 persons returned in 1961 Census, 192 were reported as literates, consisting of 148 males and 44 females. 89 of the male literates and 36 of the female literates were in urban areas. These figures are presented as a percentage along with those for the general population and all the scheduled castes put together for easy comparison.

PERCENTAGE LITERATES

	Rural		Urban	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
General population . .	37.81	11.57	62.66	36.67
All scheduled castes . .	20.86	4.23	38.34	13.96
Dombars	14.68	2.32	15.51	5.49

Basis:—Census of India, vol. IX-Parts II C (*i*) and V-A (*ii*)

The above abstract indicates that the rate of literacy among Dombars is very low. The gap is very high even within the Scheduled castes. In keeping with the general trend, Dombars' literacy in urban areas is more. So also, males are better than females. The over all rate, including males and females in rural and urban sectors, works out to 9.72% as against 31.41 for general population and 14.53 for all the scheduled castes. Detailed break up for educational level, age and sex in the case of Dombars is as follows:—

Educational levels for 100.00 *Dombars enumerated in the State by sex and Age-group.*

Sex	Age-group	Illiterates	Literates without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation and above
Males . . .	All ages	41.90	05.92	01.42	00.15
	0— 4	09.26	Nil	Nil	Nil
	5—9	07.19	00.86	00·10	Nil
	10—14	04.61	01.42	00·46	Nil
	15—19	02.83	00.71	00.15	Nil
	20—29	05.21	01.11	00.10	00.05
	30—44	06.68	01.01	00.46	00.10
	45+	06.12	00.81	00.15	N l
Females . . .	All ages	48.38	01.42	00.76	00.05
	0—4	10.13	Nil	Nil	Nil
	5— 9	07.14	00.66	Nil	Nil
	10—14	06.12	00.30	00.10	Nil
	15—19	03.39	00.10	00.15	Nil
	20—29	07.95	00.15	00.30	Nil
	30—44	07.84	00.10	00.10	Nil
	45+	05.82	00.10	00.10	00.05
GRAND TOTAL	i.e.	90.28	07.34	02.18	00.20

Basis:—All ages both sexes Census of India, Volume IX Part V-A (ii) p.176-185.

The statement indicates that the population of literates does not show marked increase over that of old people. Ameliorative measures under five year plan schemes do not seem to have any impact on Dombars.

VIII. Economic life:

It has already been observed in detail that the traditionl occupation of Dombars is rope-dancing, jugglery, begging, manufacturing of comb out of horn and wood, selling of date mats and baskets, dedicated prostitution, rearing, cattle lifting, burglary and theft. The 1961 Census data indicate their economic way of life as follows :—

Means of livelihood

Category	Absolute figures				Percentage to total population			
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Workers and non-workers combined	402	345	574	656	53.82	46.18	46.67	53.33
Workers :								
All categories	198	101	241	141	26.51	13.52	19.59	11.46
Cultivator	53	16	6	4	07.10	02.14	00.49	00.33
Agricultural labourer	29	36	4	..	03.88	04.82	00.33	00.00
Livestock, forestry hunting etc.	34	27	13	4	04.55	03.61	01.06	00.33
Household Industry	54	19	44	20	07.23	02.54	03.58	01.63
Manufacturing other than household industry	4	..	57	21	00.54	00.00	04.63	01.71
Construction	..	..	3	..	00.00	00.00	00.24	00.00
Trade and Commerce	2	..	8	1	00.27	00.00	00.65	00.08
Transport, storage and communication	2	..	42	18	00.27	00.00	03.41	01.46
Other Services	20	3	64	73	02.68	00.40	05.20	05.93
Non-workers :	204	244	333	515	27.31	32.66	27.07	41.8
Special occupations								
Tanning and curring of hides and skins	..	..	1	..	00.00	00.00	00.08	00.00
Scavenging	1	..	23	46	00.13	00.00	01.87	03.74

Basis :— Census of India, Vol. IX Part IV-A (i) S.C.T. I Part A.

In the rural sector 40% of the Dombars are workers against 55% among all the scheduled castes and 50% among the general population. Women participation is nearly 33% against 43% for scheduled castes and 37% for general population. Rate of women participation in the labour force is more in the urban sector, while the total labour force is less in urban than rural by 9%. Urban working force among Dombars, Scheduled Castes and General population are 31%; 42% and 34% respectively, urban women participation rates being 37%; 34% and 21%. Agricultural operations are the main source of livelihood among the Dombars of rural areas followed by Household Industry and Live-stock. Perhaps these two latter categories represent their traditional occupation of comb manufacture and pig rearing. In urban areas, 'Other Services' is the chief category means of livelihood. 'Scavenging where nearly 2% of males and 4% of females are engaged is classified under this category. Significant proportions under transport may represent the transportation of night soil and street sweepings.

Occupational classification of Dombars returned as workers in 1961 Census, on the basis of the code structure laid down by the occupational information unit of the Directorate-General of Resettlement and Employment, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India are available in greater detail in Table S. C. T. VII of Census of India, 1961 Volume IX, Part V-A (ii). Occupations which have reported less than 1% of the total workers in each sex are of little significance. Number of workers in other occupations are indicated below :—

Significant occupations among Dombars

Code No. and description of Significant occupation	No. of males	No. of females
230 General and other ministerial Assistants and Clerks	6	2
301 Retail trader	8	1
404 & 411 Animal, birds and insects rearing .	68	34
415 Plantation labourers	15	7
702, 706 & 709 Spinners, weavers, Dyers and related workers	61	20
770 Carpenters	7	6
850 Basketry weavers	20	16
890 & 899 Casual labourers	46	31
931 Cleaners, Sweepers and Watermen . . .	74	63
Cultivators	59	20
Agricultural labourers	33	36
All workers (including negligible proportion in other occupations)	439	242

It is clear from the above statement that Dombars attempt to get themselves engaged in new and better avocations like spinning and weaving, retail trading carpentry, ministerial and Secretariat jobs etc. Still the majority of them live by scavanging followed by Animal rearing. It may even be said that pig rearing is the most popular occupation, if the data are processed from secondary occupations as well. The Scavengers of urban areas pursue pig rearing as their subsidiary means of livelihood.

As already indicated, pig rearing is one of the traditional occupation of both the Telugu Dombar and Arya Dombar. It does not require much capital and yet, it is considered as remunerative because of the prolificity of the animals reared. A young female pigling of about 3 months old, can be purchased for Rs. 5/-. It grows up very quickly and within another six months' period, gives birth to nearly a dozen piglings, out of which about half-a-dozen survive. In its life time it may conceive ten times. A full grown adult pig may fetch a price ranging from Rs. 40/- to 70/-. Tending the animal does not cost much as it requires no special feeding. It feeds by itself on the filth and human excreta. After groundnut harvesting, the cultivators allow Dombars to graze their pigs in the harvested fields. The pigs feed on the nuts which escaped picking by the farmers. By this process, the field gets burrowed and becomes tilled, besides getting a rich nitrogenous manure by way of urine and droppings by the pigs. Droppings at the pig-sty are sold at Rs. 2/- per bag. A family tends 30 to 40 animals at a time. It is quite obvious that more concentration of Dombar families with this traditional occupation at a village, creates problem on the self feeding of the herd, and preventing them from trespassing into the cultivated fields. So, Dombars tending large herds of pigs, do not concentrate in one village.

A few Dombars pursue comb-making, another traditional occupation. They procure horns of dead and slaughtered cows or buffaloes, either from slaughter houses or from Chakkilians on payment of small sums. The horns are split into two half cones vertically and each flattened by gently heating over a fire. The heated pieces are kept for sometime in an improvised press consisting of two heavy bricks. They are then cut into required sizes with a saw. Some use light wood in the place of horn. A finished comb may be sold for about half-a-rupee. However, this cottage industry is dying out fastly due to the popularisation of cheap plastic combs.

Dombars settled in urban areas are mostly employed by the local bodies like Municipalities and major panchayats as sweepers and scavengers. For instance, out of the 93 workers

among the 244 persons surveyed in Dharapuram town, 44 males and 8 females were found as Sweepers, 4 males and 32 females as Scavengers and the rest of 5 males as general labourers. Each worker gets a monthly salary of Rs. 62/-, besides a pair of clothes annually at the time of Deepavali. Scavenging is done in a crude form. Night soil from dry type latrines are scooped and carried in tin trays. These are emptied into buckets, which in turn are emptied into wheel borrows. These have to be dragged and dumped in night-soil dumping grounds to make urban-compost. Even for such a repulsive type of work, there is competition from Chakkilians, Jogies, Kuravans, because the salaries received are more attractive than the earning in other occupations known to them. Pig rearing is only a subsidiary occupation in Dharapuram town. 6 out of the 53 households enumerated do not tend pigs. The remaining 47 households own a total of 134 pigs. The following abstract indicates the income pattern of the 53 households.

Income group (Rs. per month)	No. of households
25–50	5
21–75	21
76–100	5
101 and above	22
TOTAL	53

Their expenditure pattern shows that food forms the main expenditure. Expenses on chewing, smoking and entertainment are also appreciable. In spite of their moderate income, Dombars of Dharapuram town are found to be indebted. Borrowing for the sake of ceremonies forms the bulk of the debt.

IX. Life cycle:

Birth :

Dombars observe no ceremonies when a woman is pregnant. Neither there is any restriction on the diet nor special diet taken during confinement. Delivery takes place in the dwelling hut itself. Some experienced old women attend to the delivery. After delivery, a special decoction of ginger, pepper and curry leaves is prepared and given to the delivered mother. The placenta is usually kept at the backyard of the house in a pot and buried. The child is given a bath and adorned with new clothes. No elaborate ceremony is done for readmitting a mother on the seventh or ninth day into the house. But in Palayapadi it is said that a pig is slaughtered and a feast given to all the relations on that day.

Puberty :

When a girl attains puberty, a separate hut is constructed with green leaves, close to the dwelling house and the girl ushered into it. She lives there for a week or nine days and pollution is observed till she is given a bath and taken back. This period of seggregation is sometimes extended to 15 days. On that day she is given a bath. The hut is dismantled and burnt. The maternal uncle gives her presents and new clothes. During subsequent mensuration the woman observes Pollution for three to five days. During this period she sleeps on the 'pial' of the house.

Marriage :

Of the 976 males and 1,001 females, 586 and 481 are reported in 1961 Census as 'never married' representing 60.04% and 48.05% as against 53.99% and 42.78% among all the Scheduled Castes and 55.42% and 43.30% among the general population respectively, indicating higher proportion of never married among Dombars. However, if such proportions are worked out separtely for each of the age-groups, 0-14; 15-44 and over 45, the position gets reversed indicating the least proportion of never married among Dombars. The first indication is illusionary because of large proportion of Dombar youths within 14 years of age. The youngest age-group of 0-14 records 99.58% of males and 94.20% of females among Dombars as never married against 99.81% and 98.82% among all Scheduled Castes and 99.88% and 99.28% among general population. There is not appreciable difference among males, but the difference in females indicates early marriage among Dombars. However neither the field study nor other publications about them reveal any case of infant marriage.

Among the three categories of general population, all the scheduled castes put together and Dombars record the highest proportion of Divorced or separated persons, the proportions being 1.65% and 1.43% among males aged 15-44 and over 45 respectively and those among females being 3.53% and 1.67% respectively. Dombar males record the highest proportion of widowhood, 3.02% in the age group 15-44 and 16.43% in 45 and over, while the females record the lowest figures of 5.54% in 15-44 and 50% in 45 and over. The case studies reveal that a marriage for the second time is not celebrated with *Thali* (தாலி) tying or marriage badge. However widowed, separated or divorced practise concubinism. They live like any married individuals, the only difference being no ceremony precedes their becoming so.

There does not seem to be any general exogamous restrictions, that can be said to apply throughout the State. But there are some sub-divisions which are neither endogamous nor exogamous in its strict sense, but which seem to be based on territorial or other distinctions. For instance, the Telugu Dombars in Palayapadi are divided into four septs viz. Sathukudiyan, Kavadaiyan, Kozhimuttan and Irusan. The first two are considered as brother septs and the third and fourth are also considered as brother septs. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Dabbai Korawars have such similar sept names. Dombars at Dharapuram have five different sub-divisions as Serukkuvadu, Koonduravadu, Semmaravadu, Arivilodu and Sirappuvadu. Here again, the first two belong to a brother sept and the next two belong to another brother sept.

Out of the 75 marriages involved among the Dombars at Dharapuram, the brides in 27 cases were paternal aunt's daughters', those in 26 cases were maternal uncle's daughters, those in 11 were sister's daughters and the rest in 11 cases were either unrelated or distantly related. These figures indicate a tendency of marriage among relatives, most preferably paternal aunt's daughters or maternal uncle's daughter. Marriages are normally arranged by elders, that too only after puberty. A boy is considered to be mature enough for marriage only after his 20th year of age and girls after 15. The initiative for a marriage always comes from the groom's side. On a day fixed earlier, the groom's party visits the girl's house and settles the terms of marriage. The groom's side has to pay a bride-price called "Parisam" which varies from region to region. In Palayapadi, the traditional bride price is said to be Rs. 52.50.

The marriage invariably takes place in the house of the bride. The marriage expenditure is borne by both the parties. In all the places, the marriage is symbolised by the groom tying a "Tali" around the neck of the girl. The shape of the "Tali" is usually a small disc of the size of a 4 anna piece hooked to a double string of black beads. In some places, the "Tali" is in the shape of a hallow disc. After marriage, the relations assembled are given a feast and they, in turn, are expected to make small cash presents called "Moi".

Divorces are freely granted for incompatibility, adultery, and barrenness. In cases where divorces are granted on the move of the wife, she has to return the bride-price to the husband. Divorce is signified by cutting the Tali string and returning it to the husband in the presence of the caste headman and other elders.

Death :

The Dombars usually bury the dead. Soon after a death, close relations are sent for. A cold water bath is given and perfumes applied to the corpse. A small quantity of paddy is dehusked and a few grains sprinkled over the body and into the mouth. The body is taken to the burial ground in an improvised stretcher constructed out of bamboos. Drums and pipes are played all along the route. In the burial ground a pit is dug north-south and the body laid into it. The Telugu Dombars and the Thotti Naick Dombars say that they place the body with head towards south. On the third day, members of the bereaved family revisit the burial ground and pour a little ghee and milk at the place of burial. Pollution is observed for 3 to 16 days depending upon the circumstsances till "Karumathi" is performed. The Dombars of Dharapuram say that on the "Karumathi" day, they would slay a pig, cook it with rice and place the food to the crows near the place of burial. Well-to-do people among the Dombars perform one anniversary in commemoration of the dead. The Dombars generally spend amounts beyond their means on death ceremonies.

In one or two places, the Dombars in consonance with local practice, cremate the dead instead of burying in the case of very elderly persons who have lived a full span of life.

X. Religion:

Dombars professed to be Vaishnavites and not unfrequently wore the trident mark on the forehead, but Fredric S. Mullaly considered them (Notes on criminal classes of the presidency, 1892) demonologists, worshipping the deity of the margosa tree, Polariammal and Mariammal. There does not seem to be any conversion to Christianity. The Dombars of Palayapadi worship Madurai veeran as their principal deity. The Dombars in Dharapuram say that their principal deity is Kaliamma, for whom they have built a temple close by. Besides their own deities, they are also known to worship Palaniandavar, Vinayakar, Vishnu and Siva. The Dombars of Palayapadi celebrate the annual festival of Madurai veeran in a grand manner in the month of Vaikasi-May-June. On this occasion animal sacrifices are also offered. A fattened he-pig, a male pigling and a fowl are sacrificed on this occasion. After feasting on the animals sacrified, a dance is arranged in the precincts of the Madurai veeran temple. One or two in the crowd may get possessed and become oracles. The Dombars of Dharapuram celebrate the annual festival for Kali-

amman in the month of Masi February-March. 'Pongal' (cooked rice) is cooked on this occasion. Formerly they used to offer sacrifices, but that has now been stopped. Besides the annual festival of the local deities, they also observe important Hindu festivals like *Deepavali, Thai Pongal, Adi Pandigai* etc.

The Dombars attach great importance to oaths and ordeals. The most common form of taking oath is by extinguishing a burning camphor, or dipping hands in a boiling pot of ghee. Another form of taking oath is to cross poles in front of the temple to prove the bonafides. At Palayapadi, the way in which swearing is done is by dipping hands in a boiling pot of ghee. Another form of taking oath is to cross poles in front of the temple to prove the bonafides. At Palayapadi the way in which swearing is done by dipping hands in boiling ghee, called "Nei Chatti Sathiam" is narrated as follows:—

The aggrieved person buys a new earthen pot, 15 cakes of dried cowdung, one measure of ghee and boils it in the pot in front of a temple. The person whom he challenges to prove the truth otherwise is given intimation of it and he is bound to be present at the time of boiling of the ghee. He should take the challenge and dip his fingers in the boiling ghee. On the next day, if there are burns in the fingers, it would mean that justice is on the side of the person who made the challenge. If on the other hand, the fingers are not burnt, it would mean that the justice is on the side of the person challenged. By this method only the chastity of doubtful woman is proved, and in case a suspected woman is proved unfaithful to her husband by this method she or her parents should return the bride-price to her husband and they will be declared as divorced.

In Dharapuram area, a slightly different version is narrated about the method of performing "Nei Chatti Sathiam". If a Dombar is complained of having committed a crime like theft, falsification, adultery etc., he would be summoned to appear before the caste-head. The plaintiff and the respondent will be asked to appear again with one pig each. Both the pigs received from them will be slaughtered and their flesh distributed to all the people in the community. After feasting, a pot of ghee will be boiled and both the plaintiff and the respondent will be asked to dip their index fingers in the boiling ghee. The fingers will then be bandaged immediately with cotton cloth. They will be asked to come back after 24 hours, and directed to remove the bandages. Whoever has burns on the finger will be deemed as guilty and a judgment will be passed accordingly.

XI. Structure of Social control, prestige and leadership:

Social life of Dombars is found to be largely influenced by the local or regional customs and manners of the predominant communities of the areas concerned. That is inevitable as they are scattered over a wide area with no central community organisation to control and regulate the customs and manners of the members. There is no indigenous panchayat or caste panchayat. In this notes on criminal classes of the Presidency, 1892, Fredrick S. Mullaly refers Mutli Guru as the head of Dombars and the highest priest, exercising supreme jurisdiction both in spiritual and temporal matters with headquarters at Chitvel in Pullampett taluk of Cuddapah district, about which there is also a reference in Mysore Tribes and Castes by H. V. Nanjundayya. No such central leadership is reported at present in Madras State. However, each Dombar settlement has its own headman, who decides all disputes and whose word is final. For instance, H. V. Nanjundayya and L.K.A. Iyer refer to 'Yajman' in their "Mysore Tribes and Castes, 1928-36". Dombars in Udayarpalayam taluk have a caste-head called "Mooppan" with jurisdiction over four or five adjoining villages. He is assisted in his duties by an assistant called "Odum Pillai". The Dombars of Dharapuram have a caste headman called 'Pattakkaran' and he is assisted in his duties by an assistant called "Odum Pillai". In both the places, the offices are held in a hereditary capacity and they are not elective. In Udayarpalayam taluk, the office is held by a man belonging to Sathukudiyan sept. Whenever a dispute arises, the Mooppan or Pattakaran sends intimation to caste elders living in the various villages through his assistant and a caste council sits and hears the parties to decide the matter. It hears complaints of varying nature ranging from adultery to simple assault. In case where guilt is proved, the council imposes a fine and if the guilty person refuses to pay the fine, social sanctions are applied against him in order to enforce the decision of the council. When a Dombar male elopes with a low caste woman or when a Dombar female does the same, they are excommunicated and never admitted back. The Pallars, Parayars and Chakkiliars are for this purpose treated as low castes by the Dombars. When a Dombar male elopes with a high caste woman, they are admitted into the community. When a Dombar male elopes with another Dombar female, they are traced, brought back to the village and compelled to marry on pain of social ostracism. In the case of married women, adultery is punished with fines ranging to even Rs. 50. Purification of defaulted women is effected by scorching the tongue of the women with a piece of heated gold. The Moopan or the Pattakaran is the person empowered to administer the purification.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DOMBAR

Aiyappan, A . . . . Dombo
Report on the Social economic condition of aboriginal tribe of the province of Madras 1948

Ayyanagar, Ananth ayanam . Dommars or Domars
(Reddis & Arais)
Report of the Crimtnai Tribes Act Enquiry Committee, 1949-50 P. 19 para 7 6

Chinnathambti R. . . . Dombar,
New Review, V. 18, 1943 pp. 37-42

Crooke, W. . . . Domar,
The Castes & Tribe of N.W.P. and Oudh, Calcutta—1896 Vol. II p. 12-342

Enthoven, R. E. . . . Dombar
The Tribes and castes of Bombay, Bombay, 1920 Vol. I p. 341

Enthoven, R. E. . . . Mahar Dombar
The tribes and castes of Bombay Bombay 1922 Vol. II, p. 418

Hassan, S. S. . . . Domara
The castes & tribes of H.E H. The Nizam Dominion Bombay 192 Vol.I pp. 177-184

Luiz, A. A D . . . Dommaras
All India Enquiry Nomadic Tribes Committee report (Committee set in 1958) pp. 183-184.

Mazumdar Buakat Prasad . Hadi, Domba, Chandals & Badhatan Socio-Economic History of Northern India (1030-1194 A.D.)
Calcutta : 1960
pp. 111-113

Nanjundaya H V. & Dombar
Iyer, L. K. A
Mysore Tribes & Castes Mysore 1928-36 Vol. II pp. 139-174

Russell, R. V. & Domra Dumar or Dom
Hiralal
The tribes and castes of the Central Provinces of India, London : 1916 Vol. I, p. 361 s

Sherring, M. A. . . . Dombari

Hindu tribes and castes as represented in Benaras

Calcutta : 1872 Vol. II pp. 201, 338

Sherring M. A. . . . Dommara

Hindu tribes and castes as represented in Banaras

Calcutta : 1172 Vol. III p. 141

Sherring, M. A.s . . . Domba

Hindu tribes and castes as represented in Banaras

Calcutta : 1972 Vol. III, p. 161

Thurston, E . . . . Mararh, Domaras

Castes and tribes of southern India *Madras 1909 Vol. I p. 56-57.*

Thurston, E. . . . . Domb

Castes and tribes of Southern India Madras 1909 Vol. II p. 173-185

Thurston, E. . . . . Dommara

Castes and tribes of Southern India Madras 1909 Vol. II pp. 185-190

Cornish, W. R. . . . Dommeras

Report of the Census of the Madras Presidency 1871 Madras 1874 Vol. I p. 167

Lindsay, A. W. C. . . Dombar

Report on the Mysore General Census of 1871 Bangalore 1874 p. 86

Rice L. . . . . Dombas

Report on the Mysore Census of 1881 Bangalore : 1884 p. 70

Stuart, H. A. . . . Dommara, Dombara

Census of India, 1891 Vol. XIII Madras 1883 p. 307

Narasimmiyengas, V. N. . . Dombar

Census of India 1891 Vol. XXV Mysore Part I Report *Bangalore 1893p. 258*

Francis W. . . . . Dombo Domban

Census of India 1901
Vol. XV Madras Part I Report
Madras : 1902 p. 152

Francis, W. . . . . Dommara
Census of India 1901 Vol. XV Madras Part I report Madras 1902 p. 153

Row, T. A. . . . . Dombar
Census of India 1901 Vol. XXIV Mysore Part I Report Bangalore : 1903 p. 519-520

Aiyar, V. R. T. . . . Dombars
Census of India : 1911
Vol. XXI Mysore Part I Report Bangalore 1912 p. 166

Venkatachar C. S. . . Domar
Census of India, 1931 Vol. XX Central India Agency Part I Report Delhi 1933 p. 282

Extract on "DOMBOS" from Report on the Socio-Economic Conditions of the Aboriginal Tribes of the Province of Madras by A. AIYAPPAN, M.A., Ph.,D. Secretary, Aboriginal Tribes Welfare Enquiry Committee, Printed by The Superintendent, Government Press, Madras-1948 from pages 86-88.

DOMBOS

Habitat :

The Dombos, an untouchable caste, are found in the Vizagapatam Agency areas alongside of the Bagatas, Cadabas, Jatapus and Savaras. The Dombo is the Oriya proto-type of the Paidi, Valmiki or Pano. According to a note on the Dombo in the Census Report of 1881, the same man is called Paidi by the Telugus, Dombo by the Savaras and Pano by the Khonds, and Pano quarters in Khond villages are called *Dombo Sai.*

Population :

During the 1941 Census, 20,305 Dombos from the Vizagapatam Agency areas, 346 from the plains, six from Salem and eleven from Coimbatore were returned. Under the name Pano, 522 were returned from the Vizagapatam Agency areas. If the statement that the Dombo goes by different names in different areas or is called by several names by their neighbouring tribes is correct, then out of a total of 21,190 Dombos, the vast bulk of 20,827 inhabit the Agency portions of the Vizagapatam district.

Social Organisation:

The muttahdar is the head of all the people in the villages under his jurisdiction. There is no indigenous panchayat or caste panchayat, the muttahdar decides all disputes and his word is final.

Subdivision:

They are divided into five main divisions :— Onomia, Odia, Mandiri, Mirgan and Kohara.

Among the Odia group, the following totemistic septs are said to exist :—

Bhag (tiger), Balu (bear), Nag (cobra), Hanuman (monkey God), Bengari (frog), Surya (the Sun), Matsya (fish), Jaikonda (lizard), Kochchipo (tortoise) and Kukra (dog).

Language :

Some speak Telugu and some Oriya, which depends upon the region in which they live.

Customs and Habits:

The Dombos are a scheduled caste community. They are all beef eaters, only the animals representing their totemistic septs being taboo. All are addicted to drink and opium eating, and gambling too.

Professionally, they are all weavers, and nowadays, they are pushing brokers. They act as middlemen between the hill people and the Komati traders or the sowcars and earn large profits in the transactions.

They have a natural inclination to the art of music and a good number of them are said to be employed as musicians, pipers and drummers under the Maharaja of Jeypore.

In days gone by, they used to supply the victims for the 'Merish' sacrifice. They were to kidnap youths from the plains and rear them for this purpose. Because of this service, the otherwise aristocratic Khond allowed liberties to the Panos which has led to an admixture of Pano blood in the Kui. The Dombos cremate their dead

The Dombos are also looked down with contempt by other tribes as very low and arrant thieves.

They name their children after the days of the week on which the individual was born.

Marriage :

Girls are usually married after puberty. The usual 'menarikam' (marrying mother's brother's daughter) is common; a man can claim it as a matter of right. 'Eduru menarikam', i.e., marrying father's sister's daughter, is also allowed. The procedure adopted in settling marriages is similar to that of the Porjas, i.e., opening the negotiations with liquor pots. If *Menarikam* is followed, then the number of liquor pots decreases and the 'holla tanka' — the bride price — is also reduced. It is usual for the bride-groom to go to the bride's house with his relations where the hands of the couple are linked by elders and some turmeric, coins, etc., are tied up in their clothes. After bathing the couple in 'Manjalthannir' — turmeric water— on the third day, the relations and friends are given a feast including drink. After a few days, the knots containing turmeric, coins, etc., are united, when the marriage ceremony comes to a close.

Widows are allowed to re-marry. A widow usually re-marries the younger brother of her husband.

Some of the Dombos of the Parvatipur Agency follow many of the customs of the plains castes and say they are the same as the Paidis of the adjoining plains with whom they inter-marry.

Economics:—The economic condition of the Dombos can be said to be on a par with that of the Valmikis who have earned a bit of wealth by money-lending. As stated already under 'Customs and Habits', the Dombos have earned by mediation between sowcars and hill people.

Their main occupation is cultivation and they do Podu. A vast majority of them are ryots under the Maharaja of Jeypore and each pays a rent of half a rupee irrespective of the extent of land he holds.

Extract on "DOMBARS" from 'The New Review' Volume XVIII July to December, 1943. *Edited and Published by A. Lallemand, S.J., from* 5, *Dharamtala Street, Calcutta. Printed by R. N. Mitra at the Nalanda Press,* 159-160 *Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Pages* 37 *to* 42.

DOMBARS

By R. CHINNATHAMBI

At the foot of the Javadi Hills in Andiappanur village in Tiruppattur Taluk. North Arcot district, live a small group of 16 families of a backward community, known as *Dombars.* They are first cousins of the dombars who are scavengers in urban areas. Tall and light-brown, with somewhat high and prominent features, these domabrs, more or less a hill tribe, lead a fascinating social life. Their language is a debased form of Telugu with a profuse sprinkling of Tamil words.

The dombars are usually found almost on the outskirts of the village though, of course, no respectable distance of caste consciousness separates their quarters from that of the high caste Hindu houses, as in the case of the *Pariah cheri.* The site chosen for their humble huts it often near trees the shade of which is necessary for pursuing their age-long craft of comb-making in wood. Mudwalls and thatched roofing make up their house, with even smaller replicas attached to serve as pig pens. The offensive odour from these animals often announces the vicinity of dombar quarters. These huts are scattered indiscriminately around a communal temple. A few of the dombars who have amassed a little wealth live in tiled buildings cheek by jowl with the caste Hindu houses. Whether huts or tiled buildings, their habitations have no windows but only a door.

Out of the total population of 80 comprising the group, 17 men are actually making combs out of wood for a living, assisted by three boys who have left school. As a rule boys are not compelled into the industry until they are about 15 or 16 years. After that, they are initiated into the craft of their parents. Dombar combs are the only form of combs available in rural areas for performing a very necessary cleaning of the hair. The ordinary small variety for parting the hair is no less popular than the long one used for combing out lice. The wood is obtained from the slopes of the Javadi Hills close by and while a green state is chipped off into thin blocks $3\frac{1}{4}'' \times \frac{1}{4}''$ with chisel and saw by manual labour. The teeth are formed by short files. One adult working from morn till evening can easily produce 50 wooden combs. Sel-

ling at an average price of 8 annas per 100 he can make 4 annas per day. But village workers seldom stick to their job the whole day or every day of the week. Hired labour is never employed.

Comb-making is, however, indulged in only when there is no other work to do. A good many of them are cultivators working for wages. Some of them lease out land while others work on their own fields. There are four such landlords or *Pattadars.*

Rearing pigs is another common mode of supplementing the family earnings. The annual income from the sale of pigs estimated to be from Rs. 20 to Rs. 50.

Some of the domers are rich enough to live in tiled houses and to own property, lands or houses to the value of Rs. 1,500/-. The total indebtedness of the community ran up to Rs. 1,000 at the time of this inquiry.

The dombars dress very simply—The men in lion cloth and upper piece; the women in a *Pudavai* or country saree. The cloth is woven in the district out of mill yarn. Only one man was found to wear earrings while most of the women had no ornaments. The subjection of women is a striking feature. About Rs. 200 worth of jewels was declared to be under mortgage. The mortgage deed was examined and found to have been issued by a private bank in Tirupattur town, about 12 miles away, which had loaned money on 6¼ percent simple interest.

Out of the total population of 80, only one adult was found to be literate. Of the children there were 13 boys, 12 girls and 4 babies — only 6 boys were studying in the local District Board School. One of the boys who had left school was found to have studied up to standard VI. Only when boys are 15 or thereabout, are they considered old enough to become workers in their ancestral craft. Till then the boys loaf about or serve as shepherds or cattle-boys to the small capitalist farmer. Girls are not educated at all. Education of the kind that these children are given has a serious disadvantage in that it makes the dombar youngster swell-headed when he has studied up to Standard VI, who thereafter, invariably, thinks himself above manual labour, even the handicrafts of his forefathers. One such example existed who was known popularly as *Pallikudathan* or the one who had been to school—a distinction in their community of no less eminence than being termed 'Oxonian' in higher cultural spheres.

Apart from drinking there seems to be no recreation in the community which is regularly indulged in during evenings. Those

who go to Tiruppattur on shandy days to sell combs in retail invariably halt there for the night and frequent picture houses so that a good portion of what they earn that day is spent on ticket, tea, betal or *beedi* and meals. The usual outlets for their primitive feelings such as *Mariamman* festivities, bull-racing, *Pongal* are always there, anxiously looked forward to and extravagantly enjoyed.

The dombars are a cheerful lot, patient, optimistic and shrewd. Their relationship with other communities and castes in the village is very cordial and they are not considered as untouchables. Dombars are allowed to take part in religious functions in the temple in the caste quarters of the village. The tribal god of the dombars is *Venkatesa Perumal* (*Kula deivam*) but they worship *Mari*- their habitations, covered up with thatched leaves. They celebrate her *utchavam* once a year. They do not appear to be very superstitious.

The acknowledged leader of the community, the *natamkar,* is a fairly old man and he is illiterate. But the community holds together as a unit, is peace-loving and co-operates in social functions such as weddings, funerals or festivals. Every such function is rounded off with a drinking party. There is a *kattupadu* or union and funds for communal purposes are raised on a common understanding from each family or house. And the money is entrusted with the *natamkar.* The amount available was found to be Rs. 12. This includes also fines for social offences, a good portion of which usually gets spent in drinking orgies. Fines, of course, are very rare as there are no factions in the community and they are not given to litigation which is a very common communal pastime in rural parts.

Widow re-marriage is not prevalent. Marriage, even before puberty appears to be common in spite of the Sarda Act. Each wedding costs about Rs. 200 and the usual indebtedness ensues. Concubinage is dying out, but the practice of permitting one woman or girl of the community to live as a *dasi* to perform dancing and other *sevak* to gods and men appears to continue. This or some other secret vice may be the real cause of the small number of children in the community.

Dombars eat *kambu, ragi* or *cholam* and rice once in a day. Curry, if they ever have it, is of dall and vegetables. Meat is a luxury to be indulged in on special occasions, when pigs are slaugh-

tered and shared by the whole community. But like all villagers they are undernourished and a scientific dieting of all the available articles of food in the locality would help a good deal.

Like most villagers dombars are addicted to chew tobacco as well as betel but principally tobacco which seems to deaden the pangs of hunger and is admittedly used for this purpose by most poor people in this *taluk*.

This evil has existed amongst dombars from time immemorial. They appear to be hard drinkers. Only men drink while the women and children are not allowed to. Probably the latter do on the sly. The men assert that they drink once a week, that each man goes on his own to the toddy shop and that only on festival occasions or funeral do they all get together for the orgy. But it would be nearer the truth to say that the men drink whenever they get money. This is the opinion of the village *mongar* who ought to know better and there is a 'pub' in the village itself. The men thus spend away their earnings while living on the scanty return brought in by their wives by cooly work in the fields or elsewhere. At the toddy shop each man spends 2 annas on a bottle of toddy (nearly 25 ounces) and half anna on 'taste'. *Beedi* or country cigarettes and betel come to another half anna and the total expenditure comes to 3 annas. comb-making is not such an arduous task as cooly work in the fields and the physical relief afforded by such soporifics as toddy is not after all an urgent necessity to prime the worker up for the labour on the following day. The evil exists as a bad practice, pure and simple.

As comb-making is carried on most of the time under cool trees and as cooly work in the fields entails hard labour the dombars do not suffer from lung trouble. General debility due to undernourishment is aggrevated by the drink habit and by frequent attacks of malaria. The comb-worker complained of frequent chest-pain. He believed it is due to the stooping posture during work but it is quite possible that the ailment is the result of drink. There is a disfigurement of the left palm of the comb worker—two ugly marks like knife cuts, 1½″ to 2″ long, due to the fall of the chisel blade on the palm and the firm grip on the wooden block being shaped into a comb. There seems to be no help for this unless the worker changes his mode of production.

Dombars are known in urban areas as sweepers and scavengers but to the villagers, they are makers of wooden combs without which the toilet outfit of the village beauties is incomplete. In spite of cheaper products imported from Japan, the wooden

comb has held its own in villages and through the resuscitation of this home industry which is pursued by the dombars more as a hobby and as a part-time job than as a bread-winning occupation lies the uplift of the community itself. Hand in hand with an effort to create enthusiasm for education, there should go an efficient organisation of the industry varying the raw material to sandalwood and horn and improving the tools and the designs.

PALGHAT.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from 'The Tribes and Castes' of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh by W. CROOKE, B.A., Bengal Civil Service, in Four Volumes. Vol. II, Calcutta : Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India 1896 *from page* 312 *to* 342.

*

DOM, DOMRA, DOMHARA (Sans, *Dama; Doma. Domba*), a Dravidian menial caste found scattered throughout these Provinces, regarding whose origin and ethnological affinities there has been much speculation. To the east of the Province they are usually known as Dom, but are sometimes called Jallad, "executioner", Hatyara, "murderous, blood-thirsty", or Supach, which is, as we shall see traditionally the name of the founder of the tribe, and who also enters into the legends of the Bhangis. The name seems to represent the Svapaka or "cooker of dogs", a man of a degraded and outcast tribe, the son of an Ugra woman by a Kshatriya. He is required to live outside towns like the Chandala, to eat his food in broken vessels, to wear the clothes of the dead, and to be excluded from all intercourse with other tribes; he can possess no other property than asses and dogs, and his only office is to act as public executioner or to carry out the bodies of those who die without kindered. His kinsman, the Chandala, according to Manu[1], ranks in impurity with the town boar, the dog, a woman in her courses, and an eunuch, none of whom must a Brahman allow to see him when eating. According to Dr. Caldwell[2] they are the surviving representatives of an older, ruder, and blacker race who preceded the Dravidians in India. Sir. H. M. Elliot[3] considers them to be "one of the original tribes of India. Tradition fixes their residence to the north of the Ghagra, touching the Bhars on the east in the vicinity of the Rohini. Several old forts testify to their former importance, and still retain the names of their founders, as, for instance, Domdiha and Domingarh, in the Gorakhpur District. Ramgarh and Sahnkot, on the Rohini, are also Dom forts". Attempts have, also, been made to connect them in some way with the Domkatar or Domtikar Rajputs of Gorakhpur, and with the Domwar

---

*For the Eastern Doms the valuable note by Mr. J. Kennedy, C.S., has been largely used, and that of Pandit Juala Dat Joshi for the Hill Doms. In addition to these, notes by Mr. H. D. Ferard, C. S. Banda: M. Chhedi Lal Deputy Inspector, Schools, Gorakhpur, and the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Bijnor and Dehra Dun, have been consulted.

1. Institutes, III, 239. 2. Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, 546 quoted by Risley, *Tribes* and *Castes*, I, 240.

3. Supplemental Glossary, S. V.

Bhuinhars[4]. All this discussion is, as Mr. Risley says, somewhat profitless; but out of it seems to emerge "a general consensus of opinion that the Doms belong to one of the races, whom, for convenience of expression, we may call the aborigines of India. Their personal appearance bears out this opinion. Mr. Beames[5] describes the Doms of Champaran as "small and dark, with long tresses of unkempt hair, and the peculiar glassy eye of the non-Aryan autochthon", and Mr. Sherring[6] remarks that "dark-complexioned, low of stature, and somewhat repulsive in appearance, they are readily distinguished from all the better castes of Hindus". "The type, however, "Mr. Risley adds, "as is the case with most widely-diffused castes, seems to display appreciable variation. In Eastern Bengal, according to Dr. Wise, the Dom's hair is long, black, and coarse, while his complexion is oftener of a brown than a black hue; and among the Magahiya Doms, whom I have seen in Bihar, only a small portion struck me as showing any marked resemblance to the aborigines of Chota Nagpur, who are, I suppose, among the purest specimens of the non-Aryans races of India. On the whole, however, the prevalent type of physique and complexion seems to mark the caste as not of Aryan descent, although evidence is wanting to connect it with any compact aborigional tribe of the present day. The fact that for centuries they have been condemned to the most menial duties, and have served as the helots of the entire village community, would, of itself, be sufficient to break down whatever tribal spirit they may once have possessed, and to obliterate all structural traces of their true origin".

2. To this must be added another point which cannot be left out of consideration in dealing with these menial races. The tribes of scavengers, such as the Bhangi and Dom, have for many generations formed a sort of Cave of Adullam for the outcastes of the higher races, and the notorious immoral character of the women of these tribes must have had a powerful effect in modifying the physique and appearance of castes such as these. If the Dom varies in physical character from one part of the Province to another, it is only what might naturally be expected. On the whole it may perhaps be safer to regard the Doms, not as a single, individual aggregate, but as a more or less mixed body of menials, who have been for ages in a state of the utmost

---

4. Buchanan, *Eastern India* II, 353 *Archaeological Reports*, XXII, 65, sq: Carnegy, Notes, 24.

5. *Races of the North-Western Provinces*, 85.

6. *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, I, 401.

degradation, and whose appearance and physique have been largely modified by the rigour of their occupation and environment.

Tradition of Origin—Eastern Doms

3. The origin of the Dom to the east of the Province is thus told by themselves. In the good old times all people were equally well-to-do and happy. The Brahmans had no property and built no houses for themselves. When Parameswar desired to appear in the world he took the form of a Brahman. Then intending to divide men into castes, he went about begging as a Brahman, wishing to ascertain what occupation each family followed. As he begged for alms no man gave him aught but silver and gold. At last he reached the house of a man who had killed a cow and was preparing to feed on the beef. He begged for alms, and the cow-killer brought from his house a handful of gold coins. Parameswar refused the money and asked for a little barley. The Domin, or woman of the house, went inside and found a place in the courtyard which had been trampled into mud by the feet of the cow in her death struggle, and there a few ears of parely had suddenly sprouted up. The woman plucked the grain and offered into Parameswar, who asked her where she had found it. She told him how the grain had sprouted in her courtyard. Parameswar asked where was the cow which had prepared the ground in which the grain had grown. She replied that it had been killed by her husband. Then Parameswar was worth and cursed her husband: "Thou and thy posterity shall kill animals and remain beggars for ever". Then the Domin cursed Parameswar in the form of a Brahman—

Jahan Brahman Jawa,

Char dhakka khawe,

Ek pichhari, chhattis gantha.

"Wherever the Brahman goes he shall receive four pushes. Thirtysix knots in a single sheet". So ever since Doms are beggars and slayers of animals, and Brahmans are poor and live on alms. This legend, of course, cannot be of any great antiquity, as the feeling of respect for the cow is of comparatively modern origin.

4. According to the Panjab legend the ancestor of the Doms was a Brahman named Malludant. He was the youngest of the family, and his elder brothers expelled him. One day the calf of their cow died, and they asked Malludant to take away the carcase and bury it. When he did so he was treated as an outcast, and

was obliged ever after to make his living by skinning and burying dead animals. This legend, under a slightly different form, is told also in connection with the Bhangis.

5. Another story, again, makes the Doms the descendants of Raja Ben or Vena, and from him one of their sub-castes has taken the name Benbansi. The legend of this king suggests that he was some early reformer who made himself obnoxious to Brahmans. When he became king he issued a proclamation,—"Men must not sacrifice nor give gifts nor present oblations. Who else but myself is the object of sacrifice? I am for ever the lord of offerings". The sages remonstrated respectfully with him, but in vail. They admonished him in sterner terms, and when he persisted in his piety they slew him with blades of the sacred *kusa* grass. After his death the sages beheld clouds of dut, and on inqury found that they arose from the bands of men who had taken to plundering because the land was left without a king. As Vena was childless, the sages rubbed his thigh, and from it there came a man "like a charred log, with flat face and extremely short". The sages told him to sit down (*nishada*). He did so, and hence was called Nishada, from whom sprang the "Nishadas dwelling in the Vindhyan mountains, distinguished by their wicked deeds". It may be noted that Benebans is the title of a modern Rajput sept which is of obvious Kharwar origin. By another account the name is derived by the Doms from their trade in making fans (*bena*, Sans, *vyajana*).

Internal Structure

6. As might have been expected in the case of a tribe which is obviously composed of various elements their internal structure is most intricate. Under the general term Dom there are in these Provinces at least three distinct classes of people. There are, first, the wandering race of houseless thieves and vagrants who infest Bihar and the eastern districts of the North-Western Provinces. Some of these have gradually raised themselves above the degraded status of their vagabond brethern. Some of them have settled down on the outskirts of towns and villages, and have taken to scavengering or industries connected with cane-work and basket-making. Such are the Dharkar and Bansphor or Basor, whom it is more convenient to discuss separately. Next came the Doms of the Himalayan districts, who deny all connection with the eastern branch of the tribe, and have gained a fairly respectable position as husbandmen and artisans. Lastly come to the Dom or Dum Mirasi, who are singers and musicians, and are treated of under the head Mirasi.

The Doms of the Eastern Districts

7. Like so many of the lower castes the Eastern Doms profess to have seven endogamous sub-castes. According to the Mirzapur enumeration these are,—Magahiya; Bansphor; Litta; Domra or Domahra; Jallad or Hatyara; Dharkar; and Harchanni; which last take their name from the famous Raja Harischandra, whose legend is given in connection with the Bhangis. Again, in Banda, we have a list of so-called exogamous sections or gotras in as much as they will not give a bride to a section from which within memory they have taken a bride. These sections are Tarkiya; Gepar; Gemar or Gaymar; Pesadeli, Barhel; Hazariya; Usarbarsa; Kundahor; Dharkal or Dharkar; Chamrel; Chureliya; Satchuliha; Samand; Asrent; Mahtama; Naharkarei; Mungariya; Nanet; Kaithel; Suador; Jugin; Nagarband; Dhaunsiya; Birha; Sarkhiya; Baksariya; Gujariya; Lungtaya or Langotiya. Some of these names probably denote some connection with other tribes, as the Chamrel with Chamars, Kaithel with Kayasths, and Gujariya with Gujrat. Others are perhaps occupational or totemistic; but we know at present too little of the origin or metamorphosis of these section names to make any speculations as to their meaning of any value.

8. From Gorakhpur, again, we have another enumeration which is thus described by Mr. J. Kennedy:— "The Doms say that they formerly cultivated and owned the land, but when pressure came the Magahiyas divided into two great sub-divisions— the Magahiyas and the Bansphors. The Magahiyas took to theiving, while the Bansphors were content to weave baskets and cultivate what land they could. These two sub-divisions do not intermarry, and it must be remembered that my notes relate to the thieving class alone, Magahiyas proper, who count themselves the true, original stock. They always describe themselves as subdivided into seven distinct families; but excluding the Bansphors, of whom I have spoken, there are really six—Sawant; Balgai; Chaudhari; Chauhan; Bihari and Hazari. The most of these names are taken from the Hindus, and as Hazari is a Muhammadan title of honour, this division into families is probably of comparatively recent date. Chaudhari and Chauhan are evidently also meant as honorific titles, and at the time the division was first made it must have been purely artificial. The families have no recollection of any common ancestor, nor have they any cult in memory of the founder. The Bansphors, I am told, have no such sub-divisions. The recent and artificial origin of the six subdivisions is, therefore, tolerably certain; they are imitations of Hinduism, and the only use to which they are put is to regulate marriage. Neither Magahiyas nor Bansphors can marry their first

cousins by blood, and this was probably the original rule. Besides this no Sawant can marry a Sawant or Balgai, but any of the six families can intermarry with any other. The wandering gangs of Magahiyas are composed indiscriminately of men belonging to each clan family; but each gang has its own leader and the office is hereditary in the leader's family. An outsider is never selected unless the family stock has failed." At the same time it may be urged that this form of sectional exogamy is probably much more primitive than Mr. Kennedy is disposed to believe. It is, of course, possible that the names of the exogamous sections may have been changed under Hindu or Muhammadan influence, but it seems also certain that this form of exogamy is one of the primitive institutions of the caste.

9. The Magahiya Doms take their name from the ancient kingdom of Magadha or South Bihar. Curiously enough the Mirzapur Magahiyas have lost all traditions of any connection with Magadha, and say that their name means "vagrant" from the Hindi *mag*, Sanskrit *marga*, "a road". They have been identified with the Maccocalingae of Pliny[1], and they are found as far south as Madras[2]. In their original state the Magahiyas are vagrants pure and simple, who have not even mats or tents to cover themselves in rainy or cold weather. In this respect they are in a lower grade than nomads like the Sansyas or Haburas. They frequent the jungles, but seem to have no aptitude for hunting or fishing. They live by burglary and theft, while the women prostitute themselves. In dry weather they sleep under trees, and in the rains or chill of winter they slink into out houses or crouch under a thatch or any other shelter they can find. In their depredations they never use the *sabari* or "jemmy" used by the ordinary Indian burglar. Their characteristic weapon is the curved knife (*banka*), with which they are supposed to split the bamboo for making baskets, which with begging are their ostensible occupations. But this knife is generally used for making holes besides doorposts (*baghli*). In cold weather they carry about at night an earthen pot full of hot coals, over which they crouch and warm themselves; and this, when closely beset, they fling with great accuracy at their assailants, often causing severe wounds.

10. Various attempts have been made to reform this branch of the tribe. To quote a note by Mr. D. T. Roberts, prepared for the last Police Commission :— "In Gorakhpur almost every scheme possible to think of has been considered over and over again and rejected as hopeless, the prevailing opinion being that

1. McCrindley, *Indin Antiquary*, VI 337.

2. Mullaly, *Notes*, 70, sqq.

nothing short of confinement between four walls would do any good. In 1873, and again in 1880, the question of bringing them under the Criminal Tribes Act was considered, and the conclusion come to in 1880 was that no special measures for the reclamation of this tribe seem likely to be successful and there was no use proclaiming them under the Act, because they have no means of earning their livelihood honestly, and the only thing to be done was to keep them under unceasing surveillance, and to punish with severity on commission of crime.

11. "In 1884, Mr. Kennedy, the Magistrate of Gorakhpur, again applied himself to the task. Some of the Doms were collected in the city and employed as sweepers, taught brick-making, and made to work on the roads, and others were settled in larger or smaller groups in different villages, and received assignments of land, and up to date this scheme, supported by an annual grant of Rs. 1,500, is being carried on. Some Doms do regular work as sweepers; none of them have as yet acquired any handicraft, even the simple one of brick-making. No work can be got out of them except under incessant supervision. Their fields are cultivated only when some one is standing over them, and when assistance is rendered by other cultivators.

12. "Nevertheless, on a comparison of the earlier with the later reports, a certain advance is observable. The Doms no longer skulk in fields and forests. They are all settled in some village or another which they recognise as their home. Whereas formerly Doms said that they could not sleep under a roof because ghosts troubled them, they now take kindly enough to living in houses, and will complain, not of ghosts, but of the roof leaking. It is something to have restrained their wandering propensities to this extent, and to have given them some appreciation of a settled and civilised life".

Eastern Doms; Tribal Traditions

13. According to one story Mahadeva and Parvati invited all the castes to a feast. Supach Bhagat, the ancestor of the tribe came late; and being very hungry ate the leavings of the others. Since that time they have been degraded, and eat the leavings of the other people.

14. Another legend connects them with Raja Ramchandra, in whose camp one of their ancestors committed theft; hence the deity cursed them with a life of begging and stealing.

15. A third legend tells that once upon a time the gods held a council for the distribution of the nectar among themselves.

A demon came and stole some of the nectar and was detected by Vishnu, who severed his head from his body; but as the demon had eaten the nectar he had become immortal, the two pieces of his body became the demons, Rahu and Ketu, who periodically devour the moon and cause eclipses. As the Doms, who worship these demons are able to induce them to release the moon pious people give aims to this caste at eclipses in order to secure their good offices to release the moon.

16. By another story Ramchandra once blessed Supach Bhagat, and said that if any one were cremated with fire, received from him or any of his descendants he would go straight to heaven. Since then the descendants of Supach Bhagat supply fire at cremation grounds.

17. Lastly, a story explains the hatred of the Magahiya Doms for Dhobis. Supach Bhagat once put up at the house of a Dhobi who, when he was drunk, fed his guest on the dung of his ass. Supach Bhagat cursed him and his skin forever, and since that time no Dom will touch an ass or a Dhobi. In the Bihar form of the legend, as told by Mr. Risley, Supach Bhagat had a quarrel with a Dhobi and killed and ate his ass. He subsequently cursed the Dhobi. Mr. Risley suggests that the legend may perhaps be a distorted version of some primitive taboo in which Dhobis and donkeys somehow played a part, but it is perhaps equally possible that the story may have been invented to explain why the general Hindu taboo against the Dhobi and his ass is followed by a caste so little scrupulous as the Doms.

The Bansphor Doms

18. The Bansphor branch of the Eastern Doms forms the Subject of a special article, and they need not be discussed more specially here.

The Litta Doms

19. The Litta branch of the Doms are said to derive their name from some word which means "wanderer". They may perhaps be connected with the Let sub-caste of the Bengal Bagdis, who are probably akin to the Doms. These people have no home and live by begging.

The Domra Branch of the Eastern Doms

20. The term Domra or Domahra, which is applied to the whole tribe, is also apparently sometimes used in the more restricted sense as designating those Doms who supply fire at cremation grounds.

21. The term Jallad, which is an Arabic term for "a public flogger", and Hatyara (Sans, *hatya* "murder") is more specially applied to those Doms who are employed in cities to kill ownerless dogs and to act as public executioners.

The Dharkar Branch of the Eastern Doms

22. The Dharkar branch of the Eastern Doms has been treated of in a separate article.

The Harchanni Branch of the Eastern Doms

23. The Harchanni branch of the Eastern Doms claim their name and descent from the celebrated Raja Harischandra who, as told in connection with the Bhangis, gave away all his wealth in charity and was reduced to become the slave of a Dom. In return for the kindness of his master the Raja converted the whole tribe to his religion, which they followed ever since.

24. Writing of the Magahiyas of Gorakhpur, Mr. Kennedy says :—"All disputes are settled by the panchayat, but the longest term of exclusion from the brotherhood is twelve years. During that period no companionship can be held with the outlaw even in a theft. Outlawry is, however, redeemable by a fine and feast. The abduction of a Domra girl by force and the introduction of foreign women into the camp are a frequent cause of panchayats. I am told that murder of any human being or of a cow is also severely punished; but this is about the boundary line of Domra morality with regard to outsiders. Strangers are occasionally adopted by the Magahiyas. Two or three Chamars, a Muhammadan, an Ahir, and a Teli, who had turned Domras, were lately among the inmates of the jail. It is the women who chiefly attract these recruits". Another frequent cause of meetings of the Domra council is interference with the begging beat of one camp. These beats are carefully recognised, and are sometimes given as a dowry at marriage. Any strange Domra who begs or steals in the beat of another is liable to excommunication, and the Domra of that beat will have no hesitation in giving up to the Police a stranger of the tribe who steals within his jurisdiction.

Marriage Rules

25. Among the Doms of Mirzapur the endogamous subcastes have exogamous sections, some of which are territorial or titular, and some apparently totemistic; but no Dom can give even an approximately correct list of his sections. If he is asked all he says is,—"The Panch know". This rule of exogamy is reinforced by the prohibition of marriage in the family of the maternal uncle, the father's sister, or their own sisters, as long

as there is any remembrance of relationship, which is usually about three or perhaps four generations. Polygamy is prohibited except the first wife be barren, in which case a man, with the previous sanction of the council, may take a second wife. But there seems no restriction in regard to concubinage. Sahay, the famous Dom executioner at Gorakhpur, used to keep four women. In Mirzapur if an unmarried girl is detected in an intrigue with a member of the tribe, her lover has to pay a fine of five rupees and a sheet to her father, and he then takes her over as his recognised wife with the sanction of the council. They practise adult marriage, the usual age for the marriage of a girl being eleven or twelve. The marriage is arranged by the Chharidar or "wandsman", who is the assistant of the Chaudhari or headman. The consent of the parents is said to be necessary, but runaway matches appear not to be uncommon. The bride-price among the settled Doms of Mirzapur is five rupees, five sers of treacle a sheet, five lumps of tobacco, and five packets of betel leaf. The persons of both bride and bridegroom are carefully examined, and any physical defects which may subsequently appear are not sufficient grounds for annulling the marriage. After betrothel if the bride's friend refuse to make her over they are obliged to refund the bride-price, and if the man fail to perform the engagement he is severely punished by the council. Divorce is allowed when habitual adultery is proved to the satisfaction of the council, but, as a rule, only the direct evidence of eye-witnesses is considered sufficient. Divorced women can marry again by the lower or *Sagai* form. Bastard children follow the caste of the father; but a man who intrigues with a woman not a member of the tribe, if the union has not been recognised, must pay a fine of two-and-a-half rupees and give a feast of pork and rice to the clansmen. Widows can marry by the *Sagai* form, and are generally married to widowers. The bridegroom has to make over eight rupees and one hundred cakes (*puri*) to the father of the woman. He then gives a feast to the clansmen, in the course of which the relatives of the deceased husband come forward and claim the woman. Then the assembled clansmen direct the woman's father to make over the compensation he has received to the relatives of her first husband. When this is done the man takes the woman home, puts red lead on the parting of her hair and palm leaf ornaments (*tarki*) in her ears. After he does this and feeds the clansmen on rice and pork the marriage is considered valid.

The levirate under the usual restrictions is admitted; but there is no fiction that the children of the levir are attributed to the deceased brother. Adoption is, of course, unusual; but if a man adopts, he generally adopts the son of his brother.

26. In Gorakhpur it appears that the bride-price is always spent on the marriage, and it is alleged that if either party after marriage become blind, crippled, or leprous, the marriage may be annulled.

Eastern Doms: Birth Ceremonies

27. Among the Doms of Mirzapur the mother is attended by the Chamarin midwife and the ceremonies of purification common to the menial castes are performed. On the twelfth day after birth the hair of the baby is shaved to remove that last taint of the birth pollution. The child is named by the senior man in the family a year after birth. When a man's children have died in succession the next baby is sold to some one for a nominal sum; and then is called Pachkauri, chhakauri, "he that was sold for five or six cowries", or by some other opprobrious epithet. In Gorakhpur the services of the Chamarin midwife are dispensed with on the sixth day.

The Barahi or twelfth-day ceremony is done on the tenth day. The mother and child are bathed; her hair is smeared with vermilion, and the relatives are feasted, then a little liquor is sprinkled over the woman, and after that she is considered pure.

28. Of the Magahiyas of Gorakhpur Mr. Kennedy writes:— "The birth of a Domra is always celebrated by a sacrifice to Gandak and Samaiya. Marriages are contracted when the boy is about ten years old. The matter is settled by a go-between. The boy's father pays for the marriage feast and gives presents to the father of the girl; but the Magahiyas deny that there is any idea of purchase. No religious ceremony accompanies the marriage. A panchayat is assembled, a feast held, and the girl henceforth resides with her father-in-law. A man is not restricted in the number of his wives, and concubinage is also permitted, but the concubine is held in somewhat less esteem than the wife. A woman is apparently allowed to leave her husband and transfer herself to another; but in that case she becomes a concubine. The panchayat will not restore a wife who has decamped, but they will give back any property she took away. The frequent residence of the Magahiyas in jail often obliges woman to transfer themselves to other husbands for support, and makes a polygamy advantageous. Poly is unkonwn".

Marriage Ceremonies: Eastern Doms

29. In Mirzapur the marriage is arranged by the sister's husband of the boy's father. The betrothal (*barrekhi*) is done in the usual way by the interchange of two leaf platters full of liquor, into one of which the boy's father puts a couple of rupees, which he passes on to the representative of the bride. They have the

ordinary *matmangara* ceremony, with the difference that the lucky earth brought from the village claypit is used for constructing a large fireplace with a single opening on which the women of the family cook a mess of rice and pulse, which is placed on a leaf mat in the place where the marriage is performed. This is an offering to the Manes, and the phrase used is *pitr charhana.* The usual anointing of bride and bridegroom follows, which is begun by the two fathers, who sprinkle a little turmeric and oil on the ground and invoke the sainted dead to assist them in bringing the marriage to a successful conclusion. It is a peculiarity of the tribe that both men and women join in the marriage procession. No Brahman is employed. The boy's father repeats the names of his ancestors for five generations, and the father of the bride does the same for her. Then the pair are seated close together on a mat made of leaves. The husband of the sister of the bride's father drops water on her hands and says:—*"Bar kanya chiranjiva rahen"*—"May the bride and bridegroom live long". This is done five times. The prominent part taken by the sister's husband is possibly a survival of the matriarchate. Then the garments of the pair are knotted together, and they walk round a branch of the cotton tree (*semal*), planted in the middle of the company, five times. After this the boy puts red lead on the parting of the bride's hair, and this constitutes the binding part of the ceremony. They then go into a retiring room (*kohabar*) or behind some bushes close by, and there a good deal of coarse merriment goes on—an obvious survival of the habit of immediate consummation of the marriage. Besides this, the respectable form of marriage among the settled Doms, which is known as *Charhauwa*, there is another form called *gurawat*, where two persons exchange sisters, and a still lower form of the *dola* type, where the girl is merely taken by her father to the house of her husband and lives with him as his wife after a dinner has been given to the brethern. The temporary connections of women whose husbands are in jail with other men are also fully recognised. In addition to this almost any kind of runaway match is allowed; in fact it would be hard to say what form of sexual intercourse is not recognised as a marriage.

Death Ceremonies, Eastern Doms

30. "According to Dr. Wise it is universally believed in Bengal that Doms do not burn or bury their dead, but dismember the corpse at night, like the inhabitants of Tibet, placing the pieces in a pot and sinking them in the nearest river or reservoir. This horrid idea probably arose from the old Hindu law which

compelled the Doms to bury their dead at night"[1]. This idea does not seem to prevail in these Provinces. The Doms appear to have no settled usage as regards the disposal of the corpse. Those who are fairly well off cremate the corpse, but unlike Hindus, take with them from the house the fire which is applied to the pyre. The poorer and vagrant Doms either bury, or sometimes cremate in a very rude and perfunctory way, or, when it is more convenient, throw the corpse into running water. Bodies of unmarried children are always thrown into a river or buried. The Magahiya Doms of Gorakhpur often leave the body in the jungle. Among the settled Doms of Mirzapur after a cremation they return to the house of the deceased, light a little oil in the courtyard and warm their feet in the smoke, the object, apparently being to bar the return of the ghost. Some of them, once the corpse is burnt, do not take any trouble about the ashes but leave them where the cremation took place. Others who are more scrupulous collect them on the third day and throw them into a neighbouring stream. Then they fix upon the bank a few blades of grass as a refuge for the wandering spirit, on which a little water is poured daily. Others lay out a little platter of food for the use of the departed during the days of mourning. On the tenth day they assemble at a tank, shave themselves, bathe, and offer three balls (*pinda*) of flour. At these ceremonies the sister's husband of the chief mourner officiates as priest. This seems to be another survival of the matriarchate. The same rule applies in the Bihar branch of the tribe :—"The son of a deceased man's sister or of his female cousin officiates as priest at his funeral and recites appropriate texts (*mantra*) receiving a fee for his services when the inheritance comes to be divided. Some Doms, indeed, assured me that the sister's son used formerly to get a share of the property, and that this rule had only recently fallen into disuse; but their statements did not seem to be definite enough to carry entire conviction, and I have met with no corroborative evidence bearing on the point. So also in marriage the sister's son or occasionally the sister (*suasin*) repeats mantras and acts generally as priest. Failing either of these the head of the household officiates. No other indications of an extinct custom of female kinship appear to exist, and the fact that in Western Bengal the eldest son gets an extra share on the division of an inheritance seems to show that kinship by males must have been in force for a very long time past"[2].

31. The religious practices of the tribe vary with the social status of the sub-castes, and there is no standard type of worship

1 Risley, *Tribes and Castes*, I, 248

2 Risley, *Loc cit.*

because they are not controlled by Brahmans. Of the Magahiya Doms of Gorakhpur Mr. Kennedy writes :—"The Magahiya Domras have two special divinities of their own; the chief is Gandak, whose grave is to be found at Karmaini Garhi, two days' journey to the east of Motihari, in Bengal. According to their traditions Gandak was hanged for theft a long time ago, and when dying he promised always to help the Magahiyas in trouble. He is worshipped by the whole tribe and is invoked on all important occasions; but he is pre-eminently the patron god of thefts. A succesful theft is always celebrated by a sacrifice and feast in his honour. They also worship Samaiya, a female divinity. She is without any special history, and there is no sharp distinction between her sphere and Gandak's. Her functions apparently relate chiefly to birth and illness, etc".

32. "The Magahiyas sacrifice young pigs and wine with sugar and spices to these two deities. Every Magahiya is capable of performing the sacrifice, and the remains are divided among the company, when a vow is made to Samaiya, e.g., on the birth of a child or when it is teething, or on the occasion of an illness a special pig is chosen and devoted to her, and is sacrificed in the fulfilment of the vow. The Magahiyas have neither altars nor idols, nor do they erect any platform (*chabutra*) for worship. A spot is cleared and plastered in the middle of a field, and the sacrifice is then offered".

33. "The Magahiyas naturally believe in ghosts and spirits. When a man dies, my informant told me, he turns into an evil spirit (*shaitan*). The godlings (*deota*) also, he added, were innumerable. In most villages of this district there is a special altar for all the local ghosts and deities, which may reside within the village boundaries, and the Magahiyas are always ready to share in the sacrifices of the villagers to them. They also reverence trees and platforms consecrated by Hindus in passing, but pay no further homage. They acknowledge the village Kali and sometimes sacrifice to her; but the sacrifices do not differ from those of the Hindus. They do not acknowledge Mahadeva or any other divinity, but they share the general Hindu belief in Parameswar, the giver and destroyer of life and the author of good and evil, He created the Magahiyas, they say, and ordered them to be fifth and outcasts among the Hindus. They somehow resort to a Brahman for the reading of the Vedas (*katha*). My informant had given a *katha* in this way on the last occasion of his release from jail. In these cases the Magahiyas go to the Brahman's house, but I could not find any other trace of special reverence for the Brahmans, nor have they any necessity for them".

34. In Mirzapur Doms of the better class worship Bhawani, to whom at the Nauratra of Chait they make an offering of hogs, cakes (*puri*), gruel (*lapsi*), and wreaths of flowers. The Bhawani, if appeased, keeps off illness from her votaries. They have a vague idea of an all-powerful deity, Parameswar, who punishes the guilty, and of a hell, but what it is and how sinners are punished they know not. The scavenger Doms, like the Jallad, have a special female deity called Kukarmari, "the killer of dogs", to whom a sacrifice of a young pig and some spirits is offered outside the village as a propitiation for the death of these animals. In the same way when a Dom hangman is tying the rope round the neck of a criminal, he shouts out *Dohai Maharani, Dohai Sarkar, Dohai Judge Sahib.* "Help O great Queen. Help O Government! Help Mr. Judge!" in order to free himself from any built attaching to the death. They worship the collective local gods (*deohar*) at marriages; but the wandering, vagrant habits of the tribe prevent them possessing any real respect for the village deities. Women have no worship special to themselves. On the last day of the first fortnight of Kuar they make ten lumps (*pinda*), of flour and throw them into a river, and when they come home they put some cakes and sweetened rice on a leaf-platter, and lay it in a field to propitiate the dead. Some fast on Sunday in the name of the Sun God Suraj Narayan, but these practices prevail only among the more Hinduised Doms in the neighbourhood of towns.

35. In Gorakhpur, besides the worship described above, they also venerate their Guru who is said to have had his head-quarters at Bhojpur, in the Ballia District, and to his shrine they make occasional pilgrimages and make an offering of a pig at least four years old, wine, and flowers. To a goddess named Juthaiya Bhawani, of whose functions they can give no account, they offer a young pig and some red lead, with a look of their hair, a forehead spangle, and a cake of flour boiled with pulse.

Demonology

36. Their demonology is much of the usual type common to the lower castes by whom they are surrounded. They believe that trees are inhabited by evil spirits, and unless they bow down to trees of this kind, their ghosts revenge themselves by bringing disease and death upon them. To such malignant ghosts they offer a young pig, which is eaten by the worshippers. In Mirzapur the chief Dom festivals are the Kajari and Phagua or Holi. At the Kajari in the month of Sawan they get drunk, dance, and sing. It is the regular woman's saturnalia, and on this occasion gross sexual license is tolerated. At the Phagua or Holi the same

is the case. In Gorakhpur, besides the Holi, they observe the Jiutiya on the eighth of the dark half of Kuar, and the Khichari on the day the sun enters the sign of Makar. On the Jiutiya the women fast in order to ensure long life to their husbands and the Khichari they beg boiled rice and pulse from door to door.

37. The Eastern Doms are particularly afraid of the ghosts of drowned people who are called Burna (*Burna* "to be drowned") These malignant ghosts drag under the water and drown boys who bathe in tanks and rivers infested by them[1]. Fields are in charge of Mari Masan, the deity which haunts cremation grounds, and Kukarmari, the dog goddess, already mentioned. They are ever in dread of the ghosts of the dead, which torment them in dreams if not propitiated with an annual sacrifice. If neglected they appear in their original shapes and demand a sacrifice. Women are tattooed on the arms, writs, breasts, and cheeks. If a woman not tattooed attempt to enter heaven the gate-keeper of Parameswar pitches her down to the earth again. They have the usual omens of meeting. Many of their women, as in the case of all solitary and uncanny races such as they are, are said to practise witchcraft. One way such persons acquire influence over a man is by throwing a cowry shell at him. They believe firmly in the Evil Eye. When children have been overlooked and pine away, the cure is to wave some garlic and pepper pods round the child's head on a Tuesday or Sunday, and then to throw them into the fire. The evil influence is supposed to pass away with the filthy smoke.

Occupations and Social position of the Eastern Doms

38. The occupation and social position of the Eastern Doms differ much according to the sub-castes. One duty of the ordinary Dom is to supply fire for cremation. Mr. Sherring[2] describes the custom at Benares as follows :—"On the arrival of the dead body at the place of cremation, which in Benares is at the base of one of the steep stairs (*ghat*) called the Burning Ghat, leading down from the streets above to the bed of the River Ganges, the Dom supplies five logs of wood, which he lays in order upon the ground, the rest of the wood being given by the family of the deceased. When the pile is ready for burning, a handful of lighted fire is brought by the Dom, and applied by one of the chief members of the family to the wood. The Dom is the only person who can furnish the light for this purpose; and if, from any circumstance, the services of one cannot be obtained,

1. On this see Tyler, *Primitive Culture* 109.
2. *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, 1, 401.

great delay and inconvenience are apt to occur. The Dom exacts his fee for three things, namely, first, for the five logs, secondly, for the bunch of straw and thirdly, for the light". There is no fixed fee, and as the Dom naturally makes the best of his position and raises his demands according to the position and wealth of his customer, this class of Dom, who is known as Kashiwala or "he of Benares", has a bad reputation for insolence and extortion.

39. From his business and environment the Dom is, of course, regarded by all respectable Hindus with contempt, fear, and abhorence. No one will touch food or water from his hands. The Magahiya Dom of Gorakhpur will eat anything except the flesh of the monkey, serpent, and lizard. Mr. Kennedy says that they eat most things, including carrion; but certain animals, beasts of prey, cats, and dogs, etc., they will not eat. In Mirzapur I have seen them squabbling over the carcass of a dead horse in an obvious condition of advanced decomposition. They are always on the look out for tiger flesh, but they say that stew it down more than once, as it is very heating. They will, as already stated, refuse the leavings of a Dhobi, and to this the more settled Doms of Mirzapur add those of the Hela, Musahar, and Chamar. Doms who have adopted more cleanly occupations than their vagrant and scavenger brethern, such as basket-making, are naturally becoming more Hinduised and more careful in matters of diet. Those Doms who have settled down, like the Bansphor and the Dharkar, to working in cane, and the Jallad to scavenging and acting as public executioners, are fairly respectable, industrious people. Those who work in cane use a peculiar curved knife known as *bani*. They make fans (*bena*), baskets, (*dauri*), *boxes* (*petara*), scales (*tarazu*), winnowing fans (*sup*), lampetands (*diwat*), irrigation baskets (*dala*), and betel boxes (*belhara*). These workers in cane are known in cities by the Persian title of Bedfar' (Pers, *bed*, "cane"; *baftan* "to weave"). They split the cane into eight stripe (*tar*), with an instrument (*tarauntht*) like a lemon-slicer. The outside cuttings he sells to bakers for making the mould (*sancha*) used for applying cakes to the walls of the ovens. The Bedbaf weaves the backs and seats of chairs and makes baskets, etc. The Banshphor makes baskets, but works only in bamboo. He splite the bamboo into strips (*patta*), which are soaked and woven into baskets. The allied people known as Kori Chhapparaband make door-screens (*chiq, tatti*) and thathes (*chhappar*). They work in bamboos and the reed grass known as *sentha* (*saccharum sara*). The Parchhati and Gudariya

1. For a good account of this industry, see Hoey, *Monograph on Trades*, 72.

make stools (*mondha*), and the Dharkar fine furniture, fine door-screens, baskets, fans, etc., from bamboo, but he works in bamboo and they in reed.

40. Of the Gorakhpur Magahiyas Mr. Kennedy writes :—"They eat cow's flesh readily, but they will not kill the cow. They also offer milk, like Hindus, to snakes at the Nagpanchami, but have no reverence for tigers or others animals. They express some reverence for the great rivers, Ganga and Narayani, etc. This, I think, nearly marks the extent to which they have been Hinduised. The *pipal* is the only sacred tree, and no Magahiya will pluck its leaves. They hold this superstition so firmly that I suspect it is aboriginal. No reverence is paid to the Banyan or any other sacred Hindu tree or plant. They have a special superstition about iron, and will not use it for certain purposes. A Magahiya who commits burglary with an iron instrument will not only be excluded from the brotherhood, but his eyes will some day start out of his head. Their most solemn oath is celebrated after the following fashion : A piece of ground is cleared and plastered as if for sacrifice. A piece of iron, a dish of water, some leaves of the pipal, and a particular kind of Tarai grass with some lighted charcoal are all put separately on the ground. On the top of appice is placed, and the oath is taken over it. An oath by the Dhobi is also particularly binding".

Other oaths of the Eastern Doms are on the altar of the deities they worship, on a *pipal* leaf, on a knife struck in the ground, with the fingers of the right hand resting on a vessel full of spirits, or with some cow-dung fixed on the born of a dead cow. They use none of the ordinary forms of salutation, but simply join their hands as a mark of respect.

41. The Doms of Kumaun have been thought to be akin to the aboriginal Rajis; but the latter repudiate the idea and profess the very greatest contempt for the Doms; so that if one of that class enter the dwelling of a Raji, the place must be purified with water brought from twenty-two different sources. They are supposed to be the relics of the original inhabitants of the country, corresponding to the Dhiyar or ore-smelters of Jammu, the Betal of the Kashmir Valley, the Bem of Ladakh, the Newar of Nepal. In Barhwal they appear to have been enslaved by the immigrant Khasiyas. Under the name of Dum they are described in Jammu[1] as "dark in colour, small in limb, and their countenance is of a much lower type than that of the Dogras generally, though one sees exceptions, due no doubt to an admixture of blood, for, cu-

1. Drew's *Jammu*. 56.

riously, the separation of them from the daily life of the others does not prevent an occasional intercourse that tends in some degree to assimilate the races". In the Himalayan Districts of these Provinces the Dom has been recognised as a descendant of the Dasyus of the Veda, who are supposed to have held Upper India before the advent of the Naga or Khasa race.

42. The complete Census Returns show as the main sections of the Hill Doms the Auji, Badhai, Bera, Baroda, Chamar, Chunara, Darzi, Das, Dhaki, Dhobi, Dholi, Dhunar Kamar, Koli, Lohar, Mochi, Nath, Pahariya, Sahiya, Tamoli, Tamta, and Teli, most of which are occupational. In Garhwal, according to Mr. Atkinson[1], they are divided in popular estimation into four classes. To the first belong the Kolis, Tamotas, Lohars, Ortur, and Dharhnis. The Kolis weave cloth, keep pigs and fowls, and are agricultural labourers. The Tamotas or Tamtas represent the Thatheras of the plains, and are workers in brass and copper. The Lohars are workers in iron. The Orhs comprise both masons and carpenters. Dharhis, though socially ranked with Doms, do not belong to them, for they properly include only those Khasiyas who have been put out of caste for some offence, and their offspring form a new caste with the addition of the fresh avocation. To the second class belong the Bhuls, Chunyars, Ruriyas, Agaris, and Pahris. The Bhuls represent the Telis of the plains, but also do field work. They are also called Baryas. The Chunyaras are turners, and make wooden vessles and the bottoms of *hukkas*. The Ruriyas make various kinds of bamboo baskets and sieves. The Agaris are iron smelters, and must be carefully discriminated from the Dravidian Agariyas of Mirzapur. They are Doms attached to the service of the mines by the former Rajas, but are gradually exchanging a very ill-paid and dangerous avocation for that of road-making and other profitable work. The Pahris are village messengers, and are the same as the Chamar village watchmen of the plains. To the third class belong the Mallahs, Daryas, and Chamars. The Mallahs are also called Dhunars, and are for the most part engaged in agriculture. The Daryas are village sorcerers, and conjure away hailstorms and the like, for which service they receive annual dues of grain. The Chamars call themselves Bairsawa, and will never acknowledge the name of chamar. They sew leather and perform all the usual service duties of the Dom.

43. The fourth class includes the professional beggars and vagrant musicians of the Hills—the Badi, Hurkiya, Darzi, and Dholi. The Badi is the village musician; in the plains he is con-

[1]. *Himalayan Gazetteer*, III, 277, sq.

sidered to be a Nat. He plays on various instruments and sings at festivals. He goes from village to village begging from door to door, and belongs to the class of sturdy beggars who, if they do not get what they expect, lampoon the people of the house and abuse them. For these reasons they are, to some extent, feared, and are able to maintain themselves at the expense of their neighbours. They also snare fowl and fish. The Hurkiya are so called, from the small double drum (*huruk, huruka*) shaped like an hourglass which he carries. This is an archaic musical instrument like the *damaru,* which is one of Siva's emblems. They never take to agriculture, and wander about with their women, who dance and sing. The Darzi, also called Auji and Suji, lives by tailoring, though often solely by agriculture. To the Darzi class belongs the Dholi so called from beating the drum (*dholak*). This is done by way of incantation to cause spirits and ghosts to enter or leave the person of any one, and so induce that person to give money to the performer. The Darya, Badi, Hurkiya, and Dholi are all Doms, and "are in hills the recognised priests of the malignant spirits of the hill and glen, whose aid is always sought after before any thing serious is undertaken or any difficult task is attempted. It is the Doms who preserve to the present day the pure demonism of the aborigines, while the Khasiyas temperit with the worship of the village deities, the named and localised divine entities, and furnish from their ranks the priests. Most of the Barhis belong to the Orh division of the Doms, and the Chunapaz or lime-burners belong to the Agari and Lohar branches of the Doms. Finally there is a class known as Domjogi, who are beggars. The portion of the village site assigned to Doms is in the hills known as Domarua or Domtola, like the Chamrauti where the Chamars of the plains congregate.

44. Most of these divisions of the Doms of the hills are thus purely occupational, and, as might have been expected, the enumeration varies. Thus Pandit Juala Dat Joshi writing of the Doms of Kumanun says that Doms usually do not use the term Dom in speaking of themselves, but call themselves Bairsaws, or Tallijati or Baharjati, "outcasts", or they call themselves by their occupation Orh, Lohar, and so on. He enumerates, the Kumaun Doms under the heads of Sarki Dotiwala, who work in leather; Tamta, workers in brass; Lohar, workers in iron; Orh and Barele masons; Tirua, who do tinning and making of horse shoes; Bhul, oilmen; Mochi, workers in leather; Koli, cloth-weavers; Baruri, makers of bamboo baskets, Dhuni, Dhuni Dom, and ordinary Doms who are said to be a mixed race of men from the plains and ordinary Hill Doms who work as ploughmen and day labourers; Dholi, who play on drums at festivals; Hurkiya,

who play and sing and prostitute their women; Chamar who skin animals; Badi, who play on drums and work as tailors. He adds that the reason of the increase of this caste is that they admit outcasts from the superior tribes. The Baura are separate from the Dom, and say that they were originally Jats.

According to the same authority, the Orh, Tamta, Lohar, Bare Bhul, Tirua, Mochi, Dhuni, Koli, and Baruri are exogamous, but as they advance in wealth, they show a tendency to break up into endogamous groups. The Chamar, Dholi, Badi, and Hurkiya are endogamous, and will eat *kachchi* and *pakki* only from members of their own sub-caste. Their rule of exogamy is simply that the recognised descendants of one common ancestor will not intermarry. Some of them, as they are becoming more Hinduised, have adopted the rule of not intermarrying within five generations on the side of the mother and seven on the side of the father. They can marry as many wives as they please, of whom the youngest and best-looking is regarded as head. He says that the Doms do not prostitute their women before marriage; but that among the Bhotiyas it used to be the habit for young men and girls to meet in a special house in the village, where after drinking, each youth selected a girl and cohabited with her in perfect freedom. The custom is now disappearing. We have here a good example of that form of promiscuity before marriage, of which Dr. Westermarck has collected numerous instances[1].

46. Girls, he goes on to say, are married between the age of eight or ten. When the parties are of that age, their relatives arrange the marriage for them; but when a girl has passed the age of puberty she may choose a husband for herself. There are two recognised forms of marriage, the superior, in which the father of the bride gives her away with a dowry, and the less respectable form in which the relatives of the bridegroom pay one-third of the expenses of the marriage.

47. They put away a woman when she is attacked with leprosy, becomes a lunatic or loses caste. A divorced woman, provided she has not been divorced on account of disease, may be taken on as a concubine, but she cannot be married again by any of the regular forms. The levirate and widow-marriage are recognised, and the children of a widow regularly married and of a widow rank equally; but the children of a concubine hold a lower rank, as they cannot join in the worship of deceased ancestors. A widow taken over by a man is known as *rakhui*, and it is said to be the custom for widows not to live with a man unless they have no one to support them.

[1]History of Human Marriage, 14.

Domestic Ceremonies—Himalayan Doms

48. When a woman comes to the seventh month of pregnancy she forbidden to cook for her family or to perform the domestic worship. When the child is born, a lump of coarse sugar is distributed to those present; the child is bathed, and red powder (*rori*) applied to its head and to that of the mother and all the women of the house. For eleven days the male members of the family are considered impure. In the case of the birth of twins, they perform a propitiatory ceremony.

49. The marriage ceremony is in the form usual among the lower castes. No brahman officiates and his place is taken by the sister's son who receives a fee for his services. The binding portion of the ceremony is the feeding of the brethern.

50. They burn their dead and dispose of the ashes into a neighbouring stream. In this case also the sister's son or the son-in-law of the dead man officiates and is given a loin cloth and some money. The death impurity lasts for eleven days. At her first menstruation a girl is impure for eleven days, and only for four days at each subsequent occurrence of the menses.

Religion of the Himalayan Doms

51. According to Mr. Atkinson[1], "their montane and non-Brahmanical origin is sufficiently shown by the names of the deities worshipped by them—Ganganath, Bholanath, Masan, Khabish, Goril, Kshetrpal, Saim, Airi Kalgisht or Kaluwa, Chaumu, Badhan, Haru, Batu, Bheliya, the Katyuri Rajas, Runiya, Balchan, Kalchan, Bhausi, Chhurmal. Ganganath is the favourite deity of the Doms and his origin is thus accounted for. The son of Bhabichand, Raja of Doti, quarrelled with his family and became a religious mendicant. In the course of his wanderings he arrived at Adoli, a village in Patti Salem, and there saw and fell in love with the wife of one Krishna Joshi. This Joshi was a servant at Almora, and the Jogi disguised himself and took service in the house in which the woman lived. When Krishna heard of the intrigue, he set out for Adoli, and with the aid of one Jhaparna Lohar, murdered his wife and her lover. Like Bholanath and his companions, the Jogi, his mistress, and the unborn child became boglins and vexed the people so that they built a temple and instituted a regular service in honour of the three spirits. From Adoli the cult of Ganganath spread over Kumaun, and at Takurya Lwali and Narai in his home patti we have temples in his honour. He is supposed especially to harass the young and

1. *Loc cit*; II, 319.

beautiful, if they do not propitiate him. When any one is aggrieved by the wicked or powerfull he goes to Ganganath for aid, who invariably punishes the evildoer. He sometimes possesses a follower, and through him promises all that they desire to those who offer the following articles—to Ganganath himself, a kid, cakes, sweetmeats, beads, a bag a pair of Jagi's ear rings; to his mistress Bhana, a patticoat, a sheet, and a nose ring; and to the child a coat and amulets—altogether forming a fair spoil to the Ghantuwa or astrologer who conducts the ceremonies.

52. "The current legend regarding the origin of the local deity Bholanath and his consort Barhini forms one of the connecting links between the Brahmanical system of the present day and the universal hierarchy of spirits and goblins common to all mountanious countries. With the better classes Bholanath is recognised as a form of Mahadeva, and Barhini as a form of his Sakti[1], thus meeting the requirements of the popular worship and the demands of the orthodox school, but it is evident that the idea of deifying mortals is an old one, and in this case merely localised to explain the origin of a class of temples which are acknowledged not to belong to the orthodix forms of Mahadeva. One story tells us how Uday Chand, Raja of Almora, had two queens, each of whom bore him a son. When the children arrived at man's estate, the elder of the two took to evil courses and was disinherited and left Kumaun. The younger in course of time succeeded his father as Gyan Chand, and his administration gave great satisfaction and relief to the people. Gyan Chand had been some years on the throne when his elder brother returned to Almora, and took up his quarters there in the guise of a religious mendicant. In spite of his disguise several recognised the disinherited prince, and conveyed the news of his arrival to this brother Gyan Chand. He became alarmed and gave orders for the assassination of his brother which was carried out by a man of the Bariya or gardener caste. The elder prince and his pregnant mistress were both slain near the temple of Sitala Devi. The mistress was the wife of a Brahman, and her connection with the Chand prince was considered something more than adulterous. After death the elder brother became a *bhut*. A small iron trident is sometimes placed in the corner of a cottage as an emblem of Bholanath, and is usually resorted to when any sudden or unexpected calamity attacks the inmates.

53. "The Demon Masan is usually found at burning grounds. He is supposed to be of black colour and hideous appearance He comes from the remains of a funeral pyre and chases people

[1]. On this see Monier Williams, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, 180 sqq.

passing by who sometimes die of fright, others linger for a few days and some even go mad. When a person becomes possessed by Masan, the people invoke the beneficient spirit of the house to come and take possession of some member of the family, and all begin to dance. A length some one works himself into a state of frenzy and commences to troture and belabour the body of the person possessed by Masan, until at length a cure is effected or the patient perishes under this drastic treatment".

54. "Khabish resembles Masan in his malignant nature and fondness for charnel grounds. He is also met with in dark glens and forests in various shapes. Sometimes he imitates the bellow of a buffalo, or the cry of a goat-herd or neat-herd, and sometimes he grunts like a wild pig. At other times he assumes the guise of a religious mendicant and joins travellers on their way, but his conversation (like that of all the Indian *bhuts* who speak through their nose) is always unintelligible. Like Masan he often frightens people and sometimes possesses unfortunate travellers who get benighted".

55. Goril, Goriya, Gwel, Gwall or Gol is another delfied mortal of whom the legend is given by Mr. Atkison. He was beaten out of Garhwal by Sudarsan Sah. The idea that a *bhut* can be driven out by beating is embodied in two well-known Hindi proverbs—*Mar ke age bhut bhagta hai*, "A thrashing makes a *bhut* run;" and *Laton ke bhut baton se nahin mante*. "Goblins that want kicking won't mind words".

56. Khetrpal is the same as Bhumiya, the protector of field and homestead, extensively worshipped in the western districts. Saim or Sayam, "the black one (Sans, *shyama*) is another form of the same deity. He sometimes possesses people, and his sign is that the hair of the scalp-lock becomes hopelessly entangled.

57. Kalbisht or Kaluwa is said to have been a neat-herd who lived some two hundred years ago. His enemies persuaded brother-in-law Himmat to drive a peg into the hoof of one of Kalibisht's buffaloes, intending that he should be killed in attempting to extract it, but no harm ensued. Himmat next attacked him from behind with an axe, and so wounded him on the neck that he died, but not before he had torn the treacherous Himmat limb from limb. He has now become a benevolent spirit, and his name is used by herdsmen as a charm against wild beasts, and oppressed persons resort to his temple for justice against their oppressors.

58. Chaumu is also a defied mortal and a god of cattle; so is Badhan. On the eleventh day after the birth of a calf his *linga* is washed first with water and then milk and cakes, rice and milk

are offered at his temples. Haru is the deified Haris Chandra, Raja of Champawat who built the sacred bathing place at Hardwar. Latu was his brother. The Katyuri Rajas are the defied last independent Rajas of Katyur. Runiya is a malignant *bhut* who wanders from village to village on courses formed of huge boulders, and at night especially exercises his noisy steeds. He attacks only females, and should any woman attract his attentions she invariably wastes away, haunted by her ghostly lover and joins him in the spirit land. Balchan, Kalchan, Bhasni, and Chhurmal are malignant *bhuts* of the same kind.

Religious and Social Customs of the Himalayan Doms

59. To quote again Mr. Atkinson's excellent account of this caste—"Doms do not wear the sacred thread or the bracelet (*rakhi*) nor do they have caste marks or wear, as a rule, the top-knot (*sikha*) and in a rough way they imitate the customs of the better classes, especially those who have made money in their contracts with Government. Their offerings to deceased ancestors (*Sraddha*) when made at all, are performed at the Amawas or last day of the Kanyagat of Kuar. The sister's son, younger sister's husband or son-in-law act as Brahmans on the occasion and receive gifts as such. Doms eat the flesh of all animals, use their skins, and eat food from all classes except the Bhangi, Musalman, and Christian. There is no fixed time for marriage. When an elder brother dies the younger takes the widow to wife whether she has children or not; hence the proverb *Mal bhir adhari ber, talai chir men onchhi.* "When the upper walls fall they come on the lower wall". When the elder brother dies, the burden falls upon the younger. The elder brother cannot, however, take to wife the widow of a deceased younger brother, and contracts a stain if even her shadow crosses his path. He transfers her to some other of the brotherhood, but if during the lifetime of her second husband he or she be dissatisfied, another may take her by paying the cost of her marriage. This may be repeated several times. The prohibited degrees are only a daughter, sister, uncle, aunt, brother, and these they cannot eat or smoke with".

60. To this may be added from the notes of Pandit Juala Dat Joshi that their greatest oath is to place the hand on the head of their son; others say: "If I swear falsely may I eat your flesh". They also swear by placing their hands on the grain mortar (*okhli*), flour mill (*chakki*), or on a bell. When there is dispute about boundaries they write a curse (*Bunda*) on a piece of paper and holding it on the head of a son recite the words which run as follows—"If the land in dispute be mine may I and my children enjoy it, if it be not mine may Parameswar prevent

me from enjoying it". They believe in the Evil Eye and remove it by waving some mustard over the patient and then burning it near him in a pan. They fully believe in the demoniacal theory of disease, and patients are treated by an exorciosor known as Gannua. They salute one another by the term *palagan;* Brahmans by the word seva and English and Musalmans by salam. Many of them in addition cultivate and some practise a kind of nomadic cultivation by burning down patches of jungle.

Connection Between the Doms and Gypsies

61. There seems reason to believe that some at least of the Gypsy tribes of Europe are akin to the Magahiya Doms; and a connection has been traced between their languages. Much speculation has been devoted to the term Romani, the designation of the European gypsies. According to one theory it means Roman or Roumanian. According to another "the word Rom in all the gypsy dialects of Europe has a two fold meaning signifying "man" and "husband" as well as "gypsy". A satisfactory connection has still to be found for it, that connected with Rama, the incarnate Vishnu of the Hindus being discountenanced by the authority of Professor Ascoli of Milan. By a curious and unexplained coincidence the identical word Rom or Rome occurs with the meaning "man" in modern Coptic, and according to Herodotus belonged also to the language of the ancient Egyptians. Although this isolated fact in no way affects the general bearing of the question, it is worth noting as an etymological curiosity. It is not impossible that among the original elements of the Aryan mother speech may have existed a root *ro* or *rom,* expressive of power, the survival of which we can discern in the Greek *rome,* "strength", the Latin *robur,* and perhaps in the illustrious name of Rome itself". On the other hand Dr. Schrader[1] suggests that the word *robur* in the sense of "oak" is the equivalent of *arbor* "a tree". At the same time there seems some reason for believing that Romani in the sense of "a gypsy" may be connected with our Indian terms **Dom and Domra**[2].

Distribution of the Doms According to the Census of 1891.

Districts	Benbansi	Dhanuk	Others	Muhammadans	Total
Dehra Dun . .	..	..	18,438	210	18,648
Saharanpur . .	..	..	59	2,482	2,541
Muzaffarnagar .	..	..	254	2,299	2,553
Meerut . .	..	..	..	4,257	4,257
Bulandshahr . .	..	..	..	5,663	5,663

1. Prehistoric Antiquities, 272.

2. Edinburgh Review 1978, p. 140, Grierson, *Indian Antiquary,* XV. 14, sp. XVI. 35, sqq. *Encyclopaedia Britannia,* 9th editson, article *Gypsies,* Leland Academy, 19th June 1875.

In the life of Edward Henry Palmer by Walter Besant (p. 184). Mr. Laland writes–"Several times I interviewed, in his company in London a native of India who had been a Rom, that is to say, a gypsy. Palmer examined the man long and closely in his native language that to say as a shrewd lawyer would examine a man whose assertions he wished to discredit. The result of the interview was that there is, in Plamer's opinion, one distinctive race of gypsies, who call themselves Rom, who speak a language which is not identical with any Indian tongue though much like Punjabi but which is identical with Romany. The man assured me subsequently that he would never have known from his language that Palmar was not a born Hindu".

Distribution of the Doms According to the Census of 1891—*Contd.*

District	Benbansi	Dhanuk	Others	Muhammadans	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
Aligarh . . .	..	..	21	995	1,016
Mathura . .	..	..	8	873	881
Agra . . .	..	..	15	869	884
Farrukhabad . .	..	..	3	117	120
Mainpuri . .	..	..	..	152	152
Etawah . . .	6	..	20	143	169
Etah . . .	..	..	..	95	95
Bareilly . . .	..	..	..	538	538
Bijnor . . .	..	..	..	2,929	2,929
Budaun . . .	..	..	..	603	603
Moradabad . .	..	..	4	3,488	3,492
Shahjahanpur . .	..	..	..	307	307
Pilibhit . . .	..	..	..	295	295
Cawnpur . .	..	..	26	96	122
Fatehpur . .	..	..	..	58	58
Banda . . .	..	..	..	8	8
Hamirpur . .	..	..	20	27	47
Allahabad . .	..	..	205	108	313
Jhansi . . .	..	..	8	4	12
Jalaun . . .	..	..	18	20	38
Lalitpur . . .	..	..	26	..	26

1	2	3	4	5	6
Benares . . .	..	..	1,078	76	1,154
Mirzapur . .	..	..	8,039	3	8,042
Jaunpur . . .	..	..	3,157	135	3,292
Ghazipur . .	158	11	2,968	37	3,174
Ballia . . .	36	..	1,671	..	1,707
Gorakhpur . .	..	..	7,817	72	7,889
Basti	..	..	82	101	183
Azamgarh . .	3	..	1,234	135	1,372
Kumaun . .	..	..	137,760	..	137,760
Garhwal . .	..	..	66,529	..	66,529
Tarai . . .	..	..	4,996	519	5,515
Lucknow . .	..	751	908	12	1,671
Unao . . .	..	1,285	1,904	30	3,219
Rae Bareli . .	..	1,411	4,084	51	5,546
Sitapur . . .	..	..	12	21	33
Hardoi . . .	..	..	3	24	27
Gonda . . .	..	129	1,790	27	1,946
Bahraich . .	8	17	327	109	461
Sultanpur . .	..	..	..	102	102
Partabgarh . .	..	16	24	1	41
Barabanki . .	..	780	2,441	272	3,493
TOTAL .	211	4,400	265,949	28,363	298,923

DOMAR

A caste recorded at the last Census in Allahabad Division. The Census returns show their sections as Led in Fatehpur; in Banda, Bansphor, Basor, Benbansi, Janwar, Malik, Saijad, Supabhagat, Thail, and Tharkari. This shows that they are really only a sub-caste of the great Dom race.

Distribution of the Domas According to the Census of 1891

Districts	Turaiha	Others	Total
Cawnpur	18	141	159
Fatehpur	349	1,745	2,094
Banda	..	10,371	10,371
Hamirpur	..	2,308	2,308
Allahabad	..	197	197
TOTAL .	367	14,762	15,129

Extract on "DOMBAR" from The Tribes and Castes of Bombay by R. E. ENTHOVEN, Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire, Commander of the Order of Leopold II, Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Ethnography, Bombay Presidency. Issued under the orders of the Government of Bombay, Volume-I, Bombay, Printed at the Government Central Press, 1920, *page* 341.

DOMBARI : A sub-division of Jogis; a synonym for Kolhati.

DOM : A sub-division of Mahars.

DOMB : A synonym for Mahar and Dom.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from The Tribes and Castes of Bombay by R. E. ENTHOVEN, Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire, Commander of the Order of Leopold II, Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Ethnography, Bombay Presidency. Issued under the orders of the Government of Bombay, Volume-II, Bombay, Printed at the Government Central Press, 1922, *page* 418.

MAHAR DOMBAR : A sub-division of Kolhatis.

Extract on "DOMARA" from the Castes and Tribes of H. E. H. THE NIJAMS DOMINIONS, by SYED SIRAJ UL HASSAN of Merton College, Oxford, Trinity College, Dublin, and Middle Temple, London. One of the Judges of H. E. H. the Nizam's High Court of Judicature : Lately Director of Public Instruction. Volume I, Bombay, The Times Press 1920 *pages* 177 *to* 184.

XXVIII

DOMARA

Domara, Dombari, Domri, Reddi Domara—a vagrant mongrel tribe of acrobats, jugglers, rope-dancers and tumblers, chiefly found in the Telugu and Carnatic Districts of H. H. the Nizam's Dominions. They are identical with the Kolhatis of Maharashtra, both of them being associated with the same means of livelihood. Both tribes have the evil repute of being highway robbers, burglars and dakaits, and are classed by the police among the criminal tribes of the Dominions.

History :

These tribes wander about in small gangs throughout the country and encamp in temporary huts of mats made of palmyra leaves. The men are ostensibly engaged in making combs of buffalo horns and wood, brooms for weaver's looms, dolls and mattresses. To these occupations they add the exhibition of gymnastic feats, rope-dancing tumbling, conjuring tricks and athletic exercises. In these performances they are joined by their women, some of whom are wonderfully expert in exhibitions on a long bamboo pole or a tight rope. To attract large audiences, the women selected as acrobats are generally smart and good-looking, and are trained in the art from their childhood. In their character, these women are very loose and dissolute, and the men not only encourage them in their depraved habits, but subsist largely on their immoral gains.

Both the Kolhatis and the Domaras are a mixed race composed of various elements and this fact accounts for the appreciable variations observed in their complexion and features. This variation of tupe seems to be due to the intermixture of blood brought about by the free admission of outsiders into the community, the prostistution of their women, and the kidnapping of high-caste girls to be brought up as a dancing girls.

(Titles : Appa, Ayya and Reddi).

Origin :

The Domars, as a class, are tall and well-made, varying in complexion from wheat colour to very dark. The men usually wear

short hip trousers made of a coarse white cloth and, at festivals, shawls, jackets and lace turbans obtained by them as regards in performances. The women are attired in gay clothes and deck themselves with a profusion of bangles and necklets of *cowrie* shells. The etymology of their name is obscure. It is said to be derived from the words 'Dimari' and 'Dulmar'; but their meanings are uncertain. They claim to be descended from one Motati Kapu who, being lame, was exposed in infancy, on a river bank. Sri Ramchandra and his wife, journeying in a chariot, observed the destitute child, took pity on him and restored him his limbs. The boy, in glee, jumped, and was, for this audacity, condemned to follow the occupation of a tumbler. Another tradition traces their descent from one Chinnamma, who exhibited feats before a king who had imprisoned her father. The father was released, but the woman lost her caste and had to take to prostitution.

Internal Structure.—The Domars are divided into two sub-castes : Telaga Domars and Are Domars. Telaga Domars speak Telugu and have a slang of their own. Are Domars, or Maratha Domars, appear to be originally kolhat's who migrated and settled in Telingana. Their home tongue is Marathi. The members of these sub-castes do not interdine nor intermarry.

They have exogamous sections of a territorial or eponymous type such as :

Karmachawaru	Padekuwaru
Ramasaniwaru	Jopalliwaru
Rajakawaru	Gujokuwaru

Marriage between persons belonging to the same section is prohibited. It is allowed between a man and his maternal uncle's or sister's daughter. A man may marry two sisters, but two brothers cannot carry two sisters. Polgomy is permitted. Adoption is rarely practised by the caste.

Marriage :

Girls are married both as infants and as adults. Cohabitation is tolerated before marriage, but if a girl becomes pregnant she is called upon to disclose the name of her lover, who is compelled to marry her and to pay a heavy fine to the caste council. It is customary to devote girls to temples and deities or to marry them to swords. The ceremony of dedication consists of making the girl sit before the idol of their patron deity, Guda Maisamma, and tying a *tali* (*mangalsutra*) about her neck. The *Basavi* girl is subsequently allowed to follow concubinage as her profession. The

progeny of such girls are admitted to the full privileges of the caste.

Adults girls are sometimes married to men of their own choice. But usually the intiative towards marriage is taken by the boy's father. A suitable girl is selected and a bride-price of Rs. 20/- is paid to her parents. The father of the boy goes to girl's house and presents her with a *Sari* and a *choli*. The betrothal is ratified by strong drink, of which the first cup is given to the chief man of the caste council. The marriage is performed before Maisamma, on a festive day, when men of the caste congregate from all parts to pay their devotion to the goddess. The bridegroom is first seated before the goddess on a mat of *shendi* (wild date palm), facing the east and holding in his hand a stick used for beating a drum. The girl is next brought in procession and seated opposite the boy. A necklace of glass beads is tied round the bride's neck and the clothes of the bridal pair are knotted. Rice is thrown on the heads of the couple and this forms the binding portion of the ceremony. A pig is killed the same day and the guests are feasted. On the third day after the wedding, the wedded pair are conducted in procession to the bridegroom's house. It is said that widow marrage is not permitted. But if a widow takes a fancy to a man she remains with him as his concubine. Her progeny are freely admitted into the caste.

A girl on attaining puberty is considered unclean for seven days and is kept during this period in a separate hut, with a piece of iron by her side. On the eighth day, the hut in which she lived during her pollution is burnt; the girl then bathes and becomes ceremonially pure.

A woman after child-birth is unclean for six days. On the 7tn day after birth she is bathed, goes to a well with oil, worships it and returns home with a jar full of water. The child is named on the same day and caste men are feasted in honour of the event.

Divorce :

Divorce is permitted, with the sanction of the caste assembly, on the ground of the wife's adultery, or for incompatibility of temper. A divorced woman is not allowed to marry again, but she can be kept as a mistress. Her paramour is compelled by the *Panchayat* to pay to her husband the bride-price he paid to her parents. Elopements are general. Adultery with a man of high caste is tolerated and condoned by a small fine. Social indiscretion with a man of low caste is punished with instant expulsion from the caste.

Inheritance :

In matters of inheritance, the Domars follow their own tribal usages. Sons and *Basavi* daughters share equally in their father's

property. If a man dies without male issue, his Basavi daughters share his property. Failing them, the estate descends to his married or virgin daughters.

Religion :

Guda Masamma is the favourite and characteristic diety of the caste. On Tuesdays, at night, in the month of Shravana (August-September), the goddess is worshipped with great pomp and ceremony. A large concourse of Domars assemble at the shrine of the goddess and offer pigs, fowls and sheep to her. A man of the Kummara caste officiates as priest, and while the grand *puja* takes place. Domar men beat drums and the women sing songs. The heads of the sacrificed animals are claimed by the priest. The bodies are cooked and provide a feast for the assembled votaries. Ellamma and Pochamma are also worshipped in the same month. Their other deities are Katayya, Maheshwar, Mutylamma and Kankama, worshipped with various offerings. They have a firm belief in ghosts and witchcraft and Erkala women are consulted to identify a malignant spirit. The Domars have recently been brought under the influence of the great sects and they profess themselves to be Vibhutidharis or Saivaits.

Disposal of the Dead :

The dead are buried in a lying posture, with the face downwards and the head pointing to the south. On the 3rd day after death, a pig is killed. The flesh is cooked, offered at the grave and subsequently buried under-ground. On the 11th day, the mourners become purified. Again a pig is killed and the flesh cooked; part of it is offered at the grave and buried underground, the remainder being eaten by the householders. Brahmins are called in and presented with rice and money. Some of the Domars now bury their dead in a sitting posture, with the face to the east. The chief mourner shaves his moustache and the widow breaks her bangles. No *Sradha* is performed by the members of the caste. Ancestors in general are propitiated on the *Pitra Amawasya* (last day of Bhadrapad).

Social Status :

In point of social status, the Domars rank very low and accept food from the hands of any caste except the Dhobis, the Hajams and the lowest castes, while no castes except the Malas and the Madigas will accept food from their hands. They eat the flesh of mice, cats, field rats, the mongoose, sparrows, squirrels, pigs and

fowls, but abstain from beef. They indulge freely in strong drink. They eat also the flesh of animals that have died a natural death.

Occupation :

As has been stated above, the Domars earn their livelihood by the performance of athletic feats and the prostitution of some of their women. Some of them have settled down and taken to agriculture.

XXVIII-B

DOMARA—KOLHATI

Origin :

Ancient authorities ascribe the origin of the Kolhatis to a liaison between a Shilingdhru man and a Kshatriya woman. Their traditions say that they originally belonged to Northern India and are akin to the Bowries, the Kanjars, the Waghris and other Northern India tribes. According to another account, they claim to be descended from Khatri women who were degraded for sexual indiscretions with lower castes. Very little is known, however, regarding their origin and the etymology of the name they bear. They are divided into three sub-castes : (1) Pal or Kane Kolhatis (2) Dukkar or Potri Kolhatis and (3) Dombaris. They are found in all the Districts of the Marathawada. The Pal Kolhatis are a wandering tribe, living in portable huts made of *rousa* grass, and carried from place to place on the backs of donkeys. The men are lazy and slovenly, while the women are smart and good-looking; many of them lead a life of prostitution and support the man. The Dukkar Kolhatis are a fine, manly people and derive their name from their occupation of hunting wild pig and breeding the domesticated pig They are a settled class, cultivating land and serving as village watchman. The Dombaris are a branch of the Domass of Telingana and are inferior to the other two sub-castes. The Pal and Dukkar Kolhatis speak of mixture of Gujarathi and Marathi, whereas the home tongue of the Dombaris is a mixture of Telugu and Canarese

Internal Structure :

The exogamous sections of the tribe are of the Maratha character, such as Gaikwad, Sinde, Pawar, Jadhava, Andhara, Kachare and the like. Intermarriage within the same section is prohibited. A man may marry two sisters and two uterine brothers may also marry two sisters. Marriage with a sister's daughter is allowed.

Marriage :

Girls are married either as infants, or after they have attained puberty. Sexual intercourse before marriage is tolerated and condoned by a small fine. If the man with whom she has associated be of her own caste, she is married to him. Married girls live a very virtuous life but those who are likely to develop into good athlets are dedicated to the god Khandoba : these remain unmarried and become prostitutes. The ceremony of dedication is as follows. A *pandal* is erected in front of the hut and an image of Khandoba is installed in it. The girl, bathed and ornamented, is made to stand before the deity and *bhandar* (turmeric powder) is thrown over her. Goats are sacrificed to the god and the caste people are feasted in honour of the event.

The marriage ceremony is simple and is performed at the bride's house. The bride and bridegroom are seated side by side and their garments are tied in a knot by the bride's mother. Women sing songs and one of the men beats a *dholak* (drum) all the while. Brahmans have, in recent years, been employed as priests and the ceremony is being elaborated into that current among the Maratha Kunbis. The father of a girl receives a price for her, varying from fifty to one hundred rupees.

Widow Marriage :

Widows are allowed to marry again, but divorce is not recognised. If the couple disagree and cannot live in harmony, the husband abandons his claims over his wife, on recovering the price he paid to her father. Adultery is severely punished and the delinquent woman has her head shaved and her tongue branded with hot gold.

Religion :

The chief deity of the Kolhatis is Khandoba, to whom offerings are made on Sundays and on the light 6th of Margasirsa (December). They worship Hanuman, Tuljapur Bhavani and other gods of the Hindu pantheon. Among their minor gods are Mari Ai (the deity of cholera), Mhasoba, Jotiba and Bahiroba, propitiated with sacrifices of goats and fowls. They observe the Hindu festivals and make pilgrimage to sacred places. They have a strong belief in sorcery, malevolent spirits and the evil eye. They also worship Muhammadan *Pirs*.

Disposal of the Dead :

The dead are buried with the head to the north and the face upwards. The body is washed and carried on a bamboo bier to the burial ground. No regular Sradha is performed in honour of

the deceased; but, on the 3rd day after death, food is cooked in the burial ground and, after a portion of it has been offered to and touched by a crow, the mourners eat the rest and return home. Ancestors, in general, are propitiated on the last day of Bhadrapad and on the light 3rd of Vaishakha.

Social Status :

The social rank of the Kolhatis is very low. They eat from the hands of all castes except Nhavis (barbers), *Parits* (washermen) and castes inferior to these, while no one, except a Mahar or a Manga, will eat from their hands. They also eat the leavings of Brahmans. Their touch is not regarded as unclean and they are allowed to draw water from wells used by the higher castes. They eat mutton, pork, fowl, all kinds of fish, rats and the flesh of carrion, and are addicted to strong drink. The Dukkar Kolhatis are said to add beef to this diet.

The Kolhatis admit into their community members of castes higher than themselves in social standing, and the person thus admitted is required to eat the flesh of the pig with his adopted caste brethren.

Occupation :

The Kolhatis pursue the same occupation as the Domars of Telingana. The Dukkar Kolhatis are reputed to be inveterate criminals and are vigilantly watched by the police. Girls of higher castes are often kidnapped and trained as prostitutes and acrobats. Kolhati women are expert in tattooing. Some of the settled classes have followed agricultural pursuits, but they never work as farm-labourers.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from Socio-Economic History of Northern India (1030-1194 *A. D.*) *by BHAKAT PRASAD MAZUMDAR, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of History, B. N. College, Patna University, Patna. Firma K. L. MUKHOPADHYAY, Calcutta* 1960 *pages* 111-113.

HADI, DOMBA, CHANDALA AND BADHATAU

The Hadi, Domba (Doma), Chandala* and Badhatau occupied the lowest rank in the social hierarchy. According to Alberuni, they were occupied with dirty work, like the cleansing of the villages and other services and were "not reckoned amongst any caste or guild". He saw the Doma, who played on lute and sang, following the occupation of inflicting corporal punishment on criminals or practised killing as a trade. The Badhatau or executioners were the worst of the untouchables, who devoured flesh of dead animals including dogs. A similar description of the Chandalas is given by Gardizi, the author of Kitab Zainu' l Akhbar. But Gardizi makes a distinction between the *Chandalas* and Danians, who lived like the former. These two communities however did not intermarry (amongst themselves.[261]) A perusal of the Puranas and digests show that there was not much of distinction amongst these low castes. Agni Purana[262] prescribes execution of criminals by Chandalas. Medhatithi[263] assigns a similar business to *Svapakas*. Beginnig from the days of Yajnavalkya (I. 197) till the end of the thirteenth century A.D., there was no change in the strict rules regarding the untouchability of the *Chandalas*. Some of the writers of digests went to the length of recommending penances for the higher castes for seeing or conversing and even crossing the shadows of untouchables. Kalhana records that Suyya, the great engineer of the times of Avantivarman (855-883 A.D.) was found in a heap of dust on the road by a *Chandala* woman Suyya by name, but she "without defiling the child by her touch", arranged for keeping the boy in the house of a Sudra nurse.[264] In Kashmir *Chandalas* worked as watchmen and guards of houses, as drummers and as executioners. *Dombas* worked as singers and huntsmen. Even the Jaina writer Hemchandra requires that the *Chandalas* and *Domas* should make sounds of sticks,

*According to the dharmasastras, Chandalas were either offspring of a Sudra male and a Brahmana female, or offsprings of an unmarried woman. They lived in houses outside the village, kept a cymbol under their armpit and their avocations were to execute offenders and remove dirt of the villages (Kane : HDS, Vol. II Pt. I p. 81).

261. Ouseley Ms. from Bodelian Library, Ms. Page No. 248A.

262. Agni Purana Ch. 151. 10f.

263. On Manu X. 38.

264. RT. V. 74-77.

so that the men of the higher castes may be aware of their presence and avoid the pollution.[266] Gardizi also refers to such practices.[267]

Glimpses of the life of the Bengal *Dombas* can be found in the Charyapadas. They lived in the outskirts of the city and were untouchables for the Brahmans. They often rowed across the rivers[268] and sold baskets and other articles prepared from bamboos in different parts of the country.[269] They were also experts in dancing as many of the Charyapadas refer to the skilful Dombi dancers.

---

[266]. Desinamamala II. 73, III. 54 dumbadinam sparasapariharartha chihnayastih; chandaladinam sparsa parihararthe chihnayastih.

[267]. Ms. Ouseley, Ms., Page No. 248A.

[268]. Baudda Gana O Doha Charyagiti Padavali Pada Nos. 8, 14.

[269]. *Ibid.* Pada No. 10.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from 'The MYSORE TRIBES AND CASTES Volume III by The Late H. V. NANJUNDAYYA, M.A., M.L., C.I.E., Superintendent of Ethnography, Mysore; Vice-Chancellor of the Mysore University and RAO BAHADUR L. K. ANANTHA-KRISHNA IYER, B.A., L.T., Curator of the State Museum, Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, Superintendent of Ethnography, Trichur, Cochin State, (Retired); Lecturer in Anthropology, and Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, Calcutta; Officer in Charge of Ethnographic Survey, Mysore. Author of the Cochin Tribes and Castes, Anthropology of the Syrian Christians; Lecturer on Ethnography; Corresponding Member of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, London. Corresponding Member of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, U.S.A., Associate Member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, etc. Published under the auspices of The Mysore University, Mysore, 1930, *pages from* 139 *to* 174.

DOMBAR

Introduction—Origin and Tradition of the Caste — Language — Internal Structure of the Tribe — Habitations — Marriage Customs and Ceremonies — Puberty customs — Widow Marriages — Adultery and Divorce — Dedication of Prostitutes — Pregnancy and Child-birth — Inheritance and Adoption — Tribal Organisation — Admission of Outsiders into the Caste — Religion — Funeral Customs and Ceremonies — Occupation — Social Status — Dietary of the Caste — Appearance, Dress and Ornaments.

Introduction :

DOMBARS are essentially a wandering tribe, though like similar wandering tribes, such as Korachas, many of them have settled down in towns and villages. They are acrobats and tumblers by profession and are generally tall, muscular and well-made, with a complexion varying from shades of copper to dark. According to the last Census they numbered 2,911; 1,390 being males and 1,521 females. They are, as a class, illiterate, and rarely show any inclination to send their children to school.

The Common name by which the caste is called is Dombar, a later form of the original word Dombaru or Dommara. They have no other names in this State. In the Vizagapatam District of the Madras Presidency, they are known as Itevallu. They are described as people who exhibit different shows, such as wrestling, ascending high poles, and walking on ropes. The women act as common prostitutes*. The titles used by the headman of the caste are Reddi,

*The Vizagapatnam District Manual of 1869, page 67.

Nayadu and Naik. The suffix Gadu is added at the end of the personal name of males when addressed by persons of higher caste, while the common suffixes of Appa and Ayya are used for males when they are addressed either by persons of their own or of an inferior caste.

The meaning of the word "Dombar" is not clear. Some derive it from a class styled Doms in Northern India. The latter are however scavengers, and are employed to carry corpses of destitute paupers. They correspond to the Madigas of the South, while their brethren in the South occupy a comparatively higher position. It can hardly be said that similarity of name is anything more than a coincidence. The Dombars are moveover a Telugu caste, and their traditions and customs point to their immigration into the State from the Kurnool and Nellore districts.

Origin and Tradition of the Tribe:

A Reddi had, by his younger wife, it is said, a son who was born without any limbs. Ever after he was pursued by great misfortune; and a sooth-sayer, having on consultation discovered that the unfortunate child had brought ill-luck into the family, commanded his wife to do away with the child. Her maternal affection induced her to temporize, and she hid the child in a manger. Cattle unaccountably died in numbers, and a similar result was observed wherever the child was removed. In despair the mother handed over the child to a wandering begger, to be disposed of in some safe place, and the latter consigned it to a ruined well. The unwelcome brat had, however, a rough life, and was not drowned. His cries attracted the attention of the Gods Parvati and Parameswara, who, on learning his unfortunate history, miraculously gave him his limbs, and at his request, bestowed on him a right to obtain an earthen drum from a potter's house, and doles of rice in each house to which he might resort for alms. The boy was so pleased at getting his limbs, that he jumped out of the well at one bound and cast himself at the feet of his divine benefactors†. He was then enjoined to add the profession of acrobatic performer to that of itenerant begger. The Dombars are his descendants by a concubine he picked up in his wandering tours.

Another story is that a Reddi's wife delivered of a daughter in the field outside the village, whither she had carried her husband's

†The doggerel appended seems to allude to this tradition, namely, with a backward bound (somersault) he came out of the well, and with a forward bound (somersault) he fell at their feet.

mid-day meal. A hut was improvised for her accouchement, and after it was over, her husband's elder wife, out of envy, contrived that she and her child should be regarded as outcastes. The father gave all his lands and agricultural implements to the progeny of the other wife, and left to these a drum, a pole and a rope. They had to earn their living with these implements alone, and learnt acrobatic feats. No one would marry a girl playing in public on a pole, and so the daughter, called Dombara Chinnasani, became a prostitute. This is said to account for the practice of dedicating prostitutes which is largely prevalent in the caste. A Dombar performer often begins his exhibition with the following invocation :— That is, the Kapu is the begetting father, the Desa man, an uncle, and I am the fit son* of the Sala and Mula (that is, right and left and people).

Dombars are said to be allied to Lambanis, a statement which perhaps is founded on the legend of Mola, the ancestor of Lambanis, having performed gymnastic feats before kings. It is reported that there is a section of Dombars, who are also itinerant Dombars, but distinguished from the rest by the custom of swinging a child to and fro by a rope passed round its waist while performing feats on the pole.

The Dombars found in the State are entirely of Telugu origin, and appear to have come from the Nellore and Ceded districts of the Madras Presidency. They say that their original place was Bombara Maddalapuram in the Telugu country. During the time of the Vijayanagar empire, they appear to have been the Codrt acrobats, and many of this caste are still said to hold *inams* in the Telugu country, in places like Jammalmadugu, Tadipatri, Poddutur and Gudamacherla. They spread into Mysore territory in later times after the disappearance of that kingdom.

Language :

All Dombars found in this State speak Telugu. Dombars who speak Mahratti are rarely seen here. Mahommedans who follow the profession of acrobats and wrestlers are known as Pehlwans, but they have no connection with the Telugu or Mahratti Dombars.

Internal Structure of the Tribe :

The Telugu Dombars, who are also known as Reddi Dombars are divided into two endogamous groups, namely, the settled (Uru

*Accounts differ as to the section of the Kapu Reddis to which their original ancestor belonged. Some say Kodati Reddi, some pakkanatis, some other Sajjana Reddis and so on, the section of the Reddis which they claim being that of the Reddis who are found in largest numbers in or about the place where the informants reside. This is of little importance when we remember that all the Reddis were originally of one tribe, and the sections named are the endogamous groups of the main caste of Reddis.

Dombars) and the nomad (Kadu Dombars). The wandering Dombars eat in the houses of the settled, but not *vice versa.* They seem to be subject to no exogamous restrictions; nor is any trace seen of hypergamy. But they all have, whether settled or nomadic, some sub-divisions which are neither endogamous nor exogamous, but which seem to be based on territorial or other distinctions. A list of these is given below :

1. Aisarapollu
2. Bhupativallu
3. Gandhapurajuvallu
4. Gopudasuvallu
5. Jattivallu
6. Kaggadivallu
7. Kalabandivallu
8. Kanacarddivallu
9. Kaserupuvallu
10. Kasrturivallu
11. Kutaravallu
12. Mallepuvvaaluvallu
13. Mannepulavallu
14. Matlivallu
15. Murarivallu
16. Nadumulenivallu
17. Natakarayainvallu
18. Pallekondalavallu
19. Somalarajuvallu
20. Sonduruvallu
21. Tolangivallu
22. Uppuvallu

Habitations :

Dombar houses are mere huts, somewhat similar to those of the Koravars and Joghis. They are made of palmyra leaves plaited into mats with seven strands. The huts or *gudisays* are located on the outskirts of villages, and are carried on the backs of donkeys in their wanderings from one place to another. Stolen clothes unless they are of value, are not generally sold, but hidden on the backs of their donkeys to be worn after a time. Their furniture and domestic utensils are next to nothing, beyond a few earthen pots of their own making. Cooking is done mostly in the open air. A Dombar family is always occupied.*

Marriage Customs and Ceremonies :

Polygamy is common. Dombar women play a very active part in household and other kinds of work, and so men either marry or keep as concubines more than one woman. It ofen happens that low class women of loose character, married, unmarried or widowed, take the opportunity of the visit of a troupe of Dombars to join them, and attach themselves to their party. Polyandry is unknown. Girls are trained from infancy to play on poles, and such as become skilled in that art, are not married, and lead a life of prostitution. Those who cannot be trained for such exhibition only are reserved

*Vide occupation.

for marriage. It is not strange that in such a community, they almost never care to marry girls before puberty.

There is nothing peculiar as regards relatives who are eligible for marriage. According to one account, it is said that a man may not marry the daughter of his sister. Two sisters may be married either by one man or by two uterine brothers. There is no objection to an exchange of daughters by marriage between two families.

The Dombars who have settled down in towns and villages tend more to adopt the marriage customs and ceremonies of the higher classes, such as consulting Brahmans and observing omens. Among the wandering section of them the marriage ceremony is very simple. They invite no pipers, use no *bhashinga* or marriage chaplets, nor do they worship any sacred pots. And sometimes, they do not even put up a *chapra*, or marriage-booth. They only consult a soothsayer about the future prospect of a happy union.

When a girl is selected, the bridegroom's party, accompanied by the headman of the caste, proceeds to the bride's father's house, to propose the match. The headman conducts the negotiations; and if the parties agree, the match is determined thereon. A few days afterwards, the bridegroom and his party, with the *yajaman* and friends, go to the house of the bride-elect, and the proposal is renewed before the assembly of the castemen by the bridegroom himself, and consent is given by the bride's father. The fact is announced by the *Yajaman*, who proclaims that this man's daughter has ben given to this man's son. Then one of the castemen beats a drum. Exchange of *tambulas* (betel leaves and arecanuts) is made between the parties, and the bridegroom's party supply toddy to the whole assembly. This is called the ceremony of arecanut and betel-leaves. At this meeting, half the bride-price has to be paid down, but if the bridegroom's party is very poor, a somewhat less amount is paid as earnest money. This makes the contract binding; and if the bride's party should afterwards break it, not only has this money to be paid back, but the promise-breaker has to pay a heavy fine to the caste. Among the wandering section, so strict is the caste discipline that the bride's father who breaks the promise is dragged before the caste-assembly, which is specially called together, and made to carry grind-stones and walk round and round the assembly. If, however, the father of the bridegroom, withdraws from the contract, he only forfeits the money already paid by him. On the completion of this preliminary ceremony, the marriage may take place either immediately or after some time has elapsed.

Among the settled Dombars, who are found only in a few places in the State, it is the custom to arrange for a number of marriages

being celebrated together, and to proceed to their *kattemane*, which is Tumkur, to celebrate them, before the temple of their tribal goddess Yellamma, and under the supervision and guidance of their caste headman. If, for any good reason, the marriage has to be performed at the place of either party, the caste headman or his representative must be sent for. In such cases, the marriage takes place, generally in the house of the bridegroom, and continues for three days.

On the day previous to that fixed for the marriage, the bride and her party arrive at the bridegroom's village, and are lodged in a separate house or shed. A *pandal* with only five pillars is erected, the central milk post being a twing of a Nerale tree (*Eugenia jambolina*) brought by the bridegroom's maternal uncle. In the *pandal*, the bride and the bridegroom are separately seated on pounding rods, and are smeared with turmeric. Then their gods *Sankalamma*, Gurumurthi and Yellamma, are set up in the *pandal*, and worshipped by the *yajaman*, with offerings of food and toddy. The bridal pair prostrate themselves before the gods, and touch the feet of their elders to obtain their blessing. In the evening, the bride and the bridegroom are seated together, and make *puja* to two *kalasas* set up before them. This is followed by feasting and drinking.

Next day, early in the morning, the bride gets her nails pared and the bridegroom shaves his face, and has his nails also pared. If no barber is available, the maternal uncle performs the service, and gets a *tambula*. Then the boy and the girl are made to sit face to face on two pounding rods, and are bathed, and then made to dress themselves in fresh clothes. The bride carrying some fruit and rice packed in her garments, is led along with the bridegroom to, the marriage *pandal*, the boy holding a dagger rolled up in an handkerchief. They sit facing each other on two pounding rods, and between them are placed in a plate, the *Kankanas* (wrist threads), *tali* (marriage disc), five toe-rings with dry cocoanuts and other articles. The bride then put one of the toe-rings of the second toe of the bridegroom's right foot, and the married women put the remaining rings on the bride's toes. Then each ties on the right wrist of the other, the *Kankanas*, which are made of woollen and cotton threads twisted together, and a betel leaf is tied to them. It is bound by the respective uncles of the bridal party in some places, or by one of the elders of the caste. The *tali* is handed round in the assembly, and then put on the bride's neck by the bridegroom, while women sing songs. A drum is sounded, and a boy proclaims that the marriage has been completed.

All those in the assembly pour milk (dhare) on the hands of the couple joined together; *talabalu* or the throwing of rice on each

other's head follows. The pair, holding each other by the right hand go round the milk post thrice, and then offer cocoanuts to the gods. On returning, they again sit on pounding rods, and pour into each other's hands some milk, which they drink. This part of the ceremony they call the milk-union. *Tambulas* are then distributed to all the assembled, the headman and his deputy being each given two. The couple and some relatives on each side sit together, and eat *buvvam* from the same dish.

On the morning of the third day, called *Nagavali* the newly married couple get their nails pared, and bathing and putting on fresh clothes, go to an ant-hill in state. They pour milk into the snake-holes and make *puja,* burning incense, and offering fruits and flowers. The bride carries on her head a small quantity of earth, dug out of an ant-hill; and the *pandal*-posts are worshipped after their return. In the afternoon, after dinner, the *puja* of *simhasana* takes place. The *yajaman* of the caste, who is of the *Matli* subdivision among the wandering section and of the *Somalaraju* subdivision among the settled, officiates at this ceremony when *tambulas* are distributed to the members present, who are so scrupulous and exacting that the prescribed order of precedence is observed. On the evening of that day, the milk post is removed after the usual *puja,* and the castemen and the bride's party are given a special treat, a large quantiy of toddy being consumed.

The *tera,* or the brideprice, is fifty-two rupees. This is paid either at once or in easy instalments. The settled section have, however, reduced the sum to twenty-four rupees, which they generally pay down at the time of the marriage. Sometimes, when the girl's parents are in good circumstances, the payment is remitted either partly or in full. But the wandering Dombars are very strict in enforcing the payment. If the bridegroom is too poor to pay, he has to work for his wife's parent till he discharges the debt. If he evades payment, his wife is not sent to his house at all, and is sometimes married to another man, who may be able to pay the amount. It is stated that if the wife goes to her husband's house against her father's consent before the *tera* is paid, she is never again admitted to the latter's house. The obligation is enforced, by coercion at a caste-*panchayat,* and some accounts say that even after the man's death, his property remains liable to discharge it. Formerly, among the wandering Dombars, when a girl was married, the son-in-law had to live in his father-in-law's house, in a separate hut, till a child was born. This practice has fallen into desuetude.

The marriage expenses are quite out of proportion to the poor condition of the castemen as a whole. During the period of marriage,

five to ten pigs are killed to feed the guests and more than fifteen rupees is spent in toddy, and drunken brawls among the assembled guests are frequent. The expenses are shared by both the parties, but the bridegroom's party contribute the larger share.

Purberty Customs :

When a girl attains puberty, a separate shed with date mats and green leaves is put up, and she is kept there for seven days, during which time she is considered to be impure. The girl is made to sleep there alone, an old woman being told off to sleep outside the shed to keep watch during the period. The girl is fed on good and nutritious food consisting of dry cocoanuts, ghee, gingeelly, fried bengal gram and jaggery in addition to the ordinary fare. In the evenings, married women give her turmeric powder and *Kunkuma*. It is considered inauspicious for any one to see this girl for the first time early in the morning. On the eighth day in the morning, the shed is pulled down by the maternal uncle, who throws away the materials at a distance from their residence, and the girl sets fire to them. Among the nomadic section, the girl's glass-bangles are broken and the string of glass-beads is also removed. The clothes worn by her during the period are also burnt in the fire. She goes back wearing an old cloth, and is made to bathe near the house. While bathing, she is made to change places three times, two potfuls of warm water being poured over her head at each place. After bathing, she is given a new cloth to wear, but is made to remain outside the house. A hen is sacrificed at the spot where the hut stood. That day the girl has to take her food outside the house. She bathes early in the next morning, and fasts till evening; she has another bath then, and gets new clothes to wear. Then a party of married women take her to the temple of Anjaneya. The god is worshipped, and she is given *thirtha* or holy water. When she returns to the house from the temple, cow's urine is sprinkled over her head. In the house, cooked rice is served in a heap on a plantain leaf or on a plate, to which the girl offers *puja*, burning incense and breaking, a cocoanut. Then she touches the rice with her right hand. This rice is then served to the castemen who have assembled there by invitation. The father has to spend three rupees for toddy. The girl becomes pure after this entertainment.

Widow Marriage :

The settled Dombars do not allow remarriage of women who have lost their husbands. Among them a widow must remain chaste as long as she continues to reside in her husband's house. If she is found to have been in criminal intimacy with anyone, not only has she to answer a charge before the caste people, but the rela-

tions of her deceased husband are fined for her fault. To avoid any such contingency, as soon as a young woman loses her husband, she is sent back to her father's house, and she may become the concubine of any one. The wandering Dombars on the other hand, freely permit a widow to re-marry as many times as she pleases, and there is nothing derogatory in her doing so. The man selected must not be the brother of her deceased husband, and must not be within the prohibited degrees of relationship. The ceremony is the same as in other castes among whom widow marriage is allowed, and takes place in the evening before her father's house. A bachelor may marry a widow, but it is generally a widower or a married man, who wants to have an additional wife, who takes her. In the presence of the caste-man assembled, he presents her with a white *sare*, and when she is dressed in it, he ties a turmeric root on a string to her neck as *tali*. The jewels which her previous husband had given her are all returned, and the consent of the people of her husband's party is generally taken. The woman loses all claims to her previous husband's property, and the children by him belong to his family. The essential and binding portion of the marriage is the tying of the turmeric root.

The *tera* or bride-price is half of that payable for a regular marriage, but sometimes even so low a sum as ten or fifteen rupees is accepted. It goes not to the previous husband's family. In fact, soon after the death of the husband, his widow, if there is any prospect of her marrying again, goes back to live in her father's house. The consent of the father is first obtained by the man that proposes to wed her. It is also necessary that he castemen should assent to the match, their representative, the *Yajaman* being formally consulted in the matter. Besides the *tera*, the man has to pay a fine to the caste, give them a dinner, and bear the expenses for the toddy on that day.

Adultery :

Adultery with a man of the same or higher caste is condoned by payment of a small fine, and if the husband is willing, he may keep her. If a married woman elopes with a man of another caste a fine equal to the marriage-expenses of the husband is levied, and the woman is married to him under *kudike* form. She then becomes his legitimate wife, and does not suffer in status. But if a married woman is guilty of adultery with a man of higher caste, and the husband is not willing to take her back, the caste-council levies some fine upon her, gives her *thirtha*, and makes her a *kulam bidda* (daughter of the tribe) that is a licensed prostitute. If an unmarried girl becomes pregnant by a man of the same

caste, she will be married to him, and the full *tera* of fifty-two rupees levied from him, in addition to some fine which always goes to the headman of the caste. If her lover refuses to marry her, he is out casted, and she is retained in the caste, by the *yajaman* giving her *thirtha*. She may be married to any man that offers to marry her, or she may be allowed to become a prostitute on payment of a small fine to the caste. If on the other hand, an unmarried woman should bear children to a man of a higher caste, she and her children are subjected to some fine, and admitted into the caste after some explatory ceremony. This ceremony consists in cutting a few locks of her hair, slightly burning the tip of her tongue with a bit of gold, making her swallow some *vibhuti* (sacred ashes), and getting her to beg pardon of the guru of the caste. She may thereafter marry any one of the caste or may become a prostitute, in which case she has to undergo the same ceremony of dedication as the other girls do.

Divorce :

Divorce is allowed at the instance of either party. The marriage-tie is so loose that even a small pretext, such as an occasional quarrel, or other incompatibility of temperament, will bring about separation. In such cases, before the assembled castemen called together for the purpose, the parties state their unwillingness to remain as man and wife, on account of the ill-treatment of the husband, unchastity on the part of the wife, or any other cause; and the relationship is severed, whereupon the wife is made to return the *tali* to the husband. The party that is found to be at fault is fined the cost of a dinner, with toddy to the caste men. The woman so divorced is, in the case of wandering Dombars, at liberty to marry another, in which case, the latter will pay the marriage expenses incurred by the former husband.

Dedication of Prostitutes :

The Dombar caste is notorious for dedicating girls to prostitution, the reason they assign being that when they adopted the profession of playing on the long poles, a woman was taught the art as being likely to attract a larger and more appreciative audience, and as she thus becomes the object of attention of the public in general, she could not be married to any, and was therefore to be kept as a common woman. The practice is as common among the settled as among the wandering Dombars, though the former have long ceased to play on the poles. The wandering section select smart and good-looking girls and train them up for athletic feats. Those who succeed in learning them remain unmarried, and lead a life of promiscuity. A troupe of Dombars,

without at least one prostitute among them, is a rare thing. Such women take a prominent part in their exhibitions, and are rarely equalled in dexterity by their male coadjutors. When off the stage, they generally go about in pairs to other public places, so as to attract customers for the more objectionable part of their trade.

The dedication takes place when the girl comes of age, between fifteen and sixteen. On an auspicious day, the castemen assembled by invitation. The girl is bathed and dressed in new clothes, and is seated on a pounding rod before the assembled castemen. Married women or prostitutes similarly dedicated, besmear her with turmeric and *kunkuma,* put on *sase** and fill her garment with cocoanut, rice, and other lucky articles. On rising from her seat, she bows to the elders to receive their blessing, and is then taken in procession to a temple of Anjaneya, or Yellamma, a man beating the drum and women singing songs. She gets *thirtha* from the *pujari.* Before the temple, the castemen congregate, and the girl is seated in their midst on a pounding rod. She is besmeared with turmeric and *kunkuma,* and the maternal uncle ties a tali to her neck. Basavis or married women pour sase on her. The girl bows to the castemen assembled, and is then conducted home in procession. At home a good dinner is provided for the guests by the father, who also pays for the entertainment in the toddy shop in the evening.

The settled section of the community observe nearly the same ceremonies, with slight variations, at the dedication of a girl to this life. A vessel filled with rice, with a cotton thread wound round it, is placed by her side to represent a bridegroom, when she sits in the temple at the time of the ceremony, *simhasana puja* takes place, and the permission of the caste is given by the *yajaman,* to give her license to lead a life of prostitution.

The wandering section of the Dombar repeat the same ceremonies as are observed at the marriage, on a smaller scale, when the girl thus dedicated as harlot, receives her first lover. The latter has to present her with a new clothes and four rupees, and they are provided with a new hut and a cot to sleep in. Basavis only take part in bringing them together, and indecent songs are sung, while the girl and the paramour are seated on the cot. But the latter when not hardened, often feels too bashful to submit to such public treatment and then the girl alone sits during the time the Basavis sing songs, and he is allowed to smuggle himself in after all the women guests withdraw.

*See account of the Koracha caste.

These public women are said to remain faithful to their protectors when kept as concubines. It is even asserted, that they may be flogged and fined by the caste if they prove false. Such a woman, may, however, be set free, being given a parting *tambula*. A dedicated woman who does not enter into an alliance of a more or less permanent nature, is free to consort with any man, provided he is not of a lower caste, such as Holeya, Madiga, Nayinda (barbar) or Agasa (Washerman). Sometimes the Basavis get themselves branded with Vaishnava symbols of *Sankha* and *Chakra*, and then their bodies may after death be carried and buried by Dasaris.

A Basavi, who wishes to give up her life of prostitution, may be married in the *kudike* form; she will not be allowed to perform acrobatic feats in public after this; and her children born before the marriage are left with her father.

Pregnancy and Childbirth :

The Dombars observe no ceremonies when a woman is pregnant. When living in villages, her parents bring the woman to their house for the first delivery; but wandering families naturally leave them where they are. During confinement, the mother and child are kept apart in a separate hut or room, and the treatment of the patient is generally the same as in other castes. She is kept warm, laid on a cot of coir rope, and is given some arrack and other stimulating drugs. On the second day, a pit is dug in the verandah or in front of the house, in which the after-birth and the naval string are buried, and a fowl is killed on the spot. On the third day, the mother is given some chicken broth. On the fifth, the seventh or the ninth day, the child and the mother are bathed. Castemen are given a dinner, and the child is put into a cradle, which, for the wandering Dombars, consists of a cloth swung like a hammock between two posts, or on branches of trees. The maternal uncle ties the waist-thread to the child, whether male or female. The midwife is taken that evening to a toddy shop, where she is liberally entertained. The custom of consulting the scothsayer for giving a name to the child is very common.

The names of the individuals are generally the same as those used by other castes of similar status, Mara and Mari, Yalla and Yalli and Sunka and Sunki being common. Hanumantha is a popular name, as connoting strength and prowess. The names most common for women who lead an unmarried life are Chinni, Lachmi and Venkati. They sometimes name children Galiga (wind or spirit), to appease the spirit which, according to their belief, makes children in the family, die. When frequent deaths of children

occur, they make a vow and name the surviving child after a family or village god.

Tonsure is performed for male children in the first or the third year after birth, when either a barber or the child's maternal uncle crops the hair. Then a *yede* is kept in the names of the deceased ancestors, and some castemen are invited to a dinner with toddy.

Inheritance and Adoption :

The settled Dombars follow the Hindu Law of Inheritance. If a man dies leaving sons and Basavi daughters, each of the latter gets as much as the share of each son. The caste *panchayat* always allots some property to a destitute and widowed daughter. If, at the time of the father's death, a Basavi daughter has died leaving children behind her, the latter are entitled to the share of their mother. When a Basavi dies without issues, her property goes to her brothers and Basavi sisters in the same proportion as above mentioned.

Among wandering Dombars, there is little need to observe the rules of inheritance, as they rarely possess any property to divide. The father is the sole owner of a few beasts of burden and other scanty articles a family may possess. If, after his death, a partition is desired, the elders of the group meet and effect a partition.

These men, being generally poor, rarely practice adoption. Sometimes, a boy from among near relations is brought by childless relations, and they celebrate the event by feasting the castemen. This, however happens only in the settled class. When a man has only daughters, he generally keeps one or two of them unmarried, and, they take the place of sons in the family, leading a life of free love. Prostitute women do not adopt girls as professional dancing women do.

Tribal Organisation :

Dombars have a tribal organisation to enquire into and punish infractions of caste rules. The rigidity with which these rules are enforced varies in the two sections. There is no doubt that the two sections originally formed one society and were under the same authority, but as one of them became settled, it seems to have formed its own councils which are quite independent of those of their parent stock. The *yajaman* or head of the settled Dombars, is a man belonging to the Somalaraju sub-division, and as these form a compact community found in a few places only, his authority over them is effective. His office is hereditary. He resides in Tumkur, and when disputes arise, the parties generally go to that place to obtain his adjudication. When they cannot go, he goes to their place, or sends his representative and no

important event may take place within the caste without his presence, or that of his representative. It is for this reason that they generally perform many marriages at one and the same time. They have another hereditary functionary called the minor *yajaman* or *kondikadu* (beadle), who acts as the convener of caste meetings and the headman's general assistant. On important and ceremonial occasions, they get an extra *tambula* each, and when any caste dispute is decided, they get some honorarium, either the payment of money or the presentation of a cloth. The *guru* of the settled Dombars is a Sri Vaishnava Brahman, said to be a resident in Chelur of Tumkur district. He visits them occasionally, gives them *thirtha* and *prasada* (holy water and holy victuals), and is rewarded with some customary fees.

The wandering section, owing to the character of their life, is broken up into a number of groups, each having its own *yajaman*. The common head of this section is said to be a man of the *Matli* sub-division, and is styled *Matli Nayadu*, who is regarded as having supreme jurisdiction over them, both in spiritual and temporal matters. His head-quarters are in Chitvel in the Pullampet Taluk of the Cuddapah district. Formerly, this office belonged to the Natakarayana sub-division, but one of the holders thereof lost the esteem of his community by his low behaviour. There was a dispute about his retaining his dignity, and the *palyegar* (petty chief) of the place who was asked to decide it, hung a *torana** of the cocoanut kernals to the town gate, and ruled that the party which succeeded in throwing down the *torana* by jumping over it, should have the headship. A boy of the *Matli* tribe, who had been tending donkeys, succeeded in accomplishing the feat, making, somersault over the *torana*, and standing before the chief after another somersault. Thus pleased, the *palyegar* passed an edict that he and his descendants should be recognised as the heads of the caste. He also presented the boy with an *inam* of wet lands, worth twelve *varahas* (pagodas) and a ring. This ring is still said to be in possession of the present representative of this division, and to bear an inscription in Telugu, declaring that the bearer is the headman of all the Dombars "within the four seas". A person of the Mannepala also styled Gandhaparajula division is the heriditary *pradhani*, or the lieutenant of the *yajaman*. The authority of these men, however, is only nominal, and many groups of wandering Dombars know their distant headman only by repute. On marriage and other occasions, however, they allot the first two *tambulas* to these two functionaries.

*Torana is a string with green leaves, and flowers or other articles tied to and stretched across an entrance as a decoration, to denote an auspicious occasion.

For settling disputes that may arise, each wandering gang of three or four together elect among themselves a *yajaman* and a *buddhivanta* (deputy), from the *Matle* and *Mannepala* families, if available. They meet periodically to settle disputes that may have accumulated in the interval, and the disputants pay the cost of maintaining them. They have verywide powers, and the guilty person may be fined, flogged or put out of caste. They thus settle not only caste disputes, but also property disputes, and these Dombars rarely resort to courts. An outcaste is denied all intercourse with his relations, and may secure his re-instatement only by obedience and the payment of an additional fine.

Admission of Outsiders into the Caste :

The Dombars freely admit recruits, both male and female, from any caste not lower than their own, as fixed by the text of commensality. Korachas are not admitted, and it is said that Brahmans and others of the higher castes are also not admitted. The usual incentive for others to join the ranks of Dombars is the sexual passion for either sex. When a man, especially of a higher caste, is blinded by a passion for a Dombar prostitute, and offers to join their society, she generally dissuades him at first. He is taken into the fold only if he proves intractable. The headman and other members of the caste assemble at the hut of the convery, who is again given a chance to retract.. If he is firm, he has to shave his head, beard, moustache clean, and after bathing he is taken in his wet clothes on to the temple of Yellamma. He is purified by having his tongue slightly branded with a piece of heated gold, and with swallowing *panchagavya,* and the *pujari* sprinkles some *thirtha* on his head, and he is given a spoonful to drink. He feeds the castemen and removes the leaves himself after dinner; he has also to supply them with drink that evening. Besides, a money contribution has to be paid to the temple of the tribal goddess, and the *yajaman* who has given sanction has to be presented either with some money or a pair of clothes, or some other article of value. If the person that is admitted be a woman, her paramour bears all the cost. He may not put off the event indefinitely, and should there be any unreasonable delay, he is excommunicated. Admission into the caste in this manner makes a man as good a member of the caste, as if he had been born in it. He labours under no disability, and the children born of his connection with the Dombar woman are legitimised.

Religion :

All the Dombars, whether settled or wandering, have great faith in sorcery, magic, omens, oracles etc. Whenever they commence

any important event, they consult a soothsayer or ask for a flower, as they style it, from their tribal deity.

The name of their tribal God is Gurumurthi and their tribal goddess is Yellamma. Like other wandering tribes, they also worship Maramma, Sankalamma and other maleficient deities. In recent years they have been largely influenced by the Vaishnava faith, and many have undergone the branding of the symbols of that faith namely, *sanka* and *chakra,* at the hands of the Satanis, and undertaken pilgrimages to Tirupati, the shrine of the Venkataramanaswami in the North Arcot district. In the quarters of the settled Dombars, where there is a sufficiently large number of houses, they invariably have a temple for Yellamma, whom they worship under the name (recently given) of Adi-Sakti. They strongly believe that any neglect shown to the worship of this goddess is sure to bring on misfortune to their families. The *yajaman* of the caste is the *pujari,* and he worships the goddess every Tuesday making offerings of cocoanuts, plantains and cooked rice. Once a year, on the Lunar New Year's day, animals are sacrificed before this temple.

They periodically hold a grand feast in the name of Yellamma. On such occasions, the settled sections all meet together in one place, generally Tumkur, but the nomadic sections celebrate the worship when three or four groups happen to meet together at a place. The worship comes on Tuesday. On a spot cleaned with cow-dung and water, six or seven pots of toddy are arranged in a row on planks laid thereon, the central pot being considered as representing the goddess. Margosa leaves and cotton thread dipped in turmeric paste and *Kunkuma,* are tied to each, turmeric paste and *Kunkuma* being also applied to them. All the people of the caste assembled there take a bath, and put on washed clothes. The *yajaman* who has observed fast on the previous evening also bathes, and dressing himself in washed clothes, supplied by the washerman, worships the pots with great reverence. All the people sit round with folded hands. Offerings of cocoanuts and flowers are made, and frankincense is burnt in large quantities. Then a number of sheep and goats are killed by the *pujari* after sprinkling *thirtha* on them. The Asadi of the Madiga caste, who has been invited for the occasion, sings the praises of Yellamma, who takes possession of one of them. The toddy in the pots, except the central one, with more added if necessary, is distributed among all those assembled, who get fully drunk. The revelry continues the whole night. Early in the next morning, *mangalarathi* is waved to the remaining pot, and the liquor therein is also distributed to all present as *thirtha.* This is followed by a general dinner.

When Sankalamma is worshipped, an earthen pot filled with water, is installed on a Tuesday under a tree, and before it, on a plantain leaf, cooked rice and curds with an onion are offered. Turmeric and *Kunkuma* are put on the pot. No animal is killed.

Dombars worship a number of minor gods and goddesses, such as Munisvara, Gurumurthi, Maramma and Kortigeramma (a local goddess). Another peculiar goddess is known as Kaluvaliamma. This is a goddess of epidemics, and is believed to accompany travellers when they return from a long journey. To propitiate this deity, those who have just returned to their settlement repair to a grive, and there set up three small stones under a tree, and worship them with the offering of a fowl or sheep. The sacrificed animal is cooked there, and is eaten by the people attending the worship.

Funeral Customs and Ceremonies :

The Dombars bury the dead. In some places, the corpses of pregnant women or of those suffering from leprosy are disposed of by heaping stones on it, at a spot near a hill (*kallu-seve* or stone service). The body is carried in a lying posture, by hand, among the wandering, and on a bier, among the settled Dombars. The chief mourner carries the fire and a pot full of water, walking before the procession. The body is buried with the head turned to the south, and the chief mourner breaks the pot at the head side, and sticks the firebrand in the ground there. The surviving widow breaks her bangles there, and takes off her *tali*. After washing their hands and feet in a water-course, the whole party repair to a liquor shop, where a pot of toddy* is kept ready for them. The chief mourner pours toddy, on the hands of the carriers to wash, and hands over one or two jugs of it to each of them. Then all drink the toddy and the party return to the deceased's house with a jug full of the liquor. They look at a light burning on the spot, where the deceased expired, and after condoling with the family, the relatives return to their houses. At night, a ball of rice, mixed with curds, styled *jiva mudda* is kept on fine sand spread at the place of death, with a little water and a jug of toddy. Early in the morning of the next day, the spot is examined with great care to see whether the spirit of the deceased has visited the place and partaken of the refreshments, and left any marks visible on the sand bed. Then the remaining rice, toddy and water are thrown on a green plant.

*This is in some places bought by the castemen who give to the chief mourner and his party by way of condolence.

On the third day, they place offerings on a low platform of earth, raised on the grave. Rice cooked with pork, and such other things that the deceased was particularly fond of, not excluding snuff and tobacco, are laid on two plantain leaves as *yede* and frankincense is burnt, and the spirit is exhorted not to molest the survivors. The offerings are in the end given to the crows. Again, on the eleventh day, the family bathe, and putting on washed clothes, go to the grave-yard where food cooked with meat is again offered.

A feast in honour of the dead is performed at the end of the month. On that day, all the family bathe, and renew the cooking earthen pots, throwing out the old ones as polluted. Their headman is invited to purify the house. In the central part of it, a *kalasa* is installed. New clothes are kept near it, together with food and toddy. Incense is burnt, and a pig or sheep is sacrificed. A dinner is given to the castemen, and they spend the whole night in drinking, as if to drown their sorrow in liquor. It is after this that the death pollution is fully removed. Those of the caste who have the Vaishnava symbols, *sanka* and *chakra,* branded, and who are called *Tirunamadharies,* invite a *satani* to officiate at these ceremonies. The priest instals a *chakra,* and does *puja* to it, both at the burial ground and at home, offering it large quantities of toddy, which he distributes to them as *tirtha,* reserving a good quantity for himself.

They do not perform *sraddhas.* On the New Year day, Mahalaya, New moon and Gauri feast days, they offer new clothes in the names of all the deceased ancestors; but the wandering section rarely observe these ceremonies. If a wife has any troubles attributed to the molestation of the ghost of her husband's deceased wife, a *tali* consecrated in the latter's name is worn by her. They do not perform any additional ceremony for those who die an unnatural death.

Occupation :

The characteristic profession of these men is the exhibition of rope-dancing and other acrobatic and athletic exercises. They show considerable dexterity and many of their feats would bring credit to members of any ordinary circus troupe organised in a much more elaborate fashion. The women especially are adepts in exhibitions on the pole, or the tight rope. They play in the open maidan, and take a collection at the close, the plate being taken round for obvious reasons, by the most attractive member of the troupe. The collections may amount to anything up to twenty rupees, according to the size of the place and the ability of the performers

to please the audience. Sometimes they get presents of clothes. Their performances are not now largely patronised as there are better organised circus companies going about the country. The want of finish and management interfere with the success of the *svadesi* work in this as in so many other departments. The Dombars have a supply of blunt swords, scimitars, daggers and other antiquated arms, which they exhibit on a cloth spread before the audience during the performance.

Dombars who perform in public make a great deal of din and noise, with drums and loud shrieks to attract a large crowd of spectators. This kind of glamour is called "Dombi" in Kannada (Canarese), but whether "Dombi" meaning a tumult or tumultous rabble is derived from Dombar (the name of the caste), it is not easy to determine.

They make combs of various kinds of soft wood and sometimes of sandalwood, or horn, and vend them in villages and towns. It is said that a goldsmith paramour of a Dombar woman taught them the art, presenting her with a few instruments (saw, chisel and file) required for the work; and the Dombars show particular regard to goldsmiths as their patrons. It is chiefly the women that manufacture these articles and hawk them about in the streets. They find a market even outside the State.

Dombars are included in the Criminal Tribes, and are placed under surveillance. They are credited with daring and love of excitement. They obtain information of like placts for raiding through their women, and before embarking on any such enterprises, they invoke the aid of their goddess. They are also said to train their boys by an apprenticeship to this trade*.

Dombars are also great breeders of sheep and pigs, which boys, and women are employed to graze. Men engage themselves as day labourers in the villages near or about which they encamp, their women going about for alms. They are expert bird catchers, which they secure either by spreading nets or smearing birdlimbs on their roosts.

The settled Dombars are almost all engaged in agricultural pursuits, the proceeds of which they supplement by comb-making and pig-breeding.

Dombars are vindictive, and should they consider themselves either slighted in any village they may have visited, or insufficiently remunerated for their gymnastic feats, they take other steps to remunerate themselves at the expenses of the inhabitants thereof.

*Mullaly : Notes on the Criminal Tribes of the Madras Presidency.

Men usually wear short hip-trousers made of white cloth, named *Challana* and sometimes after a series of successful forays, or at festivals, and when they give their performances, they put on gaudy shawls, jackets and laced turbans. These articles of dress are sometimes obtained as presents, but not infrequently by less legitimate means. Another characteristic part of their dress is the cotton waist-band of black colour, ornamented with hanging tassels at their end. While performing, they tie this band round, pass it tightly between the legs and tuck up the ends at the waist. They wear a silver *tali* with an effigy of Hanumanta engraved on it, suspended round the neck, silver bangles on the wrist, and also silver rings.

The family women of the nomadic section, do not wear *ravika* (bodice), and put on glass beads profusely round the neck. The prostitutes are more civilized and their dress and ornaments are the same as those of the other respectable classes, the one ornament which distinguishes a prostitute from the rest being a silver anklet which she wears round her left leg.

Their women undergo tattooing the operation being performed by a woman of Korama caste. The designs are the ordinary ones, but a prostitute has a streak of tattoo on her forehead, and if she is so disposed, she gets a likenes of her favourite paramour tattooed on her arm.

It is reported that a section of the wandering Dombars do not eat food after they hear the sound of the jackals at night and that like the Jains, they have their evening meal before the sunset.

Social Status:

The Dombars are low in social status. The wandering section eat at the hands of Oddas and Bedas. But the settled people draw the line at the Bestas. Except Holeyas and Madigas, no one eats in their houses.

The Dombars are considered to be polluted by touch, though they are allowed to enter the outer apartments of the houses of the higher castes. Brahmans help them only to fix suspicious days, and to discover whether a proposed match is agreeable according to the rules of astrology, but they do not officiate at any religious or other ceremonies for them. They are very hard drinkers, women and children also being addicted to the vice, and at night time their camps are generally noisy and troublesome to those who live near. They may draw water from the village well. The barber shaves them and pares their toe-nails and the washermen have no objection to wash their clothes. But as a matter of fact, the wandering Dombars have rarely any clothes for the washerman,

and the little washing that is necessary, they do themselves. They are allowed to enter the outer parts of temples, but take no part in the ceremonies connected therewith. Their social rank is the same as that of the Korachas*.

Dietary of the Caste :

They eat flesh of all kinds of animals, bats, cats†, owls, rats and bandicoots included. Some eat crows also; but beef and the flesh of monkeys and snakes are eschewed. They settled section have given up eating owls and bandicoots.

Conclusion :

The Dombars are supposed to be the descendants of Doms from Northern India. They are tumblers, acrobats and snake charmers. The castemen are found in various grades of culture and social elevation, owing to their residence in towns, and their frequent contact with the members of the higher castes. Some are vagrants, residing in movable huts and rearing pigs. Some are agriculturists, while others in contact with higher castes are decently dressed, and help their wives in the manufacture of combs, which appears to be a thriving trade. Their women are also decently clad and well ornamented. Their habitations are pretty neat. All of them came under my observations at Tumkur and other localities.

Appearance, Dress and Ornaments :

Dombars are a strong muscular set of people, and are found in all shades of complexion. Tribesmen living in the vicinity of towns are better dressed and put on a better appearance. Those living in villages are found dirty in habits. The women of the former class are of average stature, better dressed and better ornamented like those of high-caste women. But the women of the vagrant class are dirty in appearance. The Dombar males are generally tall, stout, muscular and hardy.

---

*It is said that Korachas and Dombars were formerly related as brothers. Once upon a time, when both were in need of a bride, they began to bid for the same girl by gradually increasing the price. Dombars brought up the price to twenty pagodas and stopped there, while the Korachas increased the bid to 25 pagodas and carried away the girl. Ever since, they have been separated into two rival groups.

†It is considered a great sin to kill a cat, but they say that the sin of killing it is washed away by eating it.

Dialect :

The Telugu Dombars have a dialect which is used only among themselves. A list of the words and phrases in the Dombar dialect with their English equivalents is given below :—

NOUNS

Words	*Meaning*
Karuv	1. Hut 2. Village
Ganne	Toddy
Kowrunganne	Arrack
Kavuru	News
Mesa	Food
Panchcham	Dhal-wated
Tiluva	Water
Tadam	1. Way 2. Door
Sirasam	Head
Vagatam	Mouth
Kivistaram	Ear
Chattam	1. Hand 2. A field
Pashtyam or Patimu	Leg
Kanigam	Blood
Nerem	Hair
Pattemu	Stomach
Abba	Father
Siragadu	Son (male child)
Pinka	Daughter (female child)
Tobbirikam	1. Man 2. Husband
Masa	1. Woman 2. Wife
Mandirenu	Wife
Dasimasariga	A prostitute
Nerupam	Marriage
Pakyalu	Rice (uncooked)
Kivulu	Ragi

NOUNS—*contd.*

Words	*Meaning*
Daipadam	Pestle
Tegem	Rope
Masastaram	Tree
Irupam	1. Hill
	2. Wood
Malem	Rain
Devarikam	1. Light
	2. God
Elemu	Betel leaf
Telipem	Chunam
Kantikam	Brass vessel
Kogilam	Earthen vessel
Kenda	Cloth
Sirasapukenda	Head cloth (turban)
Netlakenda*	Large cloth, a blanket
Gorapadammenrem	Sheep
Kaike	A dog
Netalnadava	A horse (a big donkey)
Dagarugoddedi	A buffalo (either of night-soil)
Lyuva	A fowl
Chinna Narasigadu	A jackal
Jayikam	A sword
Netala Irupam	The pole
Marupam	Dombar play
Biluvulu	Copper coins
Bagamgone	Half of rupee
Chintaginja	One anna (a tamarind seed)
Suttetikadu	A silver smith
Kogilalodu	A potter
Kendalodu	Washerman
Tanangivadu	1. Shanbhog
	2. Brahman
Lairodu	The tori
Pattukondi	Paddy
Kalastaram	Grinding stone or stone

*Netla means large or big.

NOUNS—*contd.*

Words	*Meaning*
Nelastaram	Ground
Bolistaram	A mat
Elem	1. Leaf 2. Paper
Nerupam	Sunshine
Gontikam	Arecanut
Burigyalamu	Tobacco
Rettani	Night
Tattekkam	Cot
Vatukoyyi	A bag
Masagatakenda	Women's cloth (sadi)
Tuduvukenda	Lip trousers
Gorapadamkenda	Sheep cloth or coarse wollen blanket
Elemgoddedi	Eater of leaves, a goat
Nadava or Sikkanadava	A donkey
Badisam	Cow or bullock
Mannigam	A pig
Kasikam	A cat
Netla Narasigau	A tiger
Nadamarupam	A gun
Minem	The stout rope for tying to the pole.
Gondelu or Gonelu	Rupees
Sirupalu	Pies
Pink@	Quarter rupee
Dondodu	A shopkeeper, a Komati
Gannodu	Idiga (toddy drawer)
Neralodu	Barber (man of the hair)
Elikodu	The patel
Pudodu	The talari (watchman)
Jadamodu	Police constable
Gemma	A thief
Tatekam	1. A tank 2. Train
Sonapam	Jewels
Netlollu	Big men or king
Mundarajampa	Somersault

@Also means a female child or daughter.

NOUNS—*contd.*

Words	*Meaning*
Jarikam	shoe
Gabbidi	A pregnant woman
Netlakaruvu	Kutcheri or Police Station (a big house).
Savarenainodu	A wise man
Tuparam	Bangles
Netlabidimedu	Guru or king
Lenkatam	Somersault
Gontikam*	Horn of a bullock
Adimodu	He
	NUMERALS
Ojogati	One
Sulam	Three
Chattam	Five (fingers of the hand, latte being called chattam).
Goparam	Seven
Ojagati Vaidu	Nine (one less than ten)
Gachchakaryi Ojogati	Eleven (ten and one)
Gachchakayi Sulam	Thirteen (ten and three)
Sulamgachchakayi	Thirty
Nainam	Two
Kyasaru	Six
Maggam	Four
Nainammaggalu	Eight (two fours)
Gachchakayi	Ten
Gachchakayi-Iggeu	Twelve
Nainamgachchakayi	Twenty (two times ten).
Net lagachchakayi†	Hundred (big ten)
	VERBS
Nettumadipilu$	To bow
Parigulu or Odigulu	Run
Kavu	Go
Kedu	Ask
Nabbinamu	Hide or conceal

*It also means arecanuts.

†They have no words for numbers above one hundred.

$ The ending 'pilu' is used largely to convert nouns into verbs.

VERBS

Words	*Meaning*
Ituko	Take or buy
Ettipilu	Get up or rise
Karate	Died
Kaipu	Eat
Suttavillu	Burn
Baddichchu	Know or understand
Sayichchu	Come
Suriya or Sonchu	Go
Bavalichchu Muchipillu	Hide or conceal
Pimmu	Give or keep
Maripilu	Sell
Killuko	Lie down or sleep
Karinchu	Kill
Daipu	Beat
Yajiniku	Withdraw
Marugu	Join
Sondayipu	Send away
Karipilu	Receive
Nabbadu	Is not or no

PHRASES AND SENTENCES

Gemmalichchu	To steal
Parigilatadu	He runs
Sayistadu	He comes
Karuvukavu	Go into the hut or village
Pattemu sutta viltadi	I feel hungry (my stomach burns)
Tiluvukaipu	Drink water
Mesakaipu	Eat food
Yedelipitik sonche	Went out
Adikku nabbinamu	We live that side
Adimodikelle	Fell down to the ground
Maripilatadu	He sells
Netlasiraga ayyindi	She has attained puberty (She has become a big child).

PHRASES AND SENTENCES—*contd.*

Words	*Meaning*
Tobbirikam sayistadi	Marriage consummation take place.
Dannipimmukonnadu	He has kept her
Pillaggaviri	He was arrested and taken away.
Pachchega	Let us go
Ejam nabbadu	There is not anything
Adimoda sadenabbadu	He did not come
Rettaniki sayistanu	I shall come this night
Adimonidaggira gavu maggam gonelu-pimmutadu	Go to him and he will give you four rupees.
Elem dadaputadu	He writes
Patemulo diaputado	He kicks
Vandia karuvulo nerapam outundi me-saputaru sonchu	Marriage takes place in their house Go, they will give you food.
Iddaru saistaru oganni karipiluko oga-nni sondayipu	Two persons are coming, receive one (into the hut) and send away the other.
Nerupam pettutadi	Sunshine comes.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from 'Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India, by R. V. RUSSELL of The Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Ethnography, Central Provinces Assisted by : RAI BAHADUR HIRA LAL, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Published under the orders of the Central Provinces Administration in Four Volumes—Vol. I Macmillan and Co., Limited. St. Martin's Street, London, 1916, *pages* 361 *and* 362.

DOM : An important caste in Bengal. See article Kanjar. Used as a synonym for Ganda in the Uriya country.

DOMRA : Sub-caste of Turi.

DUMAR or DOM : A low caste of sweepers in Bengal. See Kanjar. Sub-caste of Basor, Ganda, Panka and Turi. Synonym and sub-caste of Mehtar. A section of Kawar.

KANJAR : A caste of gipsies. A sub-caste of Banjara.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from Hindu Tribes and Castes' together with An Account of the Mahomedan Tribes of the North-West Frontier and of the Aboriginal Tribes of the Central Provinces, by The Rev. M. A. SHERRING, M.A., LLB., Lond., Fellow of The Calcutta University; Corresponding Member of the Bengal Asiatic Society; Author of "The Sacred City of The Hindus", "The History of Protestant Missions in India", etc., "Homo sum; human nihil a me alienum puto". Vol. III Calcutta; Thacker, Spink, and Co., London : Trubner & Co. Ludgate Hill. Bombay : Thacker and Co. Limited. Madras : Higginbotham and Co. 1879 *page* 141.

17. DOMMARA : A tribe of jugglers. They are somewhat similar in their habits to the Karawars; and wander about in gangs, performing athletic feats, and thieving (a). The tribe is variously designated as Dommara, Dombari, and Domber; which words are doubtless forms of Dom, the term by which the very numerous outcast race of Northern India is known.

The Dombers are more or less scattered over Southern India. They are tall and well-made, with a complexion varying from different shades of copper colour to very dark. Dr. Short considers that the predominant type of countenance which they exhibit is Mongolian, "somewhat pointed chin and absence of whiskers, large eyes, and prominent cheek-bones". In addition to their conjuring tricks, rope-dancing, and the like, they hunt, fish, make mats, tend donkeys and pigs. They worship the goddess Polariamah (b) They eat all kinds of flesh, including cats, pigs and game. Like the Sukalis, they are usually well clothed. The Dombers marry only one wife, but keep concubines at pleasure. The marriage string is always tied round the bride's neck.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from 'Hindu Tribes and Castes' together with An Account of the Mahomedan Tribes of the North-West Frontier and of the Aboriginal Tribes of the Central Provinces, by The Rev. M. A. SHERRING, M.A., LL.B., Lond.; Fellow of The Calcutta University; Corresponding Member of the Bengal Asiatic Society; Author of "The Sacred City of The Hindus", "The History of Protestant Missions in India", etc., "Homosum. humar. nihil a me alienum puto". Vol. III Calcutta Thacker, Spink, and Co., London: Trubner & Co. Ludgate Hill. Bombay: Thacker and Co. Limited. Madras: Higginbotham and Co., 1879, *page* 161.

VIII—SECTS OF DEVOTEES AND RELIGIOUS MENDICANTS

Many of the sects of devotees and religious mendicants found in Mysore and other parts of Southern India have their representatives in Northern India, of which an account of forty-eight is given in the former volume of "Hindu Tribes and Castes" (b). There are sects in the south, however, not met with at all in the north. The Mysore Gazetteer contains a list of thirty-seven sects in Mysore, which are as follows :

1. Kanjala (nis)
2. Kadri (a class of satanis)
3. Padasi
4. Handigada
5. Renuka Jangam
6. Ranadu Jangam
7. Samagi, or Sameraya (a class of Satanis)
8. Suragi (a class of Satanis)
9. Handiclukaru
10. Demangala
11. Pandas, or Panasumakkolu or Hale-makkalu
12. Kutuma
13. Kulasekkhara (a class of Satanis)
14. Aneganti Battela
15. Gogangi
16. Jogi
17. Kasavarajulu
18. Maelari
19. Solare
20. Budabudike
21. Bairagi
22. Dasari
23. Domba
24. Garadiga
25. Gondaliga
26. Gosayi
27. Helava, or Pichukunte
28. Pakinati Jogi
29. Wader, or Charanti
30. Sillekyata
31. Sudugadu
32. Sidda
33. Satani
34. Virakta (Lingayat)
35. Jangaliga
36. Battaru

Extract on "DOMBAR" from 'Hindu Tribes and Castes' together with An Account of the Mahomedan Tribes of the North-West Frontier and of the Aboriginal Tribes of the Central Provinces, by The Rev. M. A. SHERRING, M.A., LLB., Lond.; Fellow of the Calcutta University; Corresponding Member of the Bengal Asiatic Society; Author of "The Sacred City of The Hindus", "The History of Protestant Missions in India", etc. "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto". Vol. II Calcutta : Thacker, Spink, and Co., London : Trubner & Co., Ludgate Hill. Bombays Thacker and Co., Limited. Madras : Higginbotham and Co., 1879, *page* 201.

DOMBARI : These pursue the same profession, and are chiefly found in the Carnatic.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from 'Hindu Tribes and Castes' together with An Account of the Mahomedan Tribes of the North-West Frontier and of the Aboriginal Tribes of The Central Provinces, by The Rev. M. A. SHERRING, M.A., LL.B., Lond.; Fellow of The Calcutta University; Corresponding Member of the Bengal Asiatic Society; Author of "The Sacred City of The Hindus", "The History of Protestant Missions in India", etc. "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto". Vol. II Calcutta: Thacker, Spink, and Co. London: Trubner & Co., Ludgate Hill. Bombay: Thacker and Co., Limited, Madras: Higginbotham and Co., 1879, page 338.

80. DOMBARI : A wandering tribe with no fixed home. They go from place to place in the districts of Poona, Sattara, Belgaum, Sawunt Waree and the adjacent tracts. Some are Hindus, worshipping Yelloba and Yelluma, and some are Mohamedans, paying reverence to *pirs*, yet they have one head who exercises authority over the tribe, and intermarry only among themselves. Polygamy is practised, and money is given for the wives. They bury their dead. The Dombaris are showmen and makers of combs. They have a bad notoriety for promoting the prostitution of their women.

Extract on 'MARATHI DOMMARAS' from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E. Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologis de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia. Assisted by K. RANGACHARI M.A., of the Madras Government Museum, Volume I-A and B Government Press, Madras, 1909, *pages* 56 *to* 57.

ARE : A synonym for Marathi. The name occurs as a subdivision of Kunchigar and Kudubi. In South Canara Arya Kshatri occurs as the equivalent of Are, and, in the Telugu country, Are Kapu refers to Marathi cultivators. Arya Kuttardi is a Tamil synonym of *Marathi Dommaras.* Concerning the Area, Mr. H. G. Stuart writes as follows : *"Of the total number of 6,809 Areas, 4,373 are found in South Canara, Bellary and Anantapur, and these are the true Ares. Of the Rest I am not able to speak with certainty, as the term Arya, which is a synonym of Are, is also used as an equivalent of Marathi, and sometimes in a still wider sense. The true Ares are husbandmen of Maratha origin. They wear the sacred thread, have Brahmans as their priests, and give allegiance to the head of the Sringeri Mutt. Marriage of girls takes place either before or after puberty, and the remarriage of widows is not allowed. A husband may divorce his wife for adultery, but a wife cannot divorce her husband. When a guilt of a woman is proved, and the sanction of the Guru obtained, the husband performs the act of divorce by cutting a pumpkin in two at a place where three ways meet. The use of animal food is allowed, but intoxicating liquors are forbidden". The Ares of South Canara, Mr. Stuart writes further,† "usually speak Marathi or Konkani, but in the Kasaragod taluk and possisbly in other parts too, they speak Canarese. Their exogamous septs are called manathanas. They use the dhare form of marriage (*see* Bant), but the pot contains a mixture of water, milk, ghee (clarified butter), honey and curds instead of the usual plain water".

The Marathi-speaking Areyavaru or Aryavaru of the South Canara district follow the makkala santana law of inheritance (from father to son). For ceremonial purposes, they engage Shivalli Brahmans. An interesting feature of the marriage rites is that the bridegroom makes a pretence of going to a battle-field to fight, presumably to show that he is of Kshatriya descent. The ceremony is called dandal jatai. The bridegroom ties a bead on the neck of the bride if of the power sept, and a disc if of the Edar sept. The

*Madras Census Report, 1891.

†Manual of the South Canara district.

Areyavaru eat fowls and fish. The former are killed after certain mantrams (prayers) have been uttered, and, if a priest is available, it is his duty to despatch the bird. The caste deity is Ammanoru (Durga), in the worship of whom the Areyavaru, like other Maratha castes, employ Gondala mendicants.

Extract on 'DOMB' from Castes and Tribes of Southern India by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondent Etranger, Societed' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by K. RANGACHARI, M.A., of the Madras Government Museum—Volume II-C to J. Government Press, Madras 1909. Pages 173 to 185.

DOMB : The name Domb or Dombo is said to be derived from the word dumba, meaning devil, in reference to the thieving propensities of the tribe. The Dombas, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes, *"are a Dravidian caste of weavers and menials, found in the hill tracts of Vizagapatam. This caste appears to be an offshoot of the Dom caste of Bengal, Behar, and the North-Western Provinces. Like the Doms, the Dombas are regarded with disgust, because they eat beef, pork, horse flesh, rats, and the flesh of animals which have died a natural death, and both are considered to be Chandalas or Pariahs by the Bengalis and the Uriyas. The Domba weave the cloths and blankets worn by the hill people, but, like the Pariahs of the plains, they are also labourers, scavengers, etc. Some of them are extensively engaged in trade, and they have, as a rule, more knowledge of the world than the ryots who dispise them. They are great drunkards". In the Census Report, 1871, it was noted that "in many villages, the Doms carry on the occupation of weaving, but, in and around Jaipur, they are employed as horse-keepers, tom-tom beaters, scavengers, and in other menial duties. Notwithstanding their abject position in the social scale, some signs of progress may be detected amongst them. They are assuming the occupation, in many instances, of petty hucksters, eking out of livelihood by taking advantage of the small difference in rates between market and market".

"The Dombs", "Mr. F. Fawcett writes, **"are an outcast jungle people, who inhabit the forests on the high lands fifty to eighty or a hundred miles from the east coast, about Vizagapatam. Being outcast, they are never allowed to live within a village, but have their own little hamlet adjoining a village proper, inhabited by people of various superior castes. It is fair to say that the Dombs are akin to the Panos of the adjoining Khond country, a Pariah folk who live amongst the Khonds, and used to supply the human victims for the Meriah sacrifices. Indeed, the Khonds, who hold them in contemptuous inferiority, call them Dombas as a sort of alternative title to Panos. The Paidis of the adjoining Savara or Saora country are also, doubtless, kinsmen of the Dombs. (The same man is said to be called Paidi by Telugus, Dombo by the Savaras, and Pano by

*Madras Census Report, 1891
**Man, 1901

the Khonds. It is noted in the Census Report, 1881, that the Pano quarters in Khond villages are called Dombo Sai). In most respects their condition is a very poor one. Though they live in the best part of the Presidency for game, they know absolutely nothing of hunting, and cannot even handle a bow and arrow. They have, however, one respectable quality, industry, and are the weavers, traders, and money-lenders of the hills, being very useful as middlemen between the Khonds, Sauras, Gadabas, and other hill people on the one hand, and the traders of the plains on the other. I am informed, on good authority, that there are some Dombs who rise higher than this, but cannot say whether these are, or are not crosses with superior races. Mostly likely they are for most of the Dombs are arrant thieves. It was this propensity for thieving, in fact, which had landed some hundreds of them in the jail at Vizagapatam when I visited that place, and gave me an opportunity of recording their measurements". The averages of the more important of these measurements are as follows :—

	cm.
Stature	161.9
Cephalic length	13.8
Cephalic breadth	14.3
Cephalic index	75.6
Nasal index	86.5

It is noted by the Missionary Gloyer* that the colour of the skin of the Dombs varies from very dark to yellow, and their height from that of an Aryan to the short stature of an aboriginal, and that there is a corresponding variation in facial type.

For the following note on the Dombs, I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. They are the weavers, traders, musicians, beggers and money-lenders of the hills. Some own cattle, and cultivate. The hill people in the interior are entirely dependent on them for their clothing. A few Domb families are generally found to each village. They act as middlemen between the hill people and the Komati traders. Their profits are said to be large, and their children are, in some places, found attending hill schools. As musicians, they play on the drum and pipe. They are the hereditary musicians of

*–Jeypore, Breklum, 1901

the Maharaja of Jeypore. A Domb beggar, when engaged in his professional calling, goes about from door to door, playing on a little pipe. Their supposed powers over devils and witches result in their being consulted when troubles appear. Though the Dombs are regarded as a low and polluting class, they will not eat at the hands of Komatis, Bhondaris, or Ghasis. Some Dombas have become converters to Christianity through missionary influence.

In the Madras Census Report, 1891, the following sections of the Dombs are recorded :—Onomia, Odia, Mandiri, Mirgam and Kohara. The sub-divisions, however, seem to be as follows :—Mirigani, Kobbiriya, Odiya, Sodabisiya, Mandiri and Andiniya. There are also various septs, of which the following have been recorded among the Oriyas :—Bhag (tiger), Balu (bear), Nag (cobra) Hanuman (the monkey god), Kochchipo (tortoise), Bengri (frog), Kukra (dog), Surya (sun), Matsya (fish), and Jaikonda (lizard). It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "monkeys, frogs, and cobras are taboo, and also the sunari tree (*Ochna squarrosa*). The big lizard, cobras, frogs, and the crabs which are found in the paddy fields, and are usually eaten by jungle people, may not be eaten".

When a girl reaches puberty, she remains outside the hut for five days, and then bathes at the nearest stream, and is presented with a new cloth. In honour of the event, drink is distributed among her relatives. Girls are usually married after puberty. A man can claim his paternal aunt's daughter in marriage. When a proposal of marriage is to be made, the suitor carries some pots of liquor, usually worth two rupees, to the girl's house, and deposits them in front of it. If her parents consent to the match, they take the pots inside and drink some of the liquor. After some time has elapsed, more liquor, worth five rupees, is taken to the girl's house. A reduction in the quantity of liquor is made when a man is proposing for the hand of his paternal aunt's daughter, and, on the second occasion, the liquor will only be worth three rupees. A similar reduction is made in the jholla tonks, or bride price. On the wedding day, the bridegroom goes, accompanied by his relations, to the bride's home, where, at the auspicious moment fixed by the Desari, his father presents new cloths to himself and the bride, which they put on. They stand before the hut, and on each is placed a cloth with a myrabolam (*Terminalia*) seed, rice, and a few copper coins tied up in it. The bridegroom's right little finger is linked with the left little finger of the bride, and they enter the hut. On the following day, the newly married couple return to the home of the bridegroom. On the third day, they are bathed in turmeric water, a pig is killed, and a feast is held. On the ninth day, the knots in the cloths, containing the myrabolams, rice and coins are untied, and the marriage ceremonies are at an end. The remarriage of widows is permitted,

and a younger brother usually marries the widow of his elder brother.

It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district, that "some of the Dombus of the Parvatipur Agency follow many of the customs of the low-country castes, including menarikam (marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter), and say they are the same as the Paidis (or Paidi Malas) of the plains adjoining, with whom they intermarry".

The corpses of the more prosperous Dombs are usually cremated. The wood of the sunari tree are relli (*Cassis fistula*) may not be used for the pyre. The son or husband of a deceased person has his head, moustache, and armpits shaved on the tenth day.

Domb women, and women of other tribes in the Jeypore Agency tracts, wear silver ear ornaments called nagul, representing a cobra just about to strike with tongue protruded. Similar ornaments of gold, called naga pogulu (cobra-shaped earrings), are worn by women of some Telugu castes in the plains of Vizagapatam.

The personal names of the Dombs are, as among other Oriya castes, often those of the day of the week on which the individual was born.

Concerning the religion of the Dombs, Mr. Fawcett notes that "their chief god—probably an ancestral spirit—is called Kaluga. There is one in each village, in the headman's house. The deity is represented by a pie piece (copper coin), placed in or over a new earthen pot smeared with rice and turmeric powder. During worship a silk cloth, a new cloth, or a wet cloth may be worn, but one must not dress in leaves. Before the mangoes are eaten, the first-fruits are offered to the moon, at the full moon of the month Chitra".

"When", Gloyer writes, "a house has to be built, the first thing is to select a favourable spot, to which few evil spirits (dumas) resort. At this spot they put, in several places, three grains of rice arranged in such a way that the two lower grains support the upper one. To protect the grains, they pile up stones round them, and the whole is lightly covered with earth. When, after some time, they find on inspection that the upper grain has fallen off, the spot is regarded as unlucky, and must not be used. If the position of the grains remains unchanged, the omen is regarded as auspicious of the drive in the first spot, which must have a certain length, say of five seven, or nine ells, the ell being measured from the tip of the middle finger to the elbow. The spot is covered on the top with rice straw, leaves and shrubs, so that birds may not foul it, which would be regarded as an evil omen. (In Madras, a story is current,

with reference to the statute of Sir Thomas Munro, that be seized upon all the rice depots, and starved the people to death by selling rice in egg-shells at one shell for a rupee, and, to punish him, the Government erected the statute in an open place, so that birds of the air might insult him by polluting his face). In measuring the house, odd numbers play an important part. The number four (pura, or full number), however, forms the proper measurement, whereby they measure the size of the house, according to the pleasure of the builder. But now the Dissary (Desari) decides whether the house shall be built on the nandi, dua, or tia system, nandi signifying one, dua two, and tia three. This number of ells must be added to the measurement of the house. Supposing that the length of the house is twelve ells, then it will be necessary to add one ell according to the nandi system, so that the length amounts to thirteen ells. The number four can only be used for stables".

"The Dumas" Gloyer continues, "are represented as souls of the deceased, which roam about without a home, so as to cause to mankind all possible harm. At the birth of a child, the Duma must be invited in a friendly manner to provide the child with a soul, and protect it against evil. For this purpose, fowl is killed on the ninth day, a bone (beinknochen) detached, and pressed in to the hand of the infant. The relations are seated in solemn silence, and utter the formula:—When grand-father, grandmother, father, or brother comes, throw away the bone, and we will truly believe it. No sooner does the sprawling and excited infant drop the bone, than the Dumas are come, and boisterous glee prevails. The Dumas occasionally give vent to their ghostly sounds, and cause no little consternation among the inmates of a house, who hide from fear. Cunning thieves know how to rob the superstitious by employing instruments with a subdued tone (dumpftonende), or by emitting deep sounds from the chest. The yearly sacrifice to a Duma consists of a black fowl and strong brandy. If a member of a family falls ill, an extraordinary sacrifice has to be offered up. The Duma is not regarded only as an evil spirit, but also as a tutelary deity. He protects one against the treacherous attacks of witches. A place is prepared for him in the door-hinge, or a fishing-net, wherein he lives, is placed over the door. The witches must count all the knots of the net, before they can enter. Devil worship is closely connected with that of the Duma. The Devil's priests and in rare cases priestesses, effect communion between the people and the Dumas by a sort of possession, which the spirit, entering into them, is said to give rise to. This condition, which is produced by intoxicating drink and the fumes of burning incense, gives rise to revolting cramp-like contortions, and muscular quiverings. In this state, they are wont to communicate what sacrifices the spirits

require. On special occasions, they fall into a frenzed state, in which they cut their flesh with sharp instruments, or pass long, thin iron bars through the tongue and checks, during which operation no blood must flow. For this purpose, the instruments are rubbed all over with some blood-congealing material or sap. They also affect sitting on a sacred swing, armed with long iron nails. (Mr. G. F. Paddison informs me that he once saw a villager in the Vizagapatam district, sitting outside the house, while gorans proceeded from within. He explained that he was ill, and his wife was swinging on nails with their points upwards, to cure him.) The devil called on Jom Duto, or messenger of the going, is believed to be a oneeyed, limping, black individual, whose hair is twisted into a frightfully long horn, while one foot is very long, and the other resembles the hoof of a buffalo. He makes his appearance at the death-bed, in order to drag his victim to the realm of torture".

Children are supposed to be born without souls, and to be afterwards chosen as an abode by the soul of an ancestor. The coming of the ancestor is signalised by the child dropping a chicken bone which has been thrust into its hand, and much rejoicing follows among the assembled relations.*

Mr. Paddison tells me that some Dombs are reputed to be able to pour blazing oil over their bodies, without suffering any hurt; and one man is said to have had a miraculous power of hardening his skin, so that any one could have a free shot at him, without hurting him. He further narrates that, at Sunjanakota in the Vizagapatam district, the Doms, notwithstanding frequent warnings, put devils into two successive schoolmasters.

Various tattoo devices, borne by the Dombs examined by Mr. Fawcett, are figures and described by him. "These patterns," he writes, "were said to be, one and all, purely ornamental, and not in any way connected with totems, or tribal emblems". Risley, however,@ regards "four out of the twelve designs as pretty closely related to the religion and mythology of the tribe; two are totems and two have reference to the traditional avocations. Nos. 11 and 12 represent a classical scene in Dom folk-lore, the story of King Haris-chandra, who was so generous that he gave all he had to the poor and sold himself to a Dom at Benares, who employed him to watch his cremation ground at night. While he was thus engaged, his wife, who had also been sold for chartiable purposes, came to burn the body of her son. She had no money to pay

*Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district

@Man, 1902

and Taris-Chandra, not knowing her in the darkness, turned her away. Fortunately the sun rose; mutual recognition followed; the victims of promiscuous largesse were at once remarried, and Vishnu intervened to restore the son to life. Tatu No. 11 shows Haris-Chandra watching the burning-ground by moonlight; the wavy line is the Ganges; the dots are the trees on the other side: the strokes on either side of the king are the logs of wood which he is guarding. In No. 12 we see the sun rising, its first ray marked with a sort of fork, and the meeting of the king and queen".

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district, that "throughout the Jeypore country proper, the Dombus (and some Ghasis) are by far the most troublesome class. Their favourite crime is cattle-theft for the sake of the skins, but, in 1902, a Dombu gang in Naurangpur went so far as to levy black-mail over a large extent of country, and defy for some months all attempts at capture. The loss of their cattle exasperates the other hill folk to the last degree, and, in 1899 the Naiks (headmen) of sixteen villages in the north of Jeypore taluk headed an organized attack on the houses of the Dombus, which, in the most deliberate manner, they razed to the ground in some fifteen villages. The Dombus had fortunately got scent of what was coming, and made themselves scarce, and no bloodshed occurred. In the next year, some of the Naiks of the Ramagiri side of Jeypore taluk sent round a jack branch, a well recognised form of the fiery cross, summoning villagers other than Dombus to assemble at a fixed time and place, but this was luckily intercepted by the police. The Agent afterwards discussed the whole question with the chief Naiks of Jeypore and South Naurangpur. They had no opinion of the deterrent effects of mere imprisonment on the Dombus. 'You fatten them, and send them back', they said, and suggested that a far better plan would be to cut off their right hands. (It is noted, in the Vizagapatam Manual, 1869, that in cases of murder, the Rajah of Jeypore generally had the man's hands, nose, and ears cut off, but, after all that, he seldom escaped the deceased's relatives). They eventually proposed a plan of checking the cattle-thefts, which is now being followed in much of that country. The Baranaiks, or heads of groups of villages, were each given brands with distinctive letters and numbers, and required to brand the skins of all animals which had died a natural death or been honestly killed; and the possession by Dombus, skin merchants, or others, of unbranded skins is now considered a auspicious circumstance, the burden of explaining which lies upon the possessor. Unless this, or some other way of checking the Dombus' depredations proves successful; strious danger exists that the rest of the people will take the matter into their own hands and, as the Dombus

in the Agency number over 50,000, this would mean real trouble". It is further recorded* that the Paidis (Paidi Malas), who often commit dacoities on the roads, "are connected with the Dombus of the Rayagada and Gunupur taluks, who are even worse. These people dacoit houses at night in armed gangs of fifty or more, with their faces blacked to prevent recognition. Terrifying the villagers into staying quiet in their huts, they force their way into the house of some wealthy person (for choice the local Sondi, liquor-seller and Sowcar, † usually the only man worth looting in an agency village, and a shark who gets little pity from his neighbours when forced to disgorge), tie up the men, rape the women, and go off with everything of value. Their favourite method of extracting information regarding concealed property is to sprinkle the house-owner with boiling oil".

---

*Ibid

†Money-lender

Extract on 'DOMMARA' from Castes and Tribes of Southern India by EDGAR THURSTON, C. I. E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondent Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris : Socio Corrispondante Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by K. RANGACHARI M. A., of the Madras Government Museum—Volume II-C to J. Government Press, Madras 1909 *pages* 185 *to* 190.

DOMMARA : The Dommaras are a tribe of tumblers, athletes, and mountebanks, some of whom wander about the country, while others have settled down as agricultural labourers, or make combs out of the wood of *Blaodendron glaucum, Ixora parviflora, Pavetta indica, Ficus bengalensis, etc.* which they sell to wholesale merchants. They are, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,* "a nomad class of acrobats, who, in many respects, recall the gipsies to mind, and raise the suggestion that their name may possible be connected with the Dombs of Northern India. They speak Telugu, Marathi and Hindustani, but not generally Tamil. They are skillful jugglers, and both men and women are very clever tumblers and tight-rope dancers, exhibiting their feats as they travel about the country. Some of them sell date mats and baskets, some trade in pigs, while others, settled in villages, cultivate lands. In social position they rank just above the Pariahs and Madigas. They profess to be Vaishnavites (and Saivites). Infant marriage is not practiced. Widow remarriage is freely allowed, and polygamy is common. Their marriage tie is very loose, and their women often practice prostitution. They are a predatory class, great drunkers, and of most dissolute habits. The dead are generally burried, and (on the day of the final death ceremones) cooked rice is thrown out to be eaten by crows. In the matter of food, they eat all sorts of animals, including pigs, cats and crows". When a friend was engaged in making experiments in connection with snake venom, some Dommaras asked for permission to unbury the corpses of snakes and mungooses for the purpose of food.

The Dommaras are, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, summed up as being buffoons, tumblers, acrobats, and snakecharmers, who travel from place to place, and earn a precarious living by their exhibitions. In the Madars Census Report, 1901, Domban, Kalaikuttadi (pole-dancer), and Arya Kuttadi, are summed up, in the Tanjore Manual, as vagabond dancers, actors, pantomimists, and marionette exhibitors, who hold a very low position in the social scale, and always perform in public streets and bazars.

*Madras Census Report, 1891; Manual of the North Arcot District

By Mr. F. S. Mullaly* the Dommaras are divided into Reddi or Kapu (i.e. Cultivators) and Aray (Maratha). "The Women", he writes, "are proficient in making combs of horn and wood, and implements used by weavers. These they hawk about from place to place, to supplement the profits they derive from their exhibitions of gymnastic feats. In addition to performing conjuring tricks, rope-dancing and the like, the Dommaras hunt, fish, make mats, and rear donkeys and pigs. The head of the tribe is called the Mutli Guru. He is their high priest, and exercises supreme jurisdiction over them both in spiritual and temporal matters. His head-quarters is Chitvel in the Cuddapah district. The legend regarding the office of the Mutli Guru is as follows. At Chitvel, or as it was then known Mutli, there once lived a king, who called together a gathering of all the gymnats among his subjects. Several classes were represented. Polerigadu, a Reddi Dommara, so pleased the king that he was presented with a ring, and a royal edict was passed that the wearer of the ring and his descendants should be the head of the Dommars class. The ring then given is said to be the same that is now worn by the head of the tribe at Chitvel, which bears an inscription in Telgu declaring that the wearer is the high-priest or guru of all the Dommaras. The office is hereditary. The dwellings of the Dommaras are somewhat similar to those of the Koravars and Joghis, made of palmyra leaves plaited into mats with seven strands. These huts, or gudisays, are located on the outskirts of villages, and carried on the backs of donkeys when on the march. Stolen cloths, unless of value, are not as a rule sold, but concealed in the packs of their donkeys and after a time worn. The Dommaras are addicted to dacoity, robbery, burglary and thefts. The instrument used by them is unlike those used by other criminal classes: it is of iron, about a foot long, and with a chisel-shaped point. As cattle and sheep lifters they are expert, and they have their regular receivers at most of the cattle fairs throughout the Presidency".

It is noted, in the Nellore Manual, that the Dommaras "are stated by the Nellore Tahsildar to possess mirasi rights in some villages; that I take to mean that there is, in some villages, a customary contribution for tumblers and mendicants, which, according to Wilson, was made in Mysore the pretext for a tax named Dombar-lingada-vira-kanki. This tax under the name Dombar tafrik, was levied in Venkatagiri in 1801". In the Madura district, Dommaras are found in some villages formerly owned by Zamindars and they call themselves children of the zamindars, by whom they were probably patronised.

---

*Notes on the Criminal Classes of the Madras Presidency

Being a criminal class, the Dommaras have a thief's language of their own, of which the following are examples :—

Bidam vadu, Dommara	Dasamasa, prostitute
Poothi, policeman	Kopparam, salt
Marigam, pig	Kaljodu, goldsmith
Goparam, seven	

The Dommaras are said to receive into their community children of other castes, and women of doubtful morals, and to practice the custom of making Basavis (dedicated prostitutes).

The Telugu Dommaras give as their gotra Salava patchi, the name of a mythological bird. At times of marriage, they substitute a turmeric-dyed string consisting of 101 threads, called bondhu, for the golden tali or bottu. The marriage ceremonies of the Are Dommaras are supervised by an old Basavi woman, and the golden marriage badge is tied round the bride's neck by a Basavi.

A Dommara, whom I interviewed at Coimbatore, carried a cotton bag containing a miscellaneous assortment of rubbish used in his capacity as medicine man and snake-charmer, which included a collection of spurious jackal horns (nari kompu), the hairs round which were stained with turmeric. To prove the genuineness thereof, he showed me not only the horn, but also the feet with nails complete, as evidence that the horns were not made from the nails, being charged with manufacturing the horns, he swore, by placing his hand on the head of a child who accompanied him, that he was not deceiving me. The largest of the horns in his bag, he gravely informed me, was from a jackal which he dug out of its hole on the last new moon night. The possessors of such horns, he assured me, do not go out with the pack, and rarely leave their holes except to feed on dew, field rats, etc. These spurious horns are regarded as a talisman, and it is believed that he who owns one can command the realisation of every wish. (See Kuruvikkaran). An iron ring, which the Dommara was wearing on his wrist, was used as a cure for hernia, being heated and applied as a branding agent over the inguinal region. Lamp oil is then rubbed over the burn, and a secret medicine, mixed with fowl's egg, administered. The ring was, he said, an ancestral heirloom and as such highly prized. To cure rheumatism in the big joints, he resorted to an ingenious form of dry cupping. A small incision is made with a piece of broken glass over the affected part, and the skin damped with water. The distal end of a cow's horn, of which the tip has been removed, and plugged with wax, does duty for the cup. A hole is pierced through the wax with an iron needle, and, the horn

being placed over the seat of disease, the air is withdrawn from it by suction with the mouth, and the hole in the wax stopped up. As the air is removed from the cavity of the horn, the skin rises up within it. To remove the horn, it is only necessary to readmit air by once more boring a hole through the wax. In a bad case, as many as three horns may be applied to the affected part. The Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford possesses dry-cupping apparatus, made of cow horn, from Mirzapur in Northern India and from Natal, and of antelope horn from an unrecorded locality in India. In cases of scorpion sting the Dommara rubbed up patent boluses with human milk or milk of the milk-hedge plant (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*) and applied them to the part. For chest pains he prescribed red ochre, and for infantile diseases myrabolam (*Terminalia*) fruits mixed with water. In cases of snake-bite, a black stone, said to be made of various drugs mixed together, and burnt, is placed over the seat of the bite, and will, it was stated, drop off of its own accord as soon as it has absorbed all the poison. It is then put into milk or water to extract the poison, and the fluid is thrown away as being dangerous to life if swallowed. As a remedy for the bits of a mad dog, a plant, which is kept a secret, is mixed with the milk of a white goat, pepper, garlic and other ingredients and administered internally. A single dose is said to effect a cure.

At Tarikeri in Mysore, a wandering troupe of Are (Maratha) Dommaras performed before me. The women were decorated with jewels and flowers, and carried bells on their ankles. The men had a row of bells attached all round the lower edge of their short drawers. Before the performance commenced, a Pillayar (Ganesa) was made with cowdung, and saluted. The entertainment took place in the open air amid the beating of drums, whistling, singing and dialogue. The jests and antics of the equivalent of the circus clown were a source of much joy to the throng of villagers who collected to witness the tamasha (spectacle). One of the principal performers, in the waits between his turns, played the drum, or took a suck at a hooka (tobacco pipe) which has passed round among the members of the troupe. The entertainment, in which both men and women took part, consisted of various acrobatic feats, turning summersaults and catherine wheels, still-walking, and clever feats on the tight rope. Finally a man, climbing up a lofty bamboo pole, spun himself rapidly round and round on the top of it by means of a socket in an iron plate tied to his loin cloth, into which a spike in the pole fitted.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from Report on the Census of the Madras Presidency, 1871, with Appendix containing. The Results of the Census arranged in Standard Forms prescribed by the Government of India by W. R. CORNISH F. R. C. S. SURGEON—MAJOR, Sanitary Commissioner for Madras Vol. I MADRAS: Printed by E. Keys, at the Government Gazette Press, 1874, pages 167 and 168.

The *Dommaras* or Jugglers are another DOMMERAS wandering tribe, somewhat similar to the *Koravars.* They go about the country in gangs, performing athletic feats. They are frequently thieves. The women perform as well as the men, and most of them are common prostitutes.

Dancing Girl Castes:

A few remarks may be made here in regard to another peculiar caste common to the whole country, *viz.*, that of the Dasis, Bhogam or prostitute class. These women abound in every large town and village, where there are temple endowments.

Recruiting of the Caste:

They are regarded as a distinct caste, but, as a matter of fact, their ranks are recruited by the purchase of female children of any caste, and also by members of certain Hindu castes vowing to present daughters to the temples on recovering from illness, or relief from other misfortune. The female children of the dancing women are always brought up to the mother's profession, and so are the children purchased by them, or assigned to the temple service by the free will of the parents. At an early age they are taught to sing, play on musical instruments, and to dance, and in past years were the only class of Hindu women who received and any education at all. The temple women confine their favours to Brahmans and the higher castes of Sudras. There are numerous prostitutes amongst the Pariah and other aboriginal castes who are not connected with any religious houses.

The women attached to templed have certain public duties, for which they are paid a small sum from the temple revenues. They have to attend the customary morning and evening services of the temple, and also on festival days. Those, says Buchanan, "attached to temples of extraordinary sanctity are reserved entirely for the use of the native officers, who are all Brahmans.** Indeed almost every one of these girls that is tolerably slightly is taken by some officer of revenue for his special use, and is seldom permitted to go to the temple, except in his presence"(1).

(1) Buchanan's Mysore, Canara and Malabar, Vol.I.

Whether the higher classes of native officials of the present day countenance systematic prostitution of this description I do not know but I am not aware that any of them have had the courage to denounce practices which are not only illegal, but more mischievous to the morals of the people than *satti* and the swinging festivals which have been put down by the strong hand of Government. That there should be a traffic in young girls, avowedly with the object of training them as prostitutes for the use of a particular class of the community, and that Hindu parents should be permitted to devote their daughters of tender years to the service of the temples, or in plain language to prostitution, is not a creditable state of things, either to the Government or the people concerned.

Extract on "DOMBA" from Report on the Mysore Census of **1881,** *compiled for Government by LEWIS RICE, C.I.E., Secretary to the Government of Mysore, Bangalore: Mysore Government Press* 1884 *page* 70.

The *Domba* are wandering beggars, who make a living as tumblers, snake-charmers, & c. They speak a language allied to Hindustani and are supposed to be descended from some tribe of Northern India, such as the Doms.

Extract on "DOMMARA, DOMBARA" from Census of India, 1891, *Volume XIII, Madras, The Report on the Census By H. A. Stuart Of the Indian Civil Service; Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society; Member of The Royal Asiatic Society, Superintendent of Census Operations, Madras, printed by The Superintendent, Government Press,* 1893 *page* 307.

Groups : 46—TUMBLERS AND ACROBATS

545. DOMMARA, DOMBARA : 16, 199 : The Dommaras are a tribe of tumblers and mountebanks. This caste is said to be connected with the Doms of Northern India, but the statement appears to be based simply on the similarity of name. They are not, however, natives of the south of the peninsula, for their vernacular is Telugu and no mention is made of them in the Chudamani Nikhandu and other early Tamil works.

They have returned 91 sub-divisions, but only one Kapu (3,628) is numerically important. About 3,400 individuals have returned Dommara both as main caste and sub-division.

They are skilful jugglers and rope-dancers. "As gymnasts the Dommars" are extremely good, both men and women being experts in all manner of feats. "The women are proficient in making combs of horn and wood, and also implements" used by weavers; these they hawk about from place to place to supplement the "profits they derive from their exhibitions of gymnastic feats."† Some of them sell date mats and baskets, some trade in pigs, while others, settled in villages, cultivate lands. In Social position they rank just above the Pariahs and Madigas. The Dommaras profess to be Vaishnavites. Infant marriage is not practised; widow remarriage is freely allowed and polygamy is common. They have no priests and no elaborate ceremonies. Their marriage tie is very loose. and their women often practise prostitution. In the matter of food, they eat all sorts of animals including pigs, cats and crows. The dead are generally buried, and on the fifteenth day cooked rice is thrown out to be eaten by crows.

†Mullaly's Notes on Criminal Classes of the Madras Presidency p. 71.

Extract on "DOMBARS" from Census of India, 1891 *Volume XXV (In 4Parts). Mysore, Part I, Report with Appendices by V. N. NARASIMMIYENGAR, Provincial Superintendent of Census Operations in Mysore page* 258.

DOMBARS : Number 2,500 souls, and are tumblers and snake-charmers. They are supposed to be descendants of an original tribe from the North of India (Dombs probably.) Excepting in Chitaldurg and Shimoga, they are generally distributed over the country.

Extract on "DOMBAN", "DOMBO", "DOMMARA" from Census of India 1901 *Vol. XIV, Madras Part I—Report, Madras,* 1902 *by FRANCIS, W. pages* 152 *to* 153.

DOMBAN : A Tamil form of Dommara.

DOMBO : (58,100)—Hill weavers found mainly in Vizagapatam Agency. (C. R. 1891, para 486; C. R. 1871, p. 230; Mr. F. Fawcett in *Alan* for March 1901).

DOMMARA : (18,322) — A Telugu caste of jugglers and acrobats. (C. R. 1891, para 545; *Nellore Man.* p. 165; C. R. 1871, p. 167; *North Arcot Man,* Vol. I. p. 240).

Extract on "DOMBA" from Census of India, 1901 Volume XXIV, Mysore, Part I, Report by T. ANANDA ROW, B.A., Director of Statistics in charge of Census Operations Mysore : Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, In Mysore pages 519 to 520.

DOMBA : (Same in all languages)

(Population 2,911. 1,390 or 47.7 per cent males, of whom 840 or 28.8 per cent are unmarried, 482 or 16.5 per cent married, 68 or 2.3 per cent widowers. 1,521 or 52 per cent are females, of whom 822 or 28.2 per cent are unmarried, 517 or 17.7 per cent married and 182 or 6.2 per cent widows. Only 11 or 0.4 per cent are *literate*, all in the Vernaculars alone, and have only one Blind man among them. By *industrial condition* there are 1,202 or 41.2 per cent of Actual Workers or wage earners, of whom 188 or 6.4 per cent follow their Traditional (Tumblers and Acrobats) as their principal occupation and 31 or 1 per cent follow it as a subsidiary one. Agriculture claims 287 or 9.8 per cent, while other occupations are represented by 727 or 24.9 per cent.)

1. This caste shows an increase of 411 or 16.4 per cent of its strength in 1891, against a decrease of 287 or 10.3 per cent in the previous decade.

2. The distribution by Districts of these people shows that over three-tenths of them are in the Kolar District, and nearly one-sixth in the Tumkur District; Mysore and Bangalore together accounting for nearly another three-tenths.

3. These are buffoons, tumblers, acrobats and snake-charmers. They are supposed to be descendants of an aboriginal tribe from the North of India (Doms probably). These people travel from place to place and earn a precarious living by their exhibitions. Mr. Sherring calls these people "Dhumbari" and says these are allied to Son Chiris, a class of wandering and predatory tribe of Central India.

Extract on "DOMBAR" from Census of India, 1911 Volume XXI Mysore. Part I—Report by V. R. THYAGARAJA AIYAR, M.A., Superintendent of Census Operations, Mysore State. Bangalore : Printed at the Government Press 1912, page 166.

DOMBAR : (3,390)—These are found chiefly in the Tumkur and Kolar Districts. They are tumblers and acrobats by profession. Some follow agriculture also. The settled portion of the caste are found in Tumkar, Manchenahalli in Goribidnur Taluk and Chiknayakanhalli Taluk and are almost all engaged in agricultural pursuits, the proceeds of which they supplement by comb-making and pig breeding. Their *guru* is a Sri Vaishnava Brahman. The wandering section, owing to their nomadic life, is broken into a number of groups, each having its own Yajman. The common head of this section is said to be a man of the *matli* sub-division and a styled *matli nayadu*. The Dombars are a Telugu caste, having migrated from the Kurnool and Nellore Districts, and have nothing to do with the Doms of Northern India. Polygamy is common. Girls are trained to play on poles and such as become skilled in that are not married and lead a life of prostitution. The *tera* or brideprice, is as high as Rs. 52. The practice of dedicating Basavis is common specially with the wandering section of the caste. No *Sraddhas* are performed. The chief deities worshipped are Yellamma, Sunkalamma, Gurumurti and Maramma. The Dombars freely admit recruits, both male and female, from any caste, not lower than their own, as fixed by the test of commensality. The wandering Dombars breed pigs on a large scale, men engage themselves as day labourers in the villages near or about which they encamp, their women going about begging also. They are expert bird-catchers which they secure either by spreading snares or applying bird-lime on their roosts. The wandering section generally live in huts made of bent bamboos covered over with date mats, in the form and size of the tops of country carts; and they carry baggage from place to place on donkeys or oxen (Mys. Eth. Mon.).

Extract on "DOMBAR" from 'Census of India 1931, *Vol. XX Central India Agency, Part—I Report by C. S. VENKATACHAR of the Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Census Operations, Calcutta: Government of India, Central Publication Branch* 1933 *page* 282.

7. FINAL CLASSIFICATION OF DEPRESSED CASTES

DOMAR : So far as it has been possible to ascertain pollution by such is quite mild in form though here and there the feeling regarding it may rise to some intensity. Untouchability by itself being no satisfactory best, it had to be coupled with certain social disabilities such as non-access to Hindu places of worship and to the use of village wells from which the higher castes draw water. These social disabilities were found to be strong in their operation. The Chamar or the Balai is never permitted to draw water from the common well. They have separate wells if they could manage to have one. They are also not permitted to enter a place of worship. It was therefore decided to draw a line and include the Chamar, Balai, Basor and Bhangi among the depressed castes as indigenous to the Agency. The Thamrals of Malva and the Dharkars of Rewa allied to the Basors were also admitted into the category. The rest Meghwal, Mang, Mahar, Dher, Dom, Domar and Bhambi are not indigenous to the Agency. They are recognised as depressed castes elsewhere and are found in small numbers in this Agency and they are considered as impure locally as well. Thus these thirteen castes have been listed as depressed.

DOMBAR (Aryakoothadis)



Aryakoothadis (Dombar) who are dancing girls at night, weave mats by day.



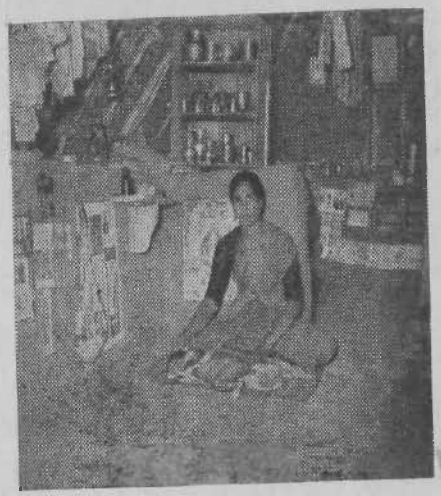
A quarter of Aryakoothadis (Dombar).



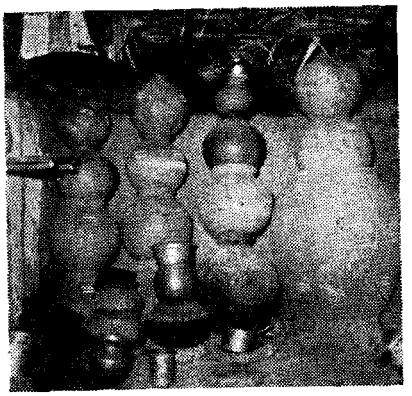
Grown tall on poverty Aryakoothadi women make short-story of breadwinning through bed



An Aryakoothadi (Dombar) danseuse.



An Aryakoothadi mother and child—inside her hut.



Inside a hut empty mud pots along with cooking vessels.



An Aryakoothadi Woman pursuing the World's oldest profession.

HOLEYA

Name, Identity, Origin and History:

In Madras State, Holeyas were classified as a Depressed Class in 1921 and 1931 Censuses and Scheduled Caste according to the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order 1936, constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order 1950 and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lists modification order, 1956. Mori Holeya, Mera, Mundala, Mulada Holeya, Salada Holeya, Kusamaila, Raneyava, Mayyan and Kopala are the synonyms for them in the State (Census of India, 1961, Volume IX Madras, Part V-A (i) Appendix I page 437). Holaa or Holer in parts of Bombay, Mysore and Rajasthan; Holeya in parts of Andhra Pradesh, Bombay, Kerala, Madras, Mysore; Holeya Dasari in parts of Andhra Pradesh, Bombay and Mysore; and Holeya in parts of Bombay and Madhya Pradesh are all synonymous. (Census of India, paper No. 2, 1960 Registrar General India, New Delhi p. 103).

Being a caste of Canarese origin, Holeyas are predominant in the areas bordering Mysore State. Two case studies about them where therefore undertaken in two of the areas adjoining Mysore State. Anniyalem village in Denkanikotta sub-taluk of Hosur taluk in Dharmapuri District and villages neighbouring Balethottanpalli and Bellepalli in Thali firka of Hosur taluk Dharmapuri District are the areas where the field study was conducted.

"Holeyas are the field labourers, and former agrestic serfs of South Canara, Pulayan being the Malayalam and Paraiyan the Tamil form of the same word. The name is derived by Brahmins from hole, pollution and by others from hola, land or soil, in recognition of the fact that, as in the case of the Paraiyan, there are customs remaining, which seem to indicate that the Holeyas were once masters of the land; but, whatever the derivation may be, it is no doubt the same as that of Paraiyan and Pulayan" (Castes and Tribes of Southern India—Thurston, II, 1909, 329). Thurston also quotes an account that "Holeyas held the country (Malabar and Canara or Kerala, Tuluva nd Hoiga) till the Tlu Brahmins were introduced by Moyur Varma (of the Kadamba dynasty)" and another account that "the Holeyas are found in the Coorg houses all over the country, and do all the menial work for the Coorgs, by whom though theoretically free men under the British Government, they were held as gleboe Adscript in a State of object servitude until lately, when, with the advant of European planters, the slave question was freely discussed, and the 'domestic institution' practically abolished." (Thurston II, 1909, 330-331).

The origin of this Caste is, according to one legend, traced to one Honnayya. During a procession, when this chief was riding on an elephant, the motley crowd that went with him entered a temple which was on their way. But the elephant could not enter the low portals of the building, and Honnayya and his immediate followers were left outside. Those that went in were the four recognised castes and Honnayya's men thereafter altogether lost the privilege of going inside the temples. A second traditon gives the origin of the term Balagai (an appellation used among themselves). Siva and Parvathi employed a servant to tend their cow. This man, one day, found that the goddess had negligently left the butter that had been churned out of the milk within his reach and discovered its exquisite taste. So, in his foolish greed, he thought that there was an unlimited quantity of it in the animals stomach and killed it on the spot. He was condemned by Iswara to eat the carcass as a punishment, and to be outcaste. Another story is told to show that they have some sort of relationship with Agasas or washermen. It is said that a Holeya boy fled at the sight of Visvakarma (a rival creator to the original Brahma), and took refuge under the washing tub of an Agasa. The latter, to justify his giving the boy an asylum against the pursuit of such a mighty personage, claimed the boy as his son, and ate his rice out of the same plate with him. It is difficult to make out the significance of this silly story.

They even claim some sort of relationship with Brahmains in as much as Arundhati, wife of Vasishta—the Paragon of chaste women for all time—is said to have a damsel of chandala (one of the terms by which the Brahmans employ in naming them) origin. The Holeyas sing songs in praise of this woman, when they sacrifice buffaloes before their goddess Mari.

Whatever the inner meanings of these legends may be, there is no evidence that they have any other origin than the whimsical fancy of some persons, who were either more partial or wished to be more generous than usual to a caste which was largely treated as low in the social scale" (Mysore Tribes and Castes, Mysore, 1928-36 by Nanjundayya. H. V. & Iyer, L. K. A.).

II. Distribution and population trend:

"The depressed classes witness a general flight from the old community names in favour of cacophonous combinations such as Adi-Karnatak when caste names are shed like garments, there is little point in an enumeration which must perforce go by name.... The drift from the old names is nearly as marked on the West Coast. Holeyas were 92,000 in 1921, 50,000 ten years later. They

were 155,000 in 1891 and have declined steadily. The few hundred Adi-Karnatakas do not come near bridging the gap and are in any case a Bellary and Coimbatore, not a Kanara production. It may be that the emergence of 23,000 Pulayans, a community not recorded from Malabar in 1921, accounts for some of the issuing Holeyas. The words are identical, with merely the characteristic substitution of a Kanarese 'h' for a Tamil or other 'p' and it is difficult to see how Pulayans could have vanished in 1921 when they are a well-known feature of the region.... The presence of 16,000 Adi-Dravidas in South Kanara clearly accounts for part of the 40,000 and it is interesting that this term should be preferred to Adi-Karnataka. The Preference is understandable when it is remembered that the Holeyas are essentially a Tulu, not a Kanarese community and that while Adi-Dravida does mean something it is extremely doubtful whether Adi-Karnataka or for that matter, Adi-Andhra, has any, even theoretical justification at all.....The question of names has been much in the attention of the leaders of these communities in the past 10 years (1921-1930) and to this is attributed the popularity of the term Adi-Dravida and to a less extent of Adi-Andhra and Adi-Karnatak, and their returns in such numbers in the caste tables. As recently as 1919, however, the Holeyas of South Kanara offered their thanks to Lord Pentland and the Madras Government for giving them the name of Panchama. They would not welcome it now." (Census of India, 1931, Madras, XIV, 333-342).

The above observations were made by Yeatts, M.W.M. in his Report on the Census of India, 1931, Volume XIV, Madras (pp. 333-342). The observations made above indicate clearly the limitations of the Census data on Holeyas, who would have also been enumerated as Adi-Karnataka, Adi-Dravida, Pulayan and Panchama. Such limitations continue to exist even now. As such, the 1961 Census data should also be viewed in a restricted sense.

In 1961 Census 1,826 were returned as Holeya, but how many of them were enumerated along with the 12,448 Adi-Karnataka, 278 Panchama and 2,669 Pulayan, who also belong either to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, are not known. Of the 67 Scheduled Castes reported in Madras State during 1961 Census, the 1,826 Holeyas account for 0.03% and hold the 26th place in the State. They are not scheduled in Kanyakumari District and do not

exist in Chingleput, North Arcot and Ramanathapuram districts. Their position in other districts is as follows :—

District-wise distribution of Holeya

State/District	No. of persons returned in 1961 Census	Percentage to the State	Descending order of size within State	Percentage among all the scheduled castes	Rank among all the scheduled castes
Madras State	1,826	100.00	..	00.03	26
Madras district . . .	7	00.38	VII	N	..
South Arcot district . .	32	01.75	V	N	..
Salem district	799	43.76	II	00.14	13
Coimbatore district . .	897	49.12	I	00·17	13
The Nilgiris district . .	36	01.97	IV	00·05	18
Madurai district . . .	1	00.05	IX	N	..
Tiruchirapalli district . .	2	00.11	VIII	N	..
Thanjavur district . . .	8	00.44	VI	N	..
Tirunelveli district . . .	44	02.41	III	00.01	22

N—Negligible.

(*Basis* : Census of India, 1961—Vol. IX Part V-A SCT II Part A).

In spite of its limited scope, the above table is useful in presenting the minimum limit. Salem district holds the maximum of 11.29% of the general population followed by Coimbatore 10.56%. Holeyas predominate in these two districts constituting 93% to the State total. South Arcot and Tanjore, which accommodate of highest proportion of Scheduled Castes *viz.* 13.21% and 12.37% respectively have 1.75% and 0.44% of Holeyas. Niligiris, which holds the least proportion of 1.22% of general population and 1.28% of Scheduled Castes holds a sizable percentage 1.97% of Holeyas. The table reveals a clear trend of Holeya's concentration in Salem, Coimbatore and Nilgiris districts which are adjacent to the Mysore State, the State of origin of Holeyas.

Among the general population and all the Scheduled Castes put together, more people live in the rural areas, the percentages being 73.31 for the former and 84.74 for the latter. Holeyas record proportion in excess of these their proportion being 95.07. This is quite reasonable as they are traditionally associated with agricultural operations. Even though Holeyas fell in line with the general population and Scheduled Castes by recording less females than the males, the number of females per 100 males are too low (i.e. 89%) compared to the 99% both for general population and Scheduled Caste. Detailed sex-ratio by age-group are therefore worked out as follows :

Number of females per 100 *males by age group*

Age-Group	General Population	Scheduled Castes	Holeyas
0—4	100	104	98
5—9	99	96	90
10—14	96	93	94
15—19	98	97	67
20—24 . . .	109	116	105
25—29	110	107	90
30—34	102	104	84
35—44	93	96	85
45—59	92	91	82
60+	99	95	93
Age not stated . . .	86	41	..

[*Basis* : Appendix IV, Volume IX Part V-A(1).]

The low sex ratio persists in all the age groups except the age-group 10-14. The rate of difference becomes widened as the age-group advances till about 30 years of age and then it decreases. This trend is perhaps an indication of Holeya women's low survivance rate during the reproductive period. It is however a matter for specialised investigation.

III. Physical characteristics:

Information on their physical appearance is lacking in any of the authentic published literature. From a lay man's point of view, they are generally black or brown in colour. It is difficult to find any one of the community with a fair skin. They are either medium or tall in stature with well built bodies. Many have round face with thick lips and well formed noses.

IV. Clan and other divisions:

Holeyas are divided into a number of endogamous sects. Holeyas of Aniyalam village in Denkanikotta sub-taluk of Salem District, where the field study was undertaken, belong to a sub-caste known as Morasu or Magga Holeyas. "Morasu is a general term for the people of Morasu Nad, and 'Magge' (loom) indicates one of their distinctive occupations, the weaving of coarse cotton cloths, a vocation they follow even in the Talaghat (Part of Salem district). It is not clear whether more than one true sub-caste is represented in the district, as the Morasus appear to include the Maggas" (Madras District Gazetters—Salem—Vol. I—Part I). For purpose of marriage the sub caste people are divided further into a number of exogamous septs. The names of some of these septs are Belli kula, Kaveru kula, Alaiyeru kula, Anai kula, Thogiri kula, Kothumai Kula, Mani Kula, Suttikaraisalu kula, Otteru Kula, Eeji-yeru kula etc. These names denote silver, elephant, pigeon, wheat, etc. However, these septs do not have any totemistic tendencies. The Holeyas differ from the Paraiyars of Tamilnad in this respect. Whereas the Holeyas are divided into a number of exogamous septs, the Paraiyars do not have any such division.

V. Dwelling, dress, ornaments, other material objects and food habits

Holeyas of Anniyalam village are accommodated within the main village itself where caste Hindus also live. However, their houses are unmingled with any other caste, but located on one side of the village. Their houses are close to each other and have a congested look. The walls are either made of mud or of random rubble; some are plastered with lime mortar. The front wall, to a height of about 2 feet, is painted red with red earth. The flooring is mud-plastered and smeared with cowdung. Most of the houses have country tiles, some have Mangalore tiles and some are thatched with a kind of grass called Kasipillu or with dried rushes of sugar-cane leaves. Almost all the houses have front verandahs. Since

stone pillars and stone slabs are available in plenty in these parts, the verandah edges, lintals and front-yards are paved with stone slabs. Even the pillars, standing in support of the roofing are of stone. The streets are seen paved with stone slabs. The houses usually have more than one room but the main hall within the house is invariably used for tethering cattle. As the climate outside is cold, the Holeyas, like most other people in these parts, take care to keep their cattle warm. In fact they would rather sleep outside in the verandah than to tie the cattle outside, exposing them to the cold. Inside the house, there is no place for washing or for taking bath. This is done in the frontyard or in the lane, in shallow pits specially erected and paved with stones. The water accumulating in these pits gets drained by a small gutter which is also paved with stones. Inside the house, the portion used for cooking is separated by a buffer wall called *Kannadisuvar* which is barely more than 4' high. Most of the tiled houses have attics in which unwanted vessels and implements are kept, when not in use.

Most of the males especially the younger generation crop their hair. Elderly men are found with tufts with their frontal shaved. The women part their hair in middle and tie it into a tight knot at the back. Both males and females keep their hair generally unkept.

The males are found either in shorts or in short dhotis. Almost all wear shirts made of coarse cloth. Women wear sarees of 8 yards. They seem to have preference for dark colours and broad borders for the sarees. The fold of the saree is adjusted to the front. The "pallav" is thrown on the left shoulder. This is in contrast to the style of wearing sarees by women of Telugu-speaking Malas who throw the "pallav" over the right shoulder. The women wear loose jackets, with arms extending upto the elbows. The jackets are buttoned up in the front. They are provided with pockets in which they keep pan supari etc. The widows are found to throw the "pallav" of the saree over the head to cover the rear portion of the head. Very young girls wear either gowns or Pavadai (skirts) and jackets.

The women are found of wearing too many glass bangles, beads and jewels of base-metal. In the wrists, they wear stout silver bangles which are rectangular in shape and not oval as usually found in other parts. These rectangular shaped thick silver bangles are called by them as 'Sollu'. Married women, in addition to Sollu, wear a string of corals in their wrists. They call this ornament as 'Kaimani.' Black glass bangles are worn in large numbers by married women. Many girls are found to wear wristlets made of silver. These are called 'Sarigai.' In the leg, they wear silver 'Kappus'

which are circular in shape, and loose chains called *'Golusus'*. Married women wear silver rings called *'Minjis'* in the second toes. In the earlobes, they wear *Kammals* which are stone studded. They wear *Kuppai Talukku* in the upper ear. In the nose they wear *Besri* or *Mookkupottu*. In the neck, they wear glass beads and necklaces made of black beads in which a gold pendant called Bottu is tied. Some wear *Thayathus*. Some wear thick silver chains in the neck. Married women wear gold *Tali* which is a flat disc to the size of an old quarter anna copper coin in which floral designs are entrusted. Almost all the women wear silver or gold-plated waist belts called *Daapu*. In contrast to the heavy load of ornaments carried by women, the ornaments worn by men are few. Some wear silver wristlets. Some wear stone studded ear rings. Many women are found to have their arms and legs tattooed with floral designs. All the women except the widows put on large sized Thilack with Kumkum. The size of these 'Thilacks' may be even 1½" in diameter.

For cooking, the Holeyas use either earthern pots or brass vessels. A few only use aluminium vessels. They use wooden laddles and wooden oars for stirring the millet meal, when being cooked. They eat their food on aluminium or bronze plates. They store their provisions in big mud pots. They use bamboo cut pieces as vessels for storing some of the minor provisions. Cooking-oil is kept in glass bottles. The harvested grains are stored in large-sized *Thombais* made of bamboo baskets, plastered with mud. If the quantity to be stored is large they store the grains in underground pits, which are five to six feet deep. They put a slab over the mouth of the pit and seal it. Ragi kept in such pits can be preserved for even five years. Whenever they require the grains, they remove the slab and bale out the grain in buckets. For this a man has to get into the pit but he does so only after the abnoxious gas collected in the pit escapes.

Each house has a grinding stone for converting ragi into flour. They place the grinding stone on a big basket tray and turn the upper wheel of the grinding stone. The flour that falls from the grinding stone is collected in the tray itself and thereby they ensure that no wastage occurs.

The staple diet of the Holeyas is ragi as is the case with most people in these parts. On rare occasions they eat rice. Ragi is cooked by converting it into flour and boiling it in water. They cook the meal into a thick paste. The cooked meal is rolled into balls and served. They cook twice a day but eat three times a day. As a side dish they prepare some sauce with tamarind and chillies. They add a few vegetables or greens in the sauce.

This is sometimes made of pulses. As this is a hilly region with cold climate, they prefer their cooked ragi rather thick and hot than in a liquid form prepared in the plains. Tea or coffee is invariably not taken. Eating of non-vegetarian food is occasional. They have no objection to eating mutton, pork or chicken. Formerly all of them were eating beef. Now they say that they abstain from eating beef. It is said that formerly when the cattle belonging to a caste-Hindu died, was given to the Holeyas who, after skinning it, ate the flesh. Now, since they have sentimental objection to the eating of beef, they flay the animal and bury the flesh. The present custom in the village is to hand over dead cattle to Holeyas only if the dead animal is a calf with less than three teeth. If the animal is an old one, the caste Hindus get the skin flayed and sold, while Madigas, who are engaged for flaying, take away the flesh.

VI. Environmental sanitation, hygienic habits etc :

The Holeyas look healthy. They do not appear to be suffering from mal-nutrition. Some of their areas were formerly malarial tracts, but now they are mostly free from the scourge. In personal cleanliness, it cannot be said that they are good. They bathe only occasionally; it may be once in a week. It has however to be appreciated that theirs is a cold country and most other people also do not take baths daily. Even in the matter of washing clothes, the Holeyas are no better than the others in their social level. Even though they do not take bath and wash their clothes regularly, they do not fail to put on sacred ash or a big Kumkum 'Thilak' in their forehead.

Their locality does not appear to be clean. They however try to keep the inside of their houses clean by sweeping regularly and by smearing the floor with cowdung paste. They have a practice which is not conducive to healthy living; and that is their habit of tying the cattle inside the living portion of the house. This, they say, is to prevent the exposure of the cattle to the cold outside; but they do not realise that the tying of cattle inside leads to large scale breeding of mosquitoes and flies.

VII. Language and Literature :

Being of Kanarese origin, Holeya's mother tongue is Kannada. In view of their domicine in Madras State, they speak fluently in Tamil. Of the 1,826 Holeyas returned in 1961 Census, 144 were reported as literates consisting of 128 males and 16 females. 30 of the male literates and 12 of the female literates were in urban areas. These figures are presented as a percentage along with those for the general population and all the Scheduled Castes put together for easy comparison.

Percentage literates

	Rural		Urban	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
General Population .	37.81	11.57	62.66	36.67
All Scheduled Castes .	20.86	4.23	38.34	13.96
Holeyas	10.62	0.49	69.77	25.53

(*Basis* : Census of India, Vol. IX—Parts II-C(i) and V-A(ii)).

The above abstract illustrates that such of those Holeyas who have moved to urban areas, but whom form a meagre proportion of 4% bear a high proportion of literates which compares favourable with the trend in general population. But the bulk of Holeyas, forming 95% and living in rural areas are far backward in regard to literacy. Detailed break up of their educational level, age and sex is as follows—

Educational levels for 100.00 *Holeyas enumerated in the State by sex and age-groups*

Sex	Age group	Illiterates	Literates without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation and above
1	2	3	4	5	6
Males . .	All ages	45.89	05.20	01.70	00.11
	0—4	06.85	Nil	Nil	Nil
	5—9	05.59	01.04	00.16	Nil
	10—14	04.60	00.93	00.33	Nil
	15—19	03.72	00.44	00.60	Nil
	20—29	07.67	00.71	00.16	00.05
	30—44	08.76	01.20	00.22	00.05
	45+	08.71	00.88	00.22	Nil

1	2	3	4	5	6
Females . .	All ages	46.22	00.77	00.11	Nil
	0—4	06.74	Nil	Nil	Nil
	5—9	06.13	Nil	Nil	Nil
	10—14	05.37	00.05	00.11	Nil
	15—19	03.12	00.05	Nil	Nil
	20—29	08.11	00.27	Nil	Nil
	30—44	08.54	00.11	Nil	Nil
	45+	08.21	00.27	Nil	Nil
Grand total (*i.e.*) all ages and both sexes		92.11	05.97	01.81	00.11

(*Basis* : Census of India, Vol. IX Part V-A(ii)).

The statement indicates that none of the females are matriculates. The 0.11% of females, who have studied upto primary or junior basic belong to the age group 10-14. This fact, along with comparatively a higher proportion of males with educational level at the earlier age-groups, is probably the impact of the free education combined with free mid-day meal afforded by the State Government.

VIII. Economic Life :

The 1961 Census data indicate Holeyas' economic way of life as follows—

Means of livelihood

Category	Absolute figures				Percentage to total population			
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Workers and non-workers combined	923	813	43	47	53.17	46.83	47.78	52.22
Workers :								
All categories	630	261	28	12	36.29	15.03	31.11	13.33
Cultivator	472	178	12	10	27.19	10.25	13.33	11.11
Agricultural labourer	81	62	5	Nil	4.67	3.57	5.56	Nil
Livestock, forestry hunting, etc.	8	4	Nil	Nil	0.46	0.23	Nil	Nil
Household Industry	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.12	Nil	Nil	Nil
Manufacturing other than household industry	Nil	Nil	3	Nil	Nil	Nil	3.33	Nil
Construction	..	..	..	Nil	..	..	..	..
Trade and Commerce	..	..	..	Nil	..	..	..	..
Transport, Storage and Communications	..	..	..	Nil	..	..	..	..
Other services	67	17	8	2	3.86	0.98	8.89	2.22
Non-workers	293	552	15	35	16.88	31.80	16.67	38.89

(*Basis* : Census of India, Vol. IX Part V-A(i) S.C.T.I. Part-A).

In the rural sector 51% of Holeyas are workers against 55% among all the Scheduled Castes and 50% among the general population. Women participation is 29% against 43% for Scheduled Castes and 37% for general population. While the overall labour force in urban gets decreased by 7% the rate of women participation increases by 1%. Urban working force among Holeyas, Scheduled Castes and general population are 44%, 42% and 34% respectively, urban women participation rates being 40%, 34% and 21%. Both in rural and urban sectors agricultural operations form their main source of livelihood followed by other services. More detailed occupational classification on the basis of the code structure laid down by the occupational information unit of the Directorate General of Ressettlement and Employment, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India are available in greater detail in Table S. C. T. VII of Census of India, 1961 Vol. IX Part V-A (ii). Occupation which have reported less than 1% of the total workers in each sex are of little significance. Number of workers in other occupations are indicated below :—

Significant occupations among Holeyas

Code No. and description of significant occupation	No. of males	No. of females
104 Village officials	8	Nil
415 Plantation labourers	7	4
899 General or casual labourers . . .	66	18
Cultivators	484	188
Agricultural labourers	86	62
All workers (including negligible proportion in other occupa ions)	658	273

Village Officers, by the very nature of their Office, are agriculturists. The sizeable proportion of general labour may perhaps pursue seasonal agricultural labour as well. Thus the occupational mobility among them seems to be practically nil. Nature and intensity of the agricultural and other activities pursued by them and their general income and expenditure pattern can, to some extent, be inferred from the case study at Anniyalam village in Denkanikotta Sub-Taluk of Hosur Taluk in the erstwhile Salem District.

In Anniyalam village, out of 108 workers in the community, 43 are engaged in cultivation, 55 in agricultural labour, 8 as cowherds and 2 as village menials. A few of them go for road works but that is only occasionally. The women folk are enagaged in collection of ' (புங்கங்கொட்டை) *Pungan pods* from which oil is extracted and used as a crude drug. The income analysis of the household in Anniyalam village shows that out of 34 households, 21 come in the income group of Rs. 25 or less, 9 in the income group of Rs. 26-50, 3 in the income group of 51-75 and only 1 in the income group of Rs. 76-100. It is seen that only 4 households out of 34, earn more than Rs. 50 a month. These four households belong to the category of cultivators. The agricultural labourers do not get work regularly. They are employed only during seasons. When they go out for work, they are paid at the rate of Re. 1 per male and 62 p. per female. Food forms 74.1% of their expenditure. The expenditure on dress is 11.7% and that on smoking and chewing 9.4%. They spend little on entertainments and luxury items. 31 out of 34 households are indebted. The average indebtedness per household in debt comes to about Rs. 390. The incidence of debt on the lowest income group of Rs. 25 or less, is high and it is ascertained that they are mostly incurred for household expenditure. The rate of interest prevailing in the village is one bag of ragi for every Rs. 100 taken for a year. A bag of ragi may cost about Rs. 30 and so the rate of interest may work out to 30%.

The areas is famous for the Halicar breed of bulls. This is a draught species and the bulls are sold for good prices. The Holeyas look after the few animals owned by them. They feed them by hand for hours together, fatten them and sell them for good prices. This is how they engage themselves during idle hours forced on them by the seasons. Some of the Holeyas have taken on *warram* lease the maintenance of cows belonging to caste-Hindus. The terms and conditions of the *warram* lease are as follows:— The cow is taken on lease when it is about 3 years old. It has to be fed and looked after well by the lessee. The first calf born to the cow should be given away to the lessor when the calf is one year old. The lessee can take the surplus milk during the weaning period. The second calf belongs to the lessee, the third to the lessor, the fourth to the lessee and so on. The cow becomes the property of the lessee after 5 years, and after that, the calves born to the cow all belong to the lessee. Under these terms the Holeyas are in possession of a few cattle. Some in the caste rear pigs. Some rear fowls. Some occasionally go out for fishing in shallow running waters, brooks and jungle streams. The catch is not sold but consumed by themselves. For fishing, they

use *kodane* which is a wick basket with a contrivance to catch fish. The kodame is placed along the course of the flow of water in such a way that the entire water of the stream flows through it. The fish that comes in the stream gets caught in the basket. They do not use any nets for fishing.

Those engaged in cultivation have their own agricultural implements. The plough used by them is slightly different from the one used in Tamil country. For levelling dry lands after sowing, they use a leveller called *Aluvai* which has 8 wooden pointers to stir the earth below. For weeding purpose, they use an instrument called 'Kundai' which has four iron pointed tillers. They have ordinary hoes, spades, sickles and serrated sickles (Karukudalu).

IX. LIFE CYCLE:

Birth ceremonies.—(While discussing distribution and population trend, a doubt has been raised whether all is well with the pregnant woman) The limited field investigation indicates that birth in a family is not looked upon as an important occasion calling for any elaborate ceremonies. The delivery usually takes place in the inner room of the house. Pollution is observed for 9 days. On the 9th day, the mother and child are given hot water bath, which is supposed to remove the pollution. On the 4th or 5th day, the mother is usually given rice with chicken sauce. Elderly women of the locality help the delivering mother. If the delivery is a protracted one, they give a decoction of some medicinal leaves. They also make the mother inhale the smoke which comes out when the peeled skin of a cobra is put into fire. The placenta is buried in the backyard.

Puberty Ceremonies.—Pollution is observed for nine or eleven days when a girl attains puberty. The girl is segregated and put in a specially erected hut close to the house. The hut is erected by the maternal uncle with the green leaves of "Lakkili". During the time the girl remains in this shed, she is given rich food. On the 9th or eleventh day, she is given a bath and taken home. Close relatives feed the girl in turn when she is kept in the green hut.

Betrothal Ceremonies.—Marriages among Holeyas take place before or after puberty of the girl. Betrothal ceremony is called by them as 'Ville Thambulam'. On this day, the bridegroom's party brings saree, jacket cloth, coconut, plantains, betel, arecanut, copra, flowers, turmeric etc., and fix a date for the celebration of the marriage. An auspicious day for celebrating the marriage is ascertained before-hand from the local astrologer or Brahmin. The Caste Head plays an important role during the betrothal ceremony.

It is a tradition among the Holeyas that the groom's party and the bride's party are entertained to a drink of toddy, but since there is Prohibition, they resort to drinking soda water if they cannot manage to get illicit drink. On the betrothal day, half the bride price namely Rs. 5.25 is given by the groom's side to the girl's parents. The remaining half of the bride-price (called Oli Panam) is agreed to be given on the marriage day.

Marriage.—Of the 966 Males and 860 females, 530 and 357 are reported in 1961 Census as 'never married', representing 54.87% and 41.51% as against 53.99% and 42.78% among all the Scheduled Castes and 55.42% and 43.30% among the general population respectively indicating the least proportion among the females and intermediary position for the males. The least proportion of females are noticed in the age-group 0-14 as well as 15-44 *viz.*, 97.62% and 7.05% respectively against 98.82% and 10.08% for all Scheduled Castes and 99.28% and 13.24% for the general population. These are indications of early marriage of Holeya females. 100.00% of never married in the age-group 0-14, 38.98% in 15-44 and 3.35% in 45+among the Holeya males against 99.81%; 33.38% and 1.29% for all Scheduled Castes and 99.88%; 39.12% and 1.55% for the general population reflect Holeya males' preference for delayed marriage. There are higher proportion of widowed, Divorced and separated among both sexes of Holeyas. The social custom does not prohibit re-marriage, but the data seem to indicate their preference not to remarry. Perhaps they have a preference to practice concubinism.

The Marriage of the Holeyas is nothing but vegetarian feast, at which the bridegroom ties Thali (தாலி) Marriage badge round the bride's neck. The ceremony takes place at the groom's house. The bride selected by common consent is to be taken to the house of her husband-elect. Along with her party, she is received at the outskirts of the village by the groom's party and are led to a pandal (பந்தல்) erected for the purpose. The contracting couple are seated facing each other in the Pandal. The caste headman known as 'Oor Gowda' presides over the function. He performs a simple pooja with the help of a brass pot placed over a small quantity of paddy. After the pooja the thali (தாலி) or marriage badge is tied by the bridegroom on the bride's neck. This is followed by the distribution of pan supari or betel leaves and arecanuts for those who assemble for the function and a meal with vegetarian dishes is served. After the dinner, the bride and groom are seated over a wooden plank called 'Simmasanam' and are blessed by the elders. On the second day, a feast of non-vegetarian dishes is served to a selected few consisting of close relatives. A Holeya's marriage expense ranges from Rs. 100 to Rs. 500 which is normally

borne by the groom's party. The traditional bride price is said to be Rs. 10.50. Half of this amount (i.e.) Rs. 5.25 is paid if the bride is a widow. Widow Marriage is celebrated in a much simpler way according to individual's likes and dislikes. Thali tying forms essential part of the ceremony. Such simple functions replace the old custom of elaborate celebrations for three or more days as detailed by Stuart in his Madras Census Report for 1891, Thurston in his Volume on the Castes and Tribes of Southern India and by H. V. Nanjundayya and L.K.A. Iyer in their book on Mysore Tribes and Castes, 1928-36.

It has already been indicated that Holeyas are divided into a number of exogamous septs. Besides exogamy, the Holeyas have their own preferences in the matter of seeking brides. Consanguneous marriages are frequent. In Anniyalam village, out of 56 marriages of the males, 17 relate to marriages with maternal uncle's daughter, 6 to paternal aunt's daughter and 19 to sister's daughter. In Ballepalli village, out of 91 marriages, 9 relate to marriage with maternal uncle's daughter, 6 to paternal aunt's daughter and only one to sister's daughter. The Holeyas have also no objection to marrying the brother's widow, but that is not compulsory.

The Holeyas recognise divorces and remarriages but these are rare. Out of 38 first marriages of females in Anniyalam village, only one resulted in divorce. The divorce which they call as Bidukkidai is symbolised by the return of Thali by the wife. When the move for divorce comes from the bride, half the brideprice received by her has to be returned to the husband. The children of the couple usually go with the father, unless the child is too young, in which case the child has to be looked after by the mother till it grows up.

Death Ceremonies.—The Holeyas bury their dead. Before the body is taken to the burial ground, a hot water bath is given and is adorned with new clothes and flowers. Drums are played and the corpse carried in a bier. The first son of the deceased usually bears the expenditure on death ceremonies. The body is buried with its head towards the south and face looking up. The purification ceremony is celebrated on the 12th day by obtaining purification water from a Brahmin.

X. Religion

The Holeyas worship village deities like Tllamma, Mariamma, Chickkamma and Sompappa. Though there is no legal bar to their entering the caste Hindu temples, they do not generally enter

these temples. When they visit these temples, they worship these deities from a distance. None of the Holeyas in Madras State has special privilege of any sort whereas Thurston reports extraordinary circumstances which led to the grant of special privileges to the Holeyas at Melkote in the Mysore District and those at Belur in the Hassan District of Mysore State, by which they can enter the local Vishnu temple upto the Sanctum Sanctorum during the annual car procession. (Castes and Tribes of Southern India, 1909—Thurston E.) At the time of field study in March, 1964, a car festival was being celebrated by the local villagers. The festival attracted a large crowd from nearby villages. The Holeyas also attended the festival mainly with a view to take advantage of poor feeding. They played drums when the temple car was dragged. In the local Anniyalam village, then an separated temples dedicated to Ellamma, Somappa, and Chickkamma the traditional deities of Holeyas.. Of these, the temple for Sompappa is within the village and the structure has a Gopuram. Other temples are small ones, located in fields and are built of stone slabs to a height of only 2 feet.

The Holeyas observe many of the Hindu festivals like Sankaranthi, Ugathi, Sivarathri, Deepavali and Dasara. Ugathi is the Telugu new Year's day. Sankaranthi falls during the Thai Pongal and it is celebrated as a harvest festival. Dasara which they call as 'Mar Navami' or 'Jansari' has some more importance in these parts than in the other parts of Madras State as they are close to Mysore. There is nothing unusual about their way of celebrating any of these festivals.

XI. Recreation and amusements

The Holeyas have plenty of leisure during off-seasons. They mostly idle away their time at home by gossiping. When there are festivals taking place in temples closeby, they go in large numbers and enjoy themselves thoroughly. During moon-lit nights, the youths play 'Kabadi' and the girls engage themselves in *Kummi* etc. which are frequently met with in rural areas. In some villages, they have organized troupes for enacting dramas called 'kelikkais'. The plays enacted by them are Kurukshetra, Bala Nagamma, Kamboji, Harischandra etc. In some places, Bajan Parties exist. In these, they play instruments like harmonium, tapala, Mridangam etc. Sometimes they go for playing music to others. For this they use tray-shaped drums (Thappattais) and pipes. They usually dance to the rythem of the drums.

XII. Inter Community relationship

The Caste Hindus of Anniyalam treat the Holeyas as untouchables. They are not allowed to take water from the drinking water well of the caste-Hindus. The Holeyas have a separate well

of their own. When the well is dry the Holeyas go to some irrigation well close-by to get water. The barbers (Hajam caste) do not serve the Holeyas. They shave themselves. When cutting of hair is necessary, one helps the other or they have it done in a barber-saloon at the nearby town Denkanikotta. The washermen of the village (Agasan caste) also do not serve the Holeyas. They have an inferior sect of Agasans who serve only the Harijans. In marriage functions of the Holeyas the Brahmins are not willing to officiate.

XIII. Social control, prestige and leadership

The Holeyas have a well settled social life. The head of the Holeyas in a village is called Oor Gowda. In all social functions, he acts as the first man. He presides over the Cast Panchayat to dispose of complaints of social delinquencies. In cases of adultery within the community, heavy fines are imposed and where the adultery happens to be with anyone outside the community, excommunication is ordered. The Panchayat has powers to divorce a marriage contract. The Oor Gowda is assisted in his duties by a Thotti, who acts as a messenger for communicating the orders of the Oor Gowda and for convening the Caste Panchayat. He is also utilised by the Caste Hindus for carrying messages. For the service rendered by this Thotti, each household gives one Vallam (four measures) of grains every year. In addition, the dead cattle are handed over to the Thotti who undertakes to distribute it to others in the caste.

Above the Oor Gowda, for all the villages in the locality, the overall head is the Desi Chetti living in Denkanikotta. He does not belong to the Holeya Caste. He is in fact, a Telugu speaking Valaiyakara Chetti. He is recognised by the Holeyas as the superior head of all the Holeyas in the locality. He is invited for the marriages, but he rarely attends them. Cases which cannot be disposed of by the Oor Gowda are taken to the Desi Chetti who hears the parties and gives his decision. He is competent to fine the delinquents. He gives away the fine amounts to the common good of the community. He is respected and revered by all the Holeyas in that locality.

Besides the Desi Chetti, they have also an overall Guru at Thoddanallur. He belongs to Vaishnava community. The Holeyas approach him for purification ceremonies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON HOLEYA

Hutton, J. H. . . . Holeya
Caste in India 1951 p. 280 (Grossary/ pp. 68, 187

Iyer L. A. Krishna . . . Holeya
The Coorg Tribes and Castes, 1948 Madras : 1948 pp. 27-29

Nan-undayya, H. V. & Holeya
Iyer, L. K. A. . . . Mysore Tribes & Castes Mysore : 1922 36 Vol. I, pp. 124 Vol. II pp. 320-355

anjundayya, H. V . . Holeya Caste II (Ethnographic Survey of Mysore Preliminary Issue-I 1906 pp. 1-24

Sherring M. A. . . . Holeyas
Hindu tribes & Castes as represented in Benaras Calcutta : 1872 Vol. II pp. 289-290

Thurston E . . . . Holeya
Castes and Tribes of Sourhern India Madras 1909 Vol II, pp. 329-351

Thurston, E . . . . Holeya
Ethnographic notes in Southern India pp. 457-458

Lindsay, A. W. C. . . Holeya
Report on the Mysore General Census of : 1871 Bangalore : 1874 pp 86-87

Major Magrath H. M S. . Balagai Holeya
Report on the Coorg General Census of 1881 Bangalore 1881

Rice, L. . . . . Holaya or Holeya
Report on the Mysore Census of 1881 Bangalore : 1884 p. 69

Stuart, H. A. . . . Holeya
Census of India 1891 Vol. XIII Madras Madras—1893 pp. 250-251

Francis W. . . . . Holeya

Census of India 1901 Vol. XV Madras Part I Report Madras 1902 p. 15

Row, T A. . . . Holeya

Census of India 1901 Vol. XXIV Mysore Part I Report Bangalore 1963 pp. 523-525

Aiyar V. R. T. . . . Holeya

Census of India 1911 Vol. XXI Mysore Part I Report Bangalore : 1912 pp. 152-153, 167-168

Aiyar, N. S. . . . . Holia

Census of India 1911 Vol. XXIII Travancore Part I Report Travancore 1912 p. 259

Extract on "HOLEYA" from 'Caste in India' Its Nature, Function and Origins by J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc. Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page 280 *Glossary.*

HOLEYA: A Kanarese caste or field labourers and village servants, formerly agrestic serfs (corresponding to Paraiyan).

Extract on "HOLEYA" from 'Caste in India' Its Nature, Function and Origins by J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc., Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page 68.

....Fully Right-Hand castes include at any rate the following: Balija, Banajiga and Komati (training castes), Vaniyan (who yoke one bullock only), Chaliyan and Seniyan (weaving castes), Janappan (Hemp dressers), Kusavan (potters), Melakkaran (musicians), Shanan (toddy drawers), Ambattan (barbers), Vannan (washermen), Idaiyan (shepherds), Vellala, Paraiyan, Mala, HOLEYA (cultivating castes), Kurav, Odde, Irula, Vedan and Vettuvan (mostly labourers). In addition to the above there seem to be, as already stated, the women of the Chakkiliyan or Madiga caste, but the Right or Left-handedness of castes differs apparently to some extent with locality.....

Extract on "HOLEYA" from 'Caste in India' Its Nature, Function and Origins by J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc., Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page 187.

....It is not suggested that the caste system has developed from ideas of soul-stuff, *mana* magic and taboo alone; only that without these ideas it could not have developed.[12] If these ideas alone were enough, one might expect to see a caste system in every island from the Nicobars to Easter, instead of only in India. At the same time Roy himself supplies evidence of a precisely similar outlook to that of the Maori within the system of Indian Caste, if a Brahman enter the quarters of the HOLEYAS, they turn out in a body to slipper him, in former times it is said to death,[13] while a party of Brahmans who passed through a Paraiyan hamlet had to run to escape cowpats and broomsticks because contact with them meant ruin to Paraiyans.[14] The taboo on a Brahman's entering a Barui's *panbari* has been mentioned earlier.[15]

---

12. Handy (*Polynesian Religion*, p. 318) sees a common element in *mana* and the Vedic *Brahma* and says : 'Similarly, I believe the tapu system as a body of rules to prevent improper contact of the superior divine with the inferior common or corrupt, to be an example of divergent evolution from the same system out of which came also the Indian caste, with its untouchableness, eating rules, purifications'.

13. 'Caste, Race and Religion', in *Man in India*, XIV, No. 2, p. 136, quoting Capt. JS. F. Mackenzie in *The Indian Antiquary*, II, p. 65 (1873).

14. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

15. p. 87 *supra.*

Extract on "HOLEYA" from 'The Mysore Tribes and Castes' Volume III by THE LATE H. V. NANJUNDAYYA, M.A., M.L., C.I.E., Superintendent of Ethnography, Mysore; Vice-Chancellor of the Mysore University.

AND

RAO BAHADUR L. K. ANANTHAKRISHNA IYER, B.A., L.T., Curator of the State Museum, Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, Superintendent of Ethnography, Trichur, Cochin State, (Retired)

Lecturer in Anthropology, and Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, Calcutta; Officer in charge of Ethnographic Survey, Mysore, Author of the Cochin Tribes and Castes, Anthropology of the Syrian Christians; Lecturer on Ethnography;

Corresponding Member of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, London. Corresponding Member of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, U.S.A., Associate Member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, etc.

Published under the auspices of The Mysore University Mysore, 1930 pages 320 to 352.

*HOLEYA: Introduction, origin and Tradition of the caste—Structure of the caste—Marriage Prohibitions—Marriage Customs and Ceremonies—Puberty Customs—Widow marriage—Adultery and Divorce—Dedication of Girls (Basavis)—Post-Natal Ceremonies—Inheritance and Adoption—Tribal Organization—Religion—Religious Order—Priests—Funeral Ceremonies—Admission of Other Castes—Occupation—Social Status—Food—Dress and Ornaments—Conclusion.

Introduction :

The Holeyas are the agrestic serfs. Though they are found all over the State of Mysore, yet the districts of Bangalore, Mysore, Kadur and Hassan show larger figures than other districts. They are an outcaste people, Pariah and Mala being their appellation in Tamil and Telugu. The term Holeya may be derived from *'hola'* a filed, Holeya meaning thence a filed-labourer. But it more probably comes from *'hole'* which means pollution, since they are regarded as of unclean habits in eating and drinking. The men of this caste are sometimes styled by their official designation as

*Holeyas are now called Adikarnatakas.

Chalavadi who is a convener of the meeting of the eighteen *phana* party carrying a brass cup and chain as insignia; and *Kulavadi* is one who calls the villagers before the patel and the revenue officers generally. As, in most places, these offices are held by them, the names are used to denote the caste generally.

The members use among themselves the term *Balagai*, as they are classed among the eighteen castes that form the right hand section of the community in Dravida countries, as against the nine castes of the left hand division. This being a common appellation to them and other higher castes, they naturally use it as being the most respectable designation to apply to themselves. *Panchama, Anthyaja and Chandala* are the terms the Brahmans employ in naming them, and denote a mild form of contempt. *Panchama*, Sanskrit term, means 'of the fifth caste', the first four castes being—Brahma, Kshtriya, Vaisya and Sudra. *Anthyaja* means 'born at the end' of the social scale. *Chandala* means one who indulges in cruel deeds, the term being applied by Manu to one born to a Sudra on a Brahman woman. Among other Sanskrit terms applied to these, may be mentioned 'Matanga', descendant of Matangi.

There are no recognized titles for this caste, the members addressing each other by their bare names. In Mysore, they generally speak Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Mahratti, being used by small sections of them according to the place of their origin.

Origin and Tradition :

The origin of this caste is, according to one legend, traced to one Honnayya, whose shrine are still honoured with offerings of fruits, as given below. During a procession, when this chief was riding on an elephant, the motley crowd that went with him entered a temple which was on their way. But the elephant could not enter the low portals of the building, and Honnayya and his immediate followers were left outside. Those that went in, were the four recognized castes and Honnayya's men thereafter altogether lost the privilege of going inside the temples.

A second tradition gives the origin of the term *Balagai*. Siva and Parvati employed a servant to tend their cow. This man, one day, found that the goddess had negligently left the butter, that had been churned out of the milk, within his reach, and discovered its exquisite taste. So, in his foolish greed, he thought that there was an unlimited quantity of it in the animal's stomach,

and killed it on the spot. He was condemned by Isvara to eat the carcass as a punishment; but the fellow found it too much to manage. So he implored the god who created two others Madigas and Bedars, to go to his help. Siva after this, went back into his temple; the Beda at once followed his creator; but the other two preferred their carrion, and remained outside devouring it. They were condemned to be out-castes, and became left hand and right hand according to the position they had taken in relation to one temple door.

Another story is told to show that they have some sort of relationship with Agasas or washermen. It is said that a Holeya boy fled at the sight of Visvakarma (a rival creator to the original Brahma), and took refuge under the washing-tub of an Agasa. The latter to justify his giving the boy an asylum against the pursuit of such a mighty personage claimed the boy as his son, and ate rice out of the same plate with him. It is difficult to make out the significance of this silly story. But it may be noted that though Agasas do not condescend to act as torch-bearers during the marriages of Holeyas, the latter borrow a torch from Agasas, appealing to them for help, "since Holeyas are the children of Agasas".

They even claim some sort of relationship with Brahmans in as much as Arundhati, wife of Vasishta the paragon of caste women for all time—is said to have been damsel of *Chandala* origin. The Holeyas sing songs in praise of this woman, when they sacrifice buffaloes before their goddess Mari.

Whatever the inner meanings of these legends may be, there is no evidence that they have any other origin than the whimsical fancy of some persons, who were either more partial or wished to be more generous than usual to a caste which was largely treated as low in the social scale. Little more weight, it is to be feared, can be ascribed to the observations* about the original status of a Kulavadi, who is erroneously assumed to be always a

*"In the rights and privileges which yet cling to him, we get glimpses of his former estate, and find proofs that the Holeyas were the first to establish villages. All the castes unhesitatingly admit that the Kulavadi is (*de jure*) the owner of the village. If there is a dispute as to the village boundary, the Kulavadi is the only one competent to take an oath as to how the boundary ought to run, and to this day, a village boundary dispute is often decided by this one fact if the Kulavadis agree, the other inhabitants of the village can say no more". "But one of this despised order is generally the priest to the village goddess, and as such, on that annual day when all hasten to pay their offering

Holeya in some authorised publications such as the *Mysore Gazetteer.* It is sought to be proved that the Holeya was the owner of the soil and the founder of villages. But the evidence adduced is shadowy. It is nowhere admitted that the Holeya was the *de jure* owner of a village; and elaborate rules are given in Manu Smriti, and other recognized books, to decide boundary disputes in which the Kulavadi's claim to settle the matter by his admission or other testimony is not even mentioned. Nor is the conclusion legitimate from the fact that in many places, a Kulavadi gets a small coin (called *nela haga* or soil money) for the soil under which a dead body is interred. It may equally well be held that the Holeya, who has no abode within the main village, was considered as having some sort of title to all the land outside its limits. The right if *puja* belonging to the village goddess, residing generally in this caste, goes only to show that this worship was not part of the true Aryan practices, and that the Hindu, with his well-known toleration, adapted himself to surrounding circumstances, by recognizing the primitive faiths and religious practices to some extent. This right of worship can give no precedence to a Holeya over a Brahman, and is allowed to continue undisturbed, especially as no one of a higher caste would consent to kill such animals as are sacrificed to the village deity. The Kulavadi shaving his head on the occasion of a death in a *gauda's* family is more a sign that he was considered a helot than a member belonging to the faimly.

Thus, the Gangadikara Holeyas call themselves the *Hale-makkalu* (house servants or slaves) of Gangadikara Okkaligas. These *Hale-makkalu* have to render certain menial services to the Okkaligas, such as carrying the sandals of the bridegroom, conveying messages from place to place, and in funeral ceremonies, carrying fire in front of the dead body to the burial ground.

Morasu Holeyas similarly consider themselves the *Hale makkalu* of the Morasu and Reddi Okkaligas. They observe the festivals of *Bandi-devaru and Hosadevaru* that are observed by the Morasu and

---

at a shrine, Holeya takes precedence of the twice-born Brahman". (*Ibid.*, page 215).

"But what seems to prove strongly, that the Holeya was the first to take possession of the soil, is that the Kulavadi receives, and is entitled to receive from the friends of any person who dies in the village a certain burial fee or as it is forcibly put—'they buy from him the ground for the dead'. This fee is still called in Canarese *nela haga*. In Manjarabad, the ancient Balam, the Kulavadi does not receive this fee from those raiyats who are related to the headmen. Here the Kulavadi occupies a higher position; he has in fact been adopted into the Patel's family, for, on a death occurring in such family, the Kulavadi goes into mourning by shaving his head. He always receives from the friends, the cloth the deceased wore and brass basin." (*Ibid,* page 216)

Mysore Gazetteer, Vol. I. page 216.

Reddi Okkaligas. They have also to render special services, such as carrying the box containing the presents made by the bridegroom to the bride on a marriage, carrying the dead body of their masters on one side and holding a torch in the processions of idols of village deities at least in front of their master who carries other lights. In return, these *Halemakkalus* are fed by their superiors in the annual festivals, and get occasional presents of a bull, calf or cloth or a vessel. They eat the food given to the departed spirit of a dead man on the third day after death.

Slavery :

Slavery as an old institution in Mysore, was precisely in the same form as it existed on the West Coast, namely, Malabar, Cochin, Travancore and South Canara. The account given below may be found to be interesting.

Slavery, chiefly, however, in the agrarian form, existed from time immemorial, and to a great extent, in the Malnad. It was unknown in Kadur, Tarikee, Chennagiri, Tarihar and Honnali, and was rare in the intermediate taluks. The population return showed, in the five Malnad taluks, 4,169 houses, containing 9,973 persons of the Holeyar caste; and it is computed that the whole of these were properly slaves, though many had now escaped from the authority of their original masters. Slaves were of two descriptions—*hoṇn-al* (from *hon*, gold) and *maṇn-al* (from *man, earth*), of which the former might, and the latter might not, be transferred from the soil to which they were attached. The terms by which slaves were designated, did not in its original signification, imply any notion of servitude. It merely meant a person (man or woman), and was applied equally to hired servants or daily labourers. Certain limits termed, *mettu*, steps were fixed, which the slaves must not pass without permission, on pain of being considered a fugitive. When a slave ran away, his master searched for him, and if successful, applied to the Amildar of the taluk to compel his return. The Native Government professed to comply with such applicants, but the interference of the Amildars was now prohibited. Masters had been considered to possess the right of punishing idle or refractory slaves by beating; no express order was given on this point, but the power is supposed to have been abrogated by the police regulations. The Malnad landholders frequently complained of this alleged departure from the custom of the country, but it is clear that slavery had been generally losing the support of the Government from the beginning of the present century, and it was generally found, on inquiry, that slaves whose return, it was requested, should be compelled, had left their masters fifteen or twenty years.

The usual maintenance (*paddi*) of the slaves in the Malnad was one *kolaga* or six *siddi of batta* or rice in the husk, equivalent to a *pakka* seer of rice, for each man, and five *siddis* for each woman, per diem, which was doubled on the new and full moons and sometimes at the feasts. An annual supply of clothes consisting of one *kambli* valued at half a rupee, to each man and woman; one *dhoti* or waistband worth half a fanam, one *panche* or coarse cloth five cubits long and costing a rupee for each woman. On the occasion of marriage, the master of the man had to purchase a wife for him usually for three or four B. pagodas, from her owner; unless, as it was most commonly done, he could not give the daughter of one of his slaves in return. This practice was called *sattai* or barter. The expenses of the marriage were borne by the master of the husband and commonly amounted to six rupees and three *khandaga* or 150 seers of rice; the children belonged to the owner of the man. When a slave, with the permission of his master, worked for another person, that person must supply him with food and clothing as above stated, and must besides pay a small annual sum, generally half a B. pagoda to the master—this was called *hegal badige,* shoulder hire. The ordinary price of a pair of slaves, man and woman, called *gudi saraku* (gudi, a Holeya's habitation; *Saraku,* goods or stocks of any kind) was 12 B. pagodas, and with a pair of bullocks they were supposed to be sufficient for cultivating five *khandaga* of land.*

These slaves, though degraded, are much better off (says Mr. Stokes) than those in Malabar; they are in general stout and healthy in appearance, and show no signs of being either over-worked or under-fed.

They are rapidly approximating to the state of the better class of agricultural labourers. The Ikkeri princes possessed a great many slaves, acquired by conquest or otherwise, some of whom were employed in the palace garden at Nagar, and others in keeping in repair the forts of Lakvalli, Kavaledroog, etc. They were all retained by Haider and his successors until the end of 1834. The establishment was a source of great abuse, but the salves considered its abolition rather in the light of dismissal than emancipation. Besides the Holeyar, there are a few slaves born of women who have lost caste, or who, in infancy, have been sold by their parents.†‡$

---

*L. Rice : *Mysore Gazetteer*, Vol. I, page.

†The Cochin Tribes and Castes, Vol. I. pages 90—95.

‡*Anthropology of the Syrian Christian*, pages 208—219.

$*Manual of South Canara*, page 210.

Population and Distribution :

At the last Census, the Holeyas numbered, 650,453 ; 330,685 being males, and 319,768 females. There is an increase of nearly 40,000 as compared with the Census of 1911, and show an increase of 11.9 per cent. They are in comparatively small numbers in the Shimoga and Chitaldrug districts.

The following is the distribution of the Holeyas according to districts, including the cities of Bangalore and Mysore, as also of the Kolar Gold Fields and Civil and Military Station of Bangalore :—

1. Bangalore City	4,851
2. Bangalore District	81,179
3. Kolar Gold Fields	35,506
4. Kolar District	66,905
5. Tumkur District	38,207
6. Mysore District	195,362
7. Mysore City	6,004
8. Chitaldrug District	35,359
9. Hassan District	89,853
10. Kadur District	50,713
11. Shimoga District	24,131
12. Civil and Military Station, Bangalore	22,383

Taluks having a population of 10,000 and more are the following :—

1. Channapatna	11,896
2. Anekal	12,546
3. Kolar Taluk	12,512
4. Malur	11,539
5. Bowringpet Taluk	10,859
6. Hunsur	15,493
7. Heggaddevankote	12,977
8. T. Narsipur	17,537
9. Krishnarajpet Taluk	12,191
10. Malavalli Taluk	20,631
11. Chamarajnagar Taluk	20,915
12. Nanajngud Taluk	21,660
13. Mandya Taluk	15,884
14. Hassan Taluk	12,665
15. Belur Taluk	19,507
16. Manjarabad Taluk	14,506

Habitations :

The Holeyas are a settled people, and usually live in groups of huts huddled close together which are generally low and built of mud. They are not provided with windows and have ventilators open to the sky. Their street is known as *Holageri** which is commonly outside the main village. Near Mysore and other important centres, they are building fine tiled houses, and are exhibiting other signs of growing prosperity. Though the entry of others into the caste is not encouraged, they admit such of those of the higher castes as are put out on account of their contact with themselves, generally in the matter of sexual relations.

Internal Structure of the Caste Endogamous Groups :

The caste has a number of sub-divisions, the principle of which is based on language, profession, or place of residence, or two or more combined ; and these groups are all said to be endogamous.

Kannada speaking divisions are Gangadikara, Morasu, Dasa, 'Magga' men (weaver) and 'Hagga' men (rope-makers).

The Telugu groups are Telugu Pakinati, Chintalu, Gundlu Jagati, Rampalu, Pasupa, Sere and Savu.

Konga, Dyaval, Mastikaru, Gogla, and Kudure are of Tamil origin.

A small number of Mahratti-speaking Holeyas are found scattered over the country on the borders of the Bombay Presidency.†

They have a number of exogamous clans, all of which descend in the male line only ; and the members of each clan regard themselves as belonging to one family. The names of these clans, or *Kulas*, will be found below :—

Attikula	Fig tree.
Anekula	Elephant or plant of that name.
Ararigaru	Beans
Ale	A tree
Agani	Bolt

*In Kannada, *Keri* means a street or quarters, and *Holageri* (*Holeya* and *Keri*) means Holeya quarters.

†Mysore Census Report : 1901, page 524.

Ankeyavaru	..
Ambarakula	An elephant howdah
Bhumi	Earth
Belli	Silver
Baligaru	Plantain
Chatrikula	Umbrella
Chandrakula	Moon
Chinnadakula	Gold
Chambula	..
Chintalu	Tamarind. (They do not cut the tree but do not scruple to use the fruit).
Chavana	..
Chella	Cleaning nuts
Darollu	..
Gollate	..
Gango-galu	..
Gudikula	Temple
Ganigarakula	Oil mill
Huvvina	Flowers
Hutta	Ant-hill
Holuru	..
Halukula	Milk
Halattakula	..
Hasube	Bag
Hare	Crowbar
Hunakula	..
Hagalukula	Bitter guard
Jintra	..
Jenukula	Honey
Kembarckula	..
Kavanekula	Sling
Karrakula	Plant
Kargadakula	Vessel
Kannanthradakula	..
Kaneerkula	A flower
Kurubarakula	Shepherd
Katigaru	..
Kannegaru	A herb
Kani	..
Kalu	Leg
Kapu	An ornament

Konga	..
Kastury	Musk
Kuppagiri	..
Kogilu	Cuckoo
Lagamikula	..
Mugaligaru	A kind of tree
Maddalati	..
Malikula	Garland
Mandatora	..
Mallora	Jasmine
Molakula	Rabbit
Matti	A Timber tree
Madya	..
Mukkara	Nose ring
Nerali	A tree
Naggaligaru	A thorny plant
Olorakula	..
Pale	..
Poomaligaru	Flower garland
Panne	A tree
Rampada	Saw
Roppada	Sheep fold
Siddukula	Lightning
Suryakula	Sun
Suttagadu	Burial ground
Settikula	Headman
Tenekula	Ears of corn
Togarigaru	Pigeon pea
Tanga	Gold
Untachanigalu	Bengal gram
Veelyadakula	Betel leaf

If the name denotes an edible plant, grain, etc. those bearing it refrain from eating the article. If it is a tree, they show their reverence by not burning or felling it. It is even reported that when a man of the Naggaligaru division is pierced by a thorn of the plant, he is prohibited from extracting the thorn himself. One, not of that division, should help him out of the difficulty.

Those who perform the worship of their gods are known as Devaraguddas, a name which is also applied to *pujaris* of some other castes; and it is said that their relation to others of the caste is hypegamous, i.e., males may marry women who are not of

this sub-division, but their women cannot marry any one of a lower rank. It is, however, doubtful if this distinction is rigidly observed.

Marriage Prohibitions :

The endogamous groups have been already named. Within these limits, and outside the exogamous *Kulas* (clans), the rules of prohibited and permissible degree are the daughters of such relationship. As a rule, an elder sister's daughter or a paternal aunt's or a material uncle's daughter, is taken in marriage. A younger sister's daughter is not taken ordinarily, but if no wife can be found elsewhere, the objection is overruled. Two sisters may be taken in marriage simultaneously by one or two brothers, but the former custom is not recommended, as it is believed that one of the sisters so married fares badly. It is allowable among them to exchange daughters, any man marrying his son to the other's daughter. There are no prohibitions on intermarriage based upon social status, local position, and change or differences of occupation. They may intermarry even if the parties are of different religious sects, such as Dasas and Saivas. The wife as a matter of course, joins the husband's sect. A woman that dedicate herself as Devaraguddi, with ceremonies of the tying of wrist band and the worship of *Kalasa,* may not marry.

Holeya girls are married either before or after puberty. If a girl remains unmarried from the absence of suitors, she is married to tree Honge (*Bargamia glabra*), Bevu (*Neem or Margosa*), Yakke (*Calotropis gigantea*) and dedicated to shrines, like those of Billigiri Ranga or Siddappaji. She may then live with any man of the caste without loss of status. She is known as *Kulamaga,* son of the family, and inherits the rights and privileges of a son, and discharges the sons duties, by performing the funeral ceremonies and attending to obsequies in respect of her parents. Her children belong to her father and are ligitimate.

Marriage Customs :

Marriage of infant girls is, as usual considered a mark of superiority, and it is claimed that they have always been partial to it in this case. Sexual license before marriage is connived at or tolerated to some extent. If a young woman remains unmarried in her father's house, she may entertain casual visitors, and, if she forms a permanent connection thus, the man may tie a *tali* to her. The brideprice for such a marriage is twelve rupees. The issue of such union is legitimate, even if it be born before the tying of the *tali.*

In some places, an unmarried girl may with impunity live with any man of the same caste, but if she becomes pregnant she has not only to marry her lover unless he rejects her, but has also to pay to the caste a fine of eight rupees. The head of the caste has power to levy a fine from the man also, who, if he declines to marry the woman, will be ostracized by the community. The woman is then at liberty to take another man, and the man who has betrayed her has to compensate her by paying twenty-five rupees and giving her a set of clothes. If the woman fails to point out her lover, she will be put out of caste. In all such cases, the head of the caste is anxious to see that all children born in the caste are legitimised and their parentage established. The habit of capturing wives from other tribes does not prevail, but they have traditions regarding such a practice. Among Morasu and Gangadikar sections, the woman loses her caste, if she becomes pregnant before marriage. The odium remains even after her death; and to ensure a proper burial of her body, such a woman sets apart a sum of money, about twelve rupees, during her life. A man, who elopes with a woman, may marry her after paying five rupees to the caste and a bride-price of fifty rupees to her parents or brothers.

Monogamous marriage is the rule, as the men are hardly able to maintain more than one wife. Polygamy is, however, recognized but polyandry is unknown. Some days before the marriage, there is an agreement of giving and taking between the parties, symbolised by exchange of betel-leaves and arecanuts. This ceremony, which however, is not essential, is konwn as *vilyasastra* (betel ceremony).

A marriage pandal is erected on 12 posts, of which one in the middle, known as *halu kamba* or milk post, has been out by the maternal uncle of the boy. A branch of the *Jambolina* tree is tied to this post. In the afternoon of the day, they keep apart new clothes, dedicated in the name of the deceased ancestors; in the evening, the bride's party, with the bride, arrive at the village of the bridegroom. They are met at a small distance from the marriage house, and are led to the bridegroom's house. Then the two parties proceed to a river or a well, escorted by a band of musicians. Each party carries four new earthen pots containing a few grains of rice and dhal, betel leaves and nuts. The pots are washed and decorated with the flowers of the arecanut tree, and *puja* is offered to them. Each party brings one set of pots to the house, and deposits them apart, in a clean place, on three sorts of grains, brought from neighbouring houses and spread on the ground. This is known as the bringing of the god into the house. On the second day, early in the morning, the bride-

groom gets his head shaved and his nails pared by his maternal uncle. Likewise the bride's nails are also pared by her maternal uncle.

Then follows the ceremony, known as *malanir sastra,* which the bride and the bridegroom separately undergo. A wooden plank belonging to a hand-loom, is placed in front of the house, within a square formed by the setting of four new earthen vessels at each corner and cotton thread passing round them thirteen times. The *yajaman* of the caste, the *buddhivanta* or the *pradhani* and three married women, in succession, pour water over the bride or the bridegroom. The bridegroom, after dressing himself, goes out and stands under a tree.

The *tali,* silver bangles, and silver toe-rings and other presents to the bride, if any, are carried by the parties going in procession with the bridegroom, who holds in his hand a dagger wrapped in a red kerchief. After reaching the marriage *pandal,* the bride and bridegroom stand facing each other. Round the wrist of each is tied a *kankana,* made of white and black woollen threads twisted together, to which are attached an iron or copper ring and a piece of turmeric and sometimes soap-nut. The bride and bridegroom present each other with a flower garland. A *tali* is tied to the neck of the bride by her maternal uncle. Next, married women pour milk on the joined hands of the couple, who are then seated side by side, with the hems of their garments tied together. Betel-leaves and nuts are distributed among the assembled. The couple now rise, go round the milk post thrice and retire into the portion of the house were the earthen vessels have been set up. That evening, the bride and the bridegroom, followed by a procession, bring from an ant-hill some quality of earth out of which thirteen balls are made, to be placed in front of the posts of the pandal. This ceremony is followed by a street procession of the bridal pair, who after their return, undergo another *dhare* (pouring of milk) similar to the one done in the morning. This being over, they retire to eat the *buvva* dinner, at which, five dishes containing cooked rice, are set down for the bride, the bridegroom, the *yajaman,* the *pradhani* and the rest of the invited caste people. The bride takes her food with her mother-in-law and the bridegroom with his father-in-law, while the others accepting their dishes, go out without observing the bride and bridegroom eating. All the members of the caste are then regaled with a sumptuous dinner and libations of toddy. The next day, after a sumptuous dinner, a *simhasana* is put up with blankets, on which are placed betel-leaves and nuts for distribution to the various functionaries of the caste. The milk post is pulled down after some fowls are killed before it and offered, and the pandal is then removed.

According to one account which seems to have been borrowed less from outside sources, five men from the bridegroom go to the bride's house and tie the *tali* round the neck of the bride, and return to the village, where they keep the bridgroom alone in a room, outside the house known as *Devaramane.* The bride comes on horseback, alights near the *Devaramane* and goes into the room occupied by the bridegroom. A cloth separates the couple and garlands are mutually exchanged. The men and women throw rice on the heads of the bride and the bridgroom.

A section of the Holeyas in Agara, Yelandur Taluk, do not erect the marriage pandal, and all their marriages are contracted in a temple of *Nalkumaneamma,* i.e. she of the four houses. Their own priest, generally known as *tirkula Dasayya,* is called in to conduct the marriage ceremony. The bride price (*tera*) is stated to be Rs. 12-13-4 at Channapatna, Rs. 25 at Koppa and Rs. 15 at Nanjangud. A widower marrying a virgin bride, has to pay an additional amount varying between Rs. 1-8-0 and Rs. 6 styled *sauti-hana* (money for the co-wise, i.e., his deceased wife). Two thirds of the marriage expenses are borne by the bridegroom. It may be noted that half the *tera* amount is to be advanced at the ceremony of *vilyada sastra.*

The following marriage customs are found to prevail among some of the Holeyas of Mysore :—

"The marriage of the Holeya of Mysore is nothing but a feast at which the bridegroom ties the *bottu* (marriage badge) round the neck of the bride. The wife cannot be divorced except for adultery. Widow's are prohibited from remarrying, but the cast widows wink at a widow's living with another man*.

The following marriage customs are found to prevail among the Holeyas of South Canara :—

"Though the marriage tie is all loose as is usual among the low and depressed castes of Southern India, their marriage ceremony is somewhat elaborate. The bridegroom's party goes to the bride's house on a fixed day with rice, betel leaf, and a few arecanuts, and waits the whole night outside the bride's hut, the bridegroom being seated on mat specially made by the bride. On the next morning, the bride is made to sit opposite the bridegroom, with a winnowing fan between them filled up with betel leaf, etc. Meanwhile the men and women throw rice over the heads of the couple. The bride then accompanies the bridegrooms to his hut carrying the mat with her. On the last day, the

*Census Report 1901.

couple take the mat to a river or tank, where fish may be found, dip the mat into the water, and catch some fish, which they let go after kissing them. A grand feast completes the marriage. Divorce is very easy, and widow marriage is freely practised".†

Puberty :

When a girl is, married, she is not sent to her husband's house immediately after the marriage, but continues to live after attainment of puberty with her parents until the marriage is consummated. When a girl comes of age, she is kept aloof in a new shed formed for the purpose with green *Lakkali* leaves. She remains in the shed for a period of from three to seven days, when she is supposed to be in a state of pollution, which is observed with even more strictness than in the higher castes. The washerwoman of the caste, supplies her with washed clothes and she may enter the temple or her ordinary dwelling only after a bath on the fifth or the seventh day.

On the evening of that day, she makes *puja* before a *kalasa,* representing the patron deity, and a general dinner is given by her parents. For a period of sixteen days, they give her rich food, consisting of jaggery, nuts, ghee and pulses. Most of the expense incurred for the ceremonies on this occasion is borne by her husband, if she is already married. If the girl is not married, the expenses are paid with the bride-price in marriage, the latter custom being prevalent in some of the Malnad (hilly tracts, especially in Hassan and Arkalgud taluks. On the twelth day she becomes pure, according to one account. A few members of the caste follow a different custom. On the day the girl bathes after Puberty. She worship the sacred Peepul tree and embraces it afterwards.

If she is already married, the news of her attaining the age is carried by her brother to her husband, who, in recompense, gives him a good entertainment. At the consumption, which generally takes place on the sixteenth day of her attaining puberty, the couple are seated on a plank, and married women wave *arati* over them and mark their foreheads with the blood of a sheep. She is presented with rice, fruits, etc., placed in her garment. The husband and her father both present her with a new cloth. The ceremony ends with a feast. The next day the girl is taken away by her husband to his house.

---

†Manual of South Canara District, page 174.

Widow Marriage :

The remarriage of widows is permitted, and takes place in a less elaborate form known as *sirudike*, i.e., the presentation of the *sari*. It is not conducted by a priest, and the bride is valued at half the price of a virgin girl. A widow's children by her first husband belong to his family, and may not claim any property that her second husband left to his sons. In the absence of legal heirs to the property of her first husband, she may succeed to his property, and, according to some, pass it on to her children by the second husband. It is, however, doubtful if this view is recognized every where and would always obtain the sanction of the courts. A woman may not choose for her second husband any one of her deceased hubsand's brothers, but may marry one of his cousins. She may, in no case, take a husband in the *kula* (family) of her father. For remarriage, the husband need not necessarily be oldern than the wife.

Adultery and Divorce :

Divorce is permitted at the desire of either party for infidelity on the part of the wife, or even without such a ground, if they agree to part, provided she pays a fine to the caste. But if she remarries, she has to give back the jewels presented by her first husband and nine rupees of the *tera* amount and the marriage expenses estimated at fifty rupees. If a husband deserts his wife without cause, he has to pay her a compensation of twenty-five rupees. The form of marriage for a divorced person is *kudike*, that is, the same as for a widow's marriage. The price paid to a divorced bride is six rupees only. Among Gangadikar and Morasu Holeyas, though divorce is recognized, the divorced person is not allowed to remarry. Adultery is not abhorred. The matter may be settled with ease by payment of fine to the caste, who use it for drinking liquor.

Dedication of Girls :

In a few cases, a father, in fulfilling a vow, may dedicate his daughter to the patron diety. The vow might have been made to free his daughter from an attack of illness, or to ensure that she may be spared to him. On a lucky day, the girl, newly bathed and decently attired, is taken to the temple of her patron deity, which is generally situated in the *Holageri* (Holeya quarters). She sits there with a dagger by her side facing the Goddess. The priest ties round her neck a disk, selected out of a number of those hanging on the idol. This is followed by a caste dinner. The girl

remains in the temple for a day, and thence forward she may associate with any man of the caste or of higher castes, or may permanently live in concubinage with any of her caste, her paramour visiting her in her house. Children born of such connections are legitimate, and are accorded the same consideration as those of married parents.

This custom of dedicating girls to gods is not in vogue among the Gangadikar and Morasu Holeyas, but is general among the rest. In a few families, it is a custom to have always one of their daughters so dedicated; and a council of allied families see to it that there is one such at least among them every year. A girl thus dedicated; is considered the living representative of the goddess, and has certain special privileges, such as leading the procession of the goddess, with a torch in her hand. The custom apparently corresponds to the practice recognised by some of the Kurubas of dedicating girls as Basavis. In both cases, it is obviously a concession to the proclivities of the community, those of the higher castes being especially favoured.

Post Natal Ceremonies :

To ensure the safe delivery of a child, some elderly man with a reputation for magic gives some oil which is administered to the mother. Arract is taken to allay pains in the belly after delivery. A *mantrasani* (lit. a witch) or midwife cuts the navel cord and attends on the mother. The severed navel cords is tied to the cradle to act as a charm. The mother lives for nine days on rice only. Musk and *gorochanamo* are given internally to both the mother and the child.

The name-giving takes place on the tenth day, when the father purifies himself with a shave and the mother is bathed. Among the Dasa section, the parents sit down together with the child for the ceremony. Their *guru* who is a Satani, brand the child with the symbols of Vishnu, and marks on the forehead of the child a *tilaka* or a perpendicular white line. If the *guru* is not available on the tenth day, the ceremony will be observed on the last day of the month. Among some people, children are named during the annual festival of their family deity. The names of local and tribal deities are, as usual, most generally given to men and women. The following may, however, be mentioned as characteristic

*A birght yellow pigment prepared from the urine or bile of a cow ro vomited by a cow in the form of scybala, or found in the headfof that animal. Dr. F. KITTEL.

of the caste, being specially such as are rarely used by other castes :—

Men

Datia	Laguma	Goviga
Hindi	Sittiga	Bogya
Jodiga	Bolaga	Pavadiga
Haligayatraga	Pateliga	Navaniga
Koniga	Jaganiga	

Women

Yalagi	Guni	Salyamma
Baiyi	Sadi	Bisakka
Tani	Konchi	Balakka
Anki	Kati	Kaki
Nyati	Arasi	Busi
Pati	Sandi	Peritayi
Velli	Bandi	
Sooli	Mudi	

Haida (boy), Mari or Kusu (child), Ammayya or Avaa (mother), Akka (elder sister) and Tangi (younger sister) are their names of endearment. A child born after the death of a few brothers and sisters is given an opprobrious name such as Tippa, meaning rubbish ; Javaraya, god of death, and Sudugadu, cremation ground. A child thus protected with the opprobrious name, is taken to the shrine of the patron deity, where the parents fulfil their vows, bore a hole in the nose and fit metallic rings into it in the name of Dharmaraya the god of death. They have no custom of giving more than one name.

Inheritance :

In the matter of inheritance, Hindu Law, modified by tribal custom, is followed. Sons divide the paternal property equally, but the youngest son has the right of selecting his share first, a custom somewhat opposed to the recognized superior status of the eldest, according to orthodox doctrine. A son-in-law who resides with his father--in-law receives an equal share with his brother-in-law. Widows and unmarried daughters are entitled to maintenance.

Adoption is practised by a few of the sections, especially in the Malnad tracts, where brother's sons are preferably taken in adoption. In no case is a younger brother adopted. In the rest of the area, adoption is seldom in vogue. Sister's sons and wife's

sister's sons are brought up as foster sons, but are not affiliated to the new family. Their status for marriage remains exactly as it was before.

Religion :

The followers of Siva are known as Mullujana, and revere the Linga at Nanjangud, and Chaudeswari and Narasimhaswami. Their patron deities are Mastamma and Baire Devaru. Their *gurus* belong to the Lingayat caste. Dasajana are the devotees of Vishnu, and they put on *nama*. Their *gurus* are *satanis*, who render help in the funeral ceremonies, and prepare the *bashinga* worn at marriages by the bride and bridegroom. Those who become *dasas* are branded by a *guru* with a mettallic signet with Vaishnava marks.

The caste, as a whole, worships all kinds of gods. The males kill animals in propitiating them, while the females offer only fruits or cooked grains, Maramma, the spirit of epidemic diseases. is propitiated with the killing of fowls or sheep. It is worshipped on Fridays and Tuesdays, with the help of a priest either of their own or of a higher caste. Gangamma is propitiated with the offering of fruits. Females only worship this god, which presides over the diseases peculiar to women. Mastamma, Baire Devaru and Manigamma are given only fruits and preparations of rice. Hindamma and Hosakereyamma are blood thirsty goddess and require the killing of animals.

The following are the names of other deities (chiefly of female *sakti* or spirits) which are worshipped in different localities :—

Durgi, Masanamma, Huchchangiyamma, Hulasamma, Mutyalamma, Muniamma, Hindamma, Patalamma, Virabhadra, Hosakereappa and Masti-Devaru.

As a rule, all gods are given only *Chokkabhojana*, vegetable food, while goddesses representing the *sakti* require to be propitiated with the killing of animals. Most of the above-mentioned goddesses are village deities, some are worshipped on Tuesdays and Fridays only, and some annually on festive days. In honour of the gods of the last kind, annual *Jatras* are held, at which many people meet together, and buffaloes and other animals are killed. The offerings made to the gods are eaten by this caste. They do not appear to have taken kindly to sipirits of trees, animals or springs, though they sometimes locate their recognized gods under trees.

Religious Orders :

In this caste are to be found a number of religious orders who live by mendicancy. They do not stick to any one place, but make frequent journeys from one place of pilgrimage to another. They are the *dasas*, the *jogis*, the *devaraguddas*, the *bidimanushyas* or the *nilagararu*. Such sections of the caste as recognize Chunchangiri Bhaire devaru as their family god, set apart a man to lead a religious life, into which he must be initiated by a Bairagi, who is also a disciple of the *matha* at Chunchangiri, Nagamangala taluk. The Bairagi bores a hole in the lobe of the right ear of the man to be made a *jogi*, with an iron needle called *diksha churi* and has to manage not to let more than two drops of blood fall to the ground in doing so. Then the candidate bathes and suspends to his neck a *kola singanada*, a tapering metallic whistle ornamented with rinds at intervals, which he hangs to his neck by a thread made of black sheep wool, intertwined sixteen times. Thenceforth he attains the rank of a priest in his caste, entitled to alms on festive and ceremonial occasions. When beginning his *puja* or his feast, a *jogi* takes his wistle in his right hand and blows a loud shrill note. A *jogi* is usually initiated in fulfilment of a vow taken by the parents, and it is said that he has to remain celibate for life. Many other castes enter into this order, such as Okkaligas, Kurubas, Besthas and Agasas. Those who pass by the *baje* of Nilagaras wear the badge of god manteswara, and girls are also so dedicated. They have to live by begging. Their head is shaved and a stringe of *rudrakshi* beads and .*Lingamani* are worn. They apply ashes to their foreheads, and carry a begging bowl and sack for holding the alms, with a cane and musical instrument, which are the badges of their profession. *Devaragudda, also known bidimanushyas* or single men, are the *pujaris* of the caste.

Priests :

Brahmins are not employed for the conduct of religious and funeral ceremonies. A Brahman's approach into the Holeya quarters is resented just as much as the Brahman avoids contact with a Holeya. The reason for this dislike is turned into a myth. It is said that Lakshmi went in her monthly sickness (which is a state of pollution) to various houses seeking a resting place. The Komatis received her kindly, and Brahmans did not allow her to approach their abode. Each had their reward, Komatis being generally wealthy and Brahmans poor. She was given a safe asylum in the houses of Holeyas. The latter fear that if a Brahman goes to their quarters, their Lakshmi will go away with him, and so drive him out. A *Satani* is generally the priest of this caste. He

attends at the name giving ceremony and conducts funeral ceremonies. A Brahman astrologer is, however, some times consulted to fix auspicious moments for the celebration of marriages and for the first entry into houses.

A man of the Lingayat caste and a Tirukula *dasa* of the Vishnu cult also sometimes serve as priests. The dead are buried, as a rule; but sometimes old people are cremated. The body is laid in the grave with its head turned towards the south. People of the same family observe mourning for ten days for the death of adult married people, and three days for that of more distant relations, or of a daughter's son.

Funeral Ceremonies :

Soon after death, the body is washed and shrouded in a new cloth and marks of ashes or of *nama* are put on the forehead, and the body is smeared with ashes and sandal paste and decked with flowers. It is then placed on a bier of Kalli wood, in a sitting posture in the case of Vaishnavas, or in a lying posture with the right flank down in the case of Saivas. Before starting to the burial ground, exchange of betel-leaves takes place between the deceased and the surviving wife. As soon as the bier is lifted, an earthen pot is smashed at the place where it had been placed. The body is set down when it has been carried half way, and the chief mourner passes once round it, and the bearers change sides. The grave will be ready, being dug by the *chakra* (a village peon) and purified with a lotion of cow dung and cow's urine sprinkled over, and its bottom lined with a layer of ashes. The body is deposited in the grave over a plantain leaf. A coin is stuck into the nose of the deceased. A cloth is spread over the body with a few coins tied in one of its corners. Then the waist string is cut off and thrown out.

The chief mourner who is the son or other relative nearest to the deceased throws in the first handful of earth, and others follow and fill up the grave. Half a seer of rice and four pies are placed on a cloth over the grave. These are taken by the grave-digger for his services. For the spirit of the deceased, they place over the grave some rice, jaggery and a few coins, which the mendicants, *Dasayya* and others accept, after declaring that the deceased has reached the upper world. The wife of the deceased takes off her bangles and throws them over the grave. Those who have accompanied the dead body return home after dipping themselves in a tank or spring. A lamp is lit at the place where the spirit has left the body, and some water is kept in a vessel close by and sand spread round it. Next morning, the water is examined

and foot-prints are searched for on the sand. If no foot-prints are seen and the water is not diminished, it is feared that the spirit has reason to be dissatisfied. A soothsayer is consulted, and according to his advice, some food is buried where the deceased breathed his last. On the third day, all the relatives of the deceased serve over the grave, milk, ghee, toddy and such other good things as the deceased liked, when he was alive.

The principal mourner gets shaved, and bathes on the eleventh day. He places new cloths before a new earthen vessel, and breaks cocoanuts in the name of the deceased. The priest who directs the obsequies of this day, is a *Satani*. Toddy forms an essential accompaniment, and those who partake of the liquor are considered to have kept company with the deceased at the feast. The *Satani* priest, after serving the guests with toddy, is said to take some for himself. He then conducts the mourner to the burial ground, where he places his feet over the grave, and bids the mourner wash them and prostrate himself. For all this, the priest is rewarded with gifts of money and grains. During the period of mourning, they do not attend *bhajana* (religious gathering) or take part in any festivities or auspicious ceremonies. They do not perform any *sradhas*.

Admission of Other Castes :

Such recruits are purified with certain ceremonies, as shaving the head (for males), branding the tongue with a piece of gold, drinking cow's urine and bathing the body with water from sacred vessels. These persons are made to pass successively through seven huts which are put up and soon burnt down after they have been passed through, symbolical of seven births. They make *puja* to the *Mudra* of the caste, and then give a dinner to the members, at which they have to collect morsels from the guests and partake of food thus collected. Thereafter they are admitted into the caste, and no social disabilities are imposed on them. The new men are affiliated to some *kula* or *gotra* of the Holeyas.

Social Status :

Holeyas look down upon Madigas as inferior, as the latter work on leather and are village scavengers. But they are regarded as unclean by the higher castes equally with the Madigas. Strictly speaking, they are not allowed to enter the houses of most of the higher castes, and have to stand at a distance from Brahmans. The dictates of necessity, however, and increasing enlightenment on both sides are now greatly relaxing the rules. There are no social

disabilities of any kind in the matter of acquiring and owning property, but Holeyas generally avoid quarters in the neighbourhood of those occupied by the higher castes.

Holeyas may not use the village well, and the village barber and washerman do not render services to them. But they have their own barbers and washermen, and are not put to any inconvenience.

At Melkote in the Mysore district, Ramanujacharya, the Vaishnava reformer, accorded to these outcastes the privilege of entering the temple along with the Brahmans and other higher castes during the annual car festival for a period of three days. On the day of the procession, the Tirukulam* people, men, women and children, shave their heads and bathe with the higher castes in the Kalyani *thirtham* or large reservoir, and carry on their head small earthen vessels filled with rice and oil, and enter the temple as far as the flag-staff, where they deliver their offerings. The privilege of entering the temple during the annual car procession is enjoyed also by the outcastes in the Vishnu temple at Belur, Hassan district@.

Ordinary a Holeya is not permitted to enter a temple, and in case he enters it, it has to be purified. A Holeya does not eat in the house of a Madiga, Koracha or Nagarata.

The members of the caste follow the cult of Vishnu or Siva; but they resort by preference, to the more vulgar and barbarous representations of these dieties. They pay homage chiefly to the images which personify malignant powers and blood thirsty qualities.

Occupation :

The following extracts from the *Mysore Census Report* of 1891, relating to the occupations of this caste, are interesting, and exhibit a state of things that is fast disappearing as regards its objectionable features :—

"The Holeyas are chiefly employed as labourers in connection with agriculture and manufacture with hand-looms, various kinds of coarse or home-spun cloth which are worn extensively by the poorer classes. In some parts of the Mysore district, considerable numbers of the Holeyas are specially engaged in betel and

*Tirukulam (sacred caste) is the title given by Ramanujacharya to this caste for the services rendered to the temple of Melkote (*Mysore Census Report*, 1891).

@*Mysore Census Report*, 1891, page 251.

vine gardening. As labourers, these classes are employed in innumerable pursuits in which manual labour preponderates. The Aleman sub-division furnishes recruits for sepoys. In the maidan, they enjoy a certain recognized prestige and status in the village autonomy, as has been already noticed. In the Malnad, however, the Holeya had degenerated into an agrestic slave and till a few decades ago under the British rule, not only as regards his property but also with regard to his body, he was not his own master. The *vargadar* or landholder owned him as a hereditary slave. In most of the purely Malnad or hilly taluks, each *vargadar,* or proprietor of landed estate owns a set of servants styled *huttalu* and *mannalu.* The former is the hereditary servitor of the family born in servitude and performing agricultural work for the landholder from father to son. The *mannalu* is a serf attached to the soil and changes hands with it. In order furthermore to rivet the ties which bind these hereditary labourers to the soil, it is alleged that the local capitalists have improvised a kind of Gretna Green marriage among them. A legal marriage of the orthodox type contains the risk of a female servant being lost to the family in case the husband did not chance to be a *huttalu* or *mannalu.* So, in order to obviate the possible loss, a custom prevails, according to which a female *huttalu* or *mannalu* is espoused in what is locally known as the *manikattu* form, which is neither more nor less than licensed concubinage. She may be given up after a time, subject to a small fine to the caste, and anybody else may then espouse her on like conditions. Not only does she then remain in the family, but her children will also become the landlord's servants".

The average wages paid to these people are :—

Daily . . .	1. Kolaga of paddy for males 4¾ Kolagas of paddy for females 1 Meal of cooked food	
	For a male	Rs. a. p.
Annually .	1. Turban	0 6 0
	1. Hachada	2 0 0
	1. Datti	0 6 0
	1. Kambli	1 4 0
	For a female	
Annually .	1. Sadi	2 8 0
	1. Bodice	0 4 0
	1. Valli	0 12 0
	1. Kambli	1 4 0

In large places, especially in Mysore and Bangalore, the Holeyas are fairly prosperous, and quite able to hold their own in labour and other markets. There are many petty raiyats holding their fields directly under Government; in fact, there are quite as many independent raiyats as subordinate tenants among them. They do not fix any particular day in the week as auspicious for ploughing and other agricultural operations.

The rains under *Bharani, Krittikke* or *Punarvasu* are considered lucky, while *Aswini* rain is unlucky.

In addition to their duties in the field, they are village watchmen and general messengers. A Chalavadi, who is generally a Holeya, is the servant of the right hand or eighteen caste section of the community, and the custodian of its symbol namely the bell and the ladle. These are made of brass and are connected together by a chain of the same metal. The Chalavadi carries the ladle on his right shoulder and heads the processions of all the people of the right hand section sounding the bell with the shake of the chain. These insignia are also produced at caste assemblies, and sometimes they are placed before Sangameswara *gaddige,* and *puja* made to them. Engraved on the ladle are the badges of the different castes composing this section, such as the plough of the Okkaliga, the scales of the Banajiga, the shears of a Kuruba, the spade of a Odda, the razor of a barber, the washing stone-slab and pot of an Agasa, and the wheel of a Kumbara. This also contains a bull flanked on either side by the sun and the moon. At the foot of the spoon are also engraved the figures of an ass and of a Bidi Basavi.

Food :

Tamil Holeyas take food in the houses of Kannada and Telugu sections, while the latter do not return the compliment, regarding the Tamil Holeyas as inferior in origin. The Gangadikara Holeyas are regarded as the highest in rank. They do not eat in the houses of even other Kannada Holeyas, but also purify metal vessels touched by them before use and throw away earthen pots so polluted.

Some of them catch small game, and also eat rats. They eat almost all kinds of flesh excepting crocodile's. They eat the flesh of cattle, sheep, goat, wild boar, pork, peacock, wolf and soft-scaled fish. Toddy and arrack are freely drunk, and sometimes women also indulge in this habit.

Dress and Ornaments :

Toe-ring, *tali* and bangles are not worn by widows. Women get their hands and foreheads tattooed by Koracha women. Males dress themselves with a loin cloth and *Kambli,* and females with *sire* and bodice. During Dipavali they dance *kolata.*

Conclusion :

The Holeyas were the agrestic slaves of the soil as in other parts of Southern India. They were emancipated about the middle of the last century. In fact, they constitute, as fully as their name implies, the backbone of cultivation in the country. *Hola* is the Canarese name for a dry crop-field and Holeya means the man of such field. There are numerous endogamous groups among the Holeyas and the caste is well organized. Their council of elders is presided over by a chief called :Gothugara' which decides all subjects relating to bad discipline. Their marriage customs, were at one time, very loose, but now have become rather right owing to their contact with other higher castes. As the original inhabitants of the land their services were, and are even now requisitioned in determining the boundaries connected with land disputes. They are at present engaged in all occupations, chiefly, agriculture, manufacture with handlooms. Some are field-labourers and some are recruits as Sepoys. They now prefer to call themselves Adikarnatakas corresponding to Adidravidas of the Madras Presidency.

Extract on "HOLIYA" from 'The Mysore Tribes and Castes' Volume-I by DIWAN BAHADUR L. K. ANANTHAKRISHNA IYER, Officer d' Academic (France). Curator of the State Museum, Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, Superintendent of Ethnography, Trichur, Cochin State (Retired).

Lecturer in Anthropology, Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, Calcutta; (Retired) : Author of the "Cochin Tribes and Castes", Anthropology of the Syrian Christians;" "Lectures on Enthnography".

Corresponding Member of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, London; of the Bureau of American Ethnology Washington, U.S.A.; of the Anthropological Societies of Florence (Italy) and Vienna (Austria); of the Asiatic Society, Vienna; Member of the Eugenic Society, London.

Foundation Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore; of the National Institute of Sciences Calcutta; Officer in charge of Ethnographic Survey of Mysore.

Published under the auspices of The Mysore University Mysore, 1935 *page* 124.

HOLEYA

Of the two great serf communities, the Paraiyar Group lie thickest in the southern half of East and South Mysore and in the planting areas of the South and Central Malnad, the Madigas (mostly Telugu) prefer the north half of East Mysore and the country on either side of the Central Chain, where the Holeyas are thinner, (Figs. 21 and 22).

Extract on 'HOLEYA' from 'The Ethnographical Survey of Mysore (Preliminary Issue)-II. Holeya Caste by H. V. NANJUNDAYYA, M.A., M.L., Bangalore: Printed at The Government Press, 1906 pages 1 to 24.

Names :

HOLEYAS : The Holeyas ( ) numbering about five and a half lakhs and forming a tenth of the total poulation, are found all over the State of Mysore, Bangalore, Mysore, Kadur and Hassan Districts show larger figures than other districts.

These are an outcaste race, *Pariah* and *Mala* being their appellation in Tamil and Telugu. The term Holeya may be derived from *'hola'* a field, *Holeya* meaning thence a field-labourer. But it more probably comes from *'Hole'* which means pollution, since they are regarded as of unclean habits in eating and drinking. The men of this caste are sometimes styled by their official designation, as *Chalavadi* who is a convener of a meeting of 18-*Phana* party, carrying a brass cup and chain as insignia, and *Kulavadi* or one who calls the villagers before the patel and the Revenue Officers generally. As in most places these officers are held by them, the names are used to denote the caste generally.

The members use among themselves the term *Balagai* as they are classed among the eighteen castes that form the right hand section of the community in Dravida countries, as against the nine castes of the left hand division. This being a common appellation to them and other and higher castes, they naturally use it as being the most respectable designation to apply to themselves. *Panchama, Anthyaja* and *Chandala* are the terms the Brahmans employ in naming them, and denote a mild form of contempt. Panchama, Sanskrit term means 'of the fifth caste', the first four castes being— Brahma, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. Anthyaja means 'born at the end' of the social scale. Chandala means one who indulges in cruel deeds, the term being applied by Manu to one born to a Sudra on a Brahman women. Among other Sanskrit terms applied to these may be mentioned 'Matanga', a descendant of Matangi.

There are no recognized titles for this caste, the members addressing each other by their bare names.

In Mysore they generally speak Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Mahratti being used by small sections of them according to the place of their origin.

Origin :

The origin of this caste is, according to one legend, traced, to one Honnayya, whose shrines are still honoured with fruit offerings. It was this way. During a procession when this chief was riding on an elephant, the motley crowd that went with him entered a temple which was in their way. But the elephant could not enter the low portals of the buildings, and Honnayya and his immediate followers were left outside. Those that went in were the four recognized castes, and Honnayya's men thereafter altogether lost the privilege of going inside the temples.

A second tradition gives the origin of the term *Balagai*. Siva and Parvati employed a servant to send their cow. This man one day found that the goddess had negligently left the butter that had been churned out of the milk, within his reach, and discovered its exquisite taste. So in his foolish greed he thought that there was an unlimited guantity of it in the animal's stomach and killed it on the spot. He was condemned by Isvara to eat the carcass as a punishment; but the fellow found it too much to manage. So he implored the god, who created two others (Madigas and Bedars), to go to his help. Siva after this went back into his temple; the Beda at once followed his maker; but the other two preferred their carrion and remained outside devouring it. They were condemned to be outcastes, and became left hand and right hand according to the position they had taken in relation to the temple door.

Another story is told to show that they have some sort of relationship with Agasas or washermen. It is said that a Holeya boy fled at the sight of Visvakarma (a rival creator to the original *Brahma*) and took refuge under the washing tub of an Agasa. The latter, to justify his giving the boy an asylum against the pursuit of a such mighty personage, claimed the boy as his son and ate his rice out of the same plate with him. It is difficult to make out the significance of this silly story. But it may be noted that though Agasas do not condescend to act as torch-bearers during the marriages of Holeyas, the latter borrow a torch from Agasas appealing to them for help, "since Holeyas are the children of Agasas".

They even claim some sort of relationship with Brahmans, in as much as Arundhati, wife of Vasishta who is considered a paragon of haste women for all time, is said to have been a damsel of Chandala origin. The Holeyas sing songs in praise of this woman when they sacrifice buffaloes before their goddess Mari.

Whatever the inner meaning of these legends may be, there is no evidence that they have any other origin than the whimsical fance of some persons, who were either more partial or wished to

be more generous than usual to a caste which was largely treated as low in the social scale. Little more weight, it is to be feared, can be ascribed to the observations* about the original status of a *Kulavadi* who is erroneuously assumed to be always a *Holeya,* in some authorized publications such as the Mysore Gazetteer. It is sought to prove that the Holeya was the owner of the soil and the founder of villages. But the evidence adduced is shadowy. It is nowhere admitted that the Holeya was the *de-jure* owner of a village; and elaborate rules are given in Manu Smriti and other recognized books to decide boundary disputes in which the Kulavadi's claim to settle the matter by his admission or other testimony is not even mentioned. Nor is the conclusion legitimate from the fact that in many places, a *Kulavadi* gets a small coin (called *nela-haga* or soil money), for the soil under which a dead body is interred. It may equally well be held that the Holeya who has no abode within the main village, was considered as having some sort of title to all the land outside its limits. The right of *puja* of the village goddess, residing generally in this caste, goes only to show that this worship was not part of the true Aryan practices, and that the Hindu with his well-known toleration adapted himself to surrounding circumstances, by recognizing the primitive faiths and religious practices to some extent. This right of worship can give no precedence to a Holeya over a Brahman and is allowed to continue undisturbed, especially as no one of a higher caste would consent to kill such animals as are sacrificed to the village deity. The *Kulavadi* shaving his head on the occasion of a death in a *gauda's* family is more a sign that he was considered a helot than a member belonging to the family.

*"In the rights and privileges which yet cling to him we get glimpses of his former estate, and find proofs that the Holeyas were the first to establish villages. All the castes unhesitatingly admit that the Kulavadi is *(de jure)* the owner of the village. If there is a dispute as to the village boundaries, the Kulavadi is the only one competent to take an oath as to how the boundary ought to run, and to this day a village boundary dispute is often decided by this one fact—if the Kulavadis agree, the other inhabitants of the village can say no more". (Mysore Gazetteer, Vol.I p.216). "But one of this despised order is generally the priest to the village goddess, and as such, on that annual day when all hasten to pay their offerings at her shrine, takes precedence of the twice born Brahman". (Mysore Gazetteer, Vol.I, p.215).

"But what seems to prove strongly that the Holeya was the first to take possession of the soil is that the Kulavadi receives and is entitled to receive from the friends of any person who dies in the village a certain burial fee or as it is forcibly put—'they buy from him the ground for the dead'. This fee is still called in Canarese *nela-haga.* In Manjarabad, the ancient Balam, the Kulavadi does not receive this fee from those raiyats who are related to the headman. Here the Kulavadi occupies a higher position; he has in fact been adopted into the Patel's family, for on a death occurring in such family the Kulavadi goes into mourning by shaving his head. He always receives from the friends, the cloths the deceased were and a brass basin." (Mysore Gazetteer, Vol.I, p. 216).

Thus the Gangadikara Holeyas call themselves, the *Hale-makkalu* (house servants or slaves) of Gangadikara Vakkaligas. These *Hale-makkalu* have to render certain menial services to the Vakkaligas such as carrying the sandals of the bridgroom, conveying messages from place to place, and in the funeral ceremonies carrying fire in front of the dead body to the burial ground.

Morasu Holeyas similarly consider themselves as the *Hale-makkalu* of the Morasu and Reddi Vakkaligas. They observe the festivals of *Bandi-devaru* and *Hosadevaru* that are observed by the Morasu and Reddi Vakkaligas. They have also to render special services such as carrying the box containing the presents made by the bridegroom to the bride in a marriage, carrying the dead body of their masters on one side and holding a torch in the processions of idols of village deities, at least in front of their master who carries other lights. In return, these Halemakkalu are fed by their superiors in the annual festivals, and get occasional presents of a bull calf or cloth or a vessel. They eat the food given to the departed spirits of a dead man on the third day after death.

Divisions :

The caste has a number of sub-divisions, the principle of division being language, profession or place of residence or two or more combined; and these groups are all said to be endogamous.

Kannada-speaking divisions are *Gangadikara, Morasu, Dasa, 'Magga'* men (weaver) and *'Hagga'* men (rope makers).

The Telugu groups are *Telugu Pakinati, Chintalu, Gundlujagati, Rampalu, Pasupa Sere* and *Savu.*

Konga, Dyaval, Mastikaru, Gogla, and *Kudure* are of Tamil origin.

A small number of Mahratti-speaking Holeyas are found scattered over the country on the borders of the Bombay Presidency.

Tamil Holeyas take food in the houses of Kannada and Telugu sections, while the latter do not return the compliment, regarding the Tamil Holeyas as inferior in origin. The Gangadikara Holeyas are regarded as the highest in rank. They do not eat in the houses of even other Kannada Holeyas, but also purify metal vessels touched by them before use and throw away earthen pots so polluted.

They have a number of exogamous divisions, all of which descend in the male line only; and the members of each division regard themselves as belonging to one family. The names of these divisions or *Kulas,* will be found in the Appendix.

If the name denotes an edible plant, grain, etc. those bearing it refrain from eating the article. If it is a tree, they show their reverence by not burning or felling it. It is even reported that when a man of the *Naggaligaru* divisions is pierced by a thorn of the plant, he is prohibited from pulling off the thorn himself. One not of that division should help him out of the difficulty.

Those who perform the worship of their gods, are known as *Devaraguddas,* a name which is also applied to *pujaris* of some other castes, and it is said that their relation to others of the caste is hypergamous, i.e., males may marry women who are not of this subdivision but their women cannot marry any one of a lower rank. It is, however, doubtful if this distinction is rigidly observed.

Birth and Name giving :

To ensure the safe delivery of a child, some elderly man with a reputation for magic, gives some oil which is administered to the mother.

Arrack is taken to allay pains in the belly after delivery. A *Mantrasani* (lit a witch) or midwife cuts the navel cord and attends on the mother. The severed navel cord is tied to the cradle to act as a charm. The mother lives for nine days on rice only. Musk and *Gorochanam** are given internally to both the mother and child.

The name-giving takes place on the 10th day, when the father purifies himself with a shave and the mother is bathed. Among the Dasa section, the parents sit down together with the child for a ceremony. Their *guru,* who is a Satani, brands the child with the symbols of Vishnu and marks on the forehead of the child a *tilaka* or a perpendicular white line. If the guru is not available on the 10th day, the ceremony will be observed on the last day of the month.

Among some people, children are named during the annual festival of their family deity.

---

*A bright yellow pigment prepared from the urine or bile of a cow o vomitted by a cow in the form of scybala, or found in the head of that animal—Dr. F. Kitte.

The names of local and tribal deities are, as usual, most generally given to men and women. The following may, however, be mentioned as characteristic of the caste, being specially such as are rarely used by other castes : —

MEN

Daita	*Haligeyatraga*
Hindi	*Koniga*
Laguma	*Bolaga*
Sittiga	*Pateliga*
Goviga	*Jaganiga*
Bogya	*Pavadiga*
Jodiga	*Navaniga*

WOMEN

Yalagi	*Kati*
Baiyi	*Arasi*
Tani	*Sandi*
Anki	*Bandi*
Nyati	*Mudi*
Pati	*Salyamma*
Velli	*Bisakka*
Sooli	*Balakka*
Guni	*Kaki*
Sadi	*Busi*
Konchi	*Peritayi*

Haida (ಹೈದ) boy, Mari (ಮಾರಿ) child, Kusu (ಕೂಸು) child, Ammayya (ಅಮ್ಮಯ್ಯ) mother, Akka (ಅಕ್ಕ) sister, Tangi (ತಂಗಿ) younger sister and Avva (ಅವ್ವ) mother, are names of endearment.

A child born after the death of a few brothers and sisters is given an opprobrious name such as Tippa (ತಿಪ್ಪ) meaning rubbish, Javaraya (ಜವರಾಯ) god of death, and Sudugadu (ಸುಡುಗಾಡು) cremation ground.

A child thus protected with the opprobrious name, is taken to the shrine of the patron deity, where the parents fulfil their vows, bore a hole in the nose and fit metallic rings into it in the name of Dharmaraya, the god of death.

They have no custom of giving more than one name.

Adoption is practised by a few of the sections and the practice is more prevalent in the Malnad tracts, where brother's sons are preferred to be taken in adoption. In no case is a younger brother adopted. In the rest of the area, adoption is seldom in vogue. Sister's sons and wife's sister's sons are brought up as foster sons, but are not affiliated to the new family. Their status for marriage remains exactly as it was before.

Marriage relations :

The endogamous divisions have been already named. Within these limits and outside the exogamous *Kulas,* the rules of prohibited and allowed degrees are as follows : One may not marry one's mother's sister or the daughter of such relation. As a rule, an elder sister's daughter or a paternal aunt's or a maternal uncle's daughter, is taken in marriage. A younger sister's daughter is not taken ordinarily, but if no wife can be found elsewhere, the objection is overruled. Two sisters might be taken in marriage simultaneously by one or two brothers, but the former custom is not recommended, as it is believed that one of the sisters so married fares badly. It is allowable among them to exchange daughters, each marrying his son to the other's daughter. There are no prohibitions on intermarriage based upon social status, local position, and change or differences of occupations. They may intermarry even if the parties are of different religious sects such as *Dasas* and *Saivas.* The wife, as a matter of course, joins the husband's sect. A woman that dedicates herself as *Devaraguddi* with the ceremonies of the tying of writ band and the worship of *Kalasa,* cannot marry.

Holeya girls are married either before or after puberty. If a girl remains unmarried from the absence of suitors, she is married to trees *Honge* (Pargamia Glabra), *Bevu* (Neem or Margosa), *Yekke* (Calotropis Gigantea) and dedicated to shrines, like those of Biligiri Ranga or Siddappaji. She may then live with any man of the caste without loss of status. She is known as *Kulamaga,* son of the family, and inherits the rights and privileges of a son and discharges the son's duties by performing the funeral ceremonies and attending to obsequies in respect of her parents. Her children belong to her father and are legitimate.

Dedication of Girls :

In a few cases, a father may wish in fulfilling a vow, to dedicate his daughter to the patron deity. The vow might have been made to free his daughter from an attack of illness or make sure that the child may be spared to him.

On a lucky day, the girl newly bathed and decently attired, is taken to the temple of her patron deity which is generally situated in the *'Holageri'*. (Holeya quarters). She there sits with a dagger by her side facing the goddess. The priest ties round her neck a disk, selected out of a number of such hanging on the idol. This is followed by a caste dinner. The girl remains in the temple for a day, and thence—forward she may associate with any man of the caste or of higher castes, or can permanently live in concubinage with any of her caste, her paramour visiting her in her house. Children born of such connections are legitimate, and are accorded the same consideration as those of married parents.

This custom of dedicating girls to gods is not in vogue among the Gangadikar and Morasu Holeyas, but is general among the rest. In a few families, it is a custom to have always one of their daughters so dedicated; and a council of allied families see to it that there is one such at least among them every year. A girl thus dedicated is considered the living representative of the goddess, and has certain special privileges, such as leading the procession of the goddess, with a torch in her hand.

Puberty :

When a girl is married, she is not sent to her husband's house immediately after the marriage but continues to live with her parents, until the marriage is consummated, after attainment of puberty. When a girl reaches this age, she is kept aloof in a new shed formed for the purpose with green *Lakkali leaves.* The remains in the shed for a period of three to seven days, when she is supposed to be in a state of pollution, which is observed with even more strictness than in the higher castes. The washerwoman of the caste, supplies her with washed clothes; and she can enter the temple or her ordinary dwelling only after a bath on the 5th or the 7th day.

On the evening of that day, she makes *puja* before a *"Kalasa"*, representing the patron deity, and a general dinner is given by her parents. For a period of sixteen days, they give her rich food consisting of jaggery, nuts, ghee and pulses. Most of the expense incurred for the ceremonies on this occasion, is borne. by her husband if she is already married. If the girl is not married, the expenses are paid up with the bride price in marriage, the latter custom being specially prevalent in some of the Malnad tracts, especially in Hassan and Arkalgud Taluks. On the 12th day she becomes pure according to one account. A few of the caste follow a different custom. On the day the girl bathes after puberty, she worships the sacred peepul tree and embraces it afterwards.

If she is already married, the news of her attaining the age is carried by her brother to her husband, who in recompense, gives him a good entertainment. At the consummation of marriage, which generally takes place on the 16th day of her attaining age of puberty, the couple are seated on a plank, and married women wave *Arati* over them and mark their foreheads with the blood of a sheep. She is presented with rice, fruits, etc., placed in her garment. The husband and her father both present her with a new cloth. The ceremony ends with a feast. The next day the girl is taken away by her husband to his house.

Age of Marriage :

Marriage of infant girls is, as usual, considered a mark of superiority and it is claimed that they have always been partial to it in this caste.

A boy is generally married between sixteen and twenty. There is no recognized custom of courting; and generally the marriages are arranged by the elders.

Sexual Relations :

Sexual licence before marriage is connived at or tolerated to some extent. If a young woman remains unmarried in her father's house, she may entertain casual visitors, and if she forms a permanent connection thus, the man may tie a *tali* to her. The bride price for such a marriage is Rs. 12. The issue of such relation is legitimate even if it were born before the tying of the *tali*.

In some places, an unmarried girl might with impunity live with any man of the same caste, but if she has become pregnant she has not only to marry her lover (unless he rejects her), but has to pay to the caste a fine of Rs. 8. The head of the caste has power to levy a fine from the man also, who if he declines to marry the frail woman, will be ostracized by the community. The woman is then at liberty to take another man, and the man who has betrayed her has to compensate her by paying Rs. 25 and giving her a suit of clothes.

If the woman fails to point out her lover, she will be put out of caste. In all such cases the head of the caste is anxious to see that all children born in the caste are legitimised and their parentage established. The habit of capturing wives from other tribes does not prevail, but they have traditions regarding such a practice.

Among Morasu and Gangadikar sections, the woman loses her caste in case she becomes pregnant before marriage. The odium remains even after her death; and to ensure a proper burial of her body, such a woman sets apart a sum of money, about Rs. 12 during her life.

A man who elopes with a woman, can marry her after paying Rs. 5 to the caste and a bride price of Rs. 50 to her parents or brothers.

Monogamous marriage is the rule, as the men are hardly able to maintain more than one wife. Polygamy is however recognized, but polyandry is unknown.

Marriage Ceremonies :

Some days before the marriage, there is an agreement of giving and taking between the parties, symbolised by exchange of betel-leaves and arecanuts. This ceremony, which however is not essential, is known as Vilyasastra (Betel ceremony).

A marriage pandal is put up on 12 posts, of which one in the middle known as *Halu Kamba,* or milk post, has been cut by the maternal uncle of the boy. A branch of the Jambolana tree is tied to this post. In the afternoon of the day, they keep apart new clohs, dedicated in the name of the deceased ancestors; in the evening, the bride's party with the bride, arrive at the village of the bridgroom. They are met at a small distance from the marriage house and are led to the bridegroom's house. Then the two parties proceed to a river or a well, escorted by a band of musicians. Each party carries four new earthen pots containing a few grains of rice and *dhall,* betel-leaves and nuts. The pots are washed and decorated with the flowers of the arecanut tree, and *puja* is offered to them. Each party brings one set of pots to the house and deposits them apart, in a clean place, on three sorts of grains, brought from neighbouring houses and spread on the ground. This is known as the bringing of the god into the house.

On the second day, early in the morning, the bridegroom gets his head shaved and his nails pared by his maternal uncle. Likewise the bridge's nails are pared also by her maternal uncle.

Then follows the ceremony, known as *Malanir Sastra,* which the bride and the bridegroom separately undergo. A wooden plank ( ) belonging to a hand-loom, is placed in front of the house, within a square formed by the placing of four new earthen vessels at each corner and with cotton thread passing round them thirteen times. The *yajaman* of the caste, the *buddhiwanta* or the

pradhani and three married women, in succession, pour water over the bride or the bridegroom. The bridegroom, after dressing himself, goes out and stands under a tree.

The *tali,* silver bangles, and silver toe-rings and other presents to the bride, if any, are carried by the parties going in procession with the bridegroom, who holds in his hand a dagger wrapped in a red kerchief. After reaching the marriage pandal, the bride and bridegroom stand facing each other. They get tied round the wrist of each a *kankana,* which is made of white and black woollen threads twisted together, to which are attached an iron or copper ring and a piece of turmeric and sometimes soapnut.

The bride and bridegroom present each other with a flower garland. A *tali* is tied to the neck of the bride by her maternal uncle. Then married women pour milk on the joined hands of the couple, who are then seated side by side, with the hems of their garments tied together. Betel leaves and nuts are distributed among the assembled. The couple now rise, go round the milk post thrice, and retire into the portion of the house where the earthen vessels have been set up.

That evening, the bride and the bridegroom followed by a procession, bring from an ant-hill some quantity of earth out of which 13 balls are made, to be placed in front of the posts of the pandal.

This ceremony is followed by a street procession of the bridal pair, who after their return, undergo another *Dhare* (pouring milk) similar to the one done in the morning. This being over, they retire to eat the *Buma* dinner, at which, five dishes containing cooked rice, are set down for the bride, the bridegroom, the yajaman, the pradhani and the rest of the invited caste people.

The bride eats with her mother-in-law, and the bridegroom with his father-in-law, while the others accepting their dishes go out without observing the bride and bridegroom eating. All the members of the caste are then regaled wth a sumptuous dinner and libations of toddy.

The next day after dinner, a *Simhasanam* is put up with blankets, on which are placed betel-leaves and nuts for distribution to the various functinaries of the caste.

The *milk post* is pulled down after some fowls are killed before it and offered, and the pandal is then removed.

According to one account (which seems to have borrowed less from outside sources), five men from the bridegroom go to the bride's house and tie the *tali* round the next of the bride and return to the village, where they keep the bridegroom alone in a room, outside the house known as *Devaramane*. The bride comes on horse-back, alights near the *Devaramane* and goes into the room occupied by the bridegroom. A cloth separates the couple and garlands are mutually exchanged. The men and women throw rice on the heads of the bride and the bridegroom.

A section of the Holeya is Agara, Yelandur Taluk, do not erect the marriage *pandal* and all their marriages are contracted in a temple *Nalkumaneamma*, i.e., She of the four houses. Their own preist, generally known as *Tirkula dasayya*, is called in to conduct the marriage ceremony.

Bride Price :

The bride price (*tera*) is stated to be Rs. 12-13-4 at Channapatna, Rs. 25 at Koppa and Rs. 15 at Nanjangud. A widower marrying a virgin bride has to pay an additonal amount varying between Rs. 1-8-0 nd Rs. 6, styled *sauti-hana* (money for the co-wife, i.e., his deceased wife). Two-thirds of the marriage expenses are borne by the bridegroom. It may be noted that half the *tera* amount is to be advanced at the ceremony of *Vilyada Sastra*.

Widow Marriage :

The remarriage of widows is permitted and takes place in the less elaborate form known as Sirudike, i.e., the presentation of the sadi. It is not conducted by a priest and the bride is valued at half the price of a virgin girl.

A widow's children by her first husband belong to his family, and cannot claim any property her second husband might leave to his sons. In the absence of legal heirs to the property of her first husband, it is stated that she may succeed to his property, and pass it on to her children by the second husband. It is, however, doubtful if this view is recognized everywhere and will obtain the sanction of the courts.

She cannot choose for her second husband any one of her deceased husband's brothers, but may marry one of his cousins. She can, in no case, take a husband in the *kula* of her father. For remarriage, the husband need not necessarily be older than the wife.

Divorce :

Divorce is permitted at the desire of either party for infidelity on the part of the wife, or even without such a ground if they agree to part, provided she pays a fine to the caste. But if she remarries another, she has to give back the jewels presented by her first husband and Rs. 9 of the *tera* amount and the marriage expenses estimated at Rs. 50.

If a husband deserts his wife without cause, he has to pay her a compensation of Rs. 25/.

The form of marriage for a divorced person is *kudike,* i.e., the same as for a widow's marriage. The price paid to a divorced bride is Rs. 6 only. Among Gangadikar and Morasu Holeyas, though divorce is recognized, the divorced person is not allowed to remarry.

Adultery is not abhorred. The matter can be settled with ease by payment of fine to the caste, who use it for drinking liquor.

Death :

The dead are buried, as a rule; but sometimes old people are cremated. The body is laid in the grave with its head turned towards the South. People of the same family observe mourning for ten days for the death of adult married people, and three days for that of more distant relations and of a daughter's son.

Soon after the death, the body is washed and shrouded in a new cloth. Marks of ashes or of *nama* are put on the forehead and the body is smeared with ashes and sandal paste and decked with flowers. It is then placed on a bier or *Kalli* wood, in a sitting posture in the case of Vaishnavas or in a lying posture with the right flank down in the case of Saivas. Before starting to the burial ground, exchange of betel-leaves takes place between the deceased and the surviving wife. As soon as the bier is carried, an earthen pot is amashed at the place where it had been placed. The body is placed down when it has been carried half way, and the chief mourner passes once round it, and the bearers change sides. The grave will be ready, being dug by the chakra (a village peon) and purified with a lotion of cowdung and cow's urine sprinkled over, and its bottom lined with a layer of ashes. The body is deposited in the grave over a plantain leaf. A coin is stuck into the nose of the deceased. A cloth is spread over the body with a few coins tied in one of its corners. Then the waist string is cut off and thrown out.

The chief mourner (who is the son or other relation nearest to the deceased) throws in the first handful of earth, and others follow and fill up the grave. A half seer of rice and 4 pies are placed on a cloth over the grave, which is taken by the grave-digger for his services. For the spirit of the deceased they place over the grave some rice, jaggery and a few coins, which the mendicants, *dasayya* and others, accept, after declaring that the deceased has reached the upper world. The wife of the deceased takes off her bangles over the grave. Those who accompanied the dead body return after dipping themselves in a tank or spring. A lamp is lit at the place where the spirit left the body, and some water is kept in a vessel close by and sand spread round it. Next morning the water is examined and foot-prints are searched for on the sand. If no foot-prints are seen and the water is not diminished, it is feared that the spirit has reason to be dissatisfied. A sooth-sayer is consulted, and according to his advice, some food is buried where the deceased breathed his last. On the third day, all the relatives of the deceased serve over the grave, milk, ghee, toddy and all other good things that the deceased liked, when he was in flesh and blood.

The principal mourner gets shaved and bathes on the 11th day. He places new clothes before a new earthen vessel and breaks cocoanuts in the name of the deceased. The priest who directs the obsequial ceremonies of this day, is a Satani. Toddy forms an essential ingredient, and those who partake of the liquor used for the obsequeies are considered to have kept company with the deceased at the feast. The Satani priest, after serving the guests with such toddy, is said to take some for himself. He then conducts the mourner to the burial ground where he places his feet over the grave and bids the mourner wash them and prostrate himself. For all this, the priest is rewarded with a gifts of money and grains.

During the period of mourning they do not attend *bhapana* (religious gathering) or take part in any festivities or auspicious ceremonies.

They do not perform any *Sraddhas*.

Social Status :

These are a settled people, and generally live in groups of huts huddled close together, which are generally low and built of mud. They are not provided with windows and have ventilators open to the sky. Their street is known as *Holageri** which is gene-

*In Kannada, *Keri* Means a street or quarters, and *Holageri* (Holeya+keri) means Holeya quarters.

rally outside the main village. Near Mysore and other large places, they are building respectable tiled houses and are exhibiting other signs of growing prosperity. Though the entry of others into the caste is not encouraged, they take in such of those of the higher castes who are put out on account of their contact with themselves, generally in the matter of sexual relations. Such recruits are purified with certain ceremonies, which are shaving the head (for males), branding the tongue with a piece of gold, drinking the cow's urine and bathing the body with water from sacred vessels. These persons are made to pass successively through seven huts which are put up and burnt down soon after they pass through, to symbolise their passing through seven births. They make *puja* to the *Mudra* of the caste, and then give a dinner to the members, at which they have to collect morsels from the guests and then partake of the food thus collected. Thereafter they are admitted into the caste and no social disabilities are imposed on them. The new men are affiliated to some *kula* or *gotra* among the Holeyas.

Inheritance :

In the matter of inheritance, they follow Hindu Law modified by their tribal customs. Sons divide the paternal property equally, but the youngest son has the right of selecting his share first, a custom somewhat opposed to the recognized superior status of the eldest according to orthodox doctrine. A son-in-law who resides with his father-in-law receives an equal share with his brother-in-law. Widows and unmarried daughters are entitled to maintenance.

Holeyas look down upon Madigas as inferior, as the latter work on leather and are village scavengers. But they are regarded as unclean by the higher castes equally with the Madigas. They are not allowed to enter the houses of most of the higher castes, and have to stand at a distance from Brahmans. In consequence of necessity and growing intelligence on both sides, the rules of contact and approach are being greatly relaxed at present. There are no social disabilities of any kind in the matter of acquiring and owning property, but Holeyas generally avoid quarters in the neighbourhood of those occupied by the higher castes.

Holeyas cannot use the village well, and the village barber and washerman do not render services to them. But they have their own barbers and washermen and are not put to any inconvenience.

At Malkote in the Mysore District, Ramanujacharya, the Vaishnava reformer, accorded to these outcastes the privilege of entering the temple along with the Brahmans and other higher castes during the annual car festival for a period of three days. On the day of the procession the *Tirukulam** people, men, women and

*Tirrukulam (sacred caste) is the title given by Ramanujacharya to this caste for the services rendered to the temple of Melkote (Census Report, 1891

children, shave their heads and bathe with the higher castes in the *Kalyani* or large reservoir, and carry on their head small earthen vessels filled with rice and oil, and enter the temple as far as the flagstaff, where they deliver their offerings. The privilege of entering the temple during the annual car procession is enjoyed also by the outcastes in the Vishnu temple at Belur, Hassan District.†

Ordinarily a Holeya is not permitted to enter a temple and in case he enters it, it has to be purified. A Holeya does not eat in the house of a Madiga, Koracha or Nagarata.

The members of the caste are either the followers of the cult of *Vishnu* or *Siva;* but they resort by preference, to the more vulger and barbarous representations of these deities. They pay homage chiefly to the images which personify the malignant powers and bloodthirsty qualities.

Religion :

The followers of *Siva* are known as *Mullujana* and reverse the *Linga* in Nanjangud and Chaudeswari and Narasimhaswami. Their patron deities are Mastamma nd Biredevaru. Their *Gurus* belong to Lingayat caste. *Dasajana* are the devotees of Vishnu and they put on *Nama.* Their Gurus are Satanis, who render help in the funeral ceremonies, and prepare the *Bhashinga** worn at the marriages by the bride and bridegroom.

Those who become *dasas* are branded with a metallic signet with Vaishnava marks by a *Guru.*

The caste, as a whole, worships all kinds of gods. The males kill animals in their worship to gods, while the females propitiate their gods offering only fruits or cooked grains. *Maramma,* the spirit of epidemic diseases, is propitated with the killing of fowls or sheep. It is worshipped on Fridays and Tuesdays with the help of a priest either of their own or of a higher caste. *Gangamma* is propitiated with the offering of fruits. Females only worship this god, which presides over the diseases peculiar to women. *Mastamma, Baire Devaru* and *Manigamma* are given only fruits and preparations of rice. *Hindamma* and *Hosakereyamma* are bloodthirsty gods and require the killing of animals.

---

†Mysore Census Report, 1891, p. 251.

*Bhashinga is prepared in pith and lead leaf and is used in marriages by the bridal parties as an ornament tied to the forehead of the bride, and over the turban of the bridegroom.

The following are the names of other gods (chiefly of female *Sakti* or spirits) which are worshipped in different localities :—

Durgi, Masanamma, Huchchangiyamma, Hulasamma, Mutyalamma, Muniamma, Hindamma, Patalamma, Veerabhadra, Hosakereappa and Masti Devaru.

As a rule, all male gods are given only *Chokkabhojana* (or non-animal food), while female gods representing the *Sakti* require to be propitiated with the killing of animals. Most of the abovementioned goddesses are the village gods, some worshipped on Tuesday and Fridays only and some annually on festive days. In honour of the gods of the last kind, annual *Jatras* are hold, at which many people collect, meet together and buffaloes and other animals are killed. The offerings made to the gods are eaten by this caste.

They do not appear to have taken kindly to spirits of trees, animals or springs, though they sometimes locate their recognized gods under trees.

Religious orders :

In this caste are to be found a number of religious orders who live by mendicancy. They do not stick to any place but live by frequent journeys to the places of pilgrimage. They are the *Dasas*, the *Jogis*, the *Devarakuddas*, the *Bidimanushyas* or the *Nilagararu*.

Such sections of the caste as recognize *Chunchangiri Bairedevaru* as their family god, set apart a man to lead a religious life, into which he must be initiated by a *Bairagi*, who is also a disciple of the Matha at Chunchangiri, Nagamangala Taluk. The *Bairagi* bores a hole in the lobe of the right ear of the man to be made a *Jogi*, with an iron needle called *diksha* churi and has to manage not to led more than two drops of blood fall to the ground in doing so. Then the candidate bathes and suspends to his neck a *Kola Singanada*, a tapering metallic whistle ornamented with rings at intervals, which he hangs to his neck by a thread made of black sheep wool, intertwined sixteen times, Thenceforth he attains the rank of a priest in his caste, entitled to alms on festive and ceremonial occasions. When beginning his *puja* or his feast, a Jogi takes his whistle in his right hand and blows a loud shrill note.

A Jogi is usually initiated in fulfilment of a vow taken by the parents, and it is said that he has to remain a bachelor for life. Many other castes enter into this order such as Vokkaligas, Kurubas, Besthas and Agasas. Those who pass by the name of Nilagaras wear the badge of god *Manteswara*, and girls are also so dedicated. They have to live by begging. Their head is shaved and a string of

rudrakshi beads and *Lingamani* are worn. They apply ashes to their foreheads and carry a begging bowl and sack for holding the alms, with a cane and a musical instrument which are the badges of their profession. *Devaraguddas*, also known as *Bidimanushyas* or single men, are the pujaris of the caste.

Priests :

Brahmans are not employed for the conduct of religious and funeral ceremonies. A Brahman's approach into the Holeya quarters is resented just as much as the Brahman avoids contact with a Holeya. The reason for this dislike is turned into a myth. It is said that Lakshhmi went in her monthly sickness (which is a state of pollution) to various houses seeking a resting place. Komatis received her kindly and Brahmans did not allow her to approach their abode. Each had their reward, Komatis being generally wealthy and Brahmans poor. She was given a safe asylum in the houses of Holeyas. The latter fear that if a Brahman goes to their quarters, their Lakshmi will go away with him, and so drive him out. A Satani is generally the priest of this caste. He attends at the name-giving ceremony and conducts funeral ceremonies. A *Brahman* astrologer is however sometimes consulted to fix auspicious moments for the celebration of marriages and for the first entry into houses.

A man of the Lingayat caste and a *Tirukula Dasa* of the Vishnu cult also sometimes serve as priests.

Occupation :

The following extracts from the Mysore Census Report of 1891, relating to the occupations of this caste, are interesting, and exhibit a state of things that is fast disappearing as regards its objectionable features :—

> The Holeyas are chiefly employed as labourers in connection with agriculture and manufacture with hand-looms, various kinds of coarse cloth or home-spun which are worn extensively by the poorer classes. In some parts of the Mysore District considerable numbers of the Holeyas are specially engaged in betel vine gardening.
>
> As labourers, these classes are employed in innumerable pursuits in which manual labour preponderates. The *Aleman* sub-division furnishes recruits as sepoys.
>
> In the maidan they enjoy a certain recognized prestige and status in the village autonomy, as has been already noticed. In the Malnad, however, the Holeya had degenerated into an agrestic slave and till a few decades ago under

the British rule, not only as regards his property but also with regard to his body he was not his own master. The *Vargadar* or landholder owned him as a hereditary slave.

In most of the purely Malnad or hilly taluks, each *Vargadar* or proprietor of landed estate owns a set of servants styled *Huttalu* and *Mannalu*. The former is the hereditary servitor of the family born in servitude and performing agricultural work for the land-holder from father to son. The *Mannalu* is a serf attached to the soil and changes hands with it.

In order furthermore to rivet the ties which bind these hereditary labourers to the soil it is alleged that the local capitalists have improvised a kind of *Gretna Green* marriage among them.

A legal marriage of the orthodox type contains the risk of a female servant being lost to the family in case the husband happened not to be a *Huttalu* or *Mannalu*. So in order to obviate the possible loss, a custom prevails, according to which a female *Huttalu* or *Mannalu* is espoused in what is locally known as the *Manikattu* form, which is neither more nor less than licensed concubinage. She may be given up after a time subject to a small fine to the caste and anybody else may then espouse her on like conditions. Not only does she then remain in the family but her children will also become the landlord's servants.

The average wages paid to those people are—

Daily

- 1 Kolaga of paddy for males
- 4¾ Kolagas of paddy for females
- 1 Meal of cooked food.

Annually

For a Male

1 Turban	0	6	0
1 Hachada	2	0	0
1 Datti	0	6	0
1 Kambli	1	4	0

For a Female

1 Sadi	2	8	0
1 Bodice	0	4	0
1 Valli	0	2	0
1 Kambli	1	4	0

In large places, especially in Mysore and Bangalore, the Holeyas are fairly prosperous and quite able to hold their own in the labour and other markets. There are many petty raiyats holding their fields directly under Government; in fact, there are quite as many independent raiyats as subordinate tenants among them. They do not fix any particular day in the week as auspicious for ploughing and other agricultural operations.

The rains under *Bharani, Krittike, Punarvasu* are considered lucky, while *Aswani* rain is unlucky.

In addition to their duties at the field, they are village watchman and general messengers. A *Chalavadi,* who is generally a Holeya, is the servant of the right hand or 18 caste section of the community, and is the custodian of the symbol of that community, viz., the bell and the ladle. These are made of brass and are connected together by a chain of the same metal. The *Chalavadi* carries the ladle on his right shoulder and heads the processions of all the right hand section people, sounding the bell with the shake of the chain. These insignia are also produced at caste assesmblies and sometimes they are placed before *Sangameswara gaddige* and *puja* made to them.

The spoon has on it engraved the badges of different castes composing this section, such as the plough of the Vokkaliga, the scales of the Banajiga, the shears of a Kuruba, the spade of a Vodda, the razor of a barber, the washing stone-slab and pot of an Agasa and the wheel of a Kumbara. This also contains a bull flanked on either side by the sun and the moon. At the foot of the spoon are also engraved the figures of an ass and of a *Bidi Basavi.*

General :

Toe-ring, *tali* and bangles are not worn by Widows. Women get their hands and fore-heads tattooed by Koracha women. Males dress themselves with a loin cloth and *kambli* and females with *sire* and bodice. During *Dipavali* they dance *kolata.*

Some of them catch small game and also eat rats. They eat almost all kinds of flesh and except only the single-hoofed animals and the jackal, monkey and crocodile. They eat flesh of cattle, sheep, goat, wild boar, pork, peacock, wolf and sofe scaled fish. Toddy and arrack are freely drunk, and sometimes women also indulge in this habit.

APPENDIX

(List of *Kalas* or Septs.)

Attikula	Fig tree
Anekula	Elephant or plant of that name
Ararigaru	Beans
Ale	A tree
Agani	Bolt
Ankeyavaru	
Ambarakula	An elephant howdah
Bhumi	Earth
Belli	Silver
Baligaru	Plantain
Chatrikula	Umbrella
Chandrakula	Moon
Chinnadakula	Gold
Chambula	
Chintalu	Tamarind. (They do not cut the tree but do not scruple to use the fruit).
Chavana	
Chella	Cleaning nuts
Darollu	
Gollate	
Gango-galu	
Gudikula	Temple
Ganigarakula	Oil-mill
Huvvina	Flowers
Hutta	Ant-hill
Holuru	
Halukula	Milk
Halattakula	
Hesube	Bag
Hare	Crowbar
Hanakula	
Hagalukula	Bitter gourd
Jintra	
Jenukula	Honey
Kembarekula	
Kavanekula	Sling
Karrakula	Plant
Kargadakula	Vessel

Kannanthradakula	..
Kaneerkula	A flower
Kurubarakula	Shepherd
Katigaru	...
Kannegaru	A herb
Kani	...
Kalu	Leg
Kapu	An ornament
Konga	..
Kasturi	Musk
Kuppagiri	..
Kogilu	Cuckoo
Lagamikula	..
Mugaligaru	A kind of tree
Maddalati	..
Malikula	Garland
Mandatora	..
Mallora	Jessamine
Molakula	Rabbit
Matti	A timber tree
Madya	..
Mukkara	Nose-ring
Nerali	A tree
Nagarakula	Snake
Naggaligaru	A thorny plant
Olorakula	..
Pale	..
Poomaligaru	Flower garland
Panne	A tree
Pasali	..
Pegadasingarollu	..
Rampada	Saw
Roppada	Sheep fold
Sadakula	..
Sara	..
Sambu	..
Sangu	..
Sidlukula	Lightning
Sumlanoru	..
Sunthaloru	..
Suryakula	Sun
Suttagadu	Burial ground

Settikula	Headman
Tenekula	Ears of corn
Togarigaru	Pigeon pea
Tanga	Gold
Untachanigalu	Bengal gram
Veelvadakula	Betel leaf
Varaku	..
Yemme	Buffalo

Extract on "HOLEYA" from 'Hindu Tribes and Castes'; together with An Account of The Mahomedan Tribes of The North-West Frontier And of The Aboriginal Tribes Of The Central Provinces by the REV. M. A. SHERRING, M.A., LL.B., Lond., Fellow of the Calcutta University; Corresponding Member of the Bengal Asiatic Society; Author of "The Sacred City of The Hindus", "The History of Protestant Missions In India", etc. "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto". Vol. II Calcutta : Thacker, Spink, And Co. London : Trubner & Co., Ludgate Hill, Bombay : Thacker and Co., Limited. Madras; Higginbotham and Co. 1879 *pages* 289 *to* 290.

XI—THE HOLEYAS

Slaves :

The Holeyas are found in Coorg houses all over the country, where they perform every description of menial work. Moreover, they belong to Coorg as members of the 'domestic institution'. The tribe has two branches : 1st, the Kembati, or Kodaga-speaking Holeyas; and 2nd, the Badga, or Canarese-speaking Holeyas. These dress differently. All, however, eat the same kinds of food, vegetable and animal, including beef. They worship Ryappadevaru and Jamants, or Kali, once every month; and once in the year sacrifice a pig or a fowl. They are a poor and ignorant people, of dark complexion. From among them, but principally from the liberated Holeyas of the late Maharajah, the German missionaries have gathered a Christian community, and have located them in the new village of Anandapur, in Amuttunaad(a).

(a) Descriptive Sketch of the various Tribes and castes in the Province of Coorg, by the Rev. G. Richter, Basil Mission, Mercara.

Extract on "HOLEYA" from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societe Romane di Anthropologia Assisted by K. RANGACHARI, M.A., of the Madras Government Museum, Volume II-C to J, Government Press, Madras, 1909 *pages* 329 *to* 351.

HOLEYA

The bulk of the Holeyas are, in the Madras Presidency, found in South Canara, but there are a considerable number in Coimbatore and on the Nilgiris (working on cinchona, tea and coffee estates). In the Manual of the South Canara district it is noted that "Holeyas are the field labourers, and former agrestic serfs of South Canara, Pulayan being the Malayalam and Paraiyan the Tamil form of the same word. The name is derived by Brahmins from hole, pollution, and by others from hola, land or soil, in recognition of the fact that, as in the case of the Paraiyan, there are customs remaining which seem to indicate that the Holeyas were once masters of the land; but, whatever the derivation may be, it is no doubt the same as that of Paraiyan and Pulayan. The Holeyas are divided into many sub-divisions, but the most important are Mari, Mera, and Mundala or Bakuda. The Mera Holeyas are the most numerous, and they follow the ordinary law of inheritance through males, as far as that can be said to be possible with a class of people who have absolutely nothing to inherit. Of course, demon propitiation (bhuta worship) is practically the exclusive idea of the Holeyas, and every one of the above sub-divisions has four or five demons to which fowls, beaten rice, cocoanuts and toddy, are offered monthly and annually. The Holeyas have, like other classes of South Canara, a number of balis (exogamous septs), and persons of the same bali cannot intermarry. Though the marriage tie is as loose as is usual among the depressed and low castes of Southern India, their marriage ceremony is somewhat elaborate. The bridegroom's party goes to the bride's house on a fixed day with rice, betel leaf and a few arecanuts, and waits the whole night outside the bride's hut, the bridegroom being seated on a mat specially made by the bride. On the next morning the bride is made to sit opposite the bridegroom, with a winnowing fan between them filled with betel leaf, etc. Meanwhile the men and women present throw rice over the heads of the couple. The bride then accompanies the bridegroom to his hut, carrying the mat with her. On the last day the couple take the mat to a river or tank where fish may be found, dip the mat into the water, and catch some fish, which they let go after kissing them. A grand feast completes the marriage. Divorce

is easy, and widow marriage is freely practiced. Holeyas will eat flesh including beef, and have no caste scruples regarding the consumption of spirituous liquor. Both men and women wear a small cap made of the leaf of the areca palm". The Holeyas who were interviewed by us all said that they do not go through the ceremony of catching fish, which is performed by Shivalli Brahmans and Akkasales.

"All Tulu Brahmin chronicles", Mr. H. A. Stuart writes* "agree in ascribing the creation of Malabar and Canara, or Kerala, Tuluva, and Haiga to Parasu Rama, who reclaimed from the sea as much land as he could cover by hurling his battle-axe from the top of the Western Ghauts. A modified form of the tradition states that Parasu Rama gave the newly reclaimed land to Naga and Machi Brahmins, who were not true Brahmins, and were turned out or destroyed by fishermen and Holeyas, who held the country till the Tulu Brahmins of the present day to Mayur Marma, but they vary dynasty). All traditions unite in attributing the introduction of the Tulu Brahmins of the present day to Mayur Varma, bu they vary in details connected with the manner in which they obtained a firm footing in the land. One account says that Habashika, chief of the Koragas, drove out Mayur Varma, but was in turn expelled by Mayur Varma's son, or son-in-law, Lokaditya of Gokarnam, who brought Brahmins from Ahi-Kshetra, and settled them in thirty-two villages. Another makes Mayur Varma himself the invader of the country, which till then had remained in the possession of the Holeyas and fishermen who had turned out Parasu Ram's Brahmins. Mayur Varma and the Brahmins whom he had brought from Ahi-Kshetra were again driven out by Nanda, a Holeya chief, whose son Chandra Sayana had, however, learned respect for Brahmins from his mother, who had been a dancing-girl in a temple. His admiration for them became so great that he not only brought back the Brahmins, but actually made over all his authority to them, and reduced his people to the position of slaves. A third account makes Chandra Sayana, not a son of a Holeya king, but a descendant of Mayur Varma and a conqueror of the Holeya king".

In Coorg, the Rev. G. Richter writes,† "the Holeyas are found in the Coorg houses all over the country, and do all the menial work for the Coorgs, by whom, though theoretically freemen under the British Government, they were held as *glebae adscripti* in a state of abject servitude until lately, when, with the advent of European planters, the slave question was freely discussed, and the 'domestic

*Manual of the South Canara district.

†Manual of Coorg.

institution' practically abolished. The Holeyas dress indifferently, are of dirty habits, and eat whatever they can get, beef included. Their worship is addressed to Eiyappa Devaru and Chamundi, or Kali goddess once every month; and once every year they sacrifice a hog or a fowl".

Of the Holeyas of the Mysore province, the following account is given in the Mysore Census Reports, 1891 and 1901. "The Holeyas number 502,493 persons, being 10.53 per cent. of the total population. They constitute, as their name implies, the back-bone of cultivation in the country. Hola is the Kanarese name for a dry-crop field, and Holeya means the man of such field. The caste has numerous sub-divisions, among which are Kannada, Gangadikara, Maggada (loom), and Morasu. The Holeyas are chiefly employed as labourers in connection with agriculture, and manufacture with handlooms various kinds of coarse cloth or home-spun, which are worn extensively by the poorer classes, notwithstanding that they are being fast supplanted by foreign cheap fabrics. In some parts of the Mysore district, considerable numbers of the Holeyas are specially engaged in betel-vine gardening. As labourers they are employed in innumerable pursuits, in which manual labourer preponderates. The Aleman sub-division furnishes recruits as Barr sepoys. It may not be amiss to quote here some interesting facts denoting the measure of material well-being achieved by, and the religious recognition accorded to the outcastes at certain first-class shrines in Mysore. At Melkote in the Mysore district, the outcastes, i.e., the Holeyas and Madiga, are said to have been granted by the great Visishtadvaita reformer, Ramanujacharya, the privilege of entering the Vishnu temple up to the *sanctum sanctorum*, along with Brahmans and others, to perform worship there for three days during the annual car procession. The following anecdote, recorded by Buchanan,* supplies the *raison d'etre* for the concession, which is said to have also been earned by their forebears having guarded the sacred murti or idol. On Ramanujacharya going to Melkota to perform his devotions at that celebrated shrine, he was informed that the place had been attacked by the Turk King of Delhi, who had carried away the idol. The Brahman immediately set out for that capital, and on arrival found that the King had made a present of the image to his daughter, for it is said to be very handsome, and she asked for it as a plaything. All day the princes played with the image, and at night the god assumed his own beautiful form, and enjoyed her bed, for Krishna is addicted to such forms of adventures. Ramanujacharya, by virtue of certain mantras, obtained possession of the image, and wished to carry it off. He asked the Brahmans

*Journey through Mysore, Canara and Malabar.

to assist him, but they refused; on which the Holeyas volunteered, provided the right of entering the temple was granted to them. Ramanujacharya accepted their proposal, and the Holeyas, having posted themselves between Delhi and Melkota, the image of the god was carried down in twenty-four hours. The service also won for the outcastes the envied title of Tiru-kulam or the sacred race. In 1799, however, when the Dewan (prime minister) Purnaiya visited the holy place, the right of the outcastes to enter the temple was stopped at the dhvaja stambham, the consecrated monolithic column, from which point alone can they now obtain a view of the god. On the day of the car procession, the Tiru-kulam people, men, women and children, shave their heads and bathe with the higher castes in the kalyani or large reservoir, and carry on their head small earthen vessels filled with rice and oil, and enter the temple as far as the flagstaffi referred to above, where they deliver their offerings, which are appropriated by the Dasayyas, who resort simultaneously as pilgrims to the shrine. Besides the privilege of entering the temple, the Tiru-kula Holeyas and Madigs have the right to drag the car, for which service they are required by getting from the temple two hundred seers of ragi (grain), a quantity of jaggery (crude sugar), and few bits of the dyed cloth used for decorating the pandal (shed) which is erected for the procession. At the close of the procession, the representatives of the aforesaid classes receive each a flower garland at the hands of the Sthanik or chief worshipper, who manages to drop a garland synchronously into each plate held by the recipients, so as to avoid any suspicion of undue preference. In return for these privileges, the members of the Tiru-kulam used to render gratitous services such as sweeping the streets round the temple daily, and in the night patrolling the whole place with drums during the continuance of the annual procession, etc. But these services are said to have become much abridged and nearly obsolete under the recent police and municipal regime. The privilege of entering the temple during the annual car procession is enjoyed also by the outcastes in the Vishnu temple at Belur in the Hassan district. It is, however, significant that in both the shrines, as soon as the car festival is over, i.e., on the 10th day, the concession ceases, and the temples are ceremonially purified.

"In the pre-survey period, the Holeya or Madig Kulvadi, in the Maidan or eastern division, was so closely identified with the soil that his oath, accompanied by certain formalities and awe-inspiring solemnities, was considered to give the *coup de grace* to long existing and vexatious boundary disputes. He had a potential voice in the internal economy of the village, and was often the *fidus* Achates of the patel village official). In the Malnad, however, the Holeya had degenerated into the agrestic slave, and till a few

decades ago under the British rule, not only as regards his property, but also with regard to his body, he was not his own master. The vargdar or landholder owned him as a hereditary slave. The genius of British rule has emancipated him, and his enfranchisement has been emphasized by the allurements of the coffee industry with its free labour and higher wages. It is, however, said that the improvement so far of the status of the outcastes in the Malnad has not bee nan unmixed good, in as much as it is likewise a measure of the decadence of the supari (betel) gardens. Be that as it may, the Holeya in the far west of the province still continues in many respects the bondsman of the local landholder of influence; and some of the social customs now prevailing among the Holeyas there, as described hereunder, fully bear out this fact.

"In most of the purely Malnad or hilly taluks, each vargdar, or proprietor of landed estate, owns a set of servants called Huttalu or Huttu-Alu and Mannalu or Mannu-Alu. The former is the hereditary servitor of the family, born in servitude, and performing agricultural work for the landholder from father to son. The Mannalu is a serf attached to the soil, and changes with it. These are usually of the Holeya class, but in some places men of the Hasalar race have been entertained. To some estates or vargs only Huttu-alus are attached, while Mannu-alus work on others. Notwithstanding the measure of personal freedom enjoyed by all men at the present time, and the unification of the land tenures in the province under the revenue survey and settlement, the traditions of birth, immemorial custom, ignorance, and never-to-be-paid-off loads of debt, tend to preserve in greater or less integrity the conditions of semi-slavery under which these agrestic slaves live. It is locally considered the acme of unwisdom to loosen the immemorial relations between capital and labour, especially in the remote backwoods, in which free labour does not exist, and the rich supari cultivation whereof would be ruined otherwise. In order furthermore to rivet the ties which bind these hereditary labourers to the soil, it is alleged that the local capitalists have improvised a kind of Gretha Green marriage among them. A legal marriage of the orthodox type contains the risk of a female servant being lost to the family in case the husband happened not to be a Huttalu or Mannalu. So, in order to obviate the possible loss, a custom prevails according to which a female Huttalu or Mannalu is espoused in what is locally known as the manikattu form, which is neither more nor less than licensed concubinage. She may be given up after a time, subject to a small fine to the caste, and anybody else may then espouse her on like conditions. Not only does she then remain in the family, but her children will also become the landlord's servants. These

people are paid with daily supply of paddy or cooked food, and a yearly present of clothing and blankets (kamblis). On special occasions, and at car feast, they receive in addition small money allowances.

In rural circles, in which the Holeyas and Madigs are kept at arms length by the Bramanical bodies, and are not allowed to approach the sacredotal classes beyond a fixed limit, the outcastes maintain a strict semi-religious rule, whereby no Brahman can enter the Holeya's quarters without necessitating a purification thereof. They believe that the direct calamities will befall them and theirs if otherwise. The ultraconservative spirit of Hindu priest-craft casts into the far distance the realization of the hope that the lower castes will become socially equal even with the classes usually termed Sudras. But the time is looming in the near distance, in which they will be on a level in temporal prosperity with the social organisms above them. Unlike the land tenures said to prevail in Chingleput or Madras, the Mysore system fully permits the Holeyas and Madigs to hold land in their own right, and as sub-tenants they are to be found almost everywhere. The highest amount of land assessment paid by a single Holeya is Rs. 279 in the Bangalore district, and the lowest six pies in the Kolar and Mysore districts. The quota paid by the outcastes towards the land revenue of the country aggregates no less than three lakhs of rupees, more than two-thirds being paid by the Holeyas, and the remainder by the Madigs. These facts speak for themselves, and afford a reliable index to the comparative well-being of these people. Instances may also be readily quoted, in which individual Holeyas, etc., have risen to be money-lenders, and enjoy comparative affluence. Coffee cultivation and allied industries have thrown much good fortune into their lap. Here and there they have also established bhajane or prayer houses, in which theistic prayers and psalms are recited by periodical congregation. A beginning has been made towards placing the facilities of education within easy reach of these depressed classes".

In connecton with the Holeyas of South Canara, it is recorded* that "the ordinary agricultural labourers of this district are Holeyas or Pariahs of two classes, known as Mulada Holeyas and Salada Holeyas, the former being the old hereditary serfs attached to Muli wargs (estates), and the latter labourers bound to their masters' service by being in debt to them. Nowadays, however, there is a little difference between the two classes. Neither are much given to changing masters, and, though a Mulada Holeya is no longer a

*Manual of the South Canara district.

slave, he is usually as much in debt as a Salada Holeya, and can only change when his new master takes the debt over. To these labourers cash payments are unknown, except occasionally in the case of Salada Holeyas, where there is a nominal annual payment to be set off against interest on the debt. In other cases interest is foregone, one or other of the perquisites being sometimes docked as an equivalent. The grain wage consists of rice or paddy (unhusked rice), and the local seer is, on the average, as nearly as possible one of 80 tolas. The daily rice payments to men, women, and children vary as follows :—

Men	From 1 seer to 2 seers
Women	From ¾ seer to 2 seers
Children	From ⅜ seer to 1 seer

"In addition to the daily wages, and the midday meal of boiled rice which is given in almost all parts, there are annual perquisites or privileges. Except on the coast of the Mangalore taluk and in the Coondapoor taluk, every Holeya is allowed rent free from 1/8 to 1/3 acre of land, and one or two coconut or palmyra trees, with sometimes a jack or mango tree in addition. The money-value of the produce of this little allotment is variously estimated at from 1 to 5 rupees per annum. Throughout the whole district, cloths are given every year to each labourer, the money value being estimated at 1 rupee per adult, and 6 annas for a child. It is also customary to give a cumbly (blanket) in the neighbourhood of the ghauts, where the damp and cold render a warm covering necessary. On three or four important festivals, presents of rice and other etables, oil and salt are given to each labourer, or, in some cases, to each family. The average value of these may be taken at 1 rupee per labourer, or Rs. 4 per family. Presents are also made on the occasion of a birth, marriage, or funeral, the value of which varies much in individual cases. Whole families of Holeyas are attached to the farms, but, when their master does not require their services, he expects them to go and work elsewhere in places where such work is to be got. In the interior, outside work is not to be had at many seasons, and the master has to pay them even if there is not much for them to do, but, one way or another, he usually manages to keep them pretty well employed all the year round".

In a note on the Kulwadis, Kulvadis or Chalavadis of the Hassan district in Mysore, Captain J. S. F. Mackenzie writes* that "every village has its Holigiri—as the quarter inhabited by the

*Ind. Ant. II, 1873.

Holiars is called—outside the village boundary hedge. This, I thought, was because they are considered an impure race, whose touch carries defilement with it. Such is the reason generally given by the Brahman, who refuses to receive anything directly from the hands of a Holiar, and yet the Brahmans consider great luck will wait upon them if they can manage to pass through the Holigiri without being molested. To this the Holiars have a strong objection, and should a Brahman attempt to enter their quarters, they turn out in a body and slipper him, in former times it is said to death. Members of the other castes may come as far as the door, but they must not enter the house, for that would bring the Holiar bad luck. If, by chance, a person happens to get in, the owner takes care to tear the intruder's cloth, tie up some salt in one corner of it, and turn him out. This is supposed to neutralized all the good luck which might have accrued to the trespasser, and avert any evil which might have befallen the owner of the house. All the thousand-and-one castes, whose members find a home in the village, unhesitatingly admit that the Kulwadi is *de jure* the rightful owner of the village. He who was is still, in a limited sense, 'lord of the village manor'. If there is a dispute as to the village boundaries, the Kulwadi is the only one competent to take the oath as to how the boundary ought to run. The old custom for settling such disputes was as follows. The Kulwadi, carrying on his head a ball made of the village earth, in the centre of which is placed some water, passes along the boundary. If he has kept the proper line, everything goes well; but should he, by accident, even go beyond his own proper boundary, then the ball of earth, of its own accord, goes to pieces, the Kulwadi dies within fifteen days, and is house becomes a ruin. Such is the popular belief. Again, the skins of all animals dying within the village boundaries are the property of the Kulwadi, and a good income he makes from this source. To this day a village boundary dispute is often decided by this one fact. If the Kulwadis agree; the other inhabitants of the villages can say no more. When—in our forefathers' days, as the natives Say—a village was first established, a stone called 'karu kallu' is set up. To this stone the Patel once a year makes an offering. The Kulwadi, after the ceremony is over, is entitled to carry off the rice, etc., offered. In cases where there is no Patel, the Kulwadi goes through the yearly ceremony. But what I think proves strongly that the Hodia was the first to take possession of the soil is that the Kulwadi receives, and is entitled to receive, from the friends of any person who dies in the village, a certain fee or as my informant forcibly put it, 'They buy from him the ground for the dead'. This fee is still called in Canarese nela haga, from nela earth, and haga, a coin worth 1 anna 2 pies. In Munzerabad the Kulwadi does not receive this fee from those ryots who are related to the headman. Here the Kulwadi occupies

a higher position. He has, in fact, been adopted into the Patel's family, for on a death occurring in such family, the Kulwadi goes into mourning by shaving his head. He always receives from the friends the clothes the deceased wore, and a brass basin. The Kulwadi, however, owns a superior in the matter of burial fees. He pays yearly a fowl, one hana (4 annas 8 pies), and a handful of rice to the agent of the Sudgadu Siddha, or lord of the burning ground. (q. v.)".

A Kulwadi, whom I came across, was carrying a brass ladle bearing the figure of a couchant bull (Basava) and a lingam under a many-headed cobra canopy. This ladle is carried round, and filled with rice, money, and betel, on the occasion of marriages in those castes, of which the insignia are engraved on the handle. These insignia were as follows :—

Weavers—Shuttle and Brush.

Bestha—Fish.

Uppara—Spade and basket for collecting slat.

Korama—Baskets and knife for splitting canes and bamboos.

Idiga—Knife, and apparatus for climbing palm trees.

Hajam—Barber's scissors, razor, and sharpening stone.

Ganiga—Oil-press.

Badavali—Washerman's pot, fire-place, mallet, and stone.

Kumbara—Potter's wheel, pots, and mallet.

Vakkaliga—Plough.

Chetti—Scales and basket.

Kuruba—Sheep-shears.

A small whistle, called kola-singanatha, made of gold, silver, or copper, is tied round the necfl of some Holeyas, Vakkaligas, Besthas, Agasas and Kurubas, by means of threads of sheep's wool intertwined sixteen times. All these castes are supposed to belong to the family of the God Bhaira, in whose name the whistle is tied by a Bairagi at Chunchingiri near Nagamangala. It is usually tied in fulfilment of a vow taken by the parents, and the ceremony costs from a hundred to two hundred rupees. Until the vow is fulfilled, the person concerned cannot marry. At the ceremony the Bairagi bores a hole in the right ear-lobe of the celebrant with a needle called diksha churi, and from the wound ten drops of blood fall to the ground (cf. Jogi Purusha). He is then bathed before the whistle is tied round his next. As the result of wearing the whistle, the man attains to the rank of a priest in his caste, and is entitled to receive

alms and meals on festive and ceremonial occasions. He blows his whistle, which emits a thin squeak, before pertaking of food, or performing his daily worship.

It is noted in the Mysore Census Report 1901, that the marriage of the Holeyas is "nothing but a feast, at which the bridegroom ties the bottu (marriage badge) round the bride's neck. The wife cannot be divorced except for adultery. Widows are prohibited from remarrying, but the caste winks at a widow's living with a man". In an account given to me of marriage among the Gangadikara Holeyas, I was told that, if a girl reaches puberty without being married, she may live with any man whom she likes within the caste. If he pays later on the bride price of twelve rupees, the marriage ceremonies take place, and the issue becomes legitimate. On the first day of these ceremonies, the bride is taken to the house for her husband-elect. The parties of the bride and bridegroom go, accompanied by music, to a river or tank, each with four new earthen pots, rice, betel, and other things. The pots, which are decorated with flowers of the areca palm, are filled with water, and set apart in the houses of the contracting couple. This ceremonial is known as bringing the god. At night the wrist-threads (Kankanam), made of black and white wool, with turmeric root and iron ring tied on them, are placed round the wrist of the bride and bridegroom. On the following day, cotton thread is passed round the necks of three brass vessels, and also round the head of the bridegroom, who sits before the vessels with hands folded, and betel leaves stuck between his fingers. Married women anoint him with oil and turmeric, and he is bathed. He is then made to stand beneath a tree, and a twig of the Jambu (*Eugenia Jambolana*) tree is tied to the milk-post. A similar ceremony is performed by the bride. The bridegroom is conducted to the marriage booth, and he and the bride exchange garlands and put gingelly (*Sesamum*) and jirige (cummin) on each other's heads. The bottur is passed round to be blessed, and tied by the bridegroom on the bride's neck. This is followed by the pouring of milk over the hands of the contracting couple. On the third day, the wrist-threads are removed, and the pots thrown away.

The Holeyas have a large number of exogamous septs, of which the following are examples :—

Ane, elephant	Hasubu, pack-sack
Male, gariand	Malige, Jasmine
Nerali, *Eugenia Jambolana*	Tene, *Setaria italica*
Hutta, ant-hill	Chatri, umbrella
Halu, milk	Mola, hare
Kavane, sling	Jenu, honey.

It is recorded in the Mysore Census Report 1901, that "351 out of the entire population of 577,166 have returned gotras, the names thereof being Harichandra, Kali, Yekke, and Karadi. In thus doing, it is evident that they are learning to venerate themselves, like others in admittedly higher grades of society".

Some Holeya families are called Hale Makkalu, or old children of the Gangadikara Vakkaligas, and have to do certain services for the latter, such as carrying the sandals of the bridegroom, acting as messenger in conveying news from place to place, carrying fire before corpses to the burning-ground, and watching over the burning body. It is said that, in the performance of these duties, the exogamous septs of the Holeya and Vakkaliga must coincide.

In the Census Report, 1901, Balagai, Bakuda, Begara or Byagara, Kusa (or Uppara) Maila, and Ranivaya (belonging to a queen) are recorded as a sub-sects of the Holeyas. Of these, Balagai is a synonym, indicating that the Holeyas belong to the right hand section. The Bakudas are said to resent the application of that name to them, and call themselves Aipattukuladavru, or the people of fifty families, presumably from the fact that they are divided into fifty balis or families. These balis are said to be named after deceased female ancestors. Begara or Byagara is a synonym, applied to the Holeyas by Kanarese Lingayats. Maila means dirt, and probaly refers to the washerman section, just as Mailari (washerman) occurs among the Malas.

The Tulu-speaking Holeyas must not be confounded with the Canarese-speaking Holeyas. In South Canara, Holeya is a general name applied to the polluting classes, Nalkes, Koragas, and the three divisions of Holeyas proper, which differ widely from each other in some respects. These divisions are—

(1) Bakuda or Mundala—A stranger, asking a woman if her husband is at home, is expected to refer to him as her Bakuda, and not as her Mundala.

(2) Mera or Mugayaru, which is also called Kaipuda.

(3) Mari or Marimanisaru.

Of these, the first two sections abstain from beef, and consequently consider themselves superior to the Mari section.

The Bakudas follow the aliya santana law of succession (in the female line), and, if a man leaves any property, it goes to his nephew. They will not touch dead cows or calves, or remove the placenta when a cow calves. Nor will they touch leather, especially in the form of shoes. They will not carry cots on which rice sheaves are thrashed, chairs, etc., which have four legs, but, when ordered to do so, either break off one leg, or add an extra leg by

tying a stick to the cot or chair. The women always wear their cloth in one piece, and are not allowed, like other Holeyas, to have it made of two pieces. The Bakudas will not eat food prepared or touched by Bilimaggas, Jadas, Paravas or Nalkes. The headman is called Mukhari. The office is hereditary, and, in some places, is, as with the Guttinaya of the Bants, connected with his house-site. This being fixed, he should remain at that house, or his appointment will lapse, except with the general consent of the community to his retaining it. In some places, the Mukhari has two assistants, called Jammana and Bondari, of whom the latter has to distribute toddy at assemblies of the caste. On all ceremonial occasions, the Mukhari has to be treated with great respect, and even an individual who gets possessed by the bhutha (devil) has to touch him with his kadasale (sword). In cases of adultery, a purificatory ceremony, called gudi suddha, is performed. The erring woman's relations construct seven small huts, through which she has to pass, and they are burned down. The fact of this purificatory ceremony taking place is usually proclaimed by the Bondari, and the saying is that 280 people should assemble. They sprinkle water brought from a temple or sthana (devil shrine) and cow's urine over the woman just before she passes through the huts. A small quantity of hair from her head, a few hairs from the eyelids, and nails from her fingers are thrown into the huts. In some places, the delinquent has to drink a considerable quantity of salt-water and cowdung water.

Her relatives have to pay a small money fine to the village deity. The ordeal of passing through huts is also practiced by the Koragas of South Canara. "The suggestion," Mr. R. E. Enthoven writes, "seems to be a rapid representation of seven existences, the outcaste regaining his for her) status after seven generations have passed without further transgression. The parallel suggested is the law of Manu that seven generations are necessary to efface a lapse from the law of endogamous marriage".

The special bhutas of the Bakudas are Kodababbu and Kamberlu (or Kangilu), but Jumadi, Panjurli, and Tanimaniya are also occasionally worshipped. For the propitiation of Kodababbu, Nalkes are engaged to put on the disguise of this bhutha, whereas Bakudas themselves dress up for the propitiation of Kamberlu in cocoanut leaves tied round the head and waist. Thus disguished, they go about the streets periodically, collecting alms from door to door. Kamberlu is soppored to cause small-pox, cholera, and other epidemic diseases.

On the day fixed for the betrothal ceremony, among the Bakudas, a few people assemble at the home of the bride-elect, and the Mukharis of both parties exchange betel or beat the palms

of their hands, and proclaim that all quarrels must cease, and the marriage is to be celebrated. Toddy is distributed among those assembled. The bride's party visit the parents of the bridegroom, and receive then or subsequently a white cloth, four rupees, and three bundles of rice. On the wedding day, those who are present seat themselves in front of the house where the ceremony is to take place, and are given betel to chew. A new mat is spread, and the bride and bridegroom stand thereon. If there is a Kodababbu sthana in the vicinity, the jewels belonging thereto are worn by the bridegroom, who also wears a red cap, which is usually kept in the sthana, and carries in his hand the sword (kadasale) belonging thereto. The Mukhari or Jammana asks if the five groups of people, from Barkur, Mangalore, Chivalli, Chithpadi, Mudanidambur and Udayavara, are present. Five men come forward, and announce that this so, and say "all relationship involving prohibited degrees may snap, and cease to exist". A tray of rice and a lamp are placed before the contracting couple, and those present throw rice over their heads. All then go to the toddy shop and have a drink. They then return to the house and partake of a meal, at which the bridegroom and his bestman (maternal uncle's son) are seated apart. Cooked rice is heaped up on a leaf before the bridegroom, and five piles of fish curry are placed thereon. First the bridegroom eats a portion thereof, and the remainder is finished off by the bestman. The bridal couple then stand once more on the mat, and the Mukhari joins their hands, sayng "No unlawful marriage should take place. Prohibited relationship must be avoided". He sprinkles water from culms of *Cynodon Dactylon* over the united hands.

The body of a dead Bakuda is washed with hot water, in which mango (*Mangifera indica*) bark is steeped. The dead are buried. The day for the final death ceremonies (bojja) is usually fixed by the Mukhari or Jammana. On that day, cooked food is offered to the deceased, and all cry "muriyo, muriyo". The son, after being shaved, and with his face veiled by a cloth, carries cooked rice on his head to a small hut erected for the occasion. The food is set down, and all present throw some of it into the hut.

The Mera or Mugayar Holeyas, like the Bakudas, abstain from eating beef, and refuse to touch leather in any form. They have no objection to carrying fourlegged articles. Though their mother tongue is Tulu, they seem to follow the makkala santana law of inheritance (in the male line). Their headman is entitled Kuruneru, and he has, as the badge of office, a cane with a silver band. The office of headman passes to the son instead of to the nephew. Marriage is called Badathana, and the details of the ceremony are like those of the Mari Holeyas. The dead are buried, and the final death ceremonies (bojja or savu) are performed on the twelfth or

sixteenth day. A feast is given to some members of the community, and cooked food offered to the deceased at the house and near the grave.

The Mari or Marimanisaru Holeyas are sometimes called Karadhi by the Bakudas. Like certain Malayalam castes, the Holeyas have distinct names for their homes according to the section. Thus, the huts of the Mari Holeyas are called kelu, and those of the Mera Holeyas patta. The headman among the Mari Holeyas are called Mulia, Boltiyadi, and Kallali. The office of headman follows in the female line of succession. In addition to various bhuthas, such as Panjurli and Jumadi, the Mari Holeyas have two special bhuthas, named Kattadhe and Kanadhe, whom they regard as their ancestors. At times of festivals, these ancestors are supposed to descend on earth, and make their presence known by taking possession of some member of the communnity. Men who are liable to be so possessed are called Dharipuneyi, and have the privilege of taking up the sword and bell belonging to the bhuthasthana when under possession.

Marriage among the Mari Holeyas is called porathavu. At the betrothal ceremony, the headman of the contracting parties exchange betel leaves and areca nuts. The bride-price usually consists of two bundles of rice and a bundle of paddy (unhusked rice). On the wedding day the bridgeroom and his party go to the home of the bride, taking with them a basket containing five seers of rice, two metal bangles, one or two cocoanuts, a comb, and a white woman's cloth. which are shown to the headman of the bride's party. The two headmen order betel leaf and areca nuts to be distributed among those assembled. After a meal, a mat is spread in front of the hut, and the bride and bridegroom stand thereon. The bridegroom has in his hand a sword, and the bride holds some betel leaves and areca nuts. Rice is thrown over their heads, and presents of money are given to them. The two headmen lift up the hands of the contracting couple, and they are joined together. The bride is lifted up so as to be a little higher than the bridegroom, and is taken indoors. The bridegroom follows her, but is taken indoors. The bridegroom follows her, but is prevented from entering by his brother-in-law, to whom he gives betel leaves and areca nuts. He then makes a forcible entrance into the hut.

When a Mari Holeya girl reaches puberty, she is expected to remain within a hut for twelve days, at the end of which time the castemen are invited to a feast. The girl is seated on a pattern drawn on the floor. At the four corners thereof, vessels filled with water are placed. The girl's mother holds over her head a plantain leaf,

and four women belonging to different balis (septs) pour water thereon from the vessles. These women and the girl then sit down to a meal, and eat off the same leaf.

Among the Mari Holeyas, the dead are usually buried, and the final death ceremonies are performed on the twelfth day. A pit is dug near the grave, into which an image of the deceased, made of rice straw, is put. The image is set on fire by his son of nephew. The ashes are heaped up, and a rude hut is erected round them by fixing theree sticks in the ground, and covering them with a cloth. Food is offered on a heaf, and the dead person is asked to eat it.

The Kusa Holeyas speak Canarese. They object to carrying articles with four legs, unless the legs are crossed. They do not eat beef, and will not touch leather. They consider themselves to be superior to the other sections of Holeyas, and use as an argument that their caste name is Uppara, and not Holeya. Why they are called Uppara is not clear, but some say that they are the same as the Upparas (salt workers) of Mysore, who, in South Canara, have descended in the social scale. The hereditary occupation of the Upparas is making salt from salt earth (ku, earth). The headman of the Kusa Holeyas is called Buddivant. As they are disciples of a Lingayat priest at the mutt at Kudli in Mysore, they are Saivites. Every family has to pay the priest a fee of eight annas on the occasion of his periodical visitations. The bhuthas specialy worshipped by the Kusa Holeyas are Masti and Halemanedeyya, but Venkataramana of Tirupati is by some regarded as their family deity. Marriage is both infant and adult, and widows are permitted to remarry, if they have no children.

At Tumkur, in the Mysore Province, I came across a settlement of people called Tigala Holeya, who do not intermarry with other Holeyas, and have no exogamous septs or house-names. Their cranial measurement approach more nearly to those of the dolichocephalic Tamil Paraiyans than those of the sub-brachycephalic Holeyas; and it is possible that they are Tamil Paraiyans, who migrated, at some distant date, to Mysore.

	Cephalic length	Cephalic breadth	Cephalic index
	cm.		
Tamil Paraiyan	18.6	13.7	73.6
Tiggala Holeya	18.5	13.9	75.1
Holeya	17.9	14.1	79.1

Extract on "HOLEYA" from Ethnographic Notes in Southern India, with 40 Plates by EDGAR THURSTON, Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Superintendent of Ethnography Madras Correspondent Etranger, Societe D' Anthropologie DE Paris Madras : Printed by The Superintendent, Government Press, 1906 from pages 457 and 458.

....At Melkote in Mysore, the chief seat of the followers of Ramanuja Acharya, and at the Brahman temple at Belur, the Holeyas or Parayars have the right of entering the temple on three days in the year, specially set apart for them". At Melkote the Holeyas and Madigas are said to have been granted the privilege of entering the *sanctum sanctorum* along with Brahmans and others on three days by Ramanuja. In 1799, however, the right to enter the temple was stoped at the dhvaja-stambham, or consecrated monolithic column. Besides the privilege of entering the temple, the Holeyas and Madigas have the right to drag the car. At both Belur and Melkote, as soon as the festival is over, the temples are ceremonially purified. It is said that the Brahmans in Mysore consider that great luck will wait upon them, if they can manage to pass through the Holeya quarter of a village unmolested, and that, should a Brahman attempt to enter their quarters, they turn out in a body and slipper him, in former times, it is said to death.*.....

*J. S. F. Mackenzie, Ind. Ant., II, 1873.

Extract on "HOLEYA" from Report on the Mysore Census of 1881 *Compiled for Government by LEWIS RICE, C.I.E., Mysore Secretary to the Government of Mysore, Bangalore: Mysore Government Press,* 1884 *page* 69.

HOLAYA OR HOLEYA 447,421

MADIGA 174,824

The *Outcastes* are composed of the *Holaya* and the *Madiga,* the former the lowest division of the Balagai or right hand faction; the latter the lowest of the Yedagai or left hand faction. They are returned as of the strength noted in the margin. The *Holaya* outnumbered the Madiga in the proportion of about 2½ to 1. Onethird of the Holaya belong to Mysore District and they also abound in Hassan, Bangalore and Kadur Districts. The *Madiga* are most numerous where the Holaya are fewest, namely in Chitaldroog. Tumkur and Kolar Districts. There are also large numbers in Bagalore District. Both Holeya and Madiga are considered unclean by the four orthodox castes, and all contact with them avoided. A Holeya having to deliver any thing to a Brahman places it on the ground and retires to a distance; when meeting in a street or road, the Holeya moves as far as possible away from the path of his superior. The Madiga are leather-dressers, an occupation in which the Holeyas seem not to engage. The outcaste population, which unmbered 813,975 in 1871, had fallen in 1881 to 622,245 or 23.55 per cent.

Extract on "HOLEYA" from Census of India, 1891, Volume XIII, Madras, The Report on The Census, by H. A. STUART, Of the Indian Civil Service; Fellow of The Royal Statistical Society; Member of The Royal Asiatic Society, Superintendent of Census Operations, Madras, Madras : Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, 1893 pages 250 and 251.

396. HOLEYA : 134,835— The HOLEYAS are the Canarese Pariah caste. The word is usually derived from *hole*, pollution, but it seems more probable that it is merely the Canarese form of the various names such as Palla, Palli, Paraiyan, Pulayan, & c., which have already been dealt with. Initial 'P' in Tamil, Telugu & c., usually becomes 'h' in Canarese.

The bulk of the Holeyas are found in South Canara, but there is a considerable number in Coimbatore and the Nilgiris. The number of sub-divisions returned is 196, of which the most important are given below :—

Sub-division	Strength	Local distribution
Bakuda	5,558	South Canara (All)
Kannada	8,595	Coimbatore (8,521)
Mari	24,650	South Canara (All)
Mera	40,302	South Canara (All)
Mundala	18,023	South Canara (All)

Like other Pariahs the Holeyas worship *Bhutas* or devils. They have priests of their own caste, who at other times serve as barbers. Their marriage ceremony is somewhat elaborate. The bridegroom's party goes to the bride's house on a fixed day with rice, betel-leaf and a few areca-nuts and waits the whole night outside the bride's hut, the bridegroom being seated on a mat specially made by the bride. On the next morning the bride is made to sit opposite the bridgeroom with a winnowing pan between them filled with betel-leaf, & c. Meanwhile the men and women present throw rice over the heads of the marriage couple. The bride then accompanies the bridegroom to his hut, carrying the mat with her. The marriage ceremony lasts for four days, during which time none of the party should fail to sit on the mat. On the last day the couple take the mat to a river or tank where fish may

be found, dip the mat into the water and catch some fish, which they let so after kissing them. A grand feast completes the marriage. Divorce is easy, and widow remarriage is freely practised. Holeyas will eat flesh including beef, and have no caste scruples regarding the consumption of spirituous liquor.

Extract on "HOLEYA" from Census of India 1901, *Madras Census Report Part -I Vol. XV by W. Francis, Madras :* 1902 *page* 155.

HOLEYA : (147,987; M.1)—Canarese field labourers corresponding to the Paraiyans of the Tamil districts. (C. R. 1891, para 396; *Mysore* C. R. 1891. pp. 250-254; *South Canaras* Man., Vol. I, pp. 173-174).

Extract on "HOLEYA" from Census of India, 1901 Volume —XXIV, Mysore, Part I—Report by T. ANANDA ROW, B. A., Director of Statistics in charge of Census Operations, Bangalore: Office of the Superintendent Govt. Printing, in Mysore, pages 523-525.

HOLEYA : (*Telugu—Malavaru. Tamil—Pariah. Hindustani—Dhed.*)

(*Population*—577,166; 290,992 or 50.4 per cent males, of whom 165,315 or 28.6 per cent are unmarried; 112,821 or 19.5 per cent married and 12,856 or 2.2 per cent widowers; 286,174 or 49.5 per cent females of whom 118,292 or 20.4 per cent are unmarried; 119,144 or 20.6 per cent married and 48,738 or 8.4 per cent widows. They muster only 2,650 or 0.4 per cent literates, of whom 2,685 or 0.4 per cent are literate in Provincial Vernaculars, 117 or 0.02 per cent in English and 29 or 0.00 per cent in other languages. The *infirms* number 778 or 0.11 per cent, of whom 53 or 0.00 per cent are Insane, 299 or 0.05 per cent are Deaf-mutes, 346 or 0.05 per cent Blind, and 80 or 0.01 per cent Leprous. By *industrial* condition these shose show 232,166 or 40.2 per cent Actual Workers, of whom 11,183 or 1.9 per cent are engaged in their Traditional (village watchmen, & c) as their principal occupation, while another 7,467 or 1.2 per cent are engaged in it as a subsidiary one. Agriculture claims 130,130 or 22.5 per cent of these people, while only 90,853 or 15.7 per cent are in other walks of life).

1. This caste, which is not only indigenous but even aboriginal, is essentially a native of the Province. The variations show that these people have increased by 75,157 or 14.9 per cent over their strength of 1891. Unfortunately, figures for 1871 are not available for comparison, as these were all brought under a general term "Out castes". But it is needless to say that these people must have suffered frightfully from the effects of the Famine of 18'6-78, and that they are slowly recovering their strength, swelled up again by large bodies of immigrants of this caste. Their distribution by Districts shows that one-third of the entire population are in the Mysore District, and nearly one-third in the Districts of Bangalore and Kolar, and the rest elsewhere.

2. They constitute, in fact, quite as fully as their name implies, "the back-bone of cultivation" in the country. Hola is the Kanarese name for a dry-crop field, and Holeya means the man of such field.

3. The caste has numerous sub-divisions all of which may, however, be crystalliized into 7 or 7 clans, such as the Kannada,

Gangadikara, Maggada, Morasu, Telugu Tigola and Tamil Holeyas or Pariyas. All these dine together but marriage is confined between families well known to each other.

4. There is a council of elders presided over by a chief called "Cothugara", which decides all questions of caste discipline, etc.

5. These people eat beef, fowl, fish and pork and drink spirituous liquors. They eat carrion, but the animal must have died a natural death.

6. Their marriage is nothing but a feast, when the bridegroom ties the bottu round the bride's neck. The wife cannot be divorced except for adultery. Widows are prohibited from remarrying, but the caste winks at a widow's living with another man. This caste also frequently takes the vow of becoming Dasari.

7. The Holeyas are chiefly employed as labourers in connection with agriculture, and manufacture with hand-looms various kinds of coarse cloth or home-spun, which are worn extensively by the poorer classes, notwithstanding that they are being fast supplanted by foreign cheap fabrics. In some parts of the Mysore District, considerable numbers of the Holeyas are specially engaged in betel-vine gardening. As labourers, these classes are employed in innumerable pursuits in which manual labour preponderates. The Aleman subdivision furnishes recruits as Barr Sepoys.

8. The Holeyas or Pariyas are known by different names in different parts of the Province. In the Maidan or the Eastern Division, they are more numerous, and enjoy a certain recognised prestige and status in the village autonomy. In the pre-survey period, the Kulvadi, who is generaly a Holeya or Madiga, was so closely identified with the soil, that his oth, accompanied by certain formalities and aweinspiring solemnities, was considered to be a final decision in long standing and most bitterly contested boundary disputes. He has an important place in the village hierarchy and is the right-hand man of the village headman caled the Patel. In the Malnad, the Holeya had degenerated into the agrarian slave and till recently, within the experience of men still living, he was practically an hereditary bondsman bought and sold with the land to which he was attached. The advent of British rule and higher principles of civil law, the introduction of the Survey Settlement, the demand for labour with higher wages brought about by the extension of coffee cultivation by European planters, and a just application of the provisions of Act XIII of 1859, all tended to emancipate him from this thraldom of ages, so that he may now

be seen, in many cases, owning land as a proprietor himself, paying taxes direct to Government, and altogether a more respectable person than he ever was. In the cities and urban centres, the Pariya is often not the polluting person that he elsewhere is. He is a good and intelligent workman, an esteemed servant and good citizen.

9. 351 persons out of the entire population have returned Gothras; the names of the Gothras being Harischandra (162), Kali (30), Yekke (11), and Karadi (22). In thus doing, it is evident that they are learning to venerate themselves like others in admittedly higher grades of society.

Extract on "HOLEYA" from Census of India, 1911, Volume XXI, Mysore, Part-I—Report, by V. R. THYAGARAJA AIYAR, M.A., Superintendent of Census Operations, Mysore State, Bangalore : Printed at the Government Press, 1912 pages 152 and 153.

.....To demonstrate the value of these remarks the constitution of a few sub-castes of certain castes (Agasa, Beda, Holeya, Kuruba, Madiga, Nayinda, Vakkaliga, Vodda) are examined with reference to their origin, rigidity of rules of endogamy and commensality, caste councils and penalties on breach of the rules which differentiate different sub-caste of the same caste.

(a) Origin :

Holeya.—There are divisions comprising endogamous groups based on the language they speak, Kanarese, Telugu and Tamil. Of the Kanarese-speaking division, the groups of *Gangadikara* and *Morasu* probably point to the Vakkaligas of those names under whom the sub-castes took refuge when they were first dispossessed and *Magga* (weaver) and had their origin in the different occupations of the lordship of the soil; the groups *Dasa* (servant) *Hagga* (rope) followed.

(b) Rigidity of the rules of endogamy and commensality :

Holeya.—Tamil Holeyas take food in the houses of Kanada and Telugu sections, while the latter do not return the compliment, regarding the Tamil Holeyas as inferior in origin. The Gangadikar Holeyas, however, do not eat in the houses of even other Kanada Holeyas. Endogamy is strictly observed.

(c) Caste Councils :

Sufficient information is not available as to whether sub-caste councils are affiliated to a common caste council. The jurisdiction seems to be territorial over the caste or connected group of endogamous groups, rather than over the endogamous group only. The Morasu Vakkaligas, for instance, are divided into *Kattemanes*, each of them being presided over by a *Yajaman* or *Gauda*. Several *Kattemanes* from a *Nadu* (division of country) and at the head of each *Nadu* is a *Nadu gauda*. Several such *Nadus* form a *Dasa* (or country) presided over by a *Desayi Gauda* or *Bhumi Gauda*. There are two such, one at the head of the Telugu section and another at the head of the Kanada section of this caste. The goldsmiths are recognised by the other Panchalas as the head of their clan and are given caste jurisdiction.

(d) Nature of penalties on breach of rules which differentiate the sub-castes of the caste :

Breach of rule of endogamy is severely punished. As regards offences against rules of food, the caste *Panchayats* are disposed to be lenient.

Extract on "HOLEYA" from Census of India, 1911, ***Volume XXI, Mysore, Part V—Report, by V. R. THYAGARAJA AIYAR, M.A., Superintendent of Census Operations, Mysore State, Bangalore : Printed at the Government Press*** 1912 *pages* 167 & 168 *Glossary.*

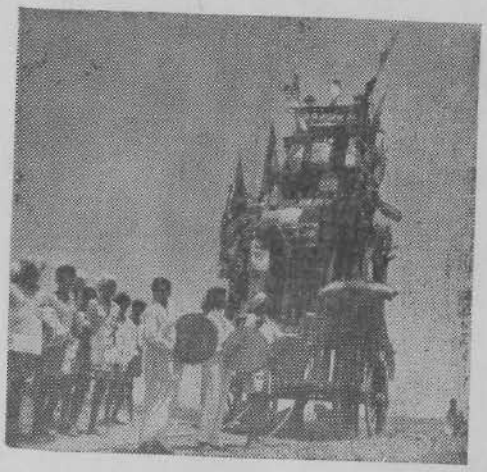
HOLEYA (613,248) : These are found everywhere, but they are not so numerous in Chitaldrug and Tumkur Districts. The traditional occupation is that of either a village watchman or an agricultural labourer. Nearly one-fifth of the number of actual workers follow the traditional occupation. They furnish the bulk of the ordinary and mining labourers. The word *'Holeya'* is, literally speaking, a person of the land and probably points to the origin of the caste. The *Holeyas* may have been the original dwellers of the country, who were subjugated and made to be labourers attached to the land, by in-coming settlers in times beyond memory. The derivation of the word from 'hole' or pollution does not seem to be correct for we are not positive whether the uncleanly habits were the resulting effects or the causing factors of the degraded condition of the caste. The *Holeyas* form the bulk of agricultural labourers in the State. In Mysore they generally speak Kanarese, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi being used by small sections of them according to the place of their origin. The Holeya belongs to the 18 Phanas section of the community, of the meetings of which he is the convener when he goes forth carrying a brass cup and chain as insignia, the cup having on it engraved the badges of different castes composing this section, such as the plough of the Vakkaliga, the scales of the Banajiga, the shears of a Kuruba, the spade of a Vodda, the razor of a barber, the washing stone slab and pot of an Agasa and the wheel of a Kumbara. The caste Holeya has a number of sub-divisions. the principle of division being language, profession or Place of residence or two or more combined; and these groups are all said to be endogamous. Kanada speaking divisions are *Gangadikara, Morasu, Dasa, Magga* (*weaver*), and *Hagga* (*rope-maker*). The Telugu groups are *Pakinati, Chintalu, Gundlujagati, Rampalu, Pasupasere* and *Savu. Konga, Dyaval, Mastikaru, Gogla,* and *Kudare* are of Tamil origin. A small number of Marathi-speaking Holeyas are found scattered over the country on the borders of the Bombay Presidency. Tamil Holeyas take food in the houses of Kanada and Telugu sections, while the latter do not return the compliment, regarding the Tamil Holeyas as inferior in origin. The *Gangadikara* Holeyas are regarded as the highest in rank. The Holeyas have a number of exogamous divisions or *Kulas*. Those who perform the worship of their gods are known as **Devaraguddas** the relation of these to others of the caste being hypergamous. Holeya girls are married either before or after puberty. If a girl remains

unmarried from the absence of suitors, she is married to trees, Honge (*Pongamia glabra*), Bavu (*margosa*), Yekke (*calotropis gigantea*), and dedicated to shrines like those of *Biligiri Ranga* or *Siddappaji*. She may then live with any man of the caste without losing status. She inherits then the rights and privileges of a son. Her children belong to her father and are legitimate. A father may also dedicate his daughter to the patron deity having made a vow during the child's illness. This system is not in vogue among the *Gangadikara* and *Morasu* Holeyas but is general among the rest. The bride price is stated to be Rs. 12-13-14 at Channapatna, Rs. 25 at Koppa and Rs. 15 at Nanjangud. The marriage of widows is permitted. Divorce is permitted at the desire of either party, for infidelity on the part of the wife or even without such a ground if they agree to part, provided she pays a fine to the caste. Holeyas do not perform Shraddhas. The Holeyas live in a hamlet separate from the village called *Holageri*. Though very rarely, recruits from other castes are taken into the fold after a ceremony. Sons divide the father's property equally, the youngest son having a right of selecting the first share. A son-in-law who resides with his father-in-law receives and equal share with his brothers-in-law. Holeyas cannot use the village well and the village barber and washerman do not render services to them. Holeyas are either *Saivas* or *Vaishnavas*. They pay homage chiefly to the images which personify the malignant powers and bloodthirsty qualities, e.g. *Mariamma, Sangamma, Mastamma, Baire Devadu, Manigamma, Hindamma, Mutyalamma, Patalamma* etc. The religious itinerant mendicants among them are known as *Dasa, Jogi, Devaraguda, Bidimanushya*, or *Nilagararu*. Satanis are generally the priests of Holeyas. Sometimes a man of Lingayat caste and a *Tirukala Dasa* of the Vishnu cult also sometimes serve as priests.

The Holeyas manufacture coarse cotton cloth; some are engaged in betel vine gardening. The *Aleman* sub-division furnishes recruits to the local infantry as sepoys. In purely *Malnad* Taluks, some Holeyas on estates were considered *serfs* either a *Huttalu* or going with the family of the landlord or as *Mannalu* or going with land when it changes hands. (Mys. Eth. Mon.)

Extract on 'HOLEYA' from Census of India, 1911, Vol. XXIII, Travancore, Part-I—Report by N. SUBRAMHANYA AIYAR, M.A., Dewan Peishcar, Census Commissioner, Trivandrum : Printed at the Ananda Press, 1912 page 259.

HOLIA (49)—A Kanarese Caste. Occupation is agriculture, like that of the Pulayas of Malbar, the k in many Kanarese words corresponding to p in Tamil and Malayalam.



Car festival of Holeyas on hilltop near Denkanikotta in Dharmapuri District.



Holeyas consume melons to tranquilize heat.



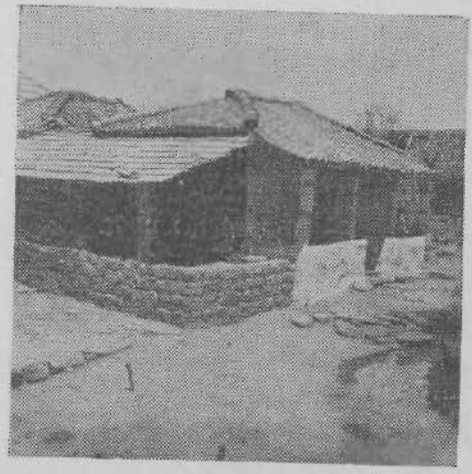
No barbecue but ragi gruel to feed the poor.



The untouchable Holeyas--indigent and destitute—receive fill from fall.

Far below par of caste Hindus, Holeyas live in segregated huts.



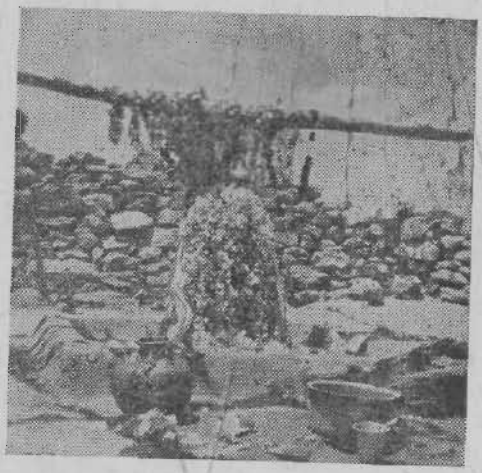


A tiled house with a shed for cattle.



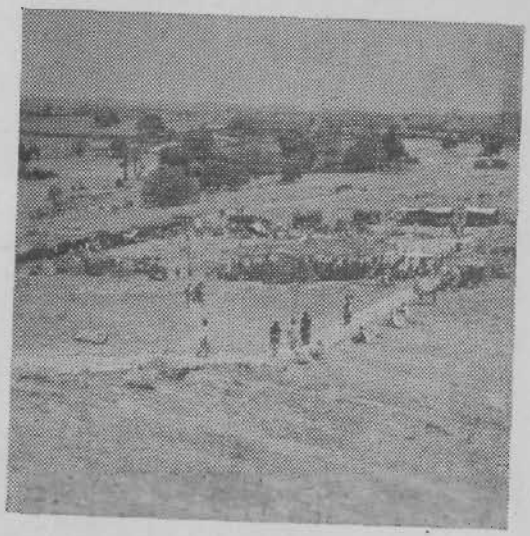
Pulverising ragi by quern stone.

The deity which Holeyas bow to.

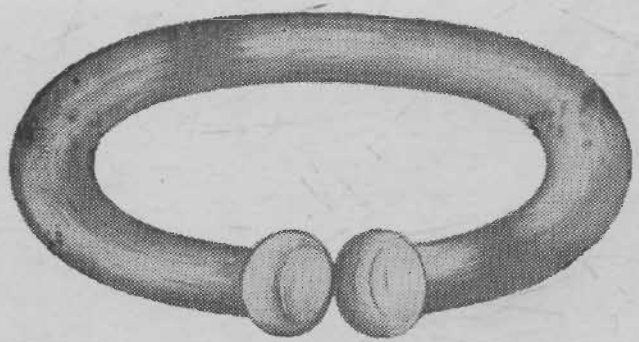




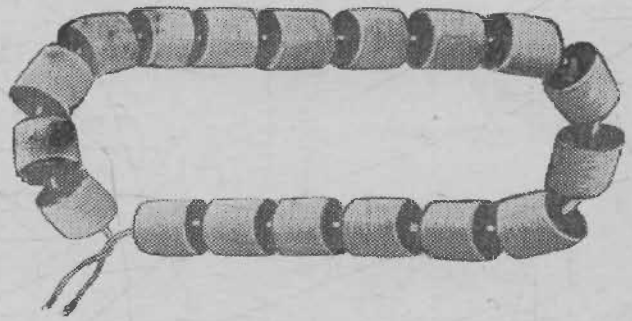
Bangle selling involves touching the untouchables. Holeya women seek the jingle wear to cherish festival day.



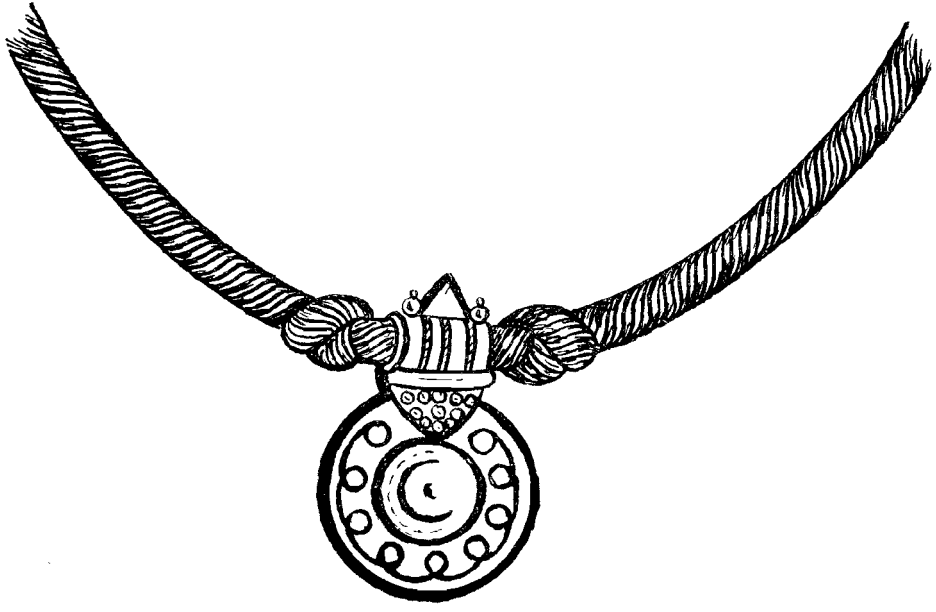
A panoromic view of Anniyalam Village in Denkanikotta Taluk of Dharmapuri District.



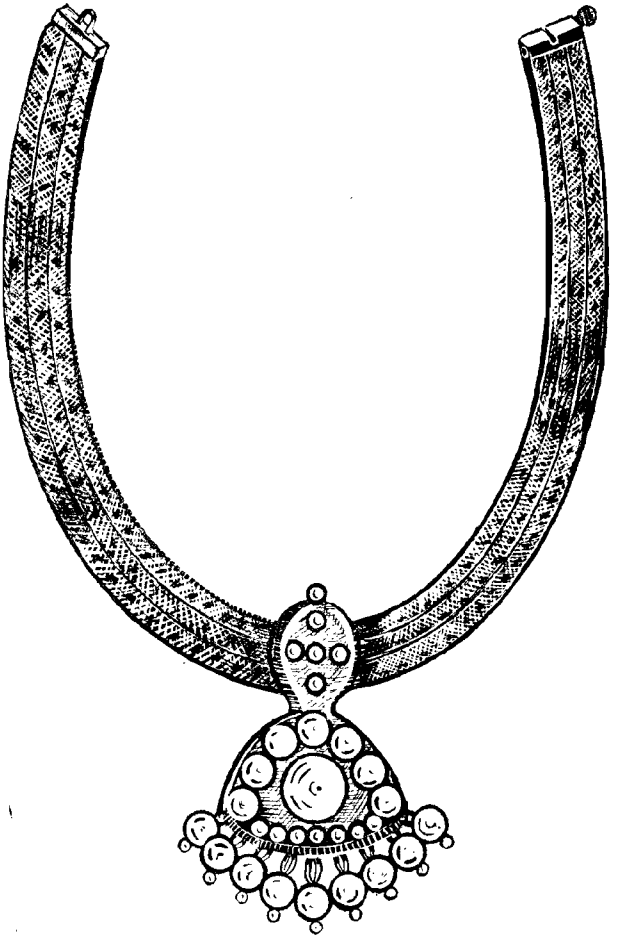
Kappu



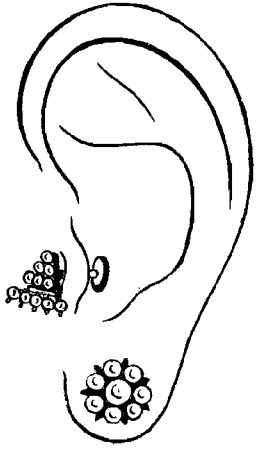
Kai-mani

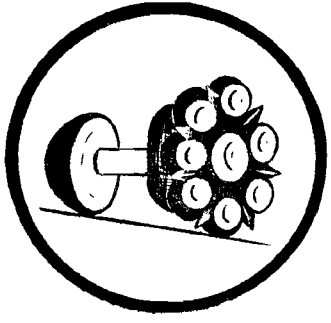


Tali (Marriage badge)

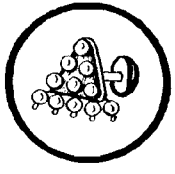


Addigai worn in the neck.

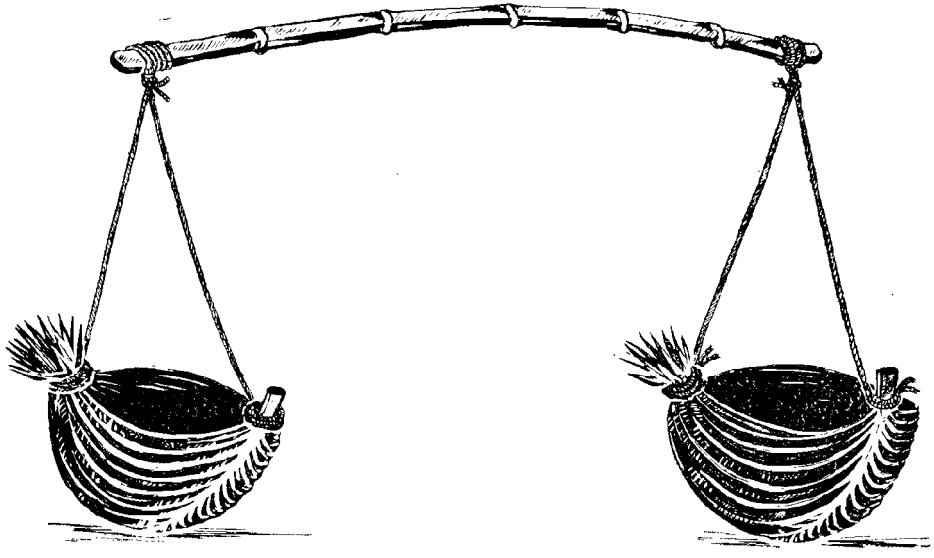




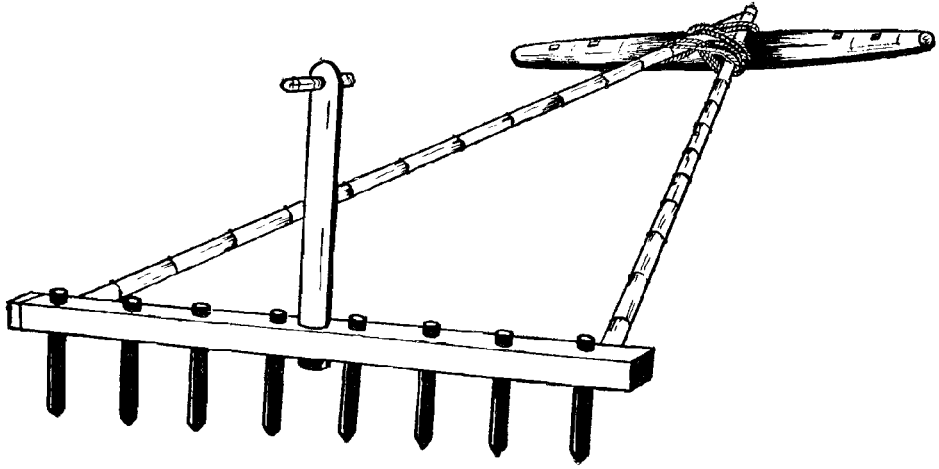
Kammal



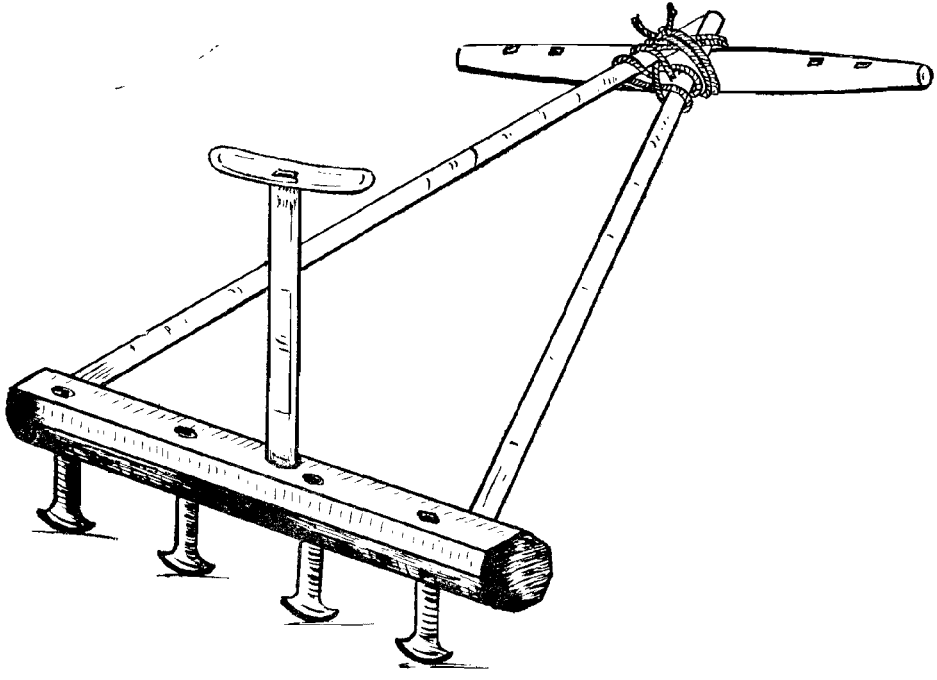
Kuppai Talukku



"Kavadi" for carrying water

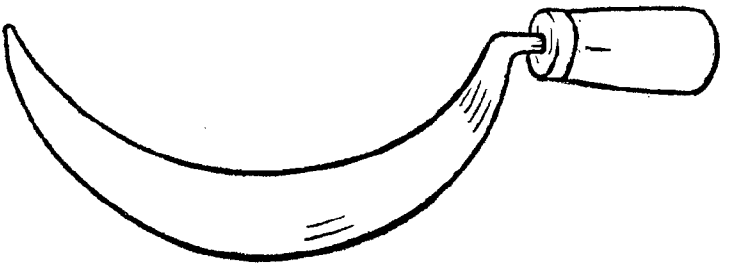


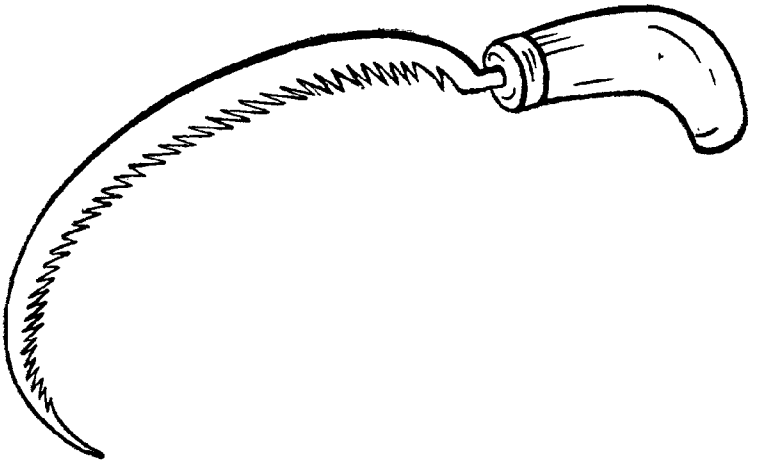
Aluvai



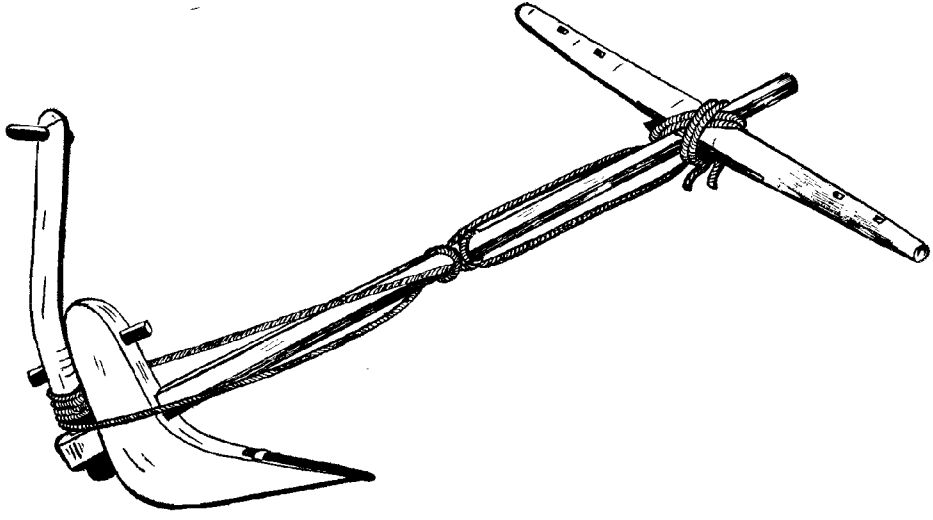
Kundai

Aruval





Karukkudalu



Kalappai (Plough) of Holeyas

MADIGAS

Name, Identity, origin and history:

Madiga is a scheduled caste throughout the Madras State except Kanyakumari District and Shencottah taluk of Tirunelveli District; in the whole of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and in parts of Bombay and Mysore States. This caste of traditional leather workers and agrestic serfs, numbering 3198 in Madras State in 1961 Census, is mostly concentrated in the Hosur taluk of the erstwhile Salem district. So far as Madras State is concerned, Madiga was classified as Depressed Class in 1921 and 1931 Censuses; as Backward Tribe in Thirteenth Schedule to the Government of India Provincial Legislative Assembly Order, 1936 and as Scheduled Caste in the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order 1936, Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lists modification order, 1956. Jambava, Sindhuvallu, Dakkali, Gosangi, Mastiga, Puravabatta, Chakkara, Chundi, Pavini, Vayani, Mayikkan and Matanga are the synonyms for Madigas in the State (Census of India, 1961, Vol. IX, Madras, Part V-A (i), Appendix I, page 437). Gosangi, the fourth synonym, is also treated as a separate entity and was classified as Depressed class in 1931 Census and Scheduled Caste with effect from 1936. Jambuvalu, which appears to sound like the first synonym Jambava, is also treated as a separate entity and was classified as Depressed Class in 1931 Census and as Scheduled Caste with effect from 1936. In fact Thurston observes that "Madigas sometimes call themselves Jambavas and claim to be descended from Jambu or Adi Jambuvalu, who is perhaps the Jambuvan of the Ramayana" (Castes and Tribes of Southern India, 1909 — Vol. IV — page 315). He also describes Madiga as "the great leather working caste of the Telugu country and correspond to the Chakkiliars of the Tamil area" (P. 292 *ibid*). Chakkiliars are the fourth major Scheduled Caste of the State and constitute 13% of the State's Scheduled Caste population. Their origin is also believed to be the Telugu country. Though these two castes are treated separate, the dividing line between these two communities is obliterated. Madigas are predominant in the districts of Salem, Coimbatore, Nilgiris and Madras. A study of this caste was conducted in Kottur village, about five miles west of Denkanikotta in Hosur taluk of former Salem District.

In Madras Census Report 1891, Mr. H. A. Stuart the then Superintendent of Census Operations traces the origin of

Madigas as follows "There was formerly a Matanga dynasty in the Canarese country and the Madigas are believed by some to be descendants of people who were once a ruling race. Matangi is a Sanskrit name for Kali and it is possible that the Madigas once played an important part in the worship of the God. The employment of Chukkiliyans and Madiga women in Shakti worship gives some colour to this supposition". Towards the end of an article in Madras Mail, 1902 quoted by Thurston on pp. 297-298 of his 4th volume on Castes and Tribes of Southern India, it is observed that "it is interesting to note that Matangas were an ancient line of kings 'somewhere in the south', and the Madigas call themselves Matangi Makkalu or children of Matangi or Durga, who is their goddess". More details about Matangi is dealt within the chapter on religion.

Fleet in his 'Dynastics of the Kanarese Districts of the Bombay Presidency, 1882' observes that "the Matangas and the Katachchuris are mentioned in connection with Mangalisa, who was the younger brother and successor of Kirttivarama I, and whose reign commenced in Saka 489 (A.D. 567-8), and terminated in Saka 532 (A.D. 610-11). Of the Matangas nothing is known except the mention of them. But Matanga means a chandala, a man of the lowest caste, an outcast, a Kirata mountaineer, a barbarian'; and the Madigas, i.e. the Mahangs of this part of the country, usually call themselves Matangi makkalu, i.e. the children of Matangi or Durga who is their goddess. It is probable, therefore, that the Matangar of this inscription were some aboriginal family of but little power and not of sufficient importance to have left any record of themselves".

There are allusions to Matangas in Kadambari, a Sanskrit work (the chieftain of the Cabaras being styled as Matanga) and Ramayana. As already indicated at the beginning, Thurston speculates an association of Madigas with Jambavan of Ramayana. Besides this speculation he also mentions that "Some Madigas, called Sindhuvallu, go about acting scenes from the Mahabaratha and Ramayana. They also assert that they fell to their present low position as the result of a curse and tell the following story :— 'Kamadhenu, the sacred cow of the Puranas, was yielding plenty of milk, which the Devas alone used. Vellamanu, a Madiga boy, was anxious to taste the milk, but was advised by Adi Jambuvadu to abstain from it. He, however, secured some by stealth, and thought that the flesh would be sweeter still. Learning this, Kamadhenu died. The Devas cut its carcass into four parts, of which they gave one to Adi Jambuvadu. But they wanted the cow brought back to life, and each brought his share of it for the purpose of reconstruction. But Velamanu had cut a bit of the flesh, boiled it, and breathed on it,

so that, when the animal was recalled to life, its chin sank, as the flesh thereof had been defiled. This led to the sinking of the Madigas in the social scale. The following variant of this legend is given in the Mysore Census Report, 1891. "At a remote period, Jambava Rishi, a sage was one day questioned by Isvara (Siva) why the former was habitually late at the Divine Court. The rishi replied that he had personally to attend to the wants of his children every day, which consequently made his attendance late: whereupon Isvara, pitying the children, gave the rishi a cow (Kamadhenu), which instantaneously supplied their every want. Once upon a time, while Jambava was absent at Isvara's Court, another rishi, named Sankya, visited Jambava's hermitage, where he was hospitably entertained by his son Yugamuni. While taking his meals, the cream that had been served was so savoury that the guest tried to induce Jambava's son Yugamuni, to kill the cow and eat her flesh; and, in spite of the latter's refusal. Sankya killed the animal, and prevailed upon the others to partake of the meat. On his return from Isvara's Court, Jambava found the inmates of his heritage eating the sacred cow's beef; and took both Sankya and Yugamuni over to Isvara's Court for judgment. Instead of entering, the two offenders remained outside, Sankya rishi standing on the right side and Yugamuni on the left of the doorway. Isvara seems to have cursed them to become Chandalas or outcasts. Hence, Sankya's decendants are, from his having stood on the right side, designated right-hand caste or Holayas; whilst those who sprang from Yugamuni and his wife Matangi are called lefthand caste or Madigas". The occupation of the latter is said also to be founded on the belief that, by making shoes for people, the sin their ancestors had committed by cow-killing would be expiated. This mode of vicariously atoning for deliberate sin has passed into a facetious proverb, "So and so has killed the cow in order to make shoes from the skin, indicating the utter worthlessness and insufficiency of the reparation." (Castes and Tribes of Southern India, 1909, Vol. IV, by E. Thurston pp. 315-316)

Madigas of Kottur village, where the field study was undertaken are ignorant of such published legends. In fact they are not inclined to narrate any legend regarding their origin or possible migration from Telugu or Karnataka country.

II. Distribution and population trend :

Madiga is one of the 67 scheduled castes returned in Tamil Nadu in 1961 Census. Their population as on 1-3-1961 was 3,198 comprising 1,620 males and 1,578 females but how many of them were enumerated along with the other synonyms like Gosangi or

Jambuvalu are not known. These 3,198 Madigas account for 00.05% of the total Scheduled Castes of the State and hold the 22nd place among the 67 Scheduled Castes. The fact that Chakkiliar the fourth major Scheduled Caste of the State, accounting for 13% of total Scheduled Castes, is considered to correspond Madigas, limits the use of Census data regarding the latter.

The 1961 Census data indicates the distribution of Madigas as follows :—

State/District	No. of Persons returned in 1961 Census	Percentage to the State	Descending order of size within State	Percentage among all the Scheduled Castes	Rank among all the Shedul-ed Castes
1	2	3	4	5	6
Madras State . . .	3,198	100·00	..	00·05	22
Madras District . .	427	13·35	IV	00·20	9
Chingleput District . .	13	00·41	VIII	N	..
North Arcot District . .	73	02·28	V	00·01	16
South Arcot District . .	28	00·88	VI	N	..
Salem District . .	1,707	53.38	I	00·31	10
Coimbatore District . .	490	15·32	II	00·09	18
Nilgiris District . .	430	13·45	III	00·55	11
Madurai District . .	7	00·22	X	N	..
Tiruchirapalli District .	14	00·44	VII	N	..
Thanjavur District . .	..	..	..	..	..
Ramanathapuram District .	..	..	..	..	..
Tirunelveli District . .	9	00·28	IX	N	26
Kanyakumari District .	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

N=Negligible.
NS=Non-Scheduled.
Basis : Census of India 1961 Vol. IX Part V-A SCT II Part A.

The above table reveals that Madigas predominate in Salem district, accounting for 53.38% of the total Madigas in the State. Next comes Coimbatore District with 15.32% followed by Nilgiris and Madras City with 13.45% and 13.35% respectively. It is obvious that Madigas being a Telugu and Kannada speaking community occupy the areas bordering Andhra Pradesh and Mysore States in high proportions. South Arcot and Tanjore are the two districts which accommodate the highest proportion of scheduled castes viz., 13.21%, 12.37% respectively. But in South Arcot District their population is 28 persons or 0.88% occupying 6th position in the State. No Madiga has been recorded in Tanjore and Ramanathapuram Districts. The least proportions are found in Madurai, Tirunelveli, Chingleput and Tiruchirapalli districts.

Among the general population and all Scheduled Castes put together, more people live in the rural areas the percentages being 73.31 for the former and 84.74 for the latter. Madigas have recorded 86.12 percent, exceeding those of general population and all Scheduled Castes. This is quite reasonable because they are traditional leather workers and agricultural labourers. Madigas fall in line with the general population and Scheduled Castes in recording less females than the males, the number of females per 100 males being 97 per cent, while it is 99% for both the general population and Scheduled Caste. The following statement indicates the percentage of population within various age groups.

Percentage age distribution

Age Group	General population	All Scheduled Castes	Madigas
All ages	100.00	100.00	100.00
0—4	13·68	14·76	14·79
5—9	12·79	12·52	13·88
10—14	11·13	11·43	12·60
15—19	08·47	08·55	07·57
20—24	08·82	08·96	07·35
25—29	08·65	08·98	09·07
30—34	07·07	07·49	08·44
35—44	12·14	11·49	11·10
45—59	11·64	10·97	09·91
60+	05·60	04·84	05·28
A.N.S.	00·01	00·01	00·00

A.N.S = Age not stated

Basis : Census of India, 1961 — Vol. IX Part V-A (i) Madras Appendix IV

The proportion of scheduled caste is more than the general population upto 34th year of age, with the exception of the age-group 5-9, and then it is less. A definite trend is also noticed that the difference gradually decreases from the lower age group 0-4 upto 30-34 and then increases. This indicates that the life expectancy of scheduled caste is definitely less than that of the general population. The position deteriorates further in the case of Madigas, which records the largest percentage of population upto 14 years of age and in the age groups 15-24 and least in other age groups showing a still lower expectation of life for Madigas.

III. Physical characteristics :

Madigas have more prominent cheek-bones, a more vinous eye and are more unkempt. (Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Vol. IV by Thurston, E. r. 293). They are generally short in stature. They appear well built and healthy. They have round faces. They are mostly dark in complexion and very few among them are brown in colour.

IV. Clan and Other Divisions :

Regarding the internal structure of the caste, Nanjundayya and Iyer (The Mysore Tribes and Castes—Vol. IV—pp. 125-169) observe as follows. "The caste contains two main divisions based on the language they speak, the Kannada and the Telugu Madigas. The Kannada Madigas do not intermarry with the Telugu speaking Madigas. Each language group has three endogamous divisions, which are Tanige Buvvadavaru in Kannada and the Tale Buvvamullu in Telugu (of the eating dish division); Hedige Buvvadavaru in Kannada and Gampa Buvvamullu, in Telugu (of the basket division); and Mora Buvvadavaru of the winnow division. These last are again sub-divided into single and double winnows". These divisions are named after the manner in which the bride and the bridegroom eat Buvva (food or common marital meal), that is, as they keep the food in an eating dish, a basket or a winnow. There are two other divisions among the Madigas, known as Jambavas & Dakkaloru; gurus of the hereditary bonds men of the Madigas.

The Madigas have a number of exogamous divisions known as Kulas, or bedagus. Most of them are named after various material objects, such as trees and animals. According to Thurston (Vol. IV) "The following are some of the more important endogamous sub divisions among the Madigas :—

Gampa dhompti — basket offering

Ginna or thal dhompti — tray or cut offering

Bhumi dhompti — earth offering

Chtala dhompti — Winnowing basket offering

Sibbi dhompti — brass vessel offering

Chadarappa dhompti — Square space on the ground offering.

These sub-divisions are based on the way in which the members thereof offer food, etc., to their Gods during marriages. (e.g.) a Gampa dhompti places it in a basket, a Bhumi dhompti on the floor. Each sub division possesses many exogamous septs of which the following are examples.

Bell — Silver

Chinthala — tamarind etc. etc.

Both the sources quoted above indicate that the divisions are based on the way food is offered to Gods or partaken during marriage. They also indicate that the exogamous septs are named after material objects. Madigas at Kottoor village, where the field study was undertaken, belong to 'Gampa dhompti — basket offering' sub-division. As there is no other sub-division in this village, information on divisions or inter division relationship could not be obtained in detail. The only information they could furnish was their further division, into many exogamous septs or Gothras as they call it. Some of them are as follows :—

Narasimhaswamy Gothra

Thimmaraswamy Gothra

Obuleswaraswami Gothra

Venkataramanaswamy Gothra

Madanagiriswamy Gothra

Ellammathevudu Gothra

As all te above have some personal name, in all probability, they may refer to lineage or family names.

V. Dwelling, Dress, Ornaments and Food habits :

In Kottur village, where field study was undertaken, Madigas live in a separate locality in Elasetti hamlet on the western part of the village. A cart-track separates the locality of Madigas from that of caste-Hindus. The houses in the Madiga locality are constructed in a line on either side of three streets, which, along with the cart-track separating the Madigas from the other caste Hindus, make a

rectangle. The houses forming the street are mostly each separate, but some touch each other in a row. The streets are broad. Water stagnates in cess pools. In the middle of their locality, there is a dirty pond in which rain water collects. The streets are unswept. Some of the houses have wide open front-yards which are used for tethering cattle during day time. The houses do not appear to be congested.

There is not much difference between the general pattern and that of the houses of the Madigas. Most of the houses in this locality are tiled ones. Both Mangalore tiles and country tiles are used. Some of the houses are thatched, the thatching material being the dried rush of sugar-cane and the straw of paddy. The roofing of all the houses is low. The walls of pucca houses are made of country bricks, or stones in random rubble. The thatched houses have mud walls with no proper plastering. The flooring of the houses is rugged and mud plastered. Almost all the houses have more than one room. One of the rooms is invariably used for tethering cattle during the cold months. A buffer wall in the living room separates the kitchen from the rest of the room. Bathing and washing are done in the front open yards. Some of the houses have front open varandahs. The availability of cheap stone pillars and stone slabs in these parts is evident from the large scale use of these in the construction of the houses.

Their males crop their hair; some have half-crops (ie.) they crop the hair with frontal portion of the head shaved. Some have tufts. They shave the head all round except for a round patch over which the tuft is grown. Almost all men have moustaches. The women part their hair in the middle and tie it into a loose knot at the back. They keep the hair mostly unkempt. The girls plait their hair into pig-tails.

Their men wear short dhoties in the waist. They put on half shirts or some second hand coat over their body. Bare bodies are seldom seen in this cold part of the country. Their women wear coloured sarees of 8 yards length. They adjust the fold of the saree to the front and throw the "pallav" over the left shoulder. In this style they differ from the Malas of Andhra area, whose women throw the "pallav" over the right shoulder. Young girls are found either in their skirts or in gowns. Boys wear shorts and shirts.

The ornaments worn by the Madiga women of Hosur area are typically characteristic of the Karnataka region. In the ear lobes they wear stone-studded ear-rings or *"Kammals"*. Stone-studded nose-screws are worn on the nose. They wear cheap chains or a string of glass beads or corals in the neck. In a few women,

the neck chain is found to contain small articles like safety pins, key of the lock of the house, tooth-picker etc. hooked to it, so that they can take them out whenever they want to use those tiny articles. Married women wear coin-shaped "*Pottu Tali* "(marriage badge) in a string of black beads. In the wrists they wear a series of glass *bangles,* "*Kai Mani*" (a string of corals), "*Kappu*" etc. Some wear silver bracelet called "*Sarigai*". In the waist they invariably wear a silver or rolled-gold plated, metallic belt called "*Ottiyanam*" over the saree, probably to keep the saree from untying itself. Some of their men wear ear-rings. Some men wear *Sarigai* in their wrists. Most of the jewels worn both by the men and women are cheap ones made of baser metals. A few only wear gold ornaments.

Tattooing of floral designs in the arms and in the legs is common among women. They put on big '*Kumkum Tilaks*'.

There is a local saying in Hosur taluk that the wants of most people there would be met by "*Kali*" and "*Puli*" meaning ragi meal and tamarind. These two form the essential ingredients of the monotonous meal of the poor class people of this locality. The "*Kali*" is made by cooking ragi flour into a pasty thick solid meal. This is generally eaten hot along with a sauce prepared with pulses and tamarind. Rice is taken as a luxury item during festive occasions. The Madigas cook their meals twice a day, in the morning and evening and eat three times a day. They take plenty of vegetables especially tomatoes during the seasons when they are cheap. They are all non-vegetarians. They eat mutton, chicken and fish. They also eat beef and pork but in recent time an attempt is made to abstain from taking beef as the caste-Hindus look down on them because of their beef-eating habit. They resort to non-vegetarian food only on rare occasions like festivals and feasts.

Chewing of pan with tobacco is widely prevalent among them as is the habit with the working class people of lower income group. Both males and females are addicted to this. The stealthy use of alcholic liquor is occasional.

VI. Environmental Sanitation, Hygienic Habits etc. :

As already indicated under "Dwelling", even-though the streets of Madiga locality in Kottur Village are broad, they are unswept. There is a dirty pond in the middle of their locality, where rain water collects. Besides, water stagnates in cess pools.

The Madigas of Hosur area do not take bath daily. It may be twice a week. But this is nothing peculiar to the caste. As this is a cold country, the people here do not generally think it necessary

to have daily baths. The weekly bath-days are Mondays and Saturdays. There seems to be no speciality to these days. Washing of clothes is also not done daily. A wash of the teeth, face and limbs, and smearing the forehead with sacred ash are considered normally sufficient for the daily body-cleansing. The Madigas generally keep the inside of their houses clean. They plaster the walls with mud and smear it with paint of red earth. The flooring is smeared with cow-dung paste. But their practice of tying the cattle inside the house leads to breeding of mosquitoes and the creation of a stench inside the house. The environmental sanitation in the Madiga locality of Elastty cannot be considered as satisfactory. Neither the owners of the locality nor the village Panchayat seems to have taken steps to clean the streets frequently. The Madigas of this locality have got a separate drinking water well. Such a facility is not however reported to be existing in other Madiga villages, where they do not have separate wells. In such villages, they have to be dependent on the mercy of the caste Hindus for their drinking water facility. Or, if there is any jungle stream or pond close-by, they go to it for taking water from these unprotected sources. The Madigas appear to be generally healthy. They do not suffer from any contagious disease like leprosy guineaworm etc. Their areas were formerly malarial infested, but now they are practically free from it.

VII. Language and literacy :

Madigas are not indigenous in Madras State and as such their mother tongue is not Tamil. They speak either Telugu or Kannada among themselves depending on the places from where they have originated and use Tamil to converse with others.

Of the 3,198 Madigas returned in 1961 Census, 226 were reported as literates, consisting of 195 males and 31 females. 87 of the male literates and 22 of the female literates were in urban areas. These figures are presented as a percentage along with those for the general population and all the scheduled castes put together for easy comparison.

Percentage of literates

	Rural		Urban	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
General population .	37·81	11·57	62·66	36·67
All Scheduled Castes .	20·86	4·23	38·34	13·96
Madigas	07·75	0·66	38·33	10·14

Basis : Census of India Vol. IX — Parts II C (i) and V-A (ii). The above statement reveals that the rate of literacy among Madigas is

the lowest of the three categories. The disparity is too high in rural areas while in urban there is not so much gap. In fact there is practically little difference between the urban males of Scheduled Castes and Madigas even though they have to put in more efforts to compete with the general population. The overall rate of literacy including males and females in rural and urban sectors, works out to 7.07% as against 31.41 for general population and 14.53 for all the scheduled castes. Detailed break up of educational level, age and sex in the case of Madigas is as follows.

Educational levels for every 100.00 *Madigas enumerated in the state by sex and age-group*

Sex	Age-group	Illiterate	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation & above
1	2	3	4	5	6
Males	All ages . .	44·56	03·69	02·38	00·03
	0—4 . .	07·97	00.00	00·00	00·00
	5—9 . .	06·19	00·91	00·03	00·00
	10—14 . .	04·66	00·47	01.06	00·00
	15—19 . . .	02·97	00.47	00·47	00·00
	20—29 . . .	06.04	00·66	00·31	00.00
	30—44 . . .	09·35	00.84	00·41	00·00
	45+ . . .	07·38	00·34	00·09	00·03
Females	All ages . .	48·37	00·72	00·25	00·00
	0—4 . . .	06·82	00·00	00·00	00·00
	5—9 . . .	06·44	00·28	00·03	00·00
	10—14 . . .	06·07	00·25	00·09	00·00
	15—19 . . .	03·56	00·03	00·06	00·00
	20—29 . . .	09·26	00·09	00·06	00·00
	30—44 . . .	08·91	00·03	00·00	00·00
	45+ . . .	07·32	00·03	00·00	00·00
Grond total *i.e.* All ages both the sexes . . .		92·93	04·41	02·63	00·03

Basis : Census of India, Vol. IX, Part V-A(ii).

The statement reveals that all the Madigas in the State are no better than illiterates. They have completely neglected education, 92.93% of the total persons are illiterates which is a high proportion and 04.41% of the total persons are literates without educational qualifications. Despite the fact that there is free education combined with free mid-day meal provided by the State Government no impact has been felt on the literacy of Madigas. The parents perhaps refrain from sending their children to the schools and wish to use them for their traditional trade or rather to assist them in earning their daily bread. But during the survey the children were mostly found to be Baby sitters and not attending the school.

It appears from the field study that they prefer to fix up their boys as farm servants under a land-lord than to send them to school with free mid-day meals facilities. Perhaps this attitude is the result of their poverty. They should try to utilize the ameliorative measures given by the State Government and put in more efforts to reap the benefits of such assistances.

VIII. Economic life :

Madigas' traditional economic way of life is well brought out in the following words of Rev. H. Huizinga in the monograph of tanning and working in Leather, Madras, 1904 by A. Chatterton "they live in hamlets at a respectable distance from the villages of the caste people, by whom they are greatly despised. Their habits are squalid in the extreme, and the odour of a Madiga hamlet is revolting. They perform all the lowest kinds of service for the caste people, especially bearing burdens and working in leather. They take charge of the ox or buffalo as soon as it dies. They remove the skin and tan it, and eat the loathsome carcass, which makes them specially despised, and renders their touch polluting. Some of the skins are used for covering the rude drums that are so largely used in Hindu festivals, and beaten in honour of the village deities. The caste men press the Madigas into their service, not only to make the drums, but also to beat them at their festivals. Eating of carrion is now given up as well as beating of drums at Hindu festivals. Their refusal to beat drum leads to bitter persecution at the hands of the caste people. The main duty of the Madigas is the curing and tanning of hides, and the manufacture of rude leather articles, especially sandals, trappings for bullocks, and large well-buckets used for irrigation. The process of tanning with lime and tangedu (CASSIA AURICULATA) bark is rough and simple. (Tangedu is said to be cut only by the Madigas, as other classes think it beneath their dignity to do it.) What their forefathers did, the Madigas do to-day. The quality of the skins they turn out is fair, and the state of the

development of the native leather trade compares very favourably with that of other trades such as blacksmithy and carpentry. The Madiga's sandals are strong, comfortable, and sometimes highly ornamental. His manner of working, and his tools are as simple as his life. He often gets paid in kind, a little fodder for his buffalo, some measures of some cheap grain, perhaps a few vegetables, etc. In the northern districts, the Madigas are attached to one or more families of ryots, and are entitled to receive the dead animals. Like the Vettiyan in the south, the Madiga is paid in kind, and he has to supply sandals for the ryots, belts for the bulls, and all the necessaries of agriculture; and for these he has to find the requisite leather himself; but for the larger articles, such as water-buckets, the master must find the leather. Of late years, there is a tendency observable among Madigas to poach on each other's monopoly of certain houses, and among the ryots themselves to dispense with the services of family Madigas, and resort to the open market for their necessaries. In such cases, the ryots demand payment from the Madigas for the skins of their dead animals.

The 1961 Census data indicate Madigas' economic way of life as follows :

Means of livelihood

Category	Absolute figures				Percentage to total Population in			
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Workers and non-workers combined . . .	1,393	1,361	227	217	50·58	49·42	51·13	48·87
Workers								
All categories	848	595	157	77	30·79	21·60	35·36	17·34
Cultivator	430	301	..	..	15·61	10·93	00·00	00·00
Agricultural labourer	238	150	..	..	08.64	05.45	00·00	00·00
Livestock, forestry, hunting etc. . . .	30	30	..	..	01·09	01·09	00·00	00.00
Household Industry	33	6	4	3	01.20	00.22	00.90	00.68
Manufacturing other than household industry .	10	..	5	..	00.36	00.00	01.13	00.00
Construction	1	..	..	..	00.04	00.00	00.00	00.00
Trade and Commerce	2	..	3	1	00.07	00.00	00.68	00.23

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Transport, Storage & Communication. . .	..	..	15	1	00.00	00.00	03.38	00.23
Other Services	104	108	130	72	03.78	03.92	29.28	16·22
Non-workers	545	766	70	140	19.79	27.81	15.77	31.53
Special Occupations								
Tanning and curing of hides and skins . .	11	..	..	..	00.40	00.00	00.00	00.00
Scavenging	2	..	100	67	00.47	00.00	22.52	15·09

Basis : Census of India, Vol. IX, Part V-A(1) SCT 1, (Part-A).

The table reveals that 52% of Madigas in the rural sector are workers against 55% among all the Scheduled Castes and 50% among the general population. Women participation of Madigas is 41% against 43% for Scheduled Castes and 37% for general population. Rate of women participation in the labour force in the urban sector decreases by 8%, while the total labour force increases by 1%. Urban working force among Madigas, Scheduled Castes and general population are 53%, 42% and 34% respectively, urban women participation rates being 33%, 34% and 21%.

In the rural sector, agricultural operations are the main source of livelihood followed by other services. In urban areas, 'Other Services' is the main source of employment which category includes Tanning as well as Scavenging. The small figure against their traditional profession of Tanning, that too only in rural, indicates their occupational mobility. The shift is towards Agriculture in rural and towards 'Other services' in urban areas. Perhaps their traditional trade of leather work is not remunerative throughout the year.

More detailed occupational classification on the basis of the code structure laid down by the occupational information unit of the Directorate General of Resettlement and Employment, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India are available in greater detail in Table SCT VII of Census of India, 1961 Vol. IX Part V-A (ii). Occupations which have reported less than 1% of the total workers in each sex are of little significance. Number of workers in other occupations are indicated below :

Significant occupations among Madigas

Code No. & description of significant occupation	No. of males	No. of females
415 Plantaion labourers	15	25
720 Shoe makers and shoe repairers	20	..
899 Labourers, n.e.c.	103	113
931 Cleaners, Sweepers & Watermen	122	70
Cultivators	430	301
Agricultural labourers	238	150
All workers (including negligible proportion in other occupation)	1,005	672

The above table confirms that insignificant proportions pursue their traditional occupation. The movement is towards agriculture, scavenging and general labour. In Kottur village as many as 15 households out of 30 households own lands. The average size of a holding in this village is about 2 acres. In the Nilgiris, a few of them are employed as plantation labourers, but a greater number of them remain as unskilled casual labourers. In Coimbatore district almost all of them are employed in agriculture. In Madras City, as many as 82 workers among them are employed as sweepers and scavengers. Although the Madigas are described as leather workers very few among them are at present engaged in that line.

The primary occupation of 12 households out of 30 in Kottur village is cultivation and that of another 9, agricultural labour. 44 out of 90 workers in this place are employed as agricultural labourers. Round about 1963, the wages paid for the agricultural labourers were 37 nP. and a meal for a male; and 25 nP. and a meal for a female. A few of them in this village during the off-season go for gathering fuel in near-by unreserved forest lands, and they sell the fuel collected in the village itself or in Denkanikotta. Two of the Madigas in this village have learnt the craft of blacksmithy and they are pursuing it on a lucrative basis. 12 women in this village go for grinding ragi in the households of caste-Hindus. The grinding is done with a hand operated grinding-stone. As there is no electricity in the village, there is no flour mill here, and the villagers have necessarily to get their ragi converted into flour with a grinding stone. A few of the Madiga boys are employed as farm-servants under rich land owners. Besides food, each boy gets an annual salary of about Rs. 20. The income and expenditure patterns of the households were studied. It was found that food forms 64.3% of the household expenditure of the Madigas. Dress forms 16.7% and smoking and chewing 6.9% of their expenditure. 93.3% of the households here are in debts. Their average indebtedness per household works out to Rs. 500.

IX. Life Cycle :

Birth Ceremonies

Normally the first delivery of a woman takes place in her mother's house. The other confinements take place in the husband's house. They use the inner room of the house for delivery. During the period of pregnancy, the mother takes rich food, but she is asked to avoid fish, gingelly, Pappaya fruits etc. which are considered as abortifacients. Assistance for the delivering mother is provided by the elderly women of the community. If any woman from outside her family takes up this job, she receives a token remuneration amounting to 2 annas for a female child and 4½ annas for a male

child. If the delivery proves to be a protracted one, the women-folk give a kind of "Patchadi" made of green leaves to aid quicker delivery. They touch the umbilical with a gold or with a silver coin and then cut it with an ordinary knife. The placenta is usually buried in the backyard. Pollution is observed for 9 days. On the first day, rice, without adding salt to it, is given. On the 10th day, the child and the mother are given bath and asked to worship the sun. During the weaning period, the mother is forbidden to take fish, as it is believed that taking of it will bring asthma to the child. From the second month onwards, the mother is free to go for outdoor work to earn her livelihood.

Puberty Ceremonies

Immediately on attainment of puberty, a thatched dormitary is constructed with coconut leaves and the girl stays in it. She should remain in it for 9 days. Each day, the hut is renewed by putting more coconut thatches by relations. On the 9th day, the girl is given a ceremonious bath and taken to the house. A small ceremony is undergone on this occasion. Plantain fruits and puffed rice are tied to the end of the "pallav" of her saree before she enters the house. The relations are fed on the occasion.

Marriage

Of the 1,620 males and 1,578 females 875 and 661 are reported in 1961 Census as 'never married' representing 54.01% and 41.89% as against 53.99% and 42.78% among all the Scheduled Castes and 55.42% and 43.30% among the general population respectively, indicating the least proportion among the females, and intermediary position for the males. If such proportions are worked out separately for each of the age-groups 0-14, 15-44 and over 45 the least proportions continue among the Madiga women and the intermediary trend of males also becomes least. This trend indicates early marriage among Madigas. However, the field study has not indicated any infant marriage. Girls are generally married after puberty and boys after 25 years of age.

The initiative for a marriage alliance should come from the bridegroom's side. The boy's parents and relations along with a Oor Ejaman visit the bride's house taking along with them betel, arecanut, coconut, flowers etc. After the consent is obtained a clay (earthen) lamp is lighted and worshipped by both the parents invoking the benevolence of the family deity. They believe that the happiness of the would-be married couple is indicated by the brightness with which the lamp burns. The parties will then exchange pan-supari as a token of agreement a day is fixd for the celebration

of the marriage. On the day previous to this day, Nalangu is performed in the girl's house. The groom's party will start for the bride's place to fetch her. They will take along with them a basket containing pan-supari, flowers, fruits, cocoanuts, turmeric, sandal-paste, rice, jaggery etc. The bride will be asked to sit in a mat and the presents brought by the groom's party will be placed before her. The relations will be given pan-supari and the bride will be ceremoniously brought to the groom's place and asked to stay in a separate house specially set apart. On the marriage day, the bride and the bridegroom will be seated on a plank in a specially erected booth in front of the bride-groom's house. Certain rituals are observed and then they will visit the nearest temple. Bride's parents will then give away the bride to the groom's parents in a ceremony called "Tharai Varthu Koduthal". The couple go round the booth three times and at the end of it, the *Oor Ejamanan* taking the Tali in his hands will ask the assembled guests whether the Muhurtham can go on. The guests will reply "yes" and then the Tali will be given to the bridegroom to tie it round the neck of the girl. The relations will then offer cash presents. The couple are asked to take meals from the same leaf. In the evening, the couple and the women-folk will go to the nearest pond with five pots and bring water. Turmeric powder will be mixed in the water brought, and this will be spilled on the guests to create some fun among them. That marks the end of the marriage ceremonies.

The Madiga caste organisation takes a serious view of adultery committed by any member of the caste with any one outside the community. Adultery within the community is viewed somewhat leniently and if the parties concerned have no objection, the delinquents are let off with a fine. Divorces are granted on grounds of adultery, incompatibility and barrenness. Incidence of divorces in the social life of Madigas in Hosur area is learnt to be rare. Out of 39 marriages involved among females, six ended in the death of the husbands and one in divorce. In case, divorce is granted on the move of the wife the bride-price and half the expenses incurred on the marriage will have to be returned to the husband. As a token of effecting divorce, the Tali is returned to the husband in the presence of the caste-assembly. The Madigas do not allow remarriage of divorced woman and widows. But if a man and a divorced or widowed woman agree to live as husband and wife, they may do so by giving a feast to the villagers. Such a conjugal union is regarded more as a recognized concubinage rather than as marriage. No Tali is tied for this, but the children born of such a union are regarded as legal heirs. Such a conjugal alliance is called by them as "Kattubudi". In seeking a bride for a boy, some preference is given for cross-cousins. Out of 40 marriages which took

place in Kottur village, 7 relate to marrying maternal uncles' daughters, 5 relate to paternal aunts' daughters and two to sisters' daughters. The remaining cases relate to unrelated families.

Thurston describes the practice of dedicating some girls in the community as Basavis or Devadasis (prostitutes). Such a custom does not prevail in any of the areas selected for field work.

Death ceremonies : Immediately on the death of a person, the body is taken out of the house and kept outside. After the relations arive, a bath is given to the body and taken to the burial ground. Burial is the common method of disposal of the dead. On the third day, the place of burial is revisited. Tender coconuts, milk, etc. will be placed near the place of burial. On the 11th day, a purification ceremony is undergone by offering pooja to the departed soul. A feast is given on this day.

X. Religion :

While tracing the origin of Madigas, it was already mentioned that according to a claim, "they call themselves Matangi Makkalu or children of Matangi or Durga, who is their goddess". Much has been written about Matangi by Thurston in his 4th volume (from p. 300 on Castes and Tribes of Southern India, 1909). What is being commonly said about any village goddess was attributed to Matangi. The field study indicates that they have more faith in village Goddess under the name of Gangamma, Pasuvesvaraswami, Chinnarayaswami, Chickkamma and Doddamma. In Minjur village the deities worshipped by the Madigas are Mathamma, Poleramma, Gangamma, Ankamma, Mariamma and Kanaka Durgamma. They also worship Tirupathi Venkateswaralu. Besides these gods and goddesses, the people belonging to the various exogamous septs profess devotion to a separate Kula Deivam (Clan deity). Some of these Kula Deivams are Venkataramanaswamy, Narasimhaswamy, Obuleswaraswamy etc. For Gangamma, they offer a sacrifice of a calf of a buffalo which they later consume. They join with the other caste Hindus in the celebration of Mariamman which takes place once in three years. On this occasion, they offer a sacrifice of goat or sheep. Though they join with the caste Hindus in the celebration of the Mariamman festival, they cannot enter the inner temple like the other caste Hindus. The annual festivals celebrated by them are the Ugathi, Pongal or Sankaranthi, Nomulu (Deepavali), Mar Navami (Dasara) etc.. Of the these festivals, they celebrate Ugathi as the most important one. Ugathi is actually the Telugu New Year's Day coming in the end of March or in the beginning of April. For celebrating this festival, they make collections among themselves and plan the

celebration in a jubilant manner. On the morning of the festival day, the Madigas assemble in a particular place under the leadership of the Oor Ejamanan who leads to the temple where a goat is sacrificed and pooja conducted. This is followed by community feasting. In the night they enact some drama which they call as "Therukoothu".

XI. Inter Community Relationship :

The Madigas are treated as untouchables by the villagers. They are not permitted to take water from the public wells in the caste-Hindu locality. The Madigas will not eat in the houses of Holeyas. In turn, the Holeyas also will not eat in the houses of Madigas. It is rather difficult to say which of these two castes occupies a higher status. The village barbers and washermen do not serve them. The Madigas help each other in shaving.

XII. Structure of social control prestige and leadership :

The Madigas have a well established caste organisation. The caste head in a village is called *'Oor Ejaman'* and is assisted in his duties by a person called *Mantri.* The office of the 'Oor Ejaman' usually goes by heredity. He controls social discipline in the village along with the help of other elders of the caste. He hears disputes among the members of the community and even decrees divorces. In all social functions, he enjoys a high order of precedence. The over-all head of the Community called *Guru,* is said to be living in Cuddappah (Andhra Pradesh). In Minjur village the caste headman goes by the name of *Pedda* (big) Madiga. His assistants are *Pedda Kolla* and *Salavathi.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fleet . . . . Dynastics of the Kanarese Districts of the Bombay Presidency, 1882

Chatterton, A. . . . Mysore Census Report of 1891 Monograph of tanning and working in leather, Madras 1904

Bhattacharya, Jogendranath Chakilian & Madiga
Hindu castes and sects,¦ Calcutta, 1896, pp. 267-268

Dube, S. C. . . . The Madigas
Indian Village, Routledge & Kegan Pan Ltd. London, 1961, pp. 68-69

Enthoven, R. E. . . Madig
Tribes and Castes of Bombay, Bombay' 1922, Vol. II, p. 400

Fishman, Alvin Texas . Culture change and the under-privileged a study of Madigas in South India under Christian Guidance
Madras Christian Literature, Society of India, 1941

Gupta, Pabitra & Basu, Arabindo. Physical characters of the Madiga of Guntur District, A Pariah castes of Andhra, Bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India, Vol. IX, No. 1, Jan. 1960, pp. 53-60

Hassan, S. A. . . . Madiga
The Castes and Tribes of H.E.H. The Nizam's Dominion, Bombay, 1920, Vol. I, pp. 409-420

Hutton, J. H. . . . Madiga
Caste in India, Bombay, 1951, p. 284 (glossary), pp. 11, 68, 166

Nanjundayya, H. V. & Iyer, L.K.A. Madiga
Mysore tribes and castes, 1928-36, Vol. I, p. 124, Vol. IV, pp. 125-169

Reddi, N. S. . . . Mala & Madiga
Man in India, Vol. XXV, 1950 (Oct-Dec.), No. 4, pp. 1-12

Reddi, N. S. . . . Madiga
Spatial variance of customs in Andhra Pradesh, Anthropology on the March edited by Bala Ratnam

Russell, R.V. & Hiralal . Madigi/Madiga
The tribes & castes of the Central Province of India, Vol. I, London, 1916, p. 384

Thurston, E. . . Madiga
Castes and tribes of Southern India, Madras, 1909, Vol. IV, pp. 292-325

Lindsay, A. W. C. . . Madiga
Report on the Mysore General Census of 1871, Bangalore, 1874, p. 87

Rice, L. . . . Madiga
Report on the Mysore Census of 1881, Bangalore, 1884, p. 69

Gait, E. A. . . . Madgi, Kotal
Census of India, 1891, Vol. I ; Assam Report, Shillong, 1892, p. 277

Hasting, Warren . . Madhgis
Census of India, 1891, Vol. VI (Berar For Hyderabad) Assigned District, Calcutta 1892, p. cvi

Stuart, H. A. . . . Madiga
Census of India, 1891, Vol. XIII ; Madras, Madras, 1893, p. 302

Narasimmiyengar, U. N. . Madiga
Census of India, 1891, Vol. XXV ; Mysore Part 1 : Report, Bangalore, 1893, pp. 254-255

Chinoy, A. D. . . . Madiga
Census of India, 1901, Vol. VIII : Berar Part I : Report, Allahabad 1902, p. 189

Francis, W. . . . Madiga
Census o fIndia, 1901, Vol. XV ; Madras Part I : Report, Madras, 1902, p. 166

Row, T. A. . . . Madiga
Census of India, 1901, Vol. XXIV : Mysore, Part I : Report, Bangalore, 1903, pp. 535—536

Mead, P. J. & Macgregor, G. L.	Madiga Census of India, 1911, Vol. VII : Bombay, Part I : Report, Bombay, 1912, p. 289
Aiyer, V. R. T. . . .	Madiga Census of India, 1911, Vol. XXI : Mysore, Part I : Report, Bangalore, 1912, pp. 152-153
Mohammed Rahmatullah .	Madiga Census of India, 1921, Vol. XXI : Hyderabad State, Part I : Report, Hyderabad Deccan, 1923, pp. 252-253
Thyagarajaiyar, V. B. .	Madiga Census of India, 1921, Vol. XXIII : Mysore, Part I : Report, Bangalore, 1923, p. 115
	Madiga Gazetteer Anantpuri District, p. 35
	Madiga District Gazetteer Godavari, Vol. I : 1907, p. 59
	Kolas & Madigas Kurnool Manual

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Indian Village' by S. C. Dube, M.A., Ph.D. foreword by Morris Edward Opler, Indian Edition, Allied Publishers Private Limited, Bombay, New Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, pages 68 *and* 69.

THE MADIGAS : The madigas are the lowest caste in Shamirpet. Economically they constitute the poorest section of the community. While the Malas, who are also untouchables but a degree higher than the Madigas, either cultivate their own land or work as farm labourers for daily wages, the Madigas affiliate themselves to the households of the substantial agriculturists in the village. According to the size of the land-holding of the cultivator, one or more Madiga families permanently attach themselves to him. At every stage of agricultural operations during the year the attached Madiga, and his wife and children, work in the fields of their master. They are not paid any daily wages. After the crops are harvested they have to go and 'beg in the master's fields or threshing grounds'. The conventions of the community have prescribed the rates of payment, mostly on the basis of the area of land under cultivation and the yield during the particular harvest. Thus for a certain area a basic minimum must be given; but if on account of good crops the yield has been high it is expected that the affiliated Madiga family would be given a proportionately larger share. In former times there used to be considerable compulsion, and, being in no position to protest, the Madigas had to slave for their masters, who could be quite ruthless. If the master was kind and considerate, they regarded it as their good luck. On the whole it was advisable for them to tolerate even a bad master, for any protests or refusal to do the allotted work on their part would eventually have meant their being forced to leave the village. Now, of course, conditions have changed, and Madigas do not any longer put up with indignities, unreasonable harshness in behaviour or rough handling. Payments differ on the basis of the quality and quantity of work they turn out, and also partly on the nature and temperament of the employer. Slow and lazy workers are paid the barest minimum, while the experienced and the efficient earn much more. In the words of a Madiga, 'If we do not work well, who will pay us? If we do very little work and that too badly, we get what we deserve in the end. If we do not work well we cannot afford to be sensitive; we have to be thick-skinned to stand the abuse of our master. But if we work hard and earn our wages by the sweat of our brow, the master has to treat us well'. To quote another informant : 'Some masters are large-hearted. They make us work hard, but they feed us well. Others expect us to work like oxen, but when it comes to feeding us they dole out mere handfuls as if we were little calves. They always grumble and curse, but when it is time for making payment to us they seem to forget that we

too must have a morsel to fill our bellies and a yard of cloth to cover our bodies'. In addition to what the Madiga families get by 'begging' at the time of harvesting, during the busy agricultural season they are fed once a day by the master. According to convention, the master should give a new cloth once every year to each individual from the attached Madiga family who has worked in his fields.

Very few Madigas possess any land worth mentioning, and therefore independent cultivation by them is almost negligible. But they have several other additional means of subsistence open to them. They have to dispose of the dead cattle in the village. As they do not refrain from carrion, this constitutes one source of food supply for them. They are also entitled to get one half of the hide of the dead animal; the other half belongs to the owner. From the owner's share of the hide the Madigas have to make for him such leather articles as he may require for agricultural purposes. Several Madiga families cure hides and work in leather; others earn a part of their living by playing drums and pipes at ceremonial occasions.

Extract on "MADIGA" from the Tribes And Castes of Bombay by R. E. ENTHOVEN, Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire, Commander of the Order of Leopold II, Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Ethnography, Bombay Presidency. Issued under the orders of the Government of Bombay. Volume II, Bombay, Printed at the Government Central Press 1922, *page* 400.

MADIG : Kanarese term for Mang; a synonym for Dhalya Vanjari.

Extract on "MADIGA" from Bulletin of The Department of Anthropology, Government of India, Calcutta-13 by PABITRA GUPTA AND ARABINDA BASU. Volume IX, Number 1, January 1960, published by NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE, Director, Department of Anthropology, Indian Museum, 27, Chowringhee Road, Calcutta-13, printed by : Prabodh Chandra Mitra, M.A., Venus Printing Works, 52/7, Bipin Behari Ganguli Street, Calcutta-12, pages 53-60.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERS OF THE MADIGA OF GUNTUR DISTRICT—A PARIAH CASTE OF ANDHRA

Introduction :

The Madiga, an untouchable Telugu-speaking caste of Andhra, are scattered all over the State. They occupy the lowest status in the Hindu society. Generally, they live outside the main village in agglomerated hamlets. Their traditional occupation is tanning of skin and making leather articles such as shoes, buckets and belts etc. The impact of Christianity on them is remarkable and a considerable number of this low caste has been converted by the missioneries. Incidentally, the Madiga, we measured somatometrically are converts. They however have retained the essentials of casteism, especially caste endogamy.

Physical measurements were taken during January-April 1960 from Palnad taluk of Guntur district, from various local populations of the area, in order to estimate the affinity or otherwise of the present day population of the soil with human skeletal remains of Nagarjunakonda, the famous archaeological site. Excavation of the skeletons from the magaliths were done by the writers simultaneously.

Anthropometric data on 70 Madiga were collected by Thurston during the early part of this century, which form the only previous anthropometric record on them. Measurements on 102 adult male individuals were done by the present writers from nine villages as follows : Nagulvaram 30, Kansaragunta 20, Koppunur 15, Mutukkur 7, Veldurti 6, Parapally and Pulareddigudem 4 each, Koalagotla 3 and Mandari 2. Besides them, eleven subjects hailing from neighbouring villages were measured at the base camp at Nagarjunakonda.

Technique of measurement followed is that of Martin. Auricular head height was taken by Schultz's parallelometer. For other measurements a set of Hermann, Richenboch and Son's anthropometric instruments was used. Skin colour and eye colour observations were done with the help of V. Luschan's and Martin-Schultz's

charts respectively. Hair colour was observed without reference to any chart. Statistical constants of the measurements and indices are shown in Table 20 and 21 respectively.

Analysis of Data :

Age Distribution

According to 5 years class interval, the distribution of the age of the individuals is as follows :—

TABLE I

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20—24	23	22.55
25—29	22	21.57
30—34	24	23.53
35—39	15	14.71
40—44	5	4.90
45—50	13	12.75
	102	100.01

Table 1 shows that highest frequencies are observed between 20 years to 34 years. 68% of the population fall within these ages. The remaining 32% belong to the ages between 35 years to 50 years. Age groups of 30-34 years, 20-24 years and 25-29 years have the incidence of 23.53%, 22.55% and 21.57% respectively.

Body Height

Body height of the Madiga is classified as follows :—

TABLE 2

Class	Frequency	Percentage
Very short (1300—1499)	3	2.94
Short (1500—1599)	31	30.39
Below medium (1600—1639)	28	27.45
Medium (1640—1669)	19	18.63
Above medium (1670—1699)	10	9.80
Tall (1700—1799)	11	10.78
	102	99.99

It is apparent from Table 2 that maximum concentration of stature is observed in 'short' class (30.39%) closely followed by 'below medium (27.45%). While 'medium' class is attributed to 18.63%, 'above medium' and 'tall' classes are represented by 9.80% and 10.78% respectively. 'Very short' stature is also observed among 2.94% population. Mean is 1619.52=6.06 mm, which lies in the 'below medium' class. The range of variation is 1452 mm to 1777 mm.

Sitting Height

Sitting height falls in the following classes :

TABLE 3

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Low (750—799)	41	40.20
Below medium (800—849) . . .	52	50.98
Medium (850—899)	9	8.82
	102	100.00

It appears from Table 3 that the 'below medium' is the most highly represented class, its frequency being 50.98%, the next highest concentration is observed in the 'low' class (40.20%). Besides these, the only other class represented is the 'medium' class having a frequency of 8.82%. It is noteworthy that although 'above medium' and 'tall' classes of stature are present, these two classes go unrepresented in sitting height. Among the Madiga sitting height ranges between 750 mm to 876 mm and the average is 809.53=2.77 mm.

Maximum Head length

According to Lebzelter and Saller's (1930) classification maximum head length is distributed as follows:—

TABLE 4

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Very short (162—169)	2	1.96
Short (170—177)	15	14.71
Medium (178—185)	41	40.20
Long (186—193)	41	40.20
Very long (194—201)	3	2.94
	102	100.01

It is observed from Table 4 that in maximum head length 'medium' and 'long' classes are the most highly represented with equal frequencies of 40.20%. Only 14.71% Madiga are 'short' headed. 'Very long' and 'Very short' classes show frequencies of 2.94% and 1.96% respectively. The average is 183.70=0.63 mm which lies in the 'medium' class. The maximum head length varies from 169 mm to 195 mm.

Maximum Head Breadth

Extending Schlaginhaufen's (1946) classification by one class (extremely narrow), the following frequencies are obtained:—

TABLE 5

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Extremely narrow (127—132) . .	3	2.94
Very narrow (133—138) . . .	19	18.63
Narrow (139—144)	47	46.06
Below medium (145—150) . . .	30	29.41
Medium (151—156)	3	2.94
	102	99.98

The maximum head breadth of the Madiga is predominantly 'narrow' (46.06%). The next classes being represented by 29.41% and 18.63% of the population are 'below medium' and 'very narrow' heads. The mean is 141.99=0.45 mm and the minimum and the maximum values are 129 mm and 155 mm respectively.

Length-Breadth index of Head

TABLE 6

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Dolichocephal (71.0—75.9) . . .	40	39.22
Mesocephal (76.0—80.9) . . .	47	46.06
Brachycephal (81.0—85.4) . . .	14	13.73
Hyperbrachycephal (85.5—X) . .	1	0.98
	102	99.99

The Madiga are mesocephal and dolichocephal people, 46.06% being classed under the former category and 39.22% in the latter. Hyperdolichocephaly is conspicuously absent. Brachycephaly occurs among 13.73% besides 0.98% being hyperbrachycephal. Notwithstanding the completely unrepresented classes of 'above medium', 'broad' and 'very broad' head breadth, the occurance of 13.73% brachycephaly may be attributed to 'short' and 'very short' classes of head length. The average is 77.36±0.30 which lies in the mesocephal class and the range varies from 71.36 to 85.63.

Classified according to Routil (1932), auricular height gives the following distribution :—

Auricular Height

TABLE 7

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Very low (X—109)	1	0.98
Low (110—117)	36	35.29
Medium (118 —125)	59	57.84
igh (126—136)	6	5.88
	102	99.99

Mostly the Madiga are 'medium' in their auricular head height (58%). 'Low' class occurs among 35% of the population and 'high' class among 6%. Mean is 118.87±0.46 mm and the range varies between 109 mm to 131 mm.

Length-Auricular Height Index of Head

The distribution of Length-auricular height index is shown as follows:—

TABLE 8

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Orthocephal (57.7—62.5) . . .	22	21.57
Hypsicephal (62.6—X)	80	78.43
	102	100.00

The Madiga are mainly 'hypsicephal', 78.43% belonging to this class and the only other class represented is 'orthocephal' (21.57%). Notwithstanding the occurance of 35.29% of 'low' and 0.98% of 'very low' head height and 40.20% of 'long heads' 78.43% of hypsicephalic heads are conspicuous. Mean is 64.81=0.27 and the range varies between 74.27 to 58.73.

Breadth-Auricular Height Index of Head

Breadth-auricular height is distributed as follows: —

TABLE 9

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Tapeinocephal (X—78.9) . . .	7	6.86
Metriocephal (79.0—84.9) . . .	63	61.76
Akrocephal (85.0—X) . . .	32	31.37
	102	99.99

The proportion of auricular height to head breadth indicates that 62% fall in the 'metriocephal' class, 31% fall in the 'akrocephal' class and of the remaining, 7% fall in the 'tapeinocephal' class.

'Narrow', 'very narrow' and 'extremely narrow' heads combined with 'medium' and 'high' heads contribute towards the formation of metriocephal and akrocephal heads. Average for this index is 83.76=0.34 and the minimum maximum values are 73.83 and 93.41 respectively.

Minimum Frontal Breadth

The following is the distribution of minimum frontal breadth according to Schlaginhaufen's classification: —

TABLE 10

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Narrow (X—94)	5	4.90
Below medium (95—99) . . .	27	26.47
Medium (100—104)	54	52.94
Above medium (105—109) . . .	13	12.75
Broad (110—X)	3	2.94
	102	100.00

Highest frequency of 53% is attained by 'medium' foreheads, the next classes being the 'below medium' (26%) and 'above medium' (13%).

It is evident that 92% of the population have forehead of medium width Mean is 100.78 ± 0.38 mm. and the range varies between 92 mm to 110 mm.

Bizygomatic Breadth

According to Lebzelter-Saller's classification (Schlaginhaufen, p. 158) bizygomatic breadth is distributed as follows:—

TABLE 11

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Very narrow (X—127)	12	11.76
Narrow (128—135)	67	65.69
Medium (136—143)	23	22.5
	102	100.00

The breadth of the face, as seen from the classification table of bizygomatic breadth, is mainly narrow (66%). Of the rest 23% and 12% are 'medium' and 'very narrow' respectively. 'Broad' and 'very broad' classes are not met with. Average is 132.71 ± 0.41 mm and the range varies from 129 mm to 155 mm.

Jugo-Frontal Index

The distribution of Jugo-frontal index according to Lundborg, Linders and Saller is shown as follows (Schlaginhaufen, p. 196).

TABLE 12

Classes	Fequency	Percentage
Very narrow (X—69.9) . . .	2	1.96
Narrow (70.0—74.9)	32	31.37
Medium (75.0—79.9)	61	59.80
Broad (80.0—84.9)	7	6.86
	102	99.99

The Jugo-frontal index shows that in 60% cases the foreheads are 'medium' in breadth in proportion to facial breadth and in 31% cases those are in 'narrow' class. In 7% it is 'broad' and in 2% it is 'very narrow'. The average is 75.99 $\pm$ 0.29 and the range varies between 66.90 to 83.33.

Morphological Facial Height

According to Lebzelter-Saller's classification (Schlaginhaufen, P 146) the distribution of morphological facial height is as follows:—

TABLE 13

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Very low (X—111)	62	60.78
Low (112—117)	27	26.47
Medium high (118—123)	13	12.75
	102	100.00

Madiga are characterised by 'very low' face which is observed among 61% population. 'Low' face is present in 26% and 'medium high' face in 13% of the population. None of the individuals possesses a 'high' face. Average is 110.6 $\pm$ 0.62 mm and the range of variation is 98 mm to 123 mm.

Morphological Facial Index

Morphological facial index is distributed as follows:—

TABLE 14

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Hypereuryprosop (X—78.9)	20	19.61
Euryprosop (79.0—83.9)	42	41·18
Mesoprosop (84.0—87.9)	25	24.51
Keotiorisio (88.0—92.9)	14	13.73
Hyperleptoprosop (93.0—X)	1	0.98
	102	100.01

Highest frequency (41%) is attained by 'euryprosop' class. The next classes 'mesoprosop', 'hypereuryprosop' and 'leptoprosop' closely follow one after the other in their frequencies (25%, 20% and 14% respectively). Mean is 82.97 0.45 and range is 72.59 to 93.80.

Bigonial Breadth

According to Schlaginhaufen's classification bigonial breadth is classified as follows :—

TABLE 15

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Short (X—89)	2	1.96
Below medium (90—99)	49	48.04
Medium (100—109)	47	46.06
Above medium (110—119)	4	3.92
	102	99.98

'Below medium' is the most frequent class which occurs among 48% people. Nearly as often (46%) occurs the 'medium' class. 4% are 'above medium' and 2% are 'short' in this character.

Mean value is 99.35 ± 0.49 mm and the range varies between 89 mm to 112 mm.

Jugo Mandibular Index

According to Schlaginhaufen's classification Jugo-mandibular index is distributed as follows :—

TABLE 16

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Very narrow (X—69.9)	3	2.94
Narrow (70.0—74.9)	52	50.98
Medium (75.0—79.9)	39	38.24
Broad (80.0—84.9)	7	6.86
Very Broad (85.0—X)	1	0.98
	102	100.00

Nearly half of the population (51%) have 'narrow' mandible in relation to breadth of face. The next is the 'medium' class represented by 38% Madiga. Only 7% of them are 'broad' in this index. Mean is 74.88 0.33 which stands on the border line of 'narrow' and 'medium' categories, and the range varies between 62.68 to 85.50.

Nasal Height

The distribution of nasal height according to Schlaginhaufen's classification stands as follows :—

TABLE 17

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Short (40—44)	9	8·82
Below medium (45—49) . . .	43	42·16
Above medium (50—54) . . .	42	41·18
Large (55—59)	8	7·84
	102	100 00

Nasal height is mainly of 'medium' category (83%), which is sub-divided into two nearly equal proportions of 'below medium' and 'above medium' classes. 'Short' and 'large' noses are also met with, their respective frequencies being 8.8% and 7.8%. Average is 49.53 $\pm$ 0.43 mm and the range varies between 41 mm to 58 mm.

Nasal Breadth

Breadth of nose classified according to Schlaginhaufen is as follows :—

TABLE 18

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Medium (30—34)	24	23·53
Above medium (35—39) . . .	64	62·74
Large (40—X)	14	13·73
	102	100·00

Breadth of nose, similar to its height, is mainly concentrated in 'above medium' class, its frequency being 63%. The next class, with much less frequency (24%), is the 'medium' class. 'Large' class is represented by a frequency of 14%. Mean is 36.53 0.27 mm and range is 30 mm to 44 mm.

Nasal Index

Classification of nasal index is shown in the table below :—

TABLE 19

Classes	Frequency	Percentage
Leptorrhine (55·0—69·9) . .	22	21·57
Mesorrhine (70·0—84·9) . . .	73	71·57
Chamaerrhine (85·0—99·9) . . .	7	6·86
	102	100·00

The Madiga are predominantly 'mesorrhine' with a frequency of 72%, achieved at the expenses of leptorrhine and chamaerrhine nose which occur at the frequency of 22% and 7% respectively. Mean is 74.01 † 0.64 and range of variation is 58.93 to 88.37.

TABLE 20

Statistical Constants of Measurements

Measurements	Maximum	Minimum	Mean ± SE.	S.D. ± S.E.	C.V. ± S.E.
Stature	1,777	4,452	1619.52 ± 6.06	61.20 ± 4.29	3.78 ± 0.26
Sitting Height	876	750	809.53 ± 2.77	27.96 ± 1.96	3.45 ± 0.24
Auricular Height (Mean of L & R)	131	109	118.87 ± 0.46	4.67 ± 0.33	3.93 ± 0.28
Maximum Head Length	195	169	183.70 ± 0.63	6.33 ± 0.44	3.45 ± 0.24
Maximum Head Breadth	155	129	141.99 ± 0.45	4.59 ± 0.32	3.23 ± 0.23
Minimum Frontal Breadth	110	92	100.78 ± 0.38	3.84 ± 0.27	3.81 ± 0.27
Maximum Bizygomatic Breadth	142	124	132.71 ± 0.41	4.11 ± 0.29	3.10 ± 0.22
Bigonial Breadth	112	89	99.35 ± 0.49	4.99 ± 0.35	5.02 ± 0.35
Inter-orbital Breadth	41	25	32.25 ± 0.28	2.84 ± 0.20	8.81 ± 0.62
Extuft. Bipalpebral Breadth	94	77	84.78 ± 0.35	3.58 ± 0.25	4.22 ± 0.30
Nasal Height	58	14	49.53 ± 0.34	3.45 ± 0.24	6.97 ± 0.49
Nasal Breadth	44	30	36.53 ± 0.27	2.76 ± 0.19	7.56 ± 0.53
Nasal Depth	28	14	19.37 ± 0.19	1.95 ± 0.14	10.07 ± 0.71
Upper Facial Height	74	51	63.65 ± 0.43	4.31 ± 0.30	6.77 ± 0.47

TABLE 20 (contd)

Measurements	Maximum	Minimum	Mean ±	S.E.	S.D. ±	S.E.	C.V. ±	S.E.
Morph. Facial Height . .	123	98	110.06 ±	0.62	6.22 ±	0.44	5.65 ±	0.40
Hort. Circum. of Head . .	570	500	538.08 ±	1.50	15.10 ±	1.06	2.81 ±	0.20
Trans. Arc of Head . . .	354	302	330.92 ±	1.15	11.54 ±	0.81	3.49 ±	0.25

TABLE 21

Statistical Constants of The Indices

Indices	Maximum	Minimum	Mean±	S.E.	S.D.±	S.E.	C.V.±	S.E.
Length-Breadth . . .	85.63	71.35	77.36 ±	0.30	3.04 ±	0.21	3.93 ±	0.28
Length-Height	74.27	58.73	64.81 ±	0.27	2.76 ±	0.19	4.26 ±	0.30
Breadth-Height	93.41	74.83	83.76 ±	0.34	3.48 ±	0.24	4.15 ±	0.29
Nasal	88.37	58.93	74.01 ±	0.64	6.45 ±	0.45	8.72 ±	0.61
Morphological Facial . .	93.80	72.59	82.97 ±	0.45	4.50 ±	0.32	5.42 ±	0.38
Jugo-Frontal	83.33	66.90	75.99 ±	0.29	2.93 ±	0.21	3.86 ±	0.27
Jugo-Mandibular . . .	85.50	62.68	74.88 ±	0.33	3.33 ±	0.23	4.45 ±	0.31

MORPHOLOGICAL OBSERVATION

TABLE 22

Skin Colour

Forehead	F	%
Black brown	11	10.78
Dark brown	33	32.35
Clear brown	51	50.00
Bright tawny	7	6.86
	102	99.99

TABLE 23

Hair

Colour, Head	F	%
Black	55	53.92
Brownish black	47	46.06
	102	99.98
Form	F	%
Flat with slight waves	49	48.51
Broad waves	31	30.69
Narrow waves	21	20.79
	101	99.99
Hair, Quantity, Head	F	%
Scanty	4	3.92
Medium	32	31.37
Pronounced	66	64.71
	102	100.00

TABLE 24

Eye

Colour	F	%
Dark blue	2	1.96
Brown green	1	0.98
Clear brown	2	1.96
Roe brown	8	7.84
Brown	23	22.55
Dark brown	29	28.43
Deep dark brown	20	19.61
Black brown	17	16.67
	102	100.00

TABLE 25

Nose

Profile	F	%
Concave	11	10·78
Straight	83	81.37
Convex	8	7·84
	102	99·99
Depression	F	%
Nose	32	31.37
Shallow	65	63·73
Deep	5	4·90
	102	100·00

TABLE 26

Forehead

Height	F	%
Low	21	20.59
Medium	74	72·55
High	7	6·86
	102	100.00

TABLE 27

Browridges

Development	*F*	%
Absent	46	45·10
Submedium	18	17·65
Medium	36	35·29
Prominent	2	1.96
	102	100·00

TABLE 28

Lips

Thickness	F	%
Thin	30	30·00
Medium	61	61·00
Thick	9	9.00
	100	100.00

TABLE 29

Chin

Prominence	F	%
Positive	25	24.51

TABLE 30

Face

Form	F	%
Elliptical	19	18·63
Oval	38	37·26
Round	2	1·96
Rectangular	6	5·88
Squarish	37	36·27
	102	100·00

Skin (table 22)

On the forehead skin colour is clear brown in half of the population investigated and dark brown among one-third of them. Black brown nuance occurs in 11 cases (10.78%) and bright tawny in 7 cases (6.86%) only.

Hair (table 23)

The colour of the head hair appears black in 53.92% and brownish black in 46.06%. Flat wavy hair predominates (48.51%), although 30.69% have broad waves and 20.79% narrow waves. The quantity of the head hair is pronounced in 64.71% and medium in 31.37%.

Eye (table 24)

Dark brown colour predominates (28.43%) although brown, deep dark brown and black brown show frequencies of 22.55%, 19.61% and 16.67% respectively.

Nose (table 25)

In nasal profile, majority (81.37%) has straight nose with 10.78% concave and 7.84% convex profile.

Depression at the nasion is shallow in 63.73% cases and absent in 31.37%, while it is deep in only 5 individuals (4.90%).

Forehead and Browridges (table 26)

Although height of the forehead is mainly medium (27.55%), it is low in 20.59% and high in 6.86%. Browridges are medium in 53% (including sub-medium class) and prominent in 2 individuals only. Among the rest it is absent.

Lips (table 28)

Lips are medium in 61% people and thick in 9%. It is noteworthy that in 30% individuals lips are thin.

Chin (table 29)

Prominence of the chin is negative in 42.16%, positive in 24.51% and neutral among the rest.

Face (table 30)

Form of the face is oval in 37.26% of the population, nearly as often occurs the squarish type, elliptical in half of the people representing the oval. Frequencies of 5.88% and 1.96% are represented by rectangular type and round type respectively.

Comparison with Thurston's Data

The only somatometric data of the Madiga available for comparison are that of Thurston (1909) who measured them from the districts of Kurnool (Adoni) and Bellery (Hospet) of Andhra State. In the following table Thurston's data have been compared with the present series.

TABLE 31

Comparative table showing Thurston's data and the present series

Characters	Thurston (Kurnool Dist.) N = 30			Thurston (Bellery Dist.) N = 40			Present Study (Guntur Dist.) N = 102		
	Min.	Max.	Av.	Min.	Max.	Av.	Min.	Max.	Av.
Stature . . .	1,542	1,732	1,631	1,522	1,734	1,629	1,452	1,777	1,619.52
Head-length . .	170	202	186	172	200	183	169	195	183.70
Head-breadth . .	130	146	139	130	154	140	129	155	141.99
Cephalic-index .	71.3	82.2	75.0	68.0	83.3	76.5	71.35	85.63	77.36
Nasal-index . .	69.4	102.6	80.6	66.7	90.1	77.5	58.93	88.37	74.01

It appears from the above table that the data from Bellery district approach the present series of Guntur district more closely than that of Kurnool district. A difference of 1 cm or so in stature noticeable between Thurston's series and the present one is not remarkable. It is evident that the pressent series shows an increase of less than 1 unit in cephalic index from that of Bellery data and more than 2 units from Kurnool data. This might be either due to, besides sample sizes, the local character of the population or relative increase of head breadth in proportion to head length during the last half-a-century. It is apparent from the above table that whereas the head length of present series does not differ, the head breadth increases by 2 mm from those of Bellery district.

When compared with Kurnool data the present series decreases by 2.30 mm in head length and increases by 2 mm in head breadth. From both the series of Thurston, therefore, the present sample increases in head breadth, which might be held responsible for the tendency towards rounder headforms of the Madiga of the present series. The maximum value for head breadth is also attained by the present series. Nasal index is lowest (74.01) in Guntur and highest (80.6) in Kurnool, the Bellary series standing intermediate (77.5). The difference between Thurston's data and the present series is difficult to interpret but it might be due to measuring technique specially in location of nasion. The difference of Thurston's two samples may be local variation.

By forming a smaller endogamous unit within the bigger caste organization, whether the Christian Madiga, preserving rigidly caste endogamy, are varying from the rest of the Madiga, is a problem for investigation.

In the present series the high values of co-efficient of variation of the measurements and indices pertaining to nose i.e. nasal depth, interorbital breadth, nasal breadth, nasal height and nasal index is conspicuous

Summary :

Somatometric measurements on 102 adult male Madiga, an untouchable caste of Andhra, were taken during January-April 1960 from Palnad taluk of district Guntur.

Regarding their metric characters, the Madiga are mainly mesocephal (46%) and dolichocephal (39%) while 14% brachycephal are present among them. They are highly hypsicephalic (78%) but none is chamaecephalic. In stature, they are in majority short, below

medium and medium, whereas 11% of the population is tall. They are euryprosop in 41% mesoprosop in 25% and hypereuryprosop in 20% population. Mainly they have mesorrhine (72%) nose but leptorrhine is not infrequent (22%).

In non metric characters they are clear brown and dark brown in skin colour, black in hair colour and brown in eye colour. Hair is wavy and face is oval and elliptical.

When the present series is compared with Thurston's data, the only previous somatometric record of the Madiga, an increase in head breadth is noticed in the present series, which is reflected in their rounder head forms. In nasal index too, there is slight variation among the two series.

LITERATURE CITED

Routile, R. . . .	1932	Uber die biologziche Geszmassi & gkeit derKopfasse. Mitt. anthrop. Ges. Wien. Bd. LXII; cited by Mitra, A. K. in Physical Anthropology of the Muslims of Bengal Bull. Dept. of Anthropo. Govt. of India 1(2) 86
Saller, K. . . .	1930	Leitfaden der Anthropologie, 50
Schlaginhaufen, Otto . .	1946	Die Anthropologic der Eidgenossenschaft. Anthropologia Helvetica, Berlin. 21, 108, 134 146, 158, 190, 196, 202, 231, 237.
Thurston, E. . . .	1909	Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Madras 1 (A-B), Intro. Table A, lxiv; Table B lxxii-lxiii

Extract on "MADIGA" from the Castes and Tribes of H.E.H. THE NIZAM'S DOMINIONS by SYED SIRAJ UL HASSAN of Merton College, Oxford, Trinity College, Dublin, and Middle Temple, London. One of the Judges of H.E.H. the Nizam's High Court of Judicature: Lately Director of Public Instruction, Volume 1 Bombay The Times Press 1920 pages 409 to 420.

LX

MADIGA.—(Mala Titles: Appa, Ayya, Female Title: Amma).

Madiga, Madigowd, Madigaru, Madru, Dher, Chandal, Antyaja, Ettiwandlu, Peddintiwandlu, Panchamollu, Matangi Makkalu, Gosangi, Kamathi, Bendar, Chambhar—a very numerous caste of leather-workers and rope-makers, many of whom are engaged as village watchmen and musicians. They are to be found scattered all over the Telugu and the Karnatic portions of H. H. in Nizam's Dominions, and correspond, in every detail, to the Mang caste of the Maratha Districts. Some of the synonyms, which stand at the head of this article have reference to the occupations the members of the caste have pursued. The name 'Ettiwandlu', for example, signifies those who do the *etti* or *begari* (forced) work. 'Chambhar' is a corruption of the Sanskrit word 'Charmakar' which means 'a worker in leather', and the word 'Kamathi' indicates that they are menials. Some, such as, 'Chandal', 'Antyaja' (lowest born), 'Gosangi' (gao, cow, and hansaka, killer), and 'Dher' are opprobrious titles applied to them by others to indicate their lowest status in Hindu society. To dignify themselves, the members of the caste have assumed such epithets as Matangi Makkalu, the children of Matangi, the daughter of their mythical ancestor Jambavan; Panchamollu, or members of the fifth caste. as distinguished from the four shastric divisions of mankind (Brahman. Kashtriya, Vaishya and Shudra); and Peddintiwandlu, or dwellers in big houses. Madigas, who are enrolled in the Indian army, call themselves Bendars, with the object of concealing their true caste.

Origin:

The etymology. of the name 'Madiga' is uncertain, although attempts are made to derive it from the word 'Matanga', the name of an aboriginal tribe, mentioned by ancient authorities as descended from the illicit connection of a Plava father and Antivasiya mother. The legends of the Madigas, probably of recent invention, give no clue to their origin or early history. According to one, the Madigas trace their parentage to Jambavant, who was believed to be the

primeval creation of Narayen, the supreme god, and to have existed when the whole world was water and there was neither the earth, nor the sun, nor other luminaries. Jambavant once perspired, and from the perspiration came forth 'Adi Shakti' (primeval energy), who laid three eggs, from which sprang Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesha. Brahma created ten sages who became the progenitors of mankind. The names of these Maha Munis are :—(1) Chapala, (2) Tamila, (3) Brahma, (4) Neela, (5) Pala, (6) Bhadrachi, (7) Raktachi, (8) Gola, (9) Jamadagni and (10) Parshuram and from the first sprang the Madigas, while the Brahmans are the descendants of the last. Another story relates that Jambavant (Zalazam) had seven sons; Brahma, with a view to create the world and people it, killed Happu Muni, one of the sons, and from the mixture of his blood with water evolved the solid earth. Brahma then killed another son named Jala Muni and his life stream changed into a stream of water. The mountains were created from Ghata Muni's blood, blood from Rakat Muni, milk from Pala Muni, and an indigo colour from Neela Muni, until at last from the blood of Gava Muni came the Madigas, the first representatives of mankind. A third account states, that, once upon a time, when Parvati and Parameshvar were on a ramble, Parvati becoming unclean, was obliged to leave her menstrual clothes under a tree and from these garments sprang Chinnaya, whom the heavenly pair engaged to tend their divine cow, Kamadhenu. Chinnaya once tasted the cow's milk and found it so delicious that he was tempted to kill the cow itself and eat its flesh. He immediately carried his impious design into effect, but the carcass of the cow was so heavy that none, not even the gods, could move it. Siva thought of Jambavant who was practising penance, and called out to him, 'Mahadigaru' (lit-a great one come down). Jambavant, who thus obtained the name Mahadiga or Madiga, appeared at Siva's call, lifted the dead body, and cut in into pieces. Siva ordered Chinnaya to dress the beef, and invited all the gods to a feast. But Chinnaya, unfortunately, while trying to blow down an effervescence, spat into the cooking pot and the gods, observing this, left the dining hall. Siva, in anger, cursed both Chinnaya and Jambavant for their negligence and degraded them to the lowest caste. Chinnaya's descendants are called Malas, while Jambavant became the ancestor of the Madigas, and as Jambavant ate the leaving of Chinnaya and drank water after him, the Madigas are ranked below the Malas in point of social standing.

Internal Structure :

The Madigas have two main divisions : Canara Madigas, and Telugu Madigas, who neither intermarry nor eat together. Each of

these is broken up into numerous sub-tribes which vary greatly in different districts. Some of these are shown below :—

(1) Madiga.
(2) Dappu Madiga.
(3) Periki Madiga.
(4) Dasri Madiga.
(5) Jangam Madiga.
(6) Mashti Madiga.
(7) Sindollu or Bogam Madiga.
(8) Bindlawad.
(9) Dakkalawad.
(10) Penda Madiga.
(11) Lambada Madiga.
(12) Karikuldawru.
(13) Jogi.
(14) Kajawad.
(15) Velpulawad.
(16) Komuwad.
(17) Koya Madiga.
(18) Bedar Madiga.
(19) Sangar.
(20) Unja.
(21) Vishturi
(22) Anpa.
(23) Ashadoru or Sandewad.
(24) Bengali Madiga.
(25) Kullu Kundalawad.

This list is in no way exhaustive. The Madiga community is a large one and distributed over a very extensive area, and to this fact are probably due the numerous groups into which it is divided. The origin of these sub-castes is obscure and very difficult of determination owing to the extreme repulsion with which the caste is regarded by all Hindus. Some of the names, such as Lambada, Koya, Bedar have reference to the castes from which the sub-castes have been recruited, while others are based upon the professions the sub-castes have followed.

The Madiga sub-caste, found everywhere in the Karnatic and Telingana, represents, probably, the original nucleus of the caste. They earn their livelihood by making sandals, leather ropes and buckets and other leather articles.

The Mashti Madiga, *jaladohi*, are story tellers and beggars, occasionally exhibiting acrobatic feats before the public.

The Sindollu, Chindiwandlu, or Bogam Madiga, are the courtezans of the Madiga caste; they attend all Madiga ceremonies and entertain the public by singing and dancing. They maintain themselves also by prostitution. Their name Sindi, or Sindollu is said to be derived from 'Sairandhri', the Sanskrit word for 'prostitute'.

The Ashadoru, or Sandewad, are vagrant beggars who obtain alms by performing plays based upon stories from the *Bhagwat*.

The Bengali Madigas are a wandering class of jugglers and conjurers and appear to have no connection with the Madigas, but derive their name from Bengal, whence they probably came. They are doubtless enrolled among the Madigas because they occupy the lowest position in Hindu society.

The Bindalas, or Bindlawad, discharge the functions of priests to the Madiga caste and perform their religious rites to the music of the *Jamadke*, a musical instrument characteristic of their profession. Occasionally, they profess to be possessed and to fortell events and exercise ghosts.

The Penda Madigas are sweepers by profession, the Lambada Madigas, and are attached to each Lambada *tanda* (camp). They act as musicians to the Banjara tribes, playing at their religious ceremonies, on the *daphada*, a sort of drum.

The Karikuldawaru make articles from horns.

The Jogis, or Joginis, are boys and girls devoted to the service of particular deities in fulfilment vows made in sickness or affliction. The girls, after their dedication, take openly to prostitution and incur no social disgrace on that account.

The Periki Madigas assert that they are so called because their ancestors ran away from the marriage of Vashistha and Arundhati to escape the rain of fire that fell on the occasion.

The Kullu Kundalawad are so called because they are engaged as carriers of earthen pots filled with *shendi* (the juice of the wild data palm) to the market. This occupation has degraded them and no pure Madiga will eat or marry with them.

The Dasri Madigas are *gurus*, or spiritual advisers to those Madigas who profess to belong to the Vaishnava sect. They occupy the highest social level among the caste and stand in hypergamous relation to their disciples. They abstain from beef.

The Jangam Madigas trace their lineage from Nulka Chandaya, who was the first Madiga proselyte to the Lingayit creed Nulka Chandaya a devout worshipper of the god Siva, and fed Jangams daily with the money he earned by selling ropes and sandals and Siva, as an act of grace, made him a Jangam. The Jangam Madigas claim for themselves the highest social position, and minister to the spiritual needs of the Shaiva Madigas or Madiga Vibhutidharis. Like the Dasris, they abstain from beef, and do not interdine with other members of the caste. It is said that they accept girls in marriage from other sub-castes but do not give their own daughters in return.

The Dakkalawads are wandering beggars, who appear to be a degraded branch of the Madigas and beg only from them. They are also the genealogists or custodians of the *gotras* of their parent caste. Regarding their origin, it is said that Heppu Muni, the eldest son of Jambavant, after being killed by Brahma for the creation of worlds, was restored to life by his father, but was degraded and condemned to sussist by begging from, and reciting the mythical history of, the Madiga and Manga castes. They extract alms as an hereditary right, and should any Madiga decline to give them their due, they mount his effigy on a bamboo pole and set it up in front of his house. Standing in the neighbourhood, they hurl at him horrible imprecations and curses; he remains under the ban of his caste and no one dares to maintain any communication with him until he thoroughly satisfied the damands of the refractory beggars. The Dakkalawads say that they have only one *gotra* 'Gangadhar' They bear an evil reputation as criminals and are vigilantly watched by the police. They are regarded as outcastes by the Madigas and are not allowed to enter their quarters, but they pitch their huts of bamboo mats at a distance from the Madiga houses.

The Gond Madigas, Koya Madigas, Lambada Madigas and Bedar Madigas may either represent the lowest strata of their respective tribes, or they may be originally Madigas who were converted to, and were gradually absorbed into, their adopted tribes. The members of these sub-castes do not intermarry, although interdining in certain cases is allowable.

The exogamous sections of the caste are mostly of the territorial type, but some of them are totemistic, although the totems are not generally held as taboo by the members of the sections bearing their names.

A few of the sections are as follows:—

Territorial	Totemistic
Mukapalli	Ullello (onions)
Yelpukonda	Kumollu (horn)
Malangurollu	Amdyarollu (castor plant)
Kunagollawaru	Gatollu (Riff)
Sultanpurwaru	Katkoorollu (Sword)
Boyampalliwaru	Gaddapollu (beard)
Nagalpalliwaru	Awalollu (cow)
Danduwaru	
Pasupalliwaru	

A Madiga cannot marry outside the sub-caste nor inside the section to which he belongs. This simple rule of exogamy is supplemented and a man may marry the daughter of his elder sister or maternal uncle or paternal aunt. Two sisters may also be married to the same man.

Members of other castes are received by the Madigas into their community by their giving a feast to the Madigas of the neighbourhood. Before the feast, a betel leaf is cut on the tongue of the novice who is subsequently required to wait upon his new associates, to eat with them and remove their dishes. The hut in which this ceremony takes place is burnt.

Marriage:

The Madigas practise both infant and adult marriage, but the former usage is deemed the more respectable and is gradually coming into vogue. Girls for whom husbands cannot be procured, or who are vowed by their parents to the service of temples, are dedicated to their tutelary deities. Such girls are called Joginis or Basavis, and are sometimes married to an idol and sometimes to a dagger. The girl, who is to undergo the ceremony, is dressed in new clothes and taken to the temple. Her forehead is smeared with kunkum (red lead powder), a lighted lamp is waved round the idol or the dagger, and the girl, bearing the lamp on her head, walks three times round the symbol of the deity. The Joginis become prostitutes, but their children are admitted to the full privileges enjoyed by the legitimate members of the caste. Unmarried girls, becoming pregnant, are also devoted to the service of gods. A girl on attaining puberty is unclean for five days. On the 5th day she bathes, touches a green leaf and becomes ceremonially pure.

Polygamy is recognised, and a man is permitted to marry as many wives as he can afford to maintain. The second wife is usually a widow or a divorce. A bride price, varying in amount from Rs. 5 to Rs. 15, is paid to the parents of the girl.

The marriage ceremony differs in different districts, but in each district it is a copy of the ritual invogue among the middle classes of Hindus.

The initiative towards marriage is taken by the bridegroom's father, who sends a party of five men to select a suitable girl for his son and settle the match. After the girl is selected, the boy's father, with his relatives, goes to the girl's house and presents her with a *sari* and a *choli*. In confirmation of the match, the caste *panchas* and entertained with *khushali*, or drink; the expenses of which are shared by both, the bridegroom's father contributing double that of the bride's father. A Brahman astrologer is consulted, and a lucky day is fixed for celebration of the wedding. A goat is killed as a sacrifice to Pochamma, who is worshipped with offerings of the goat's blood mixed with a quantity of liquor. The goat's head becomes the perquisite of a *dhobi* (washerman) while the body is cooked and partaken of by the members of the family. Other deities, such as Ellamma, Pedamma, Mutyallamma and ancestral spirits, are invoked to bless the betrothed couple. On the appointed day, the bride is taken in procession to the bridegroom's house where, on arrival, the *salawadi*, the priest of the caste, lifts her from the horse, waves rice and turmeric round her face, sprinkles water on her body and places her on a seat under a wedding canopy of eleven posts. At the auspicious moment fixed for the wedding, the bridal pair are made to stand face to face, in a large bamboo basket, containing Indian millet, and a cloth is thrown over them so as to conceal their faces from the assembled guests. In this position, they are encircled five times, twice, with raw cotton thread. After this has been done, the cloth is removed and the young couple are taken out of the basket. The cotton thread is made into two bracelets (*kankams*) and one of them is fastened, with a piece of turmeric, on the wrist of the bridegroom and the other, in like manner, on that of the bride. This simple primitive usage is followed by an orthodox one, and the couple are made to stand face to face on a wooden plank, a cloth is held between them and the *mehetarya*, or elderly member of the caste officiating as priest, throws grain five times over their heads. This last ritual is believed to be the essential portion of the ceremony and is followed by other rites, including Myalapolu, Kottanam, Brahmamodi, Dandya, Panpu, Nagvelly, Vappagintha, Vadibium and others, all of which have already been fully described in the articles on other

castes. The ceremony is closed with a feast, at which a great deal of drinking and merry-making prevails.

In the Karnatic, the marriage ceremony comprises :—

(1) *Pod.*—The goodess Ellamma is invoked and a piece of leather is tied, in her honour about the neck of an old woman.

(2) *Nischitartha.*—The confirmation of the betrothal, at which the girl is presented with Rs. 2 by the bridegroom's party.

(3) *Hogitoppa.*—The fixing of an auspicious day for celebration of the wedding.

(4) *Uditomba.*—The girl is presented with cocoanuts and rice and escorted in procession to the house of the bridegroom.

(5) *Patiarshina.*—The bridal pair are smeared with turmeric paste and oil, and *kankanams* (thread bracelets) are fastened on their wrists.

(6) *Maniavana.*—The bridal pair, with their mothers, are rubbed with oil and bathed, being seated within a square formed by placing four earthen vessels filled with water at the four corners and by passing a cotton thread seven times round their necks. The thread is removed, and with it, as well as with a pearl, the water from the pots is sprinkled on their heads. This ceremony is known as *Mani-neera* or pearl-water. The maternal uncle of the bridegroom then plants a twig of the banyan (Ficus bengalensis) under the booth and worships it.

(7) *Gane.*—The bride and the bridegroom stand facing each other in bamboo baskets containing Indian millet (*jawari*) and a figure of 'Nandi' (Shiva's bull) is traced on the ground between them. Some milk is poured on the heads of the couple and the *mangalsutra* (lucky thread) is tied about the girl's neck by the Jangam or Dasri, who officiates as priest. The bride and bridegroom then sprinkle rice over each other's head and this forms the binding portion of the ceremony.

(8) *Bhuma.*—Wheat cakes and sweets are offered to the patron deity and four persons of the bridegroom's party and five of the bride's are required to eat the offerings. Anything remaining is buried underground.

(9) *Mirongi.*—The bridegroom, on horseback, and the bride, on foot, go in procession to Hanuman's temple and, after worshipping the god, return home.

(10) A square is formed by placing an earthen pot at each corner and a cotton thread is passed round. Within this, the wedded couple are seated and bathed, their *kankanams* are untied and then transferred to the banyan twig previously planted under the booth.

(11) *Chagol.*—The feast given to the caste people and relatives of the bride, after which the bride leaves her husband's house where the wedding ceremony was performed and goes to her father's house. This rite completes the marriage ceremonies.

Tera, or bride-price, varying from Rs. 7 to Rs. 100 is paid to the girl's parents.

The Dakkalwad marriage presents some interesting features. The bride and bridegroom, dressed in wedding clothes and with their garments knotted, walk three times round a wooden pestle placed beneath the marriage canopy. They are then seated beside the pestle and grains of rice are thrown on their heads by the assembled relatives and guests. Upon this, the couple undergo ablution and the bridegroom ties the *pusti* (*mangalsutra*) about the bride's neck, the women of the household singing songs all the while. The father of the girl receives Rs. 10 as the price of his daughter.

Widow Marriage :

Widows are allowed to marry again, but they are not expected to marry their deceased husband's younger brother. On a dark night, the bridegroom's party go to the widow's house, present her with a white Sari, choli and bangles and escort her to the bridegroom's house. There the couple are bathed, and the bridegroom ties a pusti of gold round the widow's neck. Next morning the pair conceal themselves in a forest grove, and at night return to their house. After her marriage, a widow cannot claim the custody of her children by her late husband.

Divorce :

Divorce is permitted, generally, on the ground of the wife's adultery, and is effected by driving her out of the house before the caste *Panchayat*. Divorced women are allowed to marry again by the same rites as widows. The morality of the Madiga women is, however, very lax; adultery among them is not looked upon with abhorrence and is usually punished only with a nominal fine.

Inheritance :

Among the Madigas, the devolution of property is governed by the Hindu law of inheritance. A Jogini, or dedicated girl, shares her father's property equally with her brothers, with succession to her children. Wills are unknown. A childless man usually adopts his brother's son, failing whom, any boy of his own section, but in any case the adopted boy must be younger than the adopter.

Religion :

The Madigas are still animistic in their belief, and pay more reverence to the deities of diseases and ghosts and spirits of deceased persons, than to the great gods of the Hindu pantheon. Their tribal deity is Matangi, who is believed to be the female progenitor of the caste. Regarding her, it is said that she gave protection to Renuka, when the latter was pursued by her son Parshuram at his father's command. Parshuram, in wrath, cut off Matangi's nose, which was immediately restored to her by Renuka. Since then, Renuka, in the form of Ellamma, has been revered as their patron deity by the caste. Next in honour to Matangi are, Mari Amma, Murgamma or Durgamma, the goddess presiding over children, whose worship has been fully described in the report on the Manga caste, Pochamma, the deity of small-pox, Maisamma, Ellamma, Gauramma, and Mahakalamma. To Mari Amma are offered goats and bull-buffaloes in the month of Ashadha. Pochamma is worshipped on Mondays, Ellamma on Tuesdays, and Maisamma on Sundays, with offerings of goats, buffaloes, fowls and liquors, which are subsequently partaken of by the votaries themselves. Bindlas officiate as priests, and perform all religious and ceremonial observances.

Besides these greater animistic deities, the Madigas propitiate a number of ghostly powers, with a variety of sacrifices, Erakala women being engaged to identify and lay the troubling ghost. Honour is also done by the members of the caste to the standard Hindu gods, among whom may be especially mentioned Hanuman and Mahadeva. Muhammadan saints and *pirs* are also appeased by the members of the caste.

Like other Telaga castes, the Madigas are divided between Tirmanidharis and Vibhutidharis. The Tirmanidharis are under the guidance of Mala Dasris, while the Vibhutidharis, or Shaivaits, acknowledge Mala, Jangams as their spiritul *gurus*.

Disposal of the Dead :

The dead are usually buried, except in the case of women in pregnancy and lepers, who are burnt. Married agnates are mourned

for ten days, and unmarried for three days. No Sradha is performed, but birds are fed with cooked flesh on the 3rd day after death. During the period of mourning, the chief mourner may not eat flesh, molasses, oil or turmeric nor may he sleep on a bed. On the 10th day after death, a feast is given to the caste people and purification is obtained. It is said that the Namdharis burn their dead in a lying posture, with the head pointing to the south, collect the ashes and bones on the 3rd day after death, and either throw them into a sacred stream, or bury them underground. Bindalwads are employed to perform the funeral rites.

Social Status:

The social rank of the Madigas is the lowest in the Hindu social system. They eat the leavings of any caste except the Erakalas, Domars, Pichakuntalas, Buruds, Jingars and Panchadayis, while no caste except the Dakalwads, their own sub division, will eat food cooked by them. They live on the outskirts of villages, in thatched one-storied houses, with only one entrance door. Their habits are very dirty, and their quarters extremely filthy. The village barber will not shave their heads nor will the village washerman wash their clothes and they have to employ barbers and washermen from among their own community. Their touch is regarded as unclean by all respectable classes, and a Brahman touched by a Madiga is required to obtain purification by bathing himself, washing his clothes and changing his sacred thread for a new one. The diet of a Madiga is in keeping with his degraded position and he eats beef, horse flesh, pork, fowls, mutton and the flesh of animals which have died a natural death. The bear, as a representative of their ancestor Jambavant, is held in special respect, and no Madiga will injure or kill the animal.

Occupation:

The original occupation of the caste is believed to be the skinning of dead animals, leather dressing and the making of leather ropes, leather buckets for hauling water from wells and other leather articles used in husbandry. Like the Malas they are field servants, and supply the farmers with the above articles, for which they get, as their perquisite, a fixed quantity of grain for each plough. They make shoes of various kinds, but especially *chapals* (sandals) of which they produce the best varieties. They are engaged as scavengers, village watchmen, guides, executioners and begaris, or forced coolies. They also serve as musicians at the marriage and other ceremonies of high caste Hindus. Their right to carcasses is often disputed by the Malas and tedious litigations result. At some places they hold Inam

lands, in lieu of services rendered by them to the village community as messengers and carriers. They also work as village criers, announcing by beat of drum (dafada) any public orders. Some of them get enrolled in the Indian army, where they pass under the name of Bedars or Gosangi Bantus. Many serve as menials in the houses of Muhammadan landlords. A few only have taken to agriculture.

Extract on "Madiga" from 'Caste in India, Its Nature, Function, and Origins' by J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E. M.A. D.Sc. Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffery Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page 284 (*Glossary*).

MADIGA

A Telugu caste of leather-workers, corresponding to Chamar and Chakkiliyan in northern India and the Tamilnad respectively.

Extract on "Madiga" from 'Caste in India, Its Nature, Function, and Origins' by J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E. M.A. D.Sc. Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page 11.

Generally speaking, the inhabitants of the Andhra country appear to be more volatile and 'temperamental' than their neighbours, and in particular are noted for the outbreaks of rioting between the castes of the Right Hand and of the Left, two ancient factions in which the low castes of Mala and Madiga are respectively prominent as protagonists. The Chindu dance performed by Madigas with bells on their legs at marriages, and festivals generally, has had to be prohibited in several districts on account of its infuriating effect on the Malas, and of the resulting riots.[6] The Tamil seems generally to be of a harderheaded, more practical turn of mind than the Telugu, similar musical gifts being combined with a peculiar aptitude for mathematics and physics.

---

6 *Vide* infra, p. 69.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Caste in India, Its Nature, Function, and Origins by J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E. M.A. D.Sc. Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page. 68.

Fully Righthand caste include at any rate the following: Balija, Banajiga and Komati (trading castes). Vaniyan (who yoke one bullock only), Chaliyan and Seniyan (weaving castes), Janappan (hemp-dressers), Kusavan (potters), Melakkaran (musicians, Shanan (toddy drawers), Ambattan (barbers), Vannan (washermen), Idaiyan (shepherds), Vellala, Paraiyan Mala, Holeya (cultivating castes), Kurava, Odde, Irula, Vedan and Vettuvan (mostly labourers). In addition to the above there seem to be, as already stated, the women of the Chakkiliyan or Madiga caste, but the Right or Left handedness of castes differs apparently to some extent with locality.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Caste in India, Its Nature, Function, and Origins by J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E. M.A. D.Sc. Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege Oxford University Press, page 166.

The inference that the factions of the Right and Left Hand arose as a result of the introduction of the Makkathayam principle, which some castes were unwilling to accept, is inescapable. The fact that the women of one or two castes belong to one faction while the men belong to another does nothing to weaken this inference, since there is nothing more likely than that the women of a caste might be opposed to a change of this kind while the men were wishful to adopt it,[52] and it is to be observed that in the only case in which the women are certainly reported to differ from their menfolk the women belong to the Right Hand and their menfolk to the Left. Moreover, in the case of the Madiga caste the women are often made basavi or are dedicated as devadasis for whom the matrilineal system is important, while in the Kaikolan caste (a left hand caste) also, in which the same practice obtains, the women sometimes belong to the Right Hand.[53] Further, it is to be noted that while the cultivating classes support the Right Hand, which we may take perhaps to represent the form of society which conformed to ancient practice, the artisan castes all support the Left Hand faction.

52 Among the Jats men claim the right to marry a deceased brother's widow while women vehemently deny it. Wise, op. cit. p. 125.

53 According to Rose ('Caste') devadasis of the Right restrict the favours to the caste to which they belong whereas those of the Left Hand a much more promiscuous a distinction which seems to support the theory advanced here that the devadasi of the Right Hand are merely adhering to an original matrilineal systems.

Extract on "MADIGA" from The Mysore Tribes and Castes Volume IV, by The Late H. V. NANJUNDAYYA, M.A., M.L., C.I.E., Superintendent of Ethnography, Mysore; Vice-Chancellor of The Mysore University AND RAO BAHADUR L. K. ANANTHAKRISHNA IYER, B.A., L.T., Curator of the State Museum, Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, Superintendent of Ethnography, Trichur, Cochin State, (Retired); Lecturer in Anthropology, and Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, Calcutta; Officer in Charge of Ethnographic Survey, Mysore. Author of the Cochin Tribes and Castes, Anthropology of the Syrian Christians; Lectures on Ethnography; Corresponding Member of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, London. Corresponding Member of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, U.S.A., etc. Published under the auspices of The Mysore University, Mysore 1931, *pages* 125 *to* 169.

Introduction—Origin and tradition of the Caste—Internal structure of the Caste—Marriage customs and ceremonies—Puberty customs—Widow Marriage—Adultery and Divorce—Basavis—post-Natal Ceremonies—Inheritance and Adoption Caste Constitution—Admission of strangers into the caste—Magico-Religious Beliefs—Religion—Funeral ceremonies—Occupation—Social Status—Dietary of the caste—Appearance, Dress and Ornaments—Conclusion.

Introduction:

The Madigas, who are known as the left-hand caste, are regarded as lower than the Holeyas, or the right-hand caste* in the social scale.

According to the Census of 1921, the Madigas numbered 2,96,821, of whom 1,39,386 were males. They are distributed over all the districts, though the four districts of Mysore, Bangalore, Kolar and Tumkur contain 88 per cent of this caste.

The caste is commonly known as Madiga. They are also styled Edagaiyavaru, or of the left-hand faction. Among themselves they apply the terms Jambavas, Padmajatiyavaru and Matangas, has being more euphemistic. Panchamas is a word which has been recently invented to apply to this and the Holeya caste, as a term not possessing the association suggested by the more familiar names, with a low social status. Chambara and Begara are also names which

*In this country, the right-hand is considered superior to the left, the form only being employed for eating or handling sacred things, while the left-hand is exclusively used for cleaning the lower parts of the body. The designation "right-hand" denotes some superiority over the left.

others apply to this caste. Chandala and Antyaja are bare nick-names, when special stress is meant to be laid on the inferiority of this caste.

In addressing them, the names are employed generally by all the other castes; and sometimes the suffix *gadu* (in Telugu) or *ga* (in Kannada) is added to emphasise the comparative inferiority of the person addressed. Among themselves *appa, ayya,* and *amma* are the honorific suffixes employed when addressing elderly persons. The term "Manegar" (headman) is sometimes applied to the headman, or an elderly respectable member of the caste.

The Madigas and the Holeyas are sometimes known as the "black people", *Nallajanamu* in Telugu and Kappujana in Kannada, and the term *Nalla kulacharanu* is said to be the usage of these castes. But these terms are not well known, and their application is not quite established.*

The meaning of the term Madiga is not clear. It is supposed to be a corruption of Matanga. The caste known as Mhangs in the Maharashtra country correspond to Madigas, and the names may perhaps be connected with each other. The termination *"iga"* seems to denote their profession, but the first part cannot be traced to any root in the Kannada language. Matanga, in Sanskrit, is applied to a *Kirata,* or a mountaineer, or a barbarian. Matanga was applied to a dynasty (as it was believed) of hill tribes but whether they had any connection with these Madigas, it is impossible to say. They have no such tradition, and say that the name is derived from Matanga† Rishi.

Madigas belong to the left-hand group of castes, as the Holeyas to the right-hand, and somehow each of these castes, which is the lowest in its group, has appropriated the name of the group for itself, Madigas being generally known as *Edagai* (left-hand) men, and Holeyas as *Balagai* (right-hand) men.

Jambava‡ is the name given to a sub-division, but it is also popularly used to denote the whole caste. The name occurs in *Ramayana*

*See *Mysore Census Report* of 1901, p. 254. Some of the uneducated use the term "black men" for native, or Indians, as distinguished from "White men" for Europeans.

†To the term Matanga, a meaning is given as 'One that may not go into the middle of a village'.

‡Jambava of these *Ramayana* is said to have been a bear as Hanuman was a monkey. He is stated to have lived down to the time of Krishna with whom he wrestled for the possession of a gem, styled Samantaka Mani.

as that of the oldest member of the heterogeneous army of Rama's allies. Madigas say they are descended from him, and believe that he was born six months before the creation of the Earth. Perhaps it is their way of laying claim to be the oldest inhabitants of the country, a claim which has some probability in its favour. The reason for the appellation of Padmajati (lotus, caste) to Madigas cannot be traced. Chambar, corresponding to Chakkili in Tamil, is a corrupted form apparently of Charmakara, a worker in leather.

The name Begar cannot be said to be a proper name for this caste, though it is sometimes applied as such on account of their being commonly employed as servants for communal village-work. The term Begar means either a watchman or one who does petty services for revenue and other officials, for which he cannot ask for payment, as it is considered to be part of his customary duties. They are known collectively as *bitti* and *begari.*

The term Panchama is one of recent coinage (the fifth), and is applied to them and Holeyas, as they are outside the four castes mentioned in the *sastras. Chandala,* literally a cruel man, is rarely applied to any caste, except when it is meant to exhibit contempt, and then it applies indifferently to any low caste. Antyaja (literally 'born at the end') can also be hardly regarded as a special name for this caste.

Origin and Tradition of the Caste :

There is little doubt that this caste represents the earliest stratum among the inhabitants of this country who have settled in towns and villages. In colour and features they differ more widely than the Holeyas from the higher classes of the people. It is impossible to trace their origin with any certainty, but they have also some current stories bearing on the subject, which as usual are meant to make out that they had originally a higher status than they now possess. It is said that Jambava Rishi was created by Adi Sakti, primeval force, six months before the Earth, and when the latter was still in a fluid state, he was floating on its surface. By the command of the Creator he killed his younger son, and mixed his blood with liquid earth, whereupon it curdled into a solid mass. The name given to his younger son is Heppumuni (Heppu meaning curdle). The boy however was revived by the grace of Parameswara and Parvati, and gave rise to the caste of Dakkaloru, who are regarded as the inferior progeny (Halemakkalu) of the Madigas. They claim descent for themselves from Yugamuni, the elder son of Jambava.

They were pure at first, but Jambava Rishi was one day presented with a cow by Siva for the benefit of his children. Once during his absence at Siva's Court, his son Yugamuni, had a visit from another rishi called Sankhya, and entertained him hospitably; the latter found the milk of the cow so sweet that he tried to prevail upon Jambava's son to kill her and eat the flesh. Yugamuni did not agree, but Sankhya himself killed the animal and induced the others to partake of the meat. On his return, Jambava was horrified at the deed, and dragged both the offenders for punishment to the Iswara's Court; they were doomed to become Chandalas thenceforth, and their decendants became right-hand and the left-hand castes, as Sankhya had stood on the right side and Yuga on the left side at the entrance to the Court while awaiting judgement.* It is said that Madigas have been condemned to the mean trade of shoe-making as an expiration for the original offence of their ancestor†. The wife of Yugamuni in the above account is given the name of Matangi, but there is another story which makes a male Matanga Rishi their progenitor. Who this Rishi was they do not know, but say that it was his curse that brought upon them their low position in life. One Matanga is mentioned in the *Mahabharata* as begotten by a Sudra barber on a Brahman woman. He was therefore a Chandala, and could not shake off this character although he performed the most severe penances. It is possible that the name adopted by Madigas has come from this source.

It is stated that Western Chalukya King Mangalesa (567-610 A.D.) conquered the Matangas. Who these were has not been definitely settled, and it is conjectured that they were hill tribes, and that Madigas are their descendants.‡ The tribal goddess of the Madigas is known as Matangi. They themselves have no traditions of any connection with a ruling race, and the conjecture may be due to a mere similarity of names, and to the belief that, being aboriginal, they have ruled the country at some remote period.

"We shall now proceed to enquire who this Mathangi was, and how she came to be worshipped there. Jamadhagni Maharishi, known as Bagavan on account of his godly power and virtues, married Renuka, the daughter of Renu, and had five sons by her, the youngest

*Mysore Census Report 1891, page 255. Another version of the story is given in the account of the Holeyas. Vol. III, pages 321-324.

†There is a current proverb in Kannada and Telugu about expiating the sin of killing a cow by the present of a pair of shoes. This has no apparent connection with this story, but denotes an cutter disproportion between an offence and its reparation.

‡Bijapur Gazetteer, page 381; Kanara Gazetteer, p. 81; Madras Census Report of 1891, p. 302.

of whom was the famous Parasurama, an incarnation of Vishnu. 'Once upon a time,' says the *Bhagavatapurana,* 'Renuka having gone to the Ganga, saw the king of the Gandharvas wearing garlands of lotus, to play with the Apsaras. Having gone to the river to fetch water, she, whose heart was somewhat attracted by Chitraratha (the king of the Gandharvas) who was playing, forgot the time of *Yajna* (sacrifice). Coming to feel the delay, and afraid of the curse of the *muni,* she returned to the hermitage, and placed the pitcher before the *muni,* and remained standing with folded palms. The Muni (Jamadhagni), coming to know of the unchasteness of his wife, got enraged, and said, 'O my sons! kill this sinner'. Although thus directed, they did not do so. They said Parasu Rama, who was well aware of the power of the Muni in respect of meditations and asceticism, killed, as directed by his father, his mother along with his brothers. The son of Satyavati (Jamadhagni) was pleased, and requested Rama to pray for any favour. Rama desired the reanimation of those killed, and their forgetfulness of the fact of their having been killed. Immediately did they get up, as though after a deep sleep. Rama, who was conscious of the powers of his father in regard to asceticism, took the life of his dear ones.

The version locally prevalent is somewhat different. Jamadhagni Bagawan's hermitage was near this Kona, and he was worshipping the god Surabeswara, and doing *tapas* (penance) there. One day, his wife Renuka Devi, went very early in the morning, to the river Gundlacama to bathe, and fetch water for her husband's sacrificial rites. She was accompanied, as was her wont on such occasions, by a female slave of the chuckler (leather-worker) caste, as a sort of bodyguard and attendant. While she was bathing, the great warrior Karthaviriyarjuna with a thousand arms happened to fly across the sky on some business of his own, and Renuka saw his form reflected in the water, and was pleased with it in her mind. It must be mentioned that she never used to take any vessel with her to fetch water, for her chastity was such that she had power to roll water into a pot-like shape, as if it were wax, and thus bring it home. On this day, however, she failed to effect this, try what she might, and she was obliged to return home empty handed. In the meanwhile, the sage, her husband, finding that his wife did not return as usual, learnt through his 'wisdom sight' what had happened, and ordered his son Parasurama to slay his sinful mother. Parasurama went towards the river accordingly, and, seeing his mother returning, aimed an arrow at her, which severed her head from her body, and also similarly severed, with its unspent force, the head of the chuckler woman who was coming immediately behind his mother. Parasurama returned to his father without even noticing this accident, and when his father, pleased with his prompt obedience, offered him any boon, he prayed for the re-animation of

his mother. Jamadhagni then gave him some holy water out of his vessel, and told him to put together the dismembered parts, and sprinkle some water over them. Parasurama went off in great delight and haste, and, as it was still dark and early in the morning, he wrongly put his mother's head on the chuckler woman's trunk, and sprinkled water on them. Then seeing another head and another body lying close by, he thought that they belonged to the female slave whom he had unwittingly killed, and he put them also together, and re-animated them. He was extremely vexed when he found out the mistakes he had committed, but, as there was no rectifying them without another double murder, he produced the two women before his father, and begged to be forgiven. The sage finally accepted the person with his late consort's head as his wife, and granted to the other woman the status of an inferior deity, in response to her prayers, and owing to her having his wife's body. This was the origin of Mathangi".

The Madigas claim to be the children of Matangi. "There was, "Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,* "formerly a Matanga dynasty in the Canarese country, and the Madigas are believed by some to be descendants of people who were once a ruling race. Matangi is a Sanskrit name for Kali, and it is possible that the Madigas once played an important part in the worship of the goddess. The employment of Chakkiliyans and Madiga women in Sakti worship gives some colour to this supposition." According to Fleet,† "the Matangas and the Kalachchuris are mentioned in connection with Mangalisa, who was the younger brother and successor of Kirttivarman I, and whose reign commenced in Saka 489 (A.D. 567-8), and terminated in Saka 532 (A.D. 610-11). Of the Matangas, nothing is known, except the mention of them. But Matanga means 'a *chandala*', a man of the lowest caste, an outcaste, a *kirata* mountaineer, a barbarian;' and the Madigas, i.e., the Mahangs of this part of country, usually call themselves Matangi-*makkalu* i.e., the children of Matangi or Durga, who is their goddess. It is probable, therefore, that the Matangas of this inscription were some aboriginal family of but little power, and not of sufficient importance to have left any record of themselves." There are allusions to Matangas in the *Ramayana,* and in the *Kadambari,* a sanskrit work, the chieftain of the Sabaras is styled Matanga. The tutelary deity of the Madigas is Mathamma or Matangi, who is said to be worshipped by the Komatis under the name of Kanyakaparameswari‡.

---

*Madras Census Report, 1891, p. 302.

†Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts of the Bombay Presidency, 1882.

‡E. Thurston : Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Vol. IV, 1909, page 303.

The claim to a descent from Jambava may perhaps be an indication of their original character. Jambava is associated with the armies of the allies of Rama in the *Ramayana,* and is said to have been a bear, as most of them were monkeys. It is now generally agreed that these terms were applied to the non-Aryan races who helped Rama in his invasion of the southernmost portion of India.

Madigas speak Kannada, or Telugu, according to the locality they live in. There are some immigrants into the State from the southern parts of the Madras Presidency, and they speak Tamil; but their number is insignificant.

Internal Structure of the Caste :

Endogamous groups : The caste contains two main divisions. based on the language they speak, the Kannada and the Telugu Madigas. The Kannada Madigas do not intermarry with the Telugu-speaking Madigas. Each language-group has three endogamous divisions, which are Tanige Buvvadavaru in Kannada and Tale Buvvamuvallu in Telugu (of the eating-dish division); Hedige Buvvadavaru in Kannada and Gampa Buvvamuvallu in Telugu (of the basket division); and Mora Buvvadavaru of the winnow-division. These last are again sub-divided into single and double winnows.

These divisions are named after the manner in which the bride and the bridegroom eat *Buvva* (food or common marital meal), that is, as they keep the food in an eating-dish, a basket or a winnow. It is said that the people of the last division, in some places, make the figure of a human body out of the cooked rice and other articles used for Buvva, and that the bride and the bridegroom, with some of their nearest male relatives on either side, eat up the figure, the bridegroom and his party beginning to consume from the head, and the bride and her party from the legs. From this practice, they take the name of Henabuvvadavaru in Kannada, and Finigedomativallu in Telugu (of the corpse division).

In addition to the above, there are two other divisions among the Madigas, known as Jambavas and Dakkaloru, which deserve special mention.

Jambavas are the *Gurus* of the Madigas, and have some *mathas* for themselves, such as those at Kodihalli (Hiriyur taluk) and Nelamangala. They affix *muni** to their personal names (as e.g., Rudramuni). and wear a *linga,* and mark their foreheads with ashes

*Muni (meaning a reecluse) is an obsolete title affixed to the names of Rishis.

(*vibhuti*) and sandal paste. When they pay periodical visits to their disciples, they lodge either in a tope near the Madiga quarters, or occupy a house specially vacated and cleansed for them. They consider Panchalas (goldsmiths) as their patrons. Whenever they go to a village in which Panchalas live, they make it a point to visit their houses, and standing outside, get some presents from them. The Jambavas may marry girls from the ordinary Madiga families, after subjecting them to some purificatory ceremony, but they on no account give their girls in marriage to the other Madigas. All the Jambavas talk Telugu, and say they belong to the Cuddapah District, and their women throw the loose end of their garment over the right shoulder, while the other Madiga women let it fall on the left side.

Dakkalus are considered to be the Halemakkalu (hereditary bondsmen) of the Madigas, and are treated by them as outcastes. Their progenitor is said to be the second son of Jambava, whose head was sacrificed when the crust of the earth hardened. His head and trunk were thrown into a well, but there was still so much vitality that the severed body continued to speak. Siva and his consort passing in the aerial regions heard some noise in the well, and impelled by curiosity came to the place, questioned the body, and learnt its story. The trunk and the head were brought together by the God, and restored him to full life. The boy declined to go back to his father, or to accompany the God to his heaven or Kailasa, and as he proved so refractory, he was nicknamed Dakkalava, that is, one that could not be held in restraint, and, sent to roam about the world with a curse that he and his descendants should have no home of their own, and should live on food begged from the descendants of the other son of Jambava, who are Madigas. Even now, the Dakkalus have no recognised head-quarters and are always moving from place to place. They are not allowed to enter the Madiga quarters. When they come to a village, they pitch their camp in a garden, or other place at a small distance from the houses of the Madigas, and announce to them their arrival. The latter are bound to supply them with food and drink, and will on no account incur their displeasure, lest they should curse them; when leaving the village, they get some presents from each family of the Madigas. On important occasions, such as marriage, these Dakkalus are not forgotton, but have some money presents and *tambula* kept apart for them.

Exogamous divisions.—The Madigas have a number of exogamous divisions known as *Kulas*, or bedagus. Most of them are named after various material objects, such as trees and animals. Though some of these septs do observe the rule of not eating, cutting, or otherwise using the object represented by their names, the connection,

if it ever existed universally, is now generally forgotton, and no significance is attached to it.

Aivalli	
Ankelu	
Ari	They do not either cut or touch the Bann i tree (Prosopis specegera).
Belli	*Silver.*
Bandari	
Bhogam	
Billu	A bow
Chatri	An umbrella.
Chimalu	Ants.
Chinnada	Gold.
Chittala	A kind of fuel tree which they do not use
Emme	A buffalo
Enna or Benne	Butter
Gonaba	
Gongadi	A cloak, worn over the head and the face
Gujjalu	
Handa	
Hatti	Court yard
Heggade	Chief man
Honnu	Gold
Hunda	
Hutta	An ant-hill
Huvvu	Flower
Jnivagala	
Kamagatti	
Kambli	A blanket
Karadi	A bear
Kengare	
Kori	A rag
Kurma	A tortoise
Kuri	A sheep
Kusume	A plant
Lakkibanda	
Lakkipamada	
Maddale	A drum
Magi	
Mallige	Jasmine
Mandala	Herd of cattle
Mandma	

Miniga	Fish
Muchchala . . .	A lid
Munaga or Nuggi (Moringa)	Horse-radish plerigosperma.
Nagara	Cobra
Nakka or Nari . .	A Jackal which they neither kill nor eat.
Palu or Halu . . .	A kind of herb
Pasapu or Arasina . .	Turmeric
Puli or Huli . . .	Tiger
Sada	..
Sakila	..
Sannakki . . .	A species of rice (husked paddy)
Setti	..
Soge	The leaf of palms, sugarcane or screw pine
Talamaru . . .	
Yalachi	The jujube
Yakila	..

As mentioned already, men of the Jambava division may take wives from other divisions, but the women should marry only in their own division. This is a genuine case of hypergamy. But sometimes those Madigas who have recently adopted the Vaishnava faith in place of the worship of village goddesses, decline to give their girls to others, while they have no objection to marry girls from other divisions. But the others do not admit this as a mark of superiority, as they hold that a married girl going out of the family cannot contaminate it, whereas a girl entering the family from a lower stratum introduces inferior blood.*

Marriage Customs and Ceremonies:

There is no age limit for marriage in either sex. But some say that marriage, after a girl has passed the age of puberty is of an inferior type, and some important parts of the regular ceremony, such as the bringing of the sacred pots (ariveni), are omitted. Marriages are arranged by the parents or other elders of the family. Polygamy is allowed, and the reasons for taking an additional wife are the same as in other cases, such as the want of issue, the need for an additional working-hand or some fault or defect in the first wife. The additional wife is generally a widow, or a divorced woman, and is married in the *kudike* form, or a concubine is considered sufficient. Polyandry is unknown.

*This belief is embodied in the proverb. The bride given away becomes an outsider to the kula or tribe.

Marriage must be inside their own groups, such as Kannada Madigas, but outside their own *kulas* or *bedagus*, the members of the same *kula* or *bedagu* being considered related as brothers and sisters. Marriage with the daughter of an elder sister, or of maternal uncle or paternal aunt, is considered most suitable. A man may not marry his paternal uncle's or maternal aunt's daughter, as she is regarded as equal to a sister. Two sisters may be married either by one man or by two uterine brothers, the elder marrying the elder sister, the younger, the younger. Exchange of daughters is not only practised, but is most commonly in vogue, the reason being the saving of the bride-price by both parties.

Negotiations for marriage are commenced by the father of the boy, who repairs to the house of the bride's father, for whom he has to procure toddy at his expense. Such visits are repeated several times, till the bride's father expresses his consent, after which the agreement is sealed by the ceremony of *oppuvilya*. In the presence of the headman and other castemen, the bride's and the bridegroom's father exchange *tambulas;* and a further confirmation takes place subsequently, on an auspicious day fixed for them by the village astrologer. The latter's opinion is also obtained about the *salavali,* or the mutual compatibility of the names of the parties to be married. For this ceremony of *vilyada sastra* the boy's father, accompanied by some married women, goes to the girl's house, taking certain provisions consisting of seven seers of rice, two or three cocoanuts, and small quantities of ghee, oil, jaggery, powdered turmeric, etc. A meeting of the castemen is convened, and the girl is seated on a plank, and presented with fruit and flowers placed in her garment. Five *kalasas* are installed before her and worshipped. An essential part of the ceremony is the *simhasana puja,* a heap of betel-leaves and arecanuts, with *vibhuti* balls at the four corners, being placed on a *kambli.* In front of this is placed the *mudre,* or insignia of Arulappa Saranaru, which is a sacred symbol kept by the head of the caste and brought out only on such occasions. After the worship is over, the girl rises from her seat, and does *namaskara* (bowing) to the sun and the elders. In some places, she gets a present of five rupees, three rupees from the bridgroom's father, and two from hers. But generally the father of the girl gives her a *hana* (4 as. 8 p.) called *Devarahana* (God's money). This is subsequently used to prepare a *tali,* which is tied to her on the first day of the marriage (the first saffron smearing). The boy's father has ordinarily to pay in addition one rupee, as the astrologer's consultation fee, and half a rupee for feeding charges. He has also to bear the expenses of buying toddy for the castemen. After this ceremony is performed, the girl should not, properly speaking, be married to any other. Any party that withdraws from the agreement has not only to reimburse the expenses incurred

by the other party, but has also to pay a fine to the caste, which is spent on toddy, and the girl may be married to another person, but the full marriage-rites are not gone through. The marriage generally takes place in the boy's house. The ceremonies follow in the same order as among some others of the Non-Brahman castes, beginning with the *devaruta* (God's feast) and *modalarasina* (first smearing of turmeric).

The *pandal* is erected on twelve posts covered with *honge*, or cocoa-nut leaves; and the central or milk-post is of the fig (*atti*), or milkbush (*kalli*) tree, cut by the bridegroom's maternal uncle. The post is decorated with seven stripes of turmeric drawn round it, and seven betel-leaves tied to it. There is also a package of nine sorts of grain attached to it by a thread. It is believed that a pregnant woman will meet with some evil if she sees this log while it is being taken to the bridal house.

On the evening of the day, the bride's party arrive at the place, and are received by their hosts with due honour. They are supplied with provisions, consisting of nine seers of rice, one jaggery cube, and a vesselful of rice.

The sacred pots (*ariveni*) are then fetched by the married women of both parties from the village potter. They are painted and placed outside by him; and the women decorate them with lines of saffron and rice-flour in fifteen places. They are set upon a bed of manure mixed with nine kinds of grain, and *puja* is offered to them sometimes wih the sacrifice of a sheep or a goat. Red marks are impressed on the wall, on each side of the entrance to this room, with the palm of the hand dipped in blood or coloured water, to keep off the evil eye. A thread dipped in a solution of turmeric powder is tied to each pot, and a similar one to the wrist of each married woman. This part of the ceremony is called Ganga-*puja* (worship of Water Goddess) and is followed by a general dinner.

Early next morning the bride and the bride-groom undergo the nail-paring ceremony, for which a man of their own caste does the service. The bridal pair bathe in the *maleniru*. They are made to sit by turns within a square formed by passing a cotton thread seven times round the necks of four earthen or brass vessels filled with water and placed at the corners. Some balls of cooked rice are placed in the vessels, and on various parts of the body of the parties to be married, and they are made to bow towards the sun. Four married women take the vessels and pour the water contained therein on the head of each of them. After this the boy and the girl are made to sit on the threshold of the house with folded hands.

The thumbs of the two hands are tied together with a cotton thread, and a broad awl stuck into a lime is placed in the hands. An earthen jug full of water is kept at the spot. The bridegroom and the bride are each lifted up by the maternal uncle, who turns round three times with the burden, and each bows towards the sun, and upset the water-jug by kicking it. They are then carried inside the house and seated on the marrige dais. The maternal uncles are each presented with a turban, twelve betel-leaves, twelve nuts, one cube of jaggery, and four pies. This ceremony is called *binaga,* or *sarebidi-sugudu,* i.e., release from bondage.

Then, putting on new wedding-clothes, the bridegroom goes out of the village and sits under a tree, where his limbs are smeared with turmeric paste. He is then made to stand facing the east, and water is poured into his hands through funnels made of betel-leaves. He turns round three times and bows towards the sun, and throws away the leaves towards the east. After similarly acting towards the other cardinal points, he sits on a *kambli* (blanket) spread under the tree. Then his party go to and return from the marriage-house three times, each time taking new clothes and other articles to the girl. The third time the bridegroom sets out with a dagger in his left hand, rolled up in a red kerchief. The bridegroom's sister carries in a new basket some betel-leaves, arecanuts, limes, turmeric paste, a gold *tali,* and a skein of unbleached cotton-thread. Near the house a light is waved before the bridegroom to ward off the evil eye. A mock resistance is overcome by the two parties throwing half-pounded paddy at each other. The bride and the bridegroom are made to sit near the *ariveni* pots, with their hands joined together. The maternal uncle of the bride gives betel-leaves and arecanuts to the headman, named *pedda* Madiga (Telugu), or *dodda* Madiga (Kannada), who putting on the thread known in this connection as *bondi* round the bride's neck, ties the *tali* to her. *Bhashings* and *Kankanas* are then tied to each party. They are then led into the *pandal,* and made to stand facing each other on the marrige dais. Either the *yajman* or another old man conducts the marriage ceremony. The couple place cummin seed and sesamum grain on each other's heads. Dhare or milk-pouring ceremony, *talabalu* or putting rice on each other's heads, and presentation of garlands to each other, take place. Lastly, the husband is made to tie another *tali* round the neck of the girl, and thereupon the binding and essential portion of the marriage is completed.

The *simhasana puja* (literally worship of the lion seat or throne) then takes place. A black *kambli* done into four folds is spread on a spot cleaned with cowdung-water near the marriage seat, and some rice is spread over it, and drawings are made of their professional

instruments, such as an awl, a knife, and a saw. A *kalasa,* or vessel filled with sweetened water, is placed on this bed, and a quarter-rupee piece is thrown in. The vessel is decorated with a silver chain round its neck, and lumps of *vibhuti* are placed on the corners of the *kambli.* In front of the *kalasa,* betel-leaves and arecanuts are arranged in a pile. The bridal pair worship all this with the help of the *yajaman* and the *Darsanadavaru* or Dasayyas and the Chowdikeyavaru, the *pujaries* of their tribal goddess. The betal-leaves and nuts are then distributed amon the people assembled in a prescribed order of precedence. The first *tambula* is set apart for the sun and the moon, the second for the Bhumidevi (Earth Goddess), the third for Gantama Vabayya, a mythical hero who is believed to have conferred a boon on the caste by procuring for them a king known as Penugonda Ratnakambli Raja, their *guru,* then the *yajman,* then the *kattemanes,* then a *tambula* to all the castemen and lastly to the Dakkalus, their reputed children. Afterwards *tambulas* (betel-leaves) are given individually to the assembled persons.

The bridal couple then rise, and walking round the milk-post three times, go into the room where the *arivenis* are installed, holding each other's hand and with the fringes of their garments knotted together. Near the *arivenis* takes place the important ceremony of *Buvvada puja, or Domati puja.* On a spot cleaned with cowdung and water a plantain-leaf is spread, and on it is consecrated an eating-dish, a basket, or a winnow, according to the section the parties belong to Married women, observing fast, cook in new earthen vessels four to eight seers of rice mixed with jaggery, holding a cloth to their noses to prevent the rice becoming contaminated by their smelling it. It is then placed in a dish, winnow, or basket, and mixed with four or five seers of ghee, plantains, and sweet cakes, made into balls. Then the bridal pair, and the three married women who have observed a half-fast (eating only once a day) for the previous three days, worship this *buvva.* Some balls are then distributed to all the castemen as *prasada,* and the rest are divided equally and put into two dishes, baskets, or winnows, as the case may be. The bride and her relations take one portion, and the bridegroom and his party the other, and they consume the whole of it at one sitting, without leaving a single morsel. It is said that they should carry the food to their mouth only with two fingers. The "dish" and the "winnow" sections perform this ceremony in the God's room (ariveni room), while the "basket" section do it in the *pandal* which is closed by a screen. The bridal pair alone remain inside to eat the rice, and their relatives receive their balls and go outside to eat them. Whatever remains unserved must, as a matter of right, go to the bride's relatives. The basket is kept in the *pandal,* and is removed thence only when the structure is pulled down after the marriage.

Among some of the winnow-section, an extra-ordinary custom prevails in eating the *buvva*. With the cooked rice that is served in the winnow a human form is made and worshipped by the bride and bridegroom and the parents of the latter. Then the bridegroom and his party sit near the head, the bride and her party sitting near the legs, and both parties eat up the whole figure. Any part that may remain uneaten is distributed among the claimants thereto. All those that are not connected with the families of their party are scrupulously excluded. The marriage-ceremonies among this section take place at night, and are finished before morning. It is apparently thought that this improvisation may be taken to represent what perhaps used to take place in grim earnest, and its observance is not generally admitted.

When the relatives of the bridal pair come out of the room where they have partaken of the *buvva* repast, the maternal uncles of the bride and the bridegroom intercept them at the threshold, and beat them with whips of twisted clothes. There is considerable fun and excitement when they try to evade the blows.

When this ceremony is over, all the castemen are given a dinner, and in the evening the bridegroom's party must supply toddy to every one of the castemen, including women and children. Next day they observe the Nagavali ceremony. The newly married couple fatch water from a well in four vessels. Then the bringing of earth from an ant-hill and worshipping the posts of the *pandal* take place as in other caste. Then takes place the pot-searching ceremony and removal of the *kankanas*. The newly married couple are taken in procession in the streets that evening. The next two days the party repair to the bride's house where a resting takes place, and return to the bridegroom's place, after which the "milk-post" is removed, and the marriage festivities are finally concluded.

The expenditure is about the same as among the Holeyas. The most important item is drink, and the expenditure on toddy amounts to about thirty rupees. The bridegroom pays the whole of it on the *vilya sastra* and *dhare* days; but on the other days, the bride's father contributes a third of what is spent for drinking. The bride-price is twelve rupees, half of which is paid on the *vilyada sastra* day, and the other half on the *dhare* day. A widower has in some places to pay an additional sum of a rupee and a half, as *sautihonnu*, or the co-wife's money. This is more a local than a caste custom.

Puberty Customs :

When a girl attains puberty, she is kept outside for nine days, and is not allowed either to touch other persons or to enter the inner portion of the house. A shed, made of green leaves of *Lakkili* or

other plant, is put up for her residence. The maternal uncle must bring the materials for the shed, and pull the shed down on the tenth day when the girl bathes. On the first day, the girl is bathed standing on an old shoe and a broom. If the girl is already married, her mother-in-law comes on the next day and presents her with cocoanuts, plantains, and other things, placing them in her garment, and then gives her a bath. The husband generally bears the feeding-expenses of that day. If the girl is unmarried, all this is done at the expense of the maternal uncle. After bathing, the girl is led to a water-course, to do *Ganga puja,* and then she may go inside the house freely. When she is subsequently married, she may live with her husband without any further ceremony.

Modesty or ignorance often makes girls reluctant to disclose their change of state, and when they thus continue in contact with the others, it is believed that the pollution will bring on some evil to the family.

The consummation of marriage of girls who have attained puberty before being married is put off for three months after the marriage, to avoid the possibility of any issue being born within the first year, which is considered inauspicious. It has been ingeniously suggested that this period is meant to ascertain whether the girl has been chaste before the marriage.

Widow Marriage :

Widow marriage is allowed and freely practised, but in some places such parties and their descendants form a distinct line. A widow may not marry a brother of the deceased husband, or any of his nearest agnates, and sometimes even the whole sept of the deceased husband is avoided. A bachelor may not marry a widow. The ceremony is simple, and takes place in the evening, before the house of the widow's father. A meeting of the castmen is convened by the *yajaman.* All jewels or other property belonging to deceased husband are returned to his relatives, who signify their consent to the union by accepting a *tambula.* The man presents the widow with a new cloth, which she wears. The new couple take their seats in the assembly on a *kambli.* A *kalasa* is set upon a *gaddige* (seat), known as *Aralappana Gaddige* (Aralappa's seat). It is worshipped by the pair. A *tali* is tied to it. The man and the woman exchange betel-leaves and the headman of the caste gives them a *tambula* (betel-leaves) to signify his permission. Either a widow, or a woman married a second time, takes the *tali* from the *kalasa,* and gives it to the man, who ties it to the widow. No women whose first husbands are living take part in the proceedings, but they may attend the dinner party. In some places, the newly married widow may not show her

face to the regularly married women for three days. The husband has to supply toddy to all castemen. The *tera,* or bride-price for a widow is six rupees. A widow may marry as many times as she pleases, and it is said that the price diminishes at every subsequent marriage. Widow marriages are always brought about by the parties themselves.

Adultery and Divorce :

A divorce is easily obtained, and the divorced woman may marry either her paramour or another person in the *kudike* form; or she may remain as a prostitute without losing caste. A man who elopes with a married woman has to pay the marriage expenses of her husband, besides a fine to the caste, before he may marry her. The return of the *tali* tied at the marriage by the husband, in the presence of the assembly of the castemen and the headman, confirms an effective divorce.

Adultery may be condoned, except when a Madiga woman misbehaves with a Holeya man, when she is irredeemably outcasted. It is said that a wife who is living in adultery may, even after the lapse of some years, be reconciled to her husband and receive his protection, with any children that may have been born in the interval. An unmarried girl committing sexual indiscretion with a man of the same caste and becoming pregnant, is either married to the latter in the *kudike* form or has her fault condoned; and any other casteman may subsequently marry her.

Basavis :

Dedication of girls as *Basavis* is common in this caste. Some families have the custom of devoting the eldest girl to this life, while in many cases, a girl is so dedicated in pursuance of some vow taken at the time of illness or other distress. This is invariably done after the girl attains her puberty.

On a lucky day, the girl, after bathing is taken to the temple, dressed in new clothes. She is there seated on a *kambli,* with a dagger by her side, to represent the bridegroom. All the members of the caste, with the headman, should be present. A *kalasa* is installed, and the Basavis smear the girl with turmeric paste, and place the lucky things, such as rice and cocoanuts, in her garment. The girl then rises, and, standing in front of the dagger, pours rice over it, in token of her having been wedded to it. Then either the *pujari* of the temple or a Basavi touches the dagger with the *tali,* which is tied to the girl's neck. The girl now carries the dagger inside the temple, and leaves it there. The *pujari* hands over to her a can and a begging pouch, which she hangs on to her left shoulder. She is then branded with a *Sankhu* and *Chakra* on the shoulders, and sometimes a *chakra* mark

is branded on her breast, but this is dispensed with if the *Basavi* is not a virgin. It is said that formerly the girl was required to sleep three nights in the temple; but now she spends one night there, and often this is also dispensed with. When the ceremony is over, the girl goes round and bows to all the castemen and elders, and receives their blessings. The father of the girl must give a dinner to all the castemen and give them also toddy to drink.

Such a girl may consort with a man of any caste except a Holeya, and her children are treated as well as if they were legitimate in all respects. During the *jatra* of Maramma, the presence of some Madiga Basavis is secured wherever they are available. When new pots are brought for this worship, and when the buffalo is led to the sacrificial post, *Basavis* come dancing and signing songs in praise of Maramma, and spitting on the by-standers.

A married woman or a widow sometimes becomes a *Basavi*, or a prostitute; but she is not allowed the status of a regular *Basavi*, nor is any elaborate ceremony observed, except the getting of the permission of the castemen, and giving a dinner. Such women may not take part in any auspicious ceremonies.

Post-Natal Ceremonies :

No ceremonies are observed during the pregnancy of the woman. The usual prohibition against the pregnant woman's husband doing such things as carrying a corpse, putting on the roof of the house, or killing any animal, obtains in this caste also.

When the women show signs of approaching delivery, they make a vow to their family God, and set apart a small coin in earnest of a larger offering to be made in case of safe delivery. On the birth of the child, it is washed, and the navel cord is cut by the midwife. The naval-string and the after-birth are buried below the eves of the house, and on the third day a little milk is poured on the spot. It is a belief that they hold with many other castes, that if a child comes out of the womb with the limbs foremost, it forebodes evil to the midwife, who is often believed quietly to strangle such a child. In cases of difficult delivery, the mother is given some arrack to drink. All the women who attend on such an occasion are supplied with toddy at the expense of the husband.

On the third day, the mother and the child are bathed in water in which the tender leaves of certain plants, Gajjaga (*molucca* bean), Ankole (*Alangium lamarckii*) and lime tree are boiled. A small pit is consecrated with *puja* in front of the house, and the mother sits on it with the child in her lap. Each of the neighbours contributes a potful of water for the bath.

An elderly woman goes round and collects a morsel of food from each house, and gives it with toddy to the confined woman to eat. Similarly, old rags are collected for the child's cradle. In the evening, four pots are placed at the corners of the pit made for the bath, and the midwife makes *puja* to them, placing before them an offering of meat and rice cooked together, on leaves of Ekka plant (*Calotropis gigantea*). She is then presented with a winnowful of grain and a *hana* in coin for a male child, and a half of that sum for a female child, besides being liberally supplied with toddy. The castemen are treated to a feast in the evening. Except on that day, the confined woman is fed on rice only, till the tenth day, without any condiment. This purifying ceremony is known as Muttu Devaru, (Pollution God), or Gundi Devaru, (Pit God).

On the sixth day, a stone is set up in the confinement room, and is worshipped by the midwife with the burning of incense and sometimes with the sacrifice of a fowl. This is known as the Goddess Satvi, which is believed to record the child's destiny on its forehead. A light is waved before it, and then placed in an unfrequented place; it is said that if any one caste a glance on it while being carried there, some evil will overtake the mother and the child. On this day, the child is first put into a cradle, an old one being generally used for the purpose, and consecrated with *puja*.

The name-giving ceremony takes place about the end of the first month. A Koracha woman is always consulted as to the fitness of the name to be given. That day some castemen are invited to a dinner. The following may be taken as examples of typical names among the Madigas:—

Males	*Females*
Honnura	Kali
Sattiga	Malli
Kadiriga	Sunki
Mara	Hanumi
Mada	Yalli

The giving of nicknames is very common in this caste. Gidda and Mota, both names meaning a dwarf, and Lottiga, 'a drinker (of toddy) by pots', may be cited as examples. The practice of giving opprobrious names is also common, Tippa (Manure heap). Gunda (round stone), Sudugadu (burning ground), and Satta (one dead). When an opprobious name is given, the child is put into a winnow, and drawn on a manurepit, and the paternal aunt kicks the winnow with the child in it with her left foot, to deceive the fate into a belief

that the child's parents are so indifferent to its value, that the child is hardly worth taking away from them. When all the male children born in a family have died, the nostrils of the last-born male child are pierced, to make the evil spirit (Fate) mistake the child for a girl and to let it alone.

Like many of the other lower classes, Madigas believe that children are specially amenable to the attacks of evil spirits. Various kinds of charms are placed round their necks, as a protection against their evil influence. White beads strung on the waistthread keep off such spirits. If a child happens to fall in the street, the mother kicks the spot with her left foot, and applies a little earth moistened with the child's spittle to its forehead. Sometimes a vesselful of water and some ragi-flour are thrown on the spot, to appease the hunger and thirst of the evil spirits which, while prowling in the air, may have caused the child to fall down. Any illness occurring soon after such a fall is attributed to it, and a vow is made to the Earth Goddess. To fulfil this, a pit is dug either where three paths meet, or under a spout discharging rain water from the roof of a house, and into it some rice, dhal and other condiments, and a live frog or a chicken, are thrown. Frankincense is burnt, and a cocoanut is broken. Bhumamma is invoked, and the child is made to cross the pit thrice, after which its feet are washed, to carry away the illness. The pit, with all its offerings, including the live frog, or chicken, is then filled up.

The children are believed to be specially exposed to the attacks of evil spirits till they complete the age of twelve. The elderly members of the family generally know what symptoms denote such an attack, and they call in the aid of a sorcerer, who exercises the spirit, generally by tying a talisman (*yantra*) to the patient. The head of a male child is first shaved in the third year, the ceremony being observed at the shrine of the family deity, or near a water-course, where Gangamma (Water Goddess) is worshipped.

Inheritance :

Madigas follow the Hindu Law of inheritance. Cases of partition and disputes of a trivial nature are settled by *panchayats,* comprised of either the village elders or their own castemen. A Basavi daughter enjoys the same privileges as a son in the matter of inheritance, while a destitute widowed daughter or sister is always willingly received into her parents' house, or given some article of value at the time of partition.

Adoption :

Being generally very poor, Madigas rarely practise adoption to supply the want of natural issue. They do not seem to attach any importance to the existence of a son for increasing the chances of their salvation in the next world. But the practice of adoption is not altogether absent, though it has but little religious significance, as may be inferred from their naming such a boy a *sakumaga,* or brought-up son. A brother's son is considered the most eligible, and in his absence, the son of an agnatic relation. A brother may not be adopted. The boy to be adopted must always be younger than the adopter, and of tender age, though, they say, the limit cannot be fixed; but on no account may a married men be adopted. The ceremony observed is like that observed by the Korachas.

Caste Constitution :

Madigas are the lowest of the "left-hand" section of the community. The whole caste is parcelled out into groups independent of one another, except that, when an important matter has to be settled, the headmen of the groups near one another send invitations to others to attend the meetings. These groups are called *Kattemanes.* Each group has a headman, styled *Dodda yajamana* (in Kannada), or *Pedda yajamanadu* (in Telugu), meaning the senior headman. He is called Manegara in some places. He presides over the tribal deliberations, and gets an additional *tambula.* Next to him is the *Chikka yajamana,* or the junior headman, otherwise called Buddhivanta. He presides over the caste-council in the absence of the senior headman, and during marriages he officiates and conducts the ceremony. Under them is the Kolkar, or Kondikadu, being the beadle. He calls together all the castemen whenever necessary. These also get extra *tambulas.* The jurisdiction of these officials extends, as in other castes, to punishing a man for transgression of any caste-rules, *e.g.,* those regarding adultery, and to admitting strangers into the caste.

As regards professional organization, it is said that each Madiga family must strictly adhere to their own patrons or principals, and that, in the event of disagreement between himself and his patron, another Madiga must do the latter's work. Such strict rules are going out of use. Where unpaid labour has to be done in villages, all the Madigas do it by turns.

Admission of Strangers :

Madigas freely take in recruits from all other castes except the Holeyas. The ceremonies observed at the time are the same as those observed by the Holeyas.

Magico-Religious Beliefs:

They have a strong faith in sorcery, witchcraft and soothsaying, and many devil-drivers are found among them. When ordinary remedies fail in case of illness, an exorcist is called in and is asked to find out whether the sick person has offended any of the family gods, or whether his sickness is due to any spell cast over him by an enemy, or if he is possessed by any evil spirit. If the anger of any of the family gods is the cause, a vow is made to propitiate it; but if the cause is traced to either a spell cast by an enemy, or to an evil spirit, the devildriver by an appropriate performance removes the cause, and ties an amulet as a protection against future trouble. Madiga children wear charms made of leather.

The *gurus* of the Madigas are Jambavas. Those of the Vishnu faith who follow Srivaishnava Brahamans and Satanis as *gurus,* also recognise the status of the Jambavas.

An A'sadi is a Madiga whose duty it is to sing the praises of Maramma during her *jatra.* He gets heavily drunk, and goes on repeating the songs relating to the history of Mavi, to the accompaniment of his drum. A'sadis are found scattered in small numbers throughout the State*.

Gosangi, which probably means a cow-eater, is another functionary whose presence is necessary during the Mari *jatra.* He is a beggar, and repeats songs relating to the origin of the caste, while playing on a stringed cylindrical instrument known as *javakane.* During the Mari festival, he represents Ranagayya, supposed to be the brother of Maramma's Madiga husband, and hurls all sorts of four abuse at her, for having destroyed his family in that horrible way.

Bala Basava is a man of the Madiga caste who pays them periodical visits and sings to them of the history of Basava and Aralappa, to the accompaniment of a *tamburi***. He is rewarded with doles raised by subscription. He is also credited with the power of foretelling events, such as famines, that may happen during the next twelve years. He bears a *mudre* (an insignia) of *Goni Basava* (a bull with saddle).

Madigas have also a priest of their own, known as Tappatiga†, who is a *pujari* of their temples, into which no other casteman is al-

*Gollas have also a man among them called an A'sadi, whose duty is similar.

**A Tamburi is a stringed instrument formed like a *Vina,* but without its note gradation.

†Literally a drummer.

lowed to enter. The office of the *pujari* is hereditary. He is initiated in the following manner. After bathing, he puts on washed clothes and is taken to the temple. There, after *puja,* a necklace, containing some beads and a *tali* bearing the representation of a goddess, is tied, to his neck. Thenceforth he may not engage himself in his caste profession of working in leather, but has to live on fees levied during marriages and by begging. He has to worship the god, and gets some customary perquisities.

Dasayyas who are dedicated to Vishnu are branded with *sankhu* and *chakra,* and abstain from working in leather. The presence of a Dasayya is necessary at all feasts observed by the Desabhaga section. He must repeat the word "Govinda" before he eats. His paraphernalia consist of *sankhu* (conch shell), *jagate* (gong), and *bavanasi* (begging bowl, or pouch).

Machala is a beggar attached to the caste. He begs only from Madigas. He carries a bugle (*kahale*) and a shallow drum (*tappate*). He is generally invited during marriages and for the worship of the family god. He pays periodical visits, and gets some prescribed fees.

Dakkalava has already been described. There are also *Jogis* and *Nilagararu* among *Madigas.*

They have strong belief in omens, both good and bad. Whenever they have to begin any important ceremony, not only are Brahmans consulted for choosing an auspicious day, but they observe many omens. Often, they consult the soothsayer if any unforeseen thing happens in the house. Children are always protected from evil spirits by wearing charms. They generally put on beads strung to the waist-thread, and a *tali* with the figure of Hanumantha on the neck. A charm usually worn on the neck is a square metallic piece containing numbers up to nine arranged in squares, so as to total fifteen in every line. This *tali* has, on the other side, the figure either of Hanumanta or any goddess. Another charm worth mentioning is a piece of metal with the figure of a dog, supposed to cure the whopping cough, which in Kannada is known by the name of dog-cough.

Religion :

The Madigas, Malas and a few other low castes must, as regards their original religious beliefs, be classed as animists, or spirit worshippers. They are notorious for their allegiance to the minor goddesses, such as Maramma and Masanamma. The tribal goddess of the Madigas is Matangi, which they now call Mahalakshi, or A'di Sakti. The soaking-pot is therefore considered by them as Matangi,

which they worship with offerings of turmeric and vermilion on Tuesdays and Fridays. In some places, a grand feast is held on Dipavali in honour of this goddess, when all the inhabitants of the Madiga quarters join together and sacrifice a number of goats, sheep and fowls, toddy pots also being consecrated in the name of the goddess.

Maramma is another of their tribal goddess, who attained her position according to a popular story in the following manner. A Madiga boy, endowed with fair features, went in search of employment to a faroff place called Rasuripatna. A Brahman mistook his origin, and received him as a student into his family, and finding him an apt pupil made him proficient in Vedas and Sastras. His daughter was given in marriage to him, and they had a number of children, who, however, unconsciously betrayed their base origin by playing at shoe-making with leaves. After several years, the Madiga's mother, who had been searching everywhere for her lost son, discovered him in the guise of a Brahman in this town. Finding it impossible to evade her, he got her head shaved and clothed her like a Brahman widow, and lest her speech should betray her, he enjoined her to pass for a dumb woman. Thus introduced into the family, she was treated with great respect by her daughter-in-law. But the sight of a sumptuous breakfast loosened her tongue, and she exclaimed that the sweet cakes she tasted were not so good as buffalo tongues. The Brahman woman at once knew what this meant, and going to her father asked him what would purify an earthen pot polluted by the touch of a dog. Applying the means suggested to herself, she heaped paddy straw round the house in which the whole family was asleep at night, entered the flames, and perished with all of them.

Her stern virtue had its reward. It was ordained that she should thenceforth become the goddess of epidemics, under the name of Mari, and receive *puja* ever afterwards. Her husband would be born again and again as a he-buffalo, her children as small kids, and her mother-in-law as a sheep, and all would be sacrificed to her. It was also said that, after the buffalo was killed, its entrails should be placed on its head and a lamp lit thereon, and that the right front leg should be cut and placed across its mouth, as a punishment for the Madiga having laid his unholy hands on her breast.

In almost every village, a temple of this goddess is found. In some places she is represented by a large bust made of stone. On the outbreak of a severe epidemic, especially of small-pox, special festivals in her honour are organised. Women dressed in *Madi* go to the shrine, carrying lamps made of sweetened rice flour on their

heads, on Tuesdays and Fridays. Sometimes, in the centre of the village, a spot is cleaned with cow-dung and water, and a washed cloth is spread thereon. Cooked food* and curds are brought from every house in the village, and made into a heap, on which a bunch of margosa leaves is stuck. This is worshipped with the offerings of turmeric, *kunkuma* incense and cocoanuts; and a sheep or a goat is sacrificed before it, whenever the devotees can afford it.

A much grander feast is celebrated in honour of Mari at irregular intervals, the hostility between the right-hand and left-hand groups often coming in the way of its performance. The Madigas and the Holeyas take the prominent part, according as the left or the right-hand section is in the ascendant. This is meant to commemorate the fate of Mari's husband, and at the close of every such festival, a he-buffalo is dedicated for the next celebration, and allowed to roam at large through the village-fields and grow fat till the time of sacrifice.+ Sometimes additional beasts are similarly dedicated as votive offering to Mari on the occurrence of any serious illness in a family.

The village elders and all the villagers contribute their share of the expenditure. It is generally in *Chaitra* or *Vaisakha* that the festival is celebrated. The period is proclaimed by the beating of tom-tom in the village, and during the week preceding the event, no one is allowed to go out of the village. The frying of eatables is also interdicted in every house during this period.

An image specially made for the occasion is installed on a raised place, in a shed built of green leaves, in front of the Mari temple, or some other central place. On the morning of the prescribed Tuesday, the pujari of this goddess washes the idol and worships it. *Aratis* are brought from each house in the village, and offered in order of preceence. The *pujari* is always a non-Brahman; he is either a Kammara, a Beda, or sometimes even a Madiga. In the evening, the newly made image is brought with great pomp in procession, with loud though discordant music. It is worshipped near the house of the blacksmith, who decorates the idol behind a screen, painting its eyes and forehead. As soon as the screen is removed, a number of cocoanuts are broken, and one or two goats are killed. The spectators are afraid of going in a line with the idols eye as it is believed that the goddess does harm to the person whom she first sees. After the usual worship, the image is carried by the blacksmith, who walks on washed cloths spread on the way by the

*This puja is known as (offering of a rice heap).

+The owners of the fields dare not turn out the animal lest they should incur the anger of Mari.

washerman. Then the whole procession comes to the shed with great pomp, a Madiga man, known as Ranagayya* dancing before sharp long scythe, cuts off the head of the beast, another man and their heads are kept near the buffalo's. Then a number of sheep or goats are killed, and the image is finally installed in it, a pot filled with toddy being also consecrated and placed in front of the idol. Then auspicious things, such as *tali,* nose-screw, toe-rings and yellow *sadi,* are brought in state by the village headman, and tied to the goddess. Presents of rice, cocoanuts, betel-leaves, and arecanuts, plantains and other fruits are given to the goddess heaped in her garment as it she were a bride.

In the meantime, a party of Madigas fetch the he-buffalo, set free in the name of Maramma, and hold it tight by the ropes. Its temper has been subduced by keeping it on short rations for two or three days previous to this event. Some quantity of oil is poured on its head, and bunches of margosa leaves are tied to the horns. Turmeric paste and *Kunkuma* powder are rubbed on its head. It is then taken in procession through all the streets in the village, Ranagayya leading it, indulging in dancing and abusive songs. As the procession approaches each house in the village, the inmates thereof bring water in a small vessel, and throw it on the buffalo, and then pour some oil in its head, and apply turmeric and *kunkuma* powders to its forehead. When the buffalo is brought back to the shed, it is tied up to a forked post just opposite the image, the neck resting on the fork. An Asadi man beats on a drum and sings the praises of Maramma, reciting the story relating to her birth, marriage and death. Sometimes a band of Madiga Basavis, most fantastically dressed, dance before the goddess, while Ranagayya, also dressed in a queer fashion, capers about freely, indulging in filthy language and spitting on the persons in the way. While this din is going on, the *pujari* worships the goddess, and waves *Arati,* and sprinkles *tirtha* on the buffalo's head. A Madiga or a Beda (according to the custom of the place), with a single stroke of a sharp long scythe, cuts off the head of the beast, another man catching its blood in an earthen vessel. As soon as the head is served from the trunk, the tongue is drawn out, and the right foreleg of the animal is cut off and thrust into the mouth crosswise. The head in this condition is carried to a small shed (called Matangi's shed) erected in front of Mari's idol, and kept there on a raised platform. A layer of fat, taken from the stomach of the animal, is spread on the eyes and mouth, and a light is kept burning on the head in an earthen basin. Two small kids and a sheep are also killed,

*Ranagayya is supposed to represent the brother of Mari's Madiga husband. He is also named Gosangi.

and their heads are kept near the buffalo's. Then a number of sheep and goats and sometimes he-buffaloes are killed, so that the whole place becomes reeking with blood. A large quantity of boiled rice is soaked in the blood caught in earthen vessels, and is mixed with the undigested food found in the stomach of the consecrated buffalo. This rice is carried in baskets, on the heads of Madigas, followed by Asadi, Ranagayya and others, who run to a spot on the boundary of the village crying out *'Kobali'* (receive the sacrifice). One or two sheep are again sacrificed there, and the party run round the whole village boundary, throwing out the coloured rice and calling out *'Kobali'*. Similarly all the fields in the village are traversed. It is nearly daybreak on the next day when this procession returns to the Mari's shed. Then *Aratis* are waved round them, and *tirtha* and *prasada* are given to them.

In the morning, the slaughtered animals are all divided among the twelve office-bearers (*Ayagararu*) of the village and such of them as are not meat-eaters make over their shares to the Madigas or Holeyas, as the case may be. The heads of all the sheep slaughtered become, by right, the property of the village washerman.

This fair continues sometimes as long as one week, but generally it is finished in three days. Various sports are held, and the village observes it as a general holiday. The idol is carried on the last day to the boundary of the village where a new shed has been put up. As soon as the image of Maramma is removed from the old shed, the heads of the sacrificed beasts kept in the Matangi's shed are buried in it, and the shed is burnt down. Then the procession goes to the village-boundary with great pomp, the Asadi singing the praises of Mari, and Ranagayya (Gosangi) abusing her and others in the filthiest language. At the boundary, the idol is placed on a dais in the new shed, and the *pujari*, throwing a curtain round, breaks the bangles put on it, and removes the *tali* thread, thus indicating that Mari has entered into widowhood. They all return to the village, where the Mari's temple has been already locked. Next day all the village people collect together, and set free another buffalo in the name of Mari. This restores the married condition of the goddess, when the temple is opened, and all the villagers offer cocoanuts etc., to the image and get *tirtha* and *prasada*.

The other names which the Madigas give to their goddess in different forms are Pujamma, Akkayyamma, Masanamma, Kalamma, Chandamma, Marigamma, Kollapuriyamma, Durgamma, Yallamma and Gangamma. The last is always worshipped on a Monday near a water-course, while the others are worshipped either on Tuesdays or Fridays. Munisvara is a male god, or spirit, worshipped generally by them, the worship being conducted in a grove.

Their worship is conducted either under a margosa tree in their *Hatti,* i.e., quarters, or outside on the prescribed days of the week, the *pujari* being a man of their own caste. The margosa tree is considered sacred, as the peculiar dwelling-place of the goddess they worship. Their shrines are generally surrounded by these trees, and they do not wantonly cut them or use them for fuel, except when cooking in the groves while performing a *puja.*

Madigas pay reverence to their patron saint Aralappa, said to be a contemporary of Basavanna, the great Lingayat reformer. He is believed to have shown his devotion to Basavanna, by presenting him with a pair of sandals made out of the skin cut from his wife's things. Basavanna being extremely pleased with his devotion, gave him *Lingadharane,* i.e. allowed him to wear on his person the Saiva emblem. Even now Aralappa is revered by the Madigas in all important ceremonies, such as marriage. They pay reverence to all the gods of the other Hindus. A section among them, known as Desabhagadavaru, are Vaishnavas, having as their *Guru* Satanis, or Srivaishnava Brahmans. Some of these become Dasaris, who earn their food by begging, and whose presence is necessary on all important ceremonies. Madigas observe the Holi, the New Year, and the Gauri feasts.

Funeral Ceremonies :

The dead are buried, except in the case of pregnant women and lepers, whose bodies are cremated. When a pregnant woman dies, the foetus is first removed, as otherwise a serious calamity is believed to follow. Sometimes the body of a leper, or of one killed by wild beasts, is buried under a heap of stones. This is called *Kallu-Seve,* or stone service. The customs observed in preparing the body and carrying it to the burial-ground, and the mode of burial, are the same as in some of the other castes. The body is always carried with the head towards the village, as the reverse would be equivalent to bringing the corpse into the village, which would result in some calamity.

After the burial, all go to a well or river, the chief mourner bathes, and the rest wash their feet and hands, and return home to see a light kept on the spot where the deceased expired. After a formal consultation, the headman of the caste fixes a day for beginnig the obsequies. The corpse-bearers may not enter the inner portion of their houses till the third-day ceremony is over. On the night of the death, some water is placed at the spot and ragi grain is spread round the vessel, so that the spirit may leave its mark on the grain if it should come to drink; and the inmates seriously look for such mark in the morning. On the third day, the agnates get rid of the

Sutaka by bathing. The chief mourner, the corpsebearers and some other relatives go to the grave, to offer food and water. A figure representing the deceased is drawn on the spot, and a sheep or a fowl is sacrificed before it. They then place some cooked food on a leaf for crows and retire to a distance. On their return home, the shoulders of the bearers who carried the corpse are touched with milk and ghee. On the tenth day, the house is cleaned with cow's urine and sometimes whitewashed, and the earthen cooking-pots are replaced by new ones. A *kalasa* is kept in the middle of the house, and is worshipped with offerings of food and new clothes, and a dinner is given to all the castemen, followed by a general carousal at the toddy shop in the evening.

During *Sutaka,* they do not go to temples or celebrate any worship of the family god, and eschew flesh and milk. At the end of the first month, they give another dinner to their castemen, making *puja* to the *kalasa* as usual. Till the completion of the month, they may not perform any auspicious ceremonies in the family.

They do not perform annual or monthly *sraddhas.* On the lunar new-year's day, *Vinayaka Chaturthi and Mahalaya Amavasya,* all the members of the family bathe and go fasting to the burial-ground where they make *puja* by applying sandal-paste to the stones and burning incense and offering cocoanuts. On returning from the grave-yard, they instal a *Kalasa* filled with toddy, and worship it, sacrificing generally a sheep or a fowl. It is said that to propitiate the first wife, the second wife offers her *puja* in the usual way whenever she wears for the first time a new cloth.

Sutaka is observed for three days for the death of any agnate. All except the parents merely bathe after the death of a child. On the third day, they go to the grave-yard, and put on the child's grave some fried grain, milk and ghee. They do not observe any pollution for the death of daughter's or sister's son.

Occupation :

Madigas are workers in leather. They have a primitive way of tanning and preparing it. They first apply chunam (chuna) to the hides of cows and buffaloes, and keep them for some days. Then, in a pit, which they call *Galle,* and which they consider sacred, a lotion of the bark of the avarike plant (*Cassia auriculata*) is made, and the skins are soaked in it. They then beat the skins with wooden mallets, and stretch them in the sun to dry. This leather is used for making leather buckets, shoes, and other simple things. Those in towns have recently learnt more refined ways of tanning sheep and goat skins, out of which they prepare shoes and slippers.

When employed as village watchmen, they are known as *Talaris*. In some places, they enjoy *inams* for this work, and other kinds of free service, such as carrying Government property from place to place, and acting as guides from village to village. They are also known as Begaris, as they are bound to serve without remuneration. They are employed as scavengers in large towns, and in small places it is their duty to sweep the villages and keep them clean. These variations in calling do not affect their social status.

Formerly, each family of the Madigas was attached to one or more families of raiyats or agriculturists, whose work they had to do, and in return get the customary remuneration. The Madiga was entitled to take the carcass of any cattle that might die in the master's house. This qualified kind of serfdom has, however, all but died out, except in the rural parts.

A village Madiga has to supply each person who contributes to his yearly allowance of grain with a pair of sandals and some leathern ropes for the ploughing cattle. He has also to make the leather bucket for lifting water with the hides supplied by the raiyat, and to keep it in proper repair. He is required to help at the harvest. In return for this service, the Madiga gets, in addition to the dead bodies of cattle in his patron's house, one bundle of unthreshed crop and a winnowful of grain, food for the working-man, and the remnant of the grain left on the threshing-floor after measurement. He is also given other perquisites, such as food on marriage and other festivals observed in the patron's house.

The Madigas find a ready market for the articles that they make, but on account of their intemperate habits, both men and women drinking to excess, they are poor as a class. The chief implements of their profession are *rampi* (a small saw), *ari* (an awl), *goota* (a peg), *uli* (a chisel), *a dikallu* (the stone on which they keep the leather while cutting it), *kodali* (an iron mallet), and *Churi* (a knife). They are all of a rude pattern, and the Madigas are rather slow in taking to improved tools. But in towns they generally provide themselves with improved implements of foreign make, and also use the stitching machine.

Tappate and *Ramdholu* (the big drum) are the instruments they use whenever they have to proclaim any important event in the village. These instruments are made by themselves. The *Tappate* is the characteristic instrument of the caste, and this has given rise to a functionary known as *Tappatiga* (a man who beats the *Tappate*), who is the *pujari* in the caste.

Some Madigas have taken to agriculture. They hold lands either in their own right, or cultivate other's lands on *vara* or other tenure.

But most of them are either day labourers, or hired servants under raiyats on annual contracts. The conditions of the contract vary in different localities, but the most common terms are for the master to feed the servant twice a day, and to give him a *kambli*, a turban and a loin cloth, *pan-supari* and tobacco.

Social Status:

Madigas are the lowest caste found in the State. They are a settled people, and generally live apart in ill-built thatched houses, in quarters outside the main village, known as Madiga-keri (Madiga quarters). Their habits and the nature of their work contribute to make this the dirtiest part of the village. The houses have only one entrance, with flimsy shutters and without any windows. They are divided by a partition wall of about four or five feet high into two parts, one being used for kitchen and store, and the other, the larger half, for sleeping and tethering the cattle. Some of those living in towns have, however, built more substantial houses. They are not allowed to use the common village well, and have their own barbers and washermen. Madigas may not approach Brahmans within a distance of about twenty paces. Any Brahman who has been touched inadvertently or purposely by a Madiga must purify himself by bathing, and washing all his clothes, and renewing the sacred thread. Madigas do not employ Brahmans for conducting their ceremonies, nor will any Brahman condescend to lend them his services. In no circumstances, they allow a Brahman to enter their quarters, as they firmly believe that such a thing will bring on the ruin of their families. If unwittingly any Brahman enters their quarters, they abuse him saying, "Fie! Get out, you mad dog!." and after he leaves, they clean the whole place with cow-dung and water. This restriction is, however, gradually losing its force. Their quarters are separate from those allotted to the Holeyas, and are generally further removed from the main village. Again, during the celebration of the festival of the village goddess Maramma, the share of the sacrificed animal which the Madiga gets is the last, while that of the Holeya is the last but one.

Dietary of the Caste:

Madigas are notorious drinkers, both males and females indulging in toddy to excess. They eat the carrion of cattle, sheep, pigs and all other animals except monkeys, snakes and a few others. They do not eat in the houses of Nayindas and Agasas, and no one eats in their houses.

Appearance, Dress and Ornaments:

There is nothing peculiar in their dress. Men wear the scanty clothing usally worn by the poor among the lower classes, namely,

a loin cloth, a turban and a *kambli*, and the women wear *Sire*, but not *Ravike* (bodice cloth), the latter being worn by the Basavis. They are a filthy class, and wash themselves only occasionally; women sometimes dress their hair, but it is generally neglected. The Jambava and the Gosangi wear a Linga in imitation of the Lingayats, and put on ashes and sandal in horizontal lines, and an *akshate* mark on the forehead. They sometimes enact plays, in which they put on disguises, and sing of the origin of their caste. They respect the Akkasale caste, and consider these people as their fathers.

The Madigas are more primitive than Holeyas, and they differ much more appreciably in outward appearance from the higher castes. They are generally strong and muscular, and somewhat short in stature, and dark in colour, with somewhat flat noses. It is generally said that one cannot be certain of the origin of a fair Madiga or a dark Brahman.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Man In India', Vol. XXX, October-December, 1950 (No. 4), Community-conflict among the Depressed Castes of Andhra, by N. SUBHA REDDI from pages 2 to 12.

The Mala and the Madiga are the untouchable castes of Andhra. This Telugu-speaking area comprises eleven districts of Madras State besides portions of Hyderabad, Orissa and Mysore. The present study is confined to Madras State only. The Mala are known to be the counterparts of the Paraiyan of Tamilnad and of the Holeya of Mysore, while the Chakkeliyan of Tamilnad acknowledge themselves as Madiga and continue even to-day to speak Telugu at home, and in Mysore the Madiga are known as such. The Mala and the Madiga occupy the lowest status in society and their social disabilities are numerous. To mention them briefly, their touch is believed to cause pollution; they live outside the main village; they cannot draw water from the common wells; the washermen and barbers do not serve them.

This condemnation of these castes by the society apart, these castes between themselves observe scrupulous segregation. The Mala have a separate hamlet, while the Madiga have their own. The food from the hands of one is taboo for the other. So is water. They never draw water from the same well, and where only one caste has a well in its hamlet and the other has not, the members of the latter caste have to either depend on the ponds or go all the way to the main village and wait at the well for some interior casteman to pour water in their pitchers. Even when they have to eat together the food offered by their master, the Mala and the Madiga sit in separate rows, if they do not actually turn their backs on each others. This can also be observed among the young boys and girls of the two castes that attend the labour schools where mid-day meal is served. In the rural areas these boys of the depressed castes sit in separate rows. If the food is cooked by a member of one of these castes, the boys of the other caste do not eat, so much so the service of a cook belonging to the interior caste has to be enlisted in these schools. Marriage between the two castes is unthinkable. There is such a deep-seated antagonism between these communities that the very name of one causes irritation in the other. The sword-dance of the Madiga which forms an essential part of all their ceremonies is the most despicable thing for the Mala. If a Madiga brandishes a red cloth that is enough insult for the Mala and if the former comes out with a sword in hand and bells on his ankles to embark on his sword-dance, the Mala, if possible, will maul him and his castemen, or if not, will coolly quit the place and evade that abominable sight. Aggravating the situation, the Madiga go on adding to the traditional dance-song new pieces of invective aimed at the Mala.

A Mala procession can never pass through a Madiga hamlet and the Madiga cannot beat their drums near the Mala residence. Where one caste is predominant the bridegroom of the other caste cannot mount a horse and go about the main streets even in a town. Any small incident is enough to act as a trigger for the outburst of violence between these two castes. Even recently at Budavaripalli near Kurnool a battle royal raged between the two communities for an alleged insult of a Madiga woman by a Mala. At Kadavakollu in Tadipatri taluk of Anantapur district some members of Mala caste have been murdered for encroaching on the Madiga's right to carron. In Totalacheruvupalli of Nellore district (Udayagiri taluk) a conflict is smouldering since long resulting in prolonged litigation, and any day it might burst into devouring flames. These are but a few instances of overt violence and aggression that occur from time to time between these two castes. There is a lot of mutual hatred and aversion. On the positive side each caste claims to be the superior and on the negative side the other caste is trated as a worthy object to be consigned to perdition. An insult from one depressed caste is insufferable for the other. There are social conventions which enjoin that if one is beaten, or spit upon by a member of the other depressed caste, not only his castemen should wreak vengeance on the offender, but the injured man himself should pay a fine for the ignominy he brought upon his community. While adultery with higher castes is not taken serious notice of, any illicit connection with the other depressed caste is met with drastic ostracism. If a Mala and a Madiga cohabit they have no place in either caste and they will be forced to flee their homes. At Eedigapalli and Edimpalli of Nellore taluk a whole hamlet is formed of hybrid offsprings who have created a separate caste of their own contracting marriages amongst themselves. A similar hamlet is formed near Brahmam Matham in Badveli taluk of Cuddepah district. At many places the scavenger service is manned mostly by such heretical spouses.

The impact of Christianity has given occasion to the manifestation of this deep seated conflict of the two castes in another form. It also discloses what relations an alien can establish amongst these castes in the context of the traditional antagonism. Wherever I went during my tours, there was a tendency in me to settle down in the hamlet which is bigger whether it is of the Mala or the Madiga. This at once created a suspicion in the minds of other castes who always tried to maintain some distance from me. The tendency to begin baptism with the bigger group must have been natural in the case of Christian Missionaries. The result is that where the Madiga predominate the converts amongst them constitute a greater proportion to the total caste than the proportion of the Mala converts, and vice versa. In Udaigiri taluk of Nellore district the Madiga constitute the

majority, and Christian converts, excepting in a few villages, are found amongst Madiga and Madiga alone, while the Mala who constitute the minority have clung on to their old denomination. In places where two missions are at work, each comes to claim the allegiance of one particular community, evoking the aversion of the other. At Markapuram in Kurnool district the Mala flocked to the Roman Catholic Church while the Madiga acceded to American Baptist Mission. In Nellore town itself the two castes joined separate churches.

This animosity among the depressed classes is, however, not without parallels. Hutton reveals that in Assam a Patni would not row for a Muchi and in Bombay the Manar refuses to share their councils and conferences with the Chamar. The counterparts of Mala and Madiga in Tamilnad and Mysore carry on their traditional feud.

Legendary Basis :

In the mythology of these people the following facts afford some clue to this antagonism. According to the Madiga, the Mala were born in the menstrual blood of Parvati, and so their name is derived from *Maila* or polluting substance. But the Mala claim that they were born from Parvati's garland or *Mala.* The mythology of the Mala continues that the sword, the red cloth and the ankle bells that are now displayed by the Madiga originally belonged to the Mala. By divine dispensation the Mala began their lives on earth as persons in charge of the graveyards and Virabahu was the first Mala on earth. This Virabahu had come to have a Madiga concubine, and one day when he was closeted with her, her brothers turned up from the forest and beheaded him, after which they took away from him the sword, and red cloth and the ankle bells. Since then these articles became the possessions of the Madiga. So the Mala claim that these articles which were theirs were snatched away by the Madiga in a cowardly manner and through disgraceful means. They adduce the following lines of the dance-song sung by the Madiga in support of their contention: "To Virabahu belonged this sword, we got it for us in a special mode." The Madiga disapprove of this legend and claim that Virabahu was himself a Madiga and the reference to a certain method only means the way in which Adijambava created this world and bestowed upon the Madiga these implements to carry on certain specialised functions. These legends have a wide currency and in consequence to an average Madiga a Mala symbolises pollution, and to a Mala the Madiga looks just like a bastard. Such are the rationalisations that underlie their outlooks. Scurrilous mythological lore symbolise their violent, antagonistic attitudes.

Factions amongst the Castes :

But the Mala and the Madiga are not selfcontained communities. They are but parts of a bigger hierarchical Hindu Society and as such

the attitudes and the activities of the other castes and their influence on the relations between the depressed castes must be taken into account. At the very first glance, it will be obvious that the dichotomy amongst the depressed castes is a part of the wider cleavage that obtains among many lower castes in South India. These factions were termed as Right-hand and Left-hand sections. Thurston cites a passage from the Census Report of Mysore (1891) which relates that Sankyamuni and Yugamuni the ancestors of the Holeya (the counterpart of Mala) and the Madiga, stood at the right and left sides of the entrance respectively when they received the curse from Indra, for the sin of killing the divine cow, Kamadhenu. In the Mysore Gazetteer also, it is written that the Holeya are referred to as *Balagai* (of the Right Hand group) and the Madiga as *Edagai* (of the Left-hand group). These designations as Right-hand and Left-hand groups are not in vogue in Andhra, but nevertheless they are convenient terms of reference. This division in Andhra ostensibly based on religious factions. All the castes of the right-hand section claim to be the followers of Ramanuja while the followers of the left-hand section claim to be Saivites.

The difficulty in enumerating and identifying these several castes has been explained at length by Hutton. The list I present is compiled out of whatever information I could gather from the roving acrobats and such repertories of caste lore. The first group consists of castes whose number is eighteen and a half. These are Balija (Small scale agriculturists and traders), Mala, Chakali (washermen), Mangali (Barbers), Kummari (Potters), Vaddi (Stonebuilder and ground-levellers), Medara (bamboo-workers), Nunegamalla (One-bull-oil pressers), Guda Desari (nomadic beggars), Pitchigunta, Dommara, Erukala, Lambadi, Mondi, Banda, Yanadi (criminal tribes), Gudaram, Elipokatla (their identity not known to the writer), and Gudidevara. The last named caste is counted only as a half because he is allowed to carry on his profession of carrying an idol of a goddess round the village, begging alms only for the first half of the day. For the second half he is expected to rest.

This section is generally known as *Setti samme* or Setti group and many castes of this group append the suffix 'setti' to their caste names. Its leadership hails from the first-named caste, Balija who purport to be the philosophical guides of this sect—Though Brahmins usually keep aloof from this sectarian schism in the lower castes, at a few places even Brahmin adherence of the extreme Ramanujite cult have openly associated themselves with this Setti group. Late Yeturi Gancsayya of Bata in Udaigiri taluk (Nellore district), I was told, used to go to the extent of dining with the castes of this sect on all ceremonial occasions including funeral feasts. Some Vaiṣyas of

Vinjamuru of the same taluk even now associate themselves with this sect.

The second section comprises seven castes, Berichetti (Trader), Devanga (weaver), Kamsali (smiths), Golla (cowherds), Jangam (Saivite priests), Nunegamalla (two-bull oil pressers) and Madiga. This sect professes allegiance to Saivism and indeed Sangam, Devanga and Kamsali are extreme Saivites. The virile and the local leaders of this group are Golla. Both Mala and Madiga, are used by their respective sects as mere fodder for the opponents' power.

A probe into the religious layers of these communities reveals certain prior dispositions. Channa Kesavulu, the caste deity of the Mala is not worshipped by the Madiga. Likewise Mathamma, a form of *Adisakti* and the tutelar deity of the Madiga, is not shown any deference by the Mala. In the traditional caste song of the Madiga, there is a repeated address to *linga* the idol of Siva. Any old Madiga even today proudly claims that in the far-famed past every implement of his, bore the impress of Siva's idol. But not all the Mala castemen are Ramanujites, nor all the Madiga Saivites. The existence of Saivites among the Mala might be a tribute to Saivite proselytism and the handful of Madiga Ramanujites here and there might represent the achievement of Ramanuja's preachings. But this sectarian minority in each caste never formed a distinguishable unit by itself. Sectarian leanings are drowned in the ocean of caste considerations. The lone example of faith claiming the better of caste is afforded by a Madiga priest of Mahimaluru in Atmakur taluk of Nellore district, an ardent follower of Ramanuja, who does not mind dining with a Ramanujite Mala but never dines with a Saivite Madiga. But even he has given his daughter in marriage to a Saivite Madiga, and though in dining he transcended the boundries of caste, in marriage he could not.

Judging from strict religious practice apart from professed fealty one cannot sort out any individual as a Ramanujite or Saivite, except on the basis of divergence in the mortual ceremonies. In all the practices and customs connected with the other branches of life, Saivites and Ramanujites are undistinguishable among the depressed classes. Both the castes provide the important functionaries for reciting *hosanas* and for severing the head of the sacrificial animal in the festivals of the village goddesses like Ankalamma and Poleramma. Rama is the popular god of all, and most of the hamlets whether of the Mala or the Madiga erect temples for Rama. All make vows to the prominent deity of the locality whoever it be. This situation reveals that the religious superstructure in its growth, has by-passed the barriers of caste and left them as they were. Any

explanation of this two-fold division of society on the basis of religious sects alone is untenable. What suffices for this study is to note that this division is a sociological reality, the wide ramifications of which embrace many an aspect of social life, leading to a clear-cut alignment of the lower castes.

There are also certain taboos in connection with interdining based on these factions. The Mala and the Madiga, though relegated to the lowest position in Hindu society, do not accept food from certain castes of the opposite sect who may be occupying a higher social status. Thus for the Mala, the food offered by Kamsali, Zangam, Devanga, and the two-bull oil-pressers is taboo, while the Madiga refuse food from Chakali, Mangali and one-bull oil-pressers. The taboo on interdining between the Mala and the Madiga is sacrosanct and a Mala whether a Ramanujite or a Saivite thinks it a sacrilege to dine in a house of a Madiga whatever be his faith. The Madiga also thinks likewise about dining with a Mala. Whatever may be the extent of exactitude to which these taboos are observed by other castes aligned in this dichotomy, this factionalism has struck deep roots in the emotional life of the depressed castes. The Balija and the Golla, the articulate champions of these two sects respectively, often whip up animosity and the Mala and Madiga readily jump into the field to give vent to their pent-up feelings.

I came upon a printed copy of rules and regulations prescribed by the leader of the Setti groups, one Ramaswami Setti, who is believed to have had considerable influence in Kalahasti and Venkatgiri taluks. Testifying to a central organisation, this paper postulates a code of social behaviour for the castes that come under this group, and suitable fines and punishments were prescribed for the delinquents. There is also a reference in it that all these castes have given solemn assent to have the said Ramaswami Chetty as the supreme arbitrator with regard to all disputes within the castes of this sect.

In fact wherever the Balija are prominent, the Mala show an enormous self-confidence, and where the Golla preponderate the position of the Madiga is unsullied. The social position of the two depressed castes often depends on the comparative strength of the Golla and Balija. Not seldom the factional favouritism exceeds its limits and tilts the delicate balance of social relations in an area that is established by each caste keeping within its bounds.

Occupational Set-up :

The occupational division among the depressed castes is important as a factor working for cooperation and conflict. An average village in Andhra has two distinct functional adjuncts, a Mala hamlet and

a Madiga hamlet. In north-western Andhra, the Madiga outnumber the Mala and in Southern Andhra the Mala preponderate. In consequence not all the villages in the former area have Mala hamlets, and some villages in southern Andhra are without Madiga hamlets. But a overwhelming majority of the villages have both the hamlets, and the society as a whole moves on with the Mala and the Madiga as essential parts in the functioning of the village organisation. There are certain social functions which are exclusively assigned to the depressed classes. The office of a village servant that entails all manual assistance to the village officers in their perquisite. The carrion of the village cattle is their right. Digging of graves and performing the two important tasks of cutting the neck of the sacrificial animal and sprinkling the blood-soaked grain over the fields during the festival of the village goddess, are their duties. They also beat drums and provide trumpets and fanfare on all festive occasions. In some villages they have also the specialised communal functions such as *Neerukattu* which means feeding all the fields with water from the village tank and *Bandila* that is, staving off the cattle from the crop. Tanning of skin and making articles of leather constitute the exclusive profession of the Madiga. In the non-deltaic area many a Mala family ekes out its existence by weaving. The dreary agricultural labour and the drudgery of bond-serfdom are the lot of both these castes, beside of a few other lower classes. Excepting leather work which is the traditional occupation of the Madiga, all other tasks are performed by both these communities. This is not to say that both the castes together perform these tasks at all places. On the contrary, what the Mala do at a place becomes their special preserve and an encroachment upon it by the Madiga will not be countenanced, while at another place the same occupation becomes the perquisite of the Madiga who keep the Mala at bay. The right to these various services is jealously guarded by each community, and there is a (vague) feeling that these rights belonged to the original settlers of the locality.

If we now attempt to delineate the territorial distribution of the rights and privileges of the respective castes, we arrive at the following broad outlines. In the N. W. Andhra that is, the major portions of Bellary and Anantapur districts, all these rights belong to the Madiga. Here the Madiga are attached to the land holders under regular employment. They also work as village servants, dig graves, perform all the functions in the village festival and claim all the carcasses. The Mala in these parts have to depend on haphazard agricultural labour besides some other skilled occupation. A little eastward, the conditions differ. In Tadipatri taluk of Anantapur district bordering upon Kurnool the Mala are the common grave-diggers. The right of working as a village servant is shared by both

the castes, and if in one village there is a Madiga as a village servant, in another village a Mala performs the same function. The carrion is shared by both. Further eastward, in Kurnool district, both Mala and Madiga share in the rights to carrion and to the office of the village servant. Digging of graves is the monopoly of the Mala, and severing the head of the sacrificial animal in the village festival is the perogative of the Madiga. The other function in the festival, namely sprinkling of blood-soaked grain over the fields is lost to the Madiga here, and it is done at some places by the Mala and at other places by another caste called Boya. To the south from here, that is in the border taluks between Cuddapah and Nellore districts the same conditions described for Kurnool exist with the exception that the task of sprinkling the blood-soaked grain is performed by the Mala alone and is not shared by the Boya. So here in the village festival there is an equal distribution of functions, as it were, between these two castes viz., while a Madiga beheads the animal, a Mala runs about with a winnowing plate filled with blood-soaked grain and sprinkles it over all the fields within the village boundries. All over the coastal area of Nellore district both the functions in the festival are performed by the Mala as also the task of grave-digging. The privilege to work as a village servant as well as the right to carrion is shared by both. In Gudur and Venkatagiri* taluks of Nellore district the carcass of an animal belonging to a ryot is shared in the following way. The right hind-leg as well as the flesh round about the vertebral column will be taken by the Madiga attached to the ryot's family; the left hind-leg is taken by the Mala farm-servants of the ryot; the right foreleg goes to the village servant who may be a Mala or a Madiga; the remaining leg is taken by the other functionaries like field-watcher and water regulator, where they exist, othewise it will be consumed by the Mala farm-servants. In Chittor district, that is the southernmost Andhra, all these rights belong to the Mala. The Madiga in these parts have to depend on his traditional profession of making leather implements, like shoes, buckets and belts, besides miscellaneous wage-labour.

What is of significance in this set up is that this occupational division does not lead to an exchange of services between these two castes themselves. Whatever a depressed caste performs it is in the service of the higher cases but rarely for the other depressed caste. Working as a village servant and performing some important functions in the festivals are service rendered upto the higher castes only. So is grave-digging, and even if one depressed castemen are functioning as general grave-diggers, as far as the other caste is concerned the latter digs graves for its own dead. Then only remains, the need of the Mala for the shoes which are made by the Madiga. Even in this case, the habit of the majority to go without shoes, and the

practice of Mala farm-servants receiving their shoes indirectly through their employer, diminish a direct dependence of the Mala on the Madiga. So the binding influence of division of labour is lost to them. The bulk of services to the other castes, which both the depressed castes are ready to render, constitute, in MacIver's terms, 'like interests' leading not to concordance but to competition and conflict in so far as the gains of one are the losses of the other. The fluidity of occupational division that allows the same tasks to be performed by one caste at one place and by another at the second place, brings to a clash the similar interests of these castes.

Even taking into view only a limited area, the set mode of occupational differentiation works smoothly when the obtaining pattern is undisturbed at least within that area. But if it contradicts what either community accepts as traditionally determined, then there is conflict. The following examples represent deviations from the prevailing patterns of occupational division—deviations often wrought by the sectarian prejudices of the more powerful castes. In N. W. Andhra, as already noted all the rights and privileges belong to the Madiga. But then exceptions exist. In Anantapur and Gooty towns the Mala dig graves for the Balija, and at the latter place they told me that this right has been conceded to them by the Madiga at the pressure of the Balija, some twenty years ago. In Siddalapuram near Anantapur where the Balija are predominant the Mala dig graves for all castes. Recently in Kadavakollu of Tadipatri taluk, the Balija tried to give their dead animals exclusively to the Mala against usage, which led to a violent riot between the Mala and the Madiga. At Totala Charuvupalli in Udaigiri taluk of Nellore district, the exercise by the Mala, of the right of joining the regular employment of the ryots, which is generally denied to them in these parts, is a constant eyesore for the Madiga. In southern Andhra at Panapakam of Chittoor district, the Balija went to the extent of depriving the Madiga of their traditional occupation of providing leather implements and got their buckets stitched by their Mala farm-servants which is a unique instance. At Dakkali in Venkatagiri taluk of Nellore district, the Golla who are strong, encouraged the Madiga to repudiate the Mala's share in carrion, which led to prolonged tension between these two castes.

An additional factor that often precipitates a quarrel is the example of neighbouring locality where their counterparts enjoy greater privileges. When a Madiga of Kovur taluk in Nellore district sings that both the swords, big and small, belong to him, he is extending to his taluk the privileges which his castemen enjoy in Udaigiri taluk of the same district. The big sword referred to in the song is the instrument by which the sacrificial animal is beheaded and which

in Kovur taluk is handled by the Mala and not the Madiga. This evokes an immediate protest from the Mala of this area to whom the Madiga with his far-fetched claims looks like an imposter.

What is more, the division of occupation is related in their minds, to differentiation of social status. To work as a village servant and to be the chief functionary in a festival are symbols of social status. In the midst of miserable existence, carrion comes as a substitute source of subsistence, besides enlivening their parched palates. Grave digging as any other traditional right, urges the holder of the right to perpetuate his profession. Low in the social ladder and performing the lowly tasks, the Mala and the Madiga suffer from all the disadvantages of a shifting pattern of occupational division and lack of traditionally determined social status as between them. With a legendary lore that provokes each to pour obscene abuse on the other, these castes wrangle for superior status and scramble for enlarged occupation. That none of these two can accept to be at the lowest level of the social scale is a proof of the genius of the land that fosters hierarchical attitudes and creates a tendency in each caste to rate itself superior to at least some. Mandelbaum aptly sums up the social organisation of India: "Each community within a village cherishes some bit of custom, some practice which is distinctive to that group, and which supposedly marks its superiority to some other social group. For no community is so lowly that it does not consider some other below it on the social scale". (Hindu Muslim Conflict in India. The Middle East Journal, October, 1947).

Frustration :

Added to all this, there is the constant oppression by the higher castes that stifles the entire social life of these classes. Deep frustration is evident and aggressive impulses naturally surg up. But where will aggression find its vent? The real sources of oppression are not amendable for attack. So animosity is diverted in a different direction towards an object more within the reach. It is thus the two depressed castes often stand with their swords drawn at each other. The following passage in Powdermaker's essay on the channelisation of Negro aggression by cultural process throws much light on social conditions like these which involve conflict amongst the down-trodden communities in the constant presence of oppressive, higher social classes: "The high degree of intra-Negro quarreling, crime and homicide .....can be directly correlated with the Negro's frustration in being unable to vent his hostility on the White. The mechanism of substitution of one object of aggression for another is well known to the scientist and the layman. The substitution of Negro for White is encouraged by the culture pattern of White Official and unofficial

leniency towards intra-Negro crime". (Personality, edited by Kluchkohn and Murray page 477). While the American situation implies conflict within the same Negro community, the situation under consideration has the additional invigorating factor of the two parties being separate in groups with different labels to identify themselves. Further, there is the direct incitement by other castes and very often these are beguiled into unnecessary conflicts. Such conflicts continue to serve the selfish interests of the higher castes. Though the two sects arryed against each other embrace many a caste, the conflict is most acute among the depressed classes and its edge gets progressively blunted among the higher castes, which again shows that myth has a mightier hold on the poorer classes and animosity has a stronger base where frustration is deeper. The Balija and the Golla the respective champions of the two opposing sects freely interdine, while the Mala and the Mediga cannot contemplate it. At Totalacheruvupalli of Nellore district the village **Munsif** who is a Balija relieved himself of all sectarian prejudices and began exploiting both the Mala and the Madiga unscrupulously taking advantage of a minor conflict that across between these two castes during a festival. The Reddi and Kamma, the landed castes of Andhra, do not generally attach themselves to any sect and exploit with greater ease the difference among the depressed castes.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Anthropology on the March' Recent Studies of Indian Beliefs, Attitudes and Social Institutions, Edited by : BALA RATANAM, General Secretary Social Sciences Association, The Book Centre, Madras-2 Chapter 24 pages 283 to 296.

SPATIAL VARIANCE OF CUSTOM IN ANDHRA PRADESH

N. S. REDDY.

In what ways — attitudes, beliefs, customs, etc. does the Mala differ from the Madiga? And why? These two castes of Andhra Pradesh occupy the lowest position in the traditional social hierarchy, and come under the category of Harijans. N. S. Reddy, of Andhra University, presents here his study of the broad contours of differing customs and practices in several areas separated by hundreds of miles from one another, their co-existence, etc. in respect of these two groups.

Two castes which occupy the lowest position in the traditional social hierarchy, and whose conditions of life bring them under the now widely used category of Harijans, are the Mala and the Madiga. The members of the latter caste alone are engaged in leather work, which occupation is not undertaken by others. There are certain other tasks, social, economic, and ceremonial, which are traditionally assigned to the Harijans, the performance of which integrates them with the village and its life in a special way. So it is found that almost every village has a Mala and a Madiga hamlet attached to it. But excepting the work in leather, the other tasks set apart for this section of society are distributed between the Mala and the Madiga in different patterns in different areas.

In respect of certain other cultural traits, too, there are regional variations. In the matter of ceremonial and ritual observances, there is generally an uniformity among both these castes living in the same area.

Andhra Pradesh consists of three distinct regions. The region to the north of Madras State with an inland extension, covering half of the breadth of the peninsula on its eastern side, is known as Rayalaseema. Its constituent districts are Chittoor, Cuddapah, Kurnool and Anantapur. From the northeastern end of this region emerge the districts of Northern Circars in a single file, one after the other, along the east coast. From south to north they are Guntur, Krishna, West Godavari, East Godavari, Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam. Apart from the historically derived distinction, these two regions differ widely from each other in physiographic features. Much of the area in Northern Circars has fertile soil, riverine irriga-

tion, and a rainfall ranging from 30 to 40 inches. The density of population ranges from 400 to a little over 1,000 per square mile in this area. A good proportion of the Rayalaseema area is embedded with infertile crystalline rock, has but poor irrigational facilities, and undependable rainfall ranging from 20 to 30 inches. The density of population here mostly ranges between 100 and 250.

In contrast to Northern Circars where paddy is extensively grown, in Rayalaseema millets form the important staple crop. The southern-most coastal district of Nellore shares some of the features of both the regions, economically better off and more densely populated than Rayalaseema, but falling short of the standards of Northern Circars. On the whole, this district seems to be more of a piece with Rayalaseema than Northern Circars. To the North of Rayalaseema and to the west of Northern Circars, is the Telengana region which has until recently been part of the Nizam's State.

The places that figure in the text of this paper are indicated in the map on the opposite page. The taluk of Gooty constitutes the northwestern end of the area under study, and it also represents one extreme end in the cultural continuum of the region. Anantapur, Tadipatri and Kurnool taluks, lying to the south, east and northeast of Gooty respectively, differ from the latter in a gently graduated degree in respect of a few cultural traits. The other extreme end in the cultural continuum of the region lies in the south as represented by Chittoor and Chandragiri taluks. Venkatagiri and Gudur taluks lying immediately to the north show some shades of variance from this area. The central region represented by Cuddapah, Badveli and Udayagiri taluks hold the mean, as it were, between the two ends, exhibiting the intermediate stages in the total range of variations. The taluk of Markapuram is straight to the north of the central area under study, and Amalapuram and Ramachandrapuram taluks are to the northeast. There are some customary practices which are distinct to these areas compared to the other parts of Andhra Pradesh.

MAP SHOWING THE TALUKS
IN ANDHRA DISTRICTS
REFERRED TO IN THE PAPER

1. Ramachandrapuram
2. Amalapuram
3. Markapuram
4. Kurnool
5. Udayagiri
6. Venkatagiri
7. Gudur
8. Badveli
9. Cuddapah
10. Tadipatri
11. Gooty
12. Anantapur
13. Chandragiri
14. Chittoor

Occupation :

In northwestern Andhra, the Madigas are in much greater numbers than the Malas. All the tasks traditionally assigned to the Harijan castes are here monopolised by the Madigas to the total exclusion of the Malas. The Madiga are attached to the landholders under regular employment. They also work as village servants, dig graves, and perform the two ceremonial functions in the village festival, i.e. beheading the sacrificial animal and sprinkling the blood-soaked grain over the village fields. They also claim all the carcasses of animals belonging to the villagers. The Malas in these areas have to depend on casual agricultural labour, besides some other skilled occupations. A little eastward, the conditions differ. In the taluk of Tadipatri the Malas are the common grave-diggers. The right of working as a village servant is shared by both the castes. While in one village there is a Madiga working as a village servant, in another village a Mala occupies the same position. And in the villages requiring more than one village servant, both the castes provide the personnel to carry out their allotted shares of work. The carrion is shared by both. The two functions in the village festival remain in the sphere of the Madiga. In Kurnool and Markapuram taluks, both the Mala and the Madiga share in the rights to carrion and to the office of the village servant. Digging of graves is the monopoly of the Mala, and severing the head of the sacrificial animal in the village festival is the prerogative of the Madiga. The other function in the festival, namely sprinkling of blood-soaked grain over the fields, is lost to the Madiga here, and it is performed by the Mala. To the south from here, in the taluks of Cuddapah, Badveli and Udayagiri, the same conditions described for Kurnool exist. In Gudur and Venkatagiri taluks, both the functions in the festival are performed by the Mala. But the Madiga supplements the Mala's work in the festival here by cutting the forelimb of the animal and placing it in the mouth of the severed head. The digging of graves remains the function of the Mala. The privilege to work as a village servant as well as the right to carrion is shared by both.

According to my information, all along the coastal tract, the Mala and the Madiga are almost on a par with each other. But towards the north, their community functions as such tend to diminish. In Amalapuram and Ramachandrapuram taluks, the Harijans do not dig graves for other castes, nor do they play any prominent part in the festival of the village goddess. But they keep their rights to the office of the village servant and to carrion, which are shared by both. In Chittoor and Chandragiri taluks, i.e. in southernmost Andhra, all these rights belong to the Mala, and the Madiga have

none. The Mala in this area dig graves, play the chief roles in the village festival, work as village servants, and monopolies all the carrion to the total exclusion of the Madiga.

The Northern Circars region differs from the rest of the area in respect of a major cultural trait. The Mala and the Madiga are each traditionally split into a number of endogamous sub-divisions in all other areas excepting Northern Circars, where no semblance of in marrying groups within each caste occurs. In the area where smaller endogamous divisions exist within each caste, there is still a difference between the Mala and the Madiga in the degree of stringency with which the interdict on intermarriage is observed. The Mala are everywhere strict-about the endogamy of each division. But the Madiga display a relatively liberal attitude. In the north-western taluks of Gooty, Anantapur, Tadipatri and Kurnool, inter-marriages between the sub-divisions of the Madiga caste, attended by the usual ceremonies, are common. The only restriction observed is that the bride's kin should not partake of the sacred meal served after the usual feast in the marriage. In the central region, i.e. Cuddapah, Badveli and Udayagiri taluks, regular marriages are allowed between the different branches of the Madiga caste, but some more restrictions are imposed on the bride's relatives. They are not allowed to enter the marriage booth until the *muhurtham* ceremony is over. They cannot sprinkle the benedictory grain on the couple, and of course, they have to keep at a distance from the sacramental meal. Such intermarriages are not countenanced in any of the taluks studied in the southern area.

Peculiar Wedding Customs :

A custom peculiar to the Pokanati division of the Mala caste in the southern taluks of Chittoor and Chandragiri is the guise which the bride puts on, with a turban on her head, as she enters the house of the bridegroom just before the marriage ceremony. The same people have an associated custom of the bride's younger brother entering the marriage booth in a saree before the arrival of the bride.

These southern taluks have another distinct feature. The endogamous sub-divisions fall into two categories in respect of a feature of the women's dress. Some divisions enjoin on the women to wear the loose end of the saree on the left shoulder, while some require them to wear it on the right shoulder. But in most parts of Andhra, the bride at the time of marriage wears it on the right shoulder even if she belongs to a sub-division requiring her usually to wear it on the left side.

In the southern taluks, not only the prevailing divisions observe the practice of wearing the end of the saree on the left side, but even at the time of marriage the bride does not wear it on the right shoulder. The Dayindla, Pokanati and Rampala sections among the Mala and the Bhoomi-Dhomati Madiga come in this category. Among these very sections, there is the practice of the bride being carried to the marriage booth by her maternal uncle. Also, in Amalapuram taluk, which lies far in the north, there is the custom of both the bride and the groom being carried by their respective maternal uncles. Such a custom does not occur in any of the other taluks referred to in this paper.

There are varying modes of arranging the sacred pots at the marriage ceremony. In all the areas, except the two southernmost taluks of Chandragiri and Chittoor, only two big pots are kept in the booth, and the rest are kept inside the house. In Chittoor taluk, they keep a different set of pots with three big ones serving as a triple base and the other pots, progressively smaller in size, being piled up one on the other in the marriage booth itself. But in Chandragiri taluk, they keep four pots at the base and pile up smaller pots in four linear rows.

Widow remarriage :

The attitudes and practices associated with widow remarriage differ among these different spatial points of study. As the practice is observed in the central taluks of Udayagiri, Badveli and Cuddapah, if a widow comes to live with a man, in the ensuing expiation ceremony only a white thread with a mango leaf is passed from the hands of the man to the woman to be worn by her. In the south, from Venkatagiri taluk downwards, a *tali* medal slung on a white string is tied round the neck of a widow.

The Dayindla Mala in the southern taluks distinguish themselves by celebrating widow remarriage in a regular way not attended by any restrictions. The woman, on her remarriage, resumes all the attributes she would have foregone on becoming a widow, i.e. the vermillion dot on the face, use of turmeric powder, and the wearing of a blouse.

The other divisions of these castes in the southern taluks, however do not practise regular remarriage, nor do they allow a resumption of the auspicious attributes by a widow even after she is recognised through a subsequent ceremony as the spouse of another man. In the northwestern taluk of Gooty, a regular remarriage is performed when a widower wants to marry a widow. Even if an unmarried

man lives with a widow, a simple ceremony is performed with the slightly distinctive practice of using a *tali* medal with a horizontal trough instead of a round depression. In either case, the woman resumes her pre-widowhood status and attributes. In the central taluks, when a man elopes with a married woman and the community decides to recognise them as man and wife, the man ties round her neck only a string of black beads. In the aforementioned southern and northwestern taluks, such a woman wears an additional *tali* medal besides the one she has had at the time of her regular marriage.

Rigid Taboos:

Though girls are generally married at a very early age among both the castes all over Andhra, the custom as prevalent among the Madiga in the Uravakonda sub-division of Gooty taluk lays down a stringent injunction that no girl after puberty shall be married with proper ceremony. As a result, a girl who has already attained menarche cannot be regularly married here. In the eastern parts of Gooty taluk, the custom allows a hurried marriage on the very day when they hold the ceremony associated with menarche. Such a marriage has acquired a special name, *bandikitharamaralu.* A little eastward in Tadipatri taluk, a grace period of one year is allowed, during which the girl should keep up some semblance of seclusion before she could go through the marriage rite. In the far south, in Chittoor taluk and the adjoining area of Chandragiri taluk, the Bhoomi-Dhomati Madiga observe a similar restriction against the marriage of grown-up girls. No such taboo exists in any other place.

At the *pradhanam* ceremony before marriage, there is a rite to be performed by the maternal uncle of the bride. In the three central taluks as well as in the Venkatagiri and Gudur taluks, a skein of yarn with 101 strands, called *bondu,* is placed round the bride's neck by her maternal uncle. This custom extends right up to Anantapur taluk, but in the Uravakonda sub-division of Gooty taluk, it is altogether absent, and the maternal uncle does not play any such ceremonial role there. In the sourthern area of Chittoor taluk also, a maternal uncle does not place any yarn piece round the neck of the bride, but fastens a small blade of gold on her forehead. In Chandragiri taluk, which lies immediately to the north from there, the maternal uncle is under an obligation to perform both the acts of fastening a gold blade on the forehead as well as placing strands of yarn round the neck. In Markapuram taluk, the custom requires that four rolls of yarn should be brought for the occasion. One is placed round the bride's neck by her maternal uncle and the other

three are given to some women who are happily married. They sling them round their own necks. As the practice obtains in the taluks of Amalapuram and Ramachandrapuram, four *bondus* are brought, and of these one is placed round the bride's neck, not by the maternal uncle but by a woman chosen for her happy family life. The other three are worn by some other women selected on the same consideration.

In the taluks of Gooty, Anantapur, Tadipatri and Kurnool, there exists the institution of Basavi, by which a woman has no formal spouse and is consecrated in an impersonal marriage. She can have illicit unions and beget children who, against the prevalent patrilineal order, continue the line of their maternal grandfather. This institution is not found in the other areas under study.

Purudu Ceremony :

After child-birth, the ceremony of *Purudu* takes place generally on the ninth day or the next odd numbered day in the central, southern and northern taluks. But as one proceeds to the north-western area the day of the ceremony falls closer and closer. In Anantapur as well as Kurnool taluks the *Purudu* is celebrated on the fifth day. In the Uravakonda sub-division of Gooty taluk it falls on the third day itself. In both the taluks of Anantapur and Gooty, the placenta is taken in a pot and buried in the backyard of the house. While the mother is given no bath until the *Purudu* day all over the rest of the areas, in Gooty taluk she bathes even on the very day of delivery and on the very slab which covers the buried placenta. Here also prevails another practice of branding the child on all its joints with a heated pin. In Amalapuram taluk, the placenta, taken in a pot, is left behind some bush or thistle outside the village. In the other areas there is no formalised mode of disposing of the placenta which is just thrown on a dung hill and covered with earth.

In the taluks of Chittoor and Chandragiri, as the finale of the *Purudu* ceremony, the mother goes to the well and conducts worship. If one proceeds towards the north, this custom disappears in immediate Venkatagiri as well as the central taluks. But it is again observed in Markapuram taluk. In the south, the mother makes an idol out of sand near the well and fixes a reed on it, calling it frog god. After worship she presents the nearby women with betel and pieces of yarn dyed in turmeric paste which they wear round their necks. In Markapuram taluk the mother goes about throwing cotton seeds on her way to the well, and offers to the idol some soaked grain with sprouting shoots, distributing a part of the same to the nearby children.

The taluks of Anantapur and Gooty in the northwest and Chittoor in the south, have the identical custom of all the children of a hamlet coming to bathe along with the new-born babe on the *Purudu* day. This practice is not observed in any other area. Around Tirupati in Chandragiri taluk, however, a modified custom prevails. The children in the hamlet do not come to bathe together, but the parents of the new born babe send oil and soap-bark powder to all the families which have young children.

After menarche, a girl is segregated for nine days in all the areas excepting the northwestern taluks of Anantapur and Gooty where the seclusion lasts only for five days. The latter area also exhibits an additional feature in connection with the associated ceremony. On the day when seclusion is ended, not only women gather round the girl and sing, but also one of them puts on the guise of Lord Krishna and sits by her, making amorous suggestions. In the south, from Venkatagiri taluk downwards, there is a custom which requires the maternal uncle to provide a lattice of twigs with which to curtain off the space where the girl after menarche sits. But while in Venkatagiri taluk the maternal uncle provides only one lattice for the whole duration of nine days, in the taluks of Chittoor and Chandragiri the maternal uncle has to replace it on the third and fifth days.

In the southern taluks of Chittoor and Chandragiri, the dead body is laid on its back in the grave with the head towards the south, which facilitates a straight fixture of the eyes towards the north where the heaven is believed to be located. In the other regions they follow a complicated process of placing the body on its face with the head to the south and then slightly bending the neck to direct the eyes towards the north. There is also another custom peculiar to Gooty taluk. Here, at the place where death occurs, they keep a mug of water for three subsequent days in the belief that the soul in this period needs to quench its thirst. Also, in this area, the food offered in the rite at the preliminary mortuary ceremony is not distributed among the assembled kinsmen as elsewhere, but is thrown about in the house and on the roof.

Social Precedence :

The southern and the northwestern areas seem to differ from each other in a number of significant ways. In certain respects they even seem antithetical. Foremost, in the northwest, there is the monopoly of the Madiga over all the roles traditionally assigned to this exterior section of society. As against this, in the south, the Mala encompass in their hands all these social and ceremonial functions to the exclusion of the Madiga. There is a correlation between

social precedence and numerical concentration of these castes in different areas.

The following table shows the strength of the two castes in some of the districts as given in the 1931 Census.

District	Mala	Madiga
Anantapur	7,014	66,875
Kurnool	36,017	52,736
Cuddapah	44,745	51,431
Chittoor	100,557	44,074
Nellore	147,037	69,473
Guntur	96,073	33,700

Viewed against these figures, the social precedence of the Madiga over the numerically weak Mala in the northwestern area becomes clear. The Madiga maintain their majority in Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts, though not in the same overwhelming proportion. In the other districts the position is reversed. In the Chittoor District the strength of the Mala is twice that of the Madiga. In this case, though the factor of numerical proportion tilts the balance in favour of the Mala, it alone cannot account for the total exclusion of the Madiga from the socially important roles in the rural life of the area. In Nellore and Guntur Districts, too, the numerical ratio of these castes continues to be the same as in Chittoor, but in the former area there is an almost equal division of functions between the two castes. In the other districts of Northern Circars, too, the numerical proportion and the pattern of functional distribution are comparable to Nellore.

Early Migrations :

Certain hypothesis based on the early migrations of people who came to form these castes suggests itself in this context. The Andhra area is not an isolated one but is part of the continuous landscape of the Indian peninsula, surrounded by other administrative and linguistic regions on the South, West and North. And the horizontal unity of some of the castes cuts across the administrative and linguistic boundaries. The Madiga caste is found in Mysore State also. The Chakkiliyans in Madras State recognise themselves as the Madiga, and continue to speak some form of Telugu in their homes.

These facts throw up a compelling suggestion that the Madiga (or the people who were later to become the members of this caste) migrated in a southward and eastward direction from beyond north-western Andhra, and found themselves dispersed in various numerical proportions in different localities, giving rise to the aforementioned patterns of social precedence and functional division. By the time the Madiga reached the south, the crystallised social norms might have already set apart for the Mala all the functional and ceremonial roles of the lower status.

The Mala recognise the Paraya of Madras and the Holeya of Mysore as their congeners. There is no indication of any considerable movement of the Mala in the southward direction from the Andhra area. On the contrary, many of the Mala in the southern District of Chittoor acknowledge the fact that their ancestors immigrated from areas to the south of Andhra. The Dayindla section of the Mala is also known as Thangala, meaning south, and as Arava, meaning Tamil. This indicates their northward movement from the south. One question that arises is whether Anantapur District should be taken to represent the beginning of the peripheral region for the Mala where they do not have any prerogative or perquisites. These data point to two cultural currents, one from the northwest and the other from the south.

Strict Endogamy :

Customs peculiar to the northwestern part of the area may be summed up. Here, the Madiga allow intermarriage between the different sub-divisions of the caste. Remarriage of widows, permitting them to resume the pre-widowhood status and attributes, is common both among the Mala and the Madiga. In the far end of this locality there is a strict taboo on post-puberty marriages of girls. Also, this area observes shorter periods of ceremonial pollution at the different crises of life like birth, puberty and death.

In the southern area under study, the distinctive customs and practices are as follows : The different sub-divisions among the Madiga as well as the Mala observe strict endogamy and do not countenance intermarriage. Here, there is a preponderance of the divisions which not only usually require the women to put on the loose end of the saree on the left shoulder, but also, as already mentioned, allow it to be worn on the same side even at the time of marriage, without changing it to the right as the practice obtains elsewhere. In this locality there is the custom of the bride being carried by her maternal uncle to the marriage booth. Also, the arrangement of the sacred pots at the marriage differs in the south from the rest of the area.

Transition of Custom:

Besides noting the possibility of distinct cultural currents, minor or major, it is important to recognise the process of local levelling of custom which leads to homogeneity of practices in a neighbourhood. Conditioned by this process, a custom may manifest itself in varying shades and degrees of intensity in different areas. This may also be stated in terms of nuclear and peripheral zones of a custom. For instance, the taboo on the post-menarche marriages is very rigid on the northwestern fringe of the area covered by the present study, and it bcomes slowly relaxed as one moves towards the east or south. Intermarriages between the different divisions of the Madiga caste are common in the northwestern area, but are subject to more and more restrictions in the central and southern areas. The period of ceremonial pollution varies gradually over this stretch of area. It may be interesting to know how these customs spread and change further on to the north and the west of Gooty taluk. Similarly, the spread of the customs found exclusively in the southern part of Andhra State should be traced in areas further south. While it may not be possible for one researcher to do all this, separate studies on these lines in different regions would yield fascinating results if the diverse data are pooled and analysed.

There is also another question which I cannot satisfactorily answer within the knowledge of facts at my disposal. How and where, exactly, between two places, does the transition of custom occur? It would need village-to-village survey over the whole area. The present study has yielded only the broad contours of differing customs over areas separated by hundreds of miles from one another. Here again the gap can be covered only by future studies undertaken by a number of researchers.

On particular way the transition of custom occurs is a compromise between two different usages. Sometimes two different customs may co-exist as two elements in a mechanical mixture. In Chittoor taluk, the maternal uncle of a bride is required to bring a blade of gold and fasten it on her forehead at the *Pradhanam* ceremony. A little northward, in Venkatagiri taluk and beyond, the maternal uncle of the bride places a skein of yarn round her neck. In the intervening area of Chandragiri taluk, the maternal uncle of the bride is obliged to do both, that is, tying the gold blade on her forehead and placing the yarn round her neck. Sometimes a locality seems to choose the via media or mid-point between two differing customs existing in areas on either side. Sending oil and soapbark powder to all the homes which have children in the ceremony that follows child-birth, is obviously an adjustment effected in a certain area of Chandragiri taluk between the more southern custom

of bathing all the children of the village together and the absence of it towards the immediate north. The five-day period of seclusion observed after child-birth in Anantapur and Kurnool taluks is perhaps a compromise between the prescribed period of nine days in further south and east, and three days in the northwest. While it is possible to interpret it as a gradual, spatial change of a custom prescribing a certain period of seclusion the interpretation of it as a compromise achieved in an intervening area between two different strains of custom cannot be ruled out. It should not surprise any one if, in such an intervening area, there are neighbouring villages with different practices, some adopting the north-western practice of three-day seclusion and some adopting the southeastern practice of nine-day seclusion. But this needs to be further verified.

Then there is the total absorption of immigrant traits and the adoption of local customs by the immigrants. The Dayindla Mala in Gudur taluk are known to have immigrated a few generations back. Though their conferers in Chittoor taluk do not have the custom of the maternal uncle placing the skein of yarn round the bride's neck, in Gudur taluk they observe this practice as the other local sections of the caste do. The differing ways of arranging the sacred pots at the time of marriage in the southern areas has been explained by the local members of the Mala caste thus : The Dayindla Mala have the tradition of arranging three big pots to provide a triangular base for the smaller pots. In the villages of Chittoor taluk where the Dayindla Mala are more in numbers, the Pokanati section of the Mala, which is in minority, adopted the practice of the dominant division. In the villages of Chandragiri taluk where the Pokanati division has greater numerical strength than the Dayindla section, the latter adopted the former's traditional practice of keeping four pots at the base and arranging the smaller pots over them.

Striking Similarities :

As against these spatial variations of practices, there are similar customs occuring at widely separated places, without their being traced in the vest stretches of intervening territory. Such are the practices of the Bhoomi-Dhomati Madiga in Chittoor and Chandragiri taluks observing the taboo on the post-puberty marriages of girls, and the Dayindla Mala of the same locality permitting regular remarriage of widows, which are similar to the customs prevalent in the northwestern area. So also is the parallel custom in the two areas of all children of the village being bathed together at the *Purudu* ceremony. It may be hasty to conclude that they indicate obliteration of the same custom in the intervening area at a later

point of time, unless it is verified whether this custom does not spread along a continuous stretch beyond the western borders of the area covered by the present study.

More striking are some of the similarities between the southern taluks on the one hand and the northern and northeastern taluks on the other. One such case is that of the bride being carried to the marriage booth by the maternal uncle in the southern taluks and the bride and the groom being carried by their respective maternal uncles in Amalapuram taluk. Another instance is the worship at the well on the day of the *Purudu* ceremony which is observed in the southern taluks and in Markapuram taluk. Unless there is a narrow zig-zag linkage of this custom over the space between the concerned places, they should be put down perhaps as instances of discontinuous diffusion. The absence of endogamous divisions among these castes in the whole of Northern Circars presents a ticklish issue of cultural regionalism. In fact these are problems on the borderland between ethnography, cultural history, history, geography and archaeology, which need to be further investigated on the basis of a multidisciplinary approach.

NOTES

1. In fact many of these customs tend to be the same among the other castes also, but that need not be taken into consideration here. If, in respect of any customary practice, these castes (Mala and Madiga) differ from each other in the same locality, it is specifically mentioned in the text. When no such difference as between caste and caste is specified, it indicates that there is uniformity of practice in that area. Another point that may be borne in mind is that, as this paper is concerned only with the spatial variation of custom, the vast body of culture which is similar in different areas is not presented here, and it remains only an undisclosed base for the present purpose.

2. This area is not covered by the present study.

3. A taluk is an administrative sub-division within a district. When it is mentioned that a custom obtains in a taluk, it means it is observed in the villages studied in different parts of that taluk. So, instead of referring at each place to the different villages, which will make for a laborious reading, it has been chosen to mention the name of the taluk only. Uniformity of custom in the whole area of the taluk is implied in such a reference. Where, however, there are segments within a taluk, differing from one another in respect of any cultural trait, the different areas are specifically mentioned. The Uravakonda sub-division within Gooty taluk is one such area mentioned in the text.

4. The medal is the same as used in any marriage, but the string is not dyed in turmeric as done in regular marriages.

5 These castes have returned themselves under different names in the Census. Hence the figures given in the table do not represent their total strength. But as the present purpose is only to gauge the proportions of the two castes, these figures may be taken to serve as a rough and ready basis. The recent Census does not give castewise figures.

Extract on "MADIGA" from the Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India, by R. V. RUSSELL of the India Civil Service, Superintendent of Ethnography, Central Provinces, Assisted by RAI BAHADUR HIRA LAL, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Published under the orders of the Central Provinces Administration in Four Volumes, Vol. I Macmillan and Co., Limited. St. Martin's Street, London, 1916 *pages* 384 *and* 385 (*Glossary*).

MADIG, MADIGA[1]

The Telugu caste of workers in leather corresponding to the Chamars, which numbers nearly 1½ millions in Madras, Mysore and Hyderabad. In 1911 there were nearly 6000 Madgis in the Central Provinces and 3000 in Berar. According to tradition, the Madigas derive their name from that of a sage called Matanga Muni, and it is said that a dynasty belonging to the caste once ruled in the Canarese country. The following legend of their origin comes from Mysore[2]. In former times the sage Jambava Rishi was habitually late in attending at Siva's court. Siva asked him why this happened, and he replied that he was occupied in tending his children. On this Siva took pity on him and gave him the sacred cow, Kamdhenu, from which all the needs of the children could be satisfied. But one day while Jambava was absent at Siva's court, another sage, Sankhya, visited his hermitage and was hospitably entertained by his son, Yugamuni. The cream which Sankhya was given was so good that he desired to kill the cow, Kamadhenu, thinking that her flesh would taste even better. In spite of Yugamuni's objections Sankhya killed the cow and distributed the meat to various persons. While this was in progress Jambava returned, and, on hearing what had been done, dragged Sankhya and Yugamuni before Siva's judgment seat. The two offenders did not enter the court but stood outside the doorway, Sankhya on the right side and Yugamuni on the left. Siva condemned them to become Chandalas or outcastes, and the descendants of Sankhya have become the righthand Holias, while those of Yugamuni and his wife matangi are the left hand caste of Madigas. The latter were set to make shoes to expiate the sin committed by their ancestor in killing a cow. Another story given in the Central Provinces is that the Galla caste of cowherds, corresponding to the Ahirs and the Madgis are the descendants of two brothers. The brothers had a large herd of cattle and wanted to divide them. At this time, however, cattle disease was prevalent, and many of the herd were affected. The younger brother did not know of this, and seeing that most of the herd were lying on the ground, he proposed to the elder brother that he himself should take all the cattle lying

[1]This article is compiled from papers by C. Ramiah Kanungo, Sironcha, and W. G. Padaya Naidu, Clerk District Office, Chanda.

[2]Mysore Census Report (1891) P. 205.

on the ground, and the elder brother all those which were standing up, as a suitable method of division. The elder brother agreed, but when the younger came to take his cattle which were on the ground he found that they were all dead, and hence he had no alternative but to take off the hides and cure and sell them. His decendants continued his degraded profession and became the Madgi caste. In Chanda the following six subcastes of Madgis are reported : The Mulka Chandriah or caste priests; the Anapa or leather dealers; the Sindhi who are supposed to have been performers of dramas; the Masti or dancers; the Kommu or tellers of stories; and the Dekkala or genealogists of the caste. It is said that Kommu really means a horn and Dekka a hoof. These last two are the lowest subdivisions, and occupy a most degraded position. In theory they should not sleep on cots, pluck the leaves of trees, carry leads on any animal other than a donkey, or even cook food for themselves, but should obtain their subsistence by eating the leavings of other Madgis or members of different castes. The Nulka Chandriah or priests are the highest subdivision and wil not take food or water from any of the others, while the four remaining subcastes eat and drink together, but do not intermarry. There are also a number of exogamous groups, most of which have territorial names; but a few are titular or totemistic, as — Mukkidi, noseless; Kumawar, a potter; Nagarwar, a citizen; Dobbulwar, one who possesses a dobbulu or copper coin; Ippawar; from the mahua tree Itkalwar from itkal a brick, and so on. The caste customs of the Madigas need not be recorded in detail. They are an impure caste and eat all kinds of food, and the leavings of others, though the higher subdivisions refuse to accept these. They live outside the village, and their touch is considered to convey pollution.

Extract on "Madiga" from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India, by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, Assisted by K. RANGACHARI, M.A., of the Madras Government Museum, Volume IV-K to M Government Press, Madras 1909 *pages* 292 *to* 325.

MADIGA : The Madiga are the great leather-working caste of the Telugu country, and correspond to the Chakkiliyans of the Tamil area. They were first studied by me at Hospet in the Bellary district, and at once formed a strong opposition party, in the belief that I was going to select and carry off the strong men, lest they should become kings, and upset the British Raj. So frightened were they, that they went in a body to live in the Muhammadan quarter of the town.

At the Hospet weekly market I witnessed a mendicant youth lying naked in a thorny bed of babul (*acacia arabica*) stems. A loathsome spectacle was afforded by a shrivelled old woman with mouth distended by a mass of mud the size of a criket-ball, both eyes bunged up with mud, and beating her bare breasts with her hands. The market was infested by religious mendicants, some from Benares and Rameswaram, others from across the Hyderabad frontier, who cadged persistently for tobacco leaves, an onion or brinjal (*Solanum Melongena*), a few chillies, a handful of grain, or a pinch of salt, and helped to deplete the slender stock of the market-sellers. One holy man from Sholapur was profusely decorated with beads, ashes, brass snakes, and deities. Holding out for four pies worth of betel leaves, while the stall-keeper only offered one pie worth, he, after making a circle in the ground with his staff round his sandals thickly studded with blunt nails, stood thereon, and abused vendor in language which was not nice. A Native Magistrate thereon summoned a constable, who, hastily donning his official belt, took the holy man in custody for an offence under the Act.

A conspicuous feature of Hospet are the block-wheel carts with wooden wheels, solid or made of several pieces, with no spokes. Dragged by sturdy buffaloes, they are excellent for carrying timber or other loads on rough roads or hill-tracks, where ordinary carts cannot travel. During the breezy and showery season of the south-west monsoon, kite-flying is the joy of the Hospet youths, the kites being decorated with devices of scorpions and Hindu gods, among which a representation of Hanuman, one of the *genii* loci, soared highest every evening.

It is fairly easy to distinguish a Madiga from a Bedar, but difficult to put the distinction in words. The Madigas have more prominent cheek-bones, a more vinous eye, and are more unkempt. The Bedar, it is said, gets drunk on arrack (alcohol obtained by distillation), whereas the Madiga contents himself with the cheaper toddy (fermented palm juice). The Bedars resort freely to the Madiga quarters (Madiga keri), situated on the outskirts of the town, and fenced in by milk-hedge (*Euphorbia tirucalli*) bushes. My Brahman assistant, hunting in the Madiga quarters for subjects for measurement, unfortunately asked some Bedars if they were Madigas. To which, resenting the mistake, one of them replied "We call you the Madiga", and the Brahman stood crushed.

The Hospet Madigas had their hair cropped short, moustache, and trimmed beard. They wore the customary threads or charm cylinders to ward off devils, and steel tweezers for removing the thorns of the babul, which is largely used as a fence for the fields of cholam and sugar. One man had suspended round his neck, as a hereditary talisman, a big silver Venkataramana bottu with the namam in the centre on an altar, and the chank and chakram stamped on it.

As bearing on the social status of the Malas and Madigas, which is a subject of dispute between the two classes, it may be noted that all the billets in cotton factories which require any skill, such as engine-drivers, valve-men, moulders, turners, etc., are held by Malas. The Madigas are generally only three-annas wage men, and do such work as turning a which, moving bales, and other trivial jobs. At a factory, whereat I stayed, at Adoni, there were three wells, *viz.*, for Malas, for Madigas, and for the rest of the workers, except Brahmans. And the well-water for the Malas was better than that for the Madigas. Madiga chindu, or sword, dance, was prohibited in 1859 and 1874. But a petition, referring to its obscene nature, and its being the cause of frequent collision between the Malas and Madigas, was submitted to the Collector of Kurnool in 1887, by a missionary. The dance was performed at festivals, held annually or triennially, in honour of the village goddess, and during the time of threshing corn, building a new house, or the opening of a newly-dug well. The dance, accompanied by a song containing grossly indecent reflections against the Malas, was also performed, under the excitement of strong drinks, in the presence of the goddess, on the occasion of marriages. One verse ran as follows: "I shall out with my saw the Malas of the four houses at Nandyal, and, having caused them to be cut up, shall remove their skins, and fix them to drums".

"The right hand party", it is stated.* "Resent the use by the left of palanquins at their marriages, and so the Malas are very jealous of the Chucklers (Madigas) carrying the bride and bridegroom through the streets, using tinkling ornaments, etc. Riots sometimes occur when a strong feeling of opposition is raised, to resent what they consider innivations."

"The Madigas, "Mr. N. G. Chetty writes** "belong to the left-hand caste, and often quarrel with the Malas (right-hand). In 1871 a Madiga, having contrived to obtain a red cloth as a reward from the Police Superintendent, wore it on his head, and went in procession on horseback by the main bazaar street. This resulted in a disturbance, in which a European Inspector was severely hurt by a Mala, who had mistaken him for the Superintendent. The two factions fixed, by mutual understanding, the streets by which each was to proceed, and no quarrels have since occurred". During the celebration of village festivals, an unmarried Madiga woman, called for the occasion Matangi (a favourite deity), abuses and spits upon the people assembled, and they do not take this as an insult, because they think that her spittle removes the pollution. The woman is, indeed, regarded as the incarnation of the goddess herself. Similarly, the Malas use very obscene language, when the god is taken in procession to the streets of the caste people.† Concerning the Matangi I gather‡ that she is an "unmarried woman of the Madiga class, chosen after a most trying ordeal, unless she happens to be descended from a previous Matangi, to represent the goddess. She must vindicate her fitness by suitable prohetic utterances, and her nomination is not confirmed till she has obtained divine approval at the temple of a certain village near Kumbam in Kurnool. When she has been finally confirmed in her honours, she enjoys the privilege of adorning her face with a profusion of turmeric and red powder, and of carrying margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves about her. She is unmarried, but without being bound by a vow of celibacy. Her business is to preside at the purificatory ceremonies that precede all festivaties. When Malakshmi, or Poleramma, or Ankamma, or any other of the village deities is to have her festival, the nearest Matangi is applied to. Her necklace of cowry (*Cypraa moneta*) shells is deposited in a well for three days, before she is allowed to put it on for the ceremony. She done the necklace, and marches behind the master of the ceremonies, who carries a knife, wooden shoes and trident, which have been similarly placed for a time at the bottom

*Manual of the Nellore district.

**Manual of the Kurnool district, 1886.

†Madras Census Report, 1891.

‡Madras Mail, 1902.

of a well. The master of the ceremonies, his male and female relations, then stand in a line, and the Matangi runs round and round them, uttering what appear to be meaningless exclamations, spitting upon all of them, and touching them with her stick. Her touch and saliva are believed to purge all uncleanliness of body and soul, and are invited by men who would ordinarily scorn to approach her, and it passes one's comprehension how she should be honoured with the task of purifying the soul and body of high class Reddis and purse-proud Komatis. It must be said that only very few Brahman families keep up this mysterious ceremony of homage to the Matangi. She is allowed to come into the house, that is to pass the outer gate. There she be smears a certain spot with cowdung, and places upon it a basket. It is at once filled with cooked food. A layer of rice powder covers the surface of the food, and on it is placed a small lamp, which is lighted. She then holds out a little earthenware pot, and asks for toddy to fill it with. But the Brahman says that she must be content with water. With the pot in her hand, and wild exultant songs in her mouth, recounting her humiliation of Brahman and Kshatriya, of saint and sovereign, she moves quickly round the assembled men and women, scattering with a free hand upon them the water from the pot. The women doff their petticoats, and make a present of them to the Matangi, and the mistress of the house gives her the cloth she is wearing. The men, however, with strange inconsistency, doff their sacred threads, and replace them by new ones after a bath. The origin of the supremacy of the Matangi is obscure, and shrouded in legends. According to one of them, the head of Renuka, the wife of the sage Bhrigu, who was beheaded by her lord's orders, fell in a Madiga house, and grew into a Madiga woman. According to another legend, a certain king prayed to be blessed with a daughter, and in answer the gods sent him a golden parrot, which soon after perched on an ant-hill, and disappeared into it. The disappointed father got the ant-hill excavated, and was rewarded for his pains by finding his daughter rise, a maid of divine beauty, and she came to be worshipped as the Matangi. It is interesting to note that Matangas were an ancient line of kings 'somewhere in the south', and the Madigas call themselves Matangi Makkalu or children of Matangi or Durga, who is their goddess".

The system of making Basavis (*see* Deva-dasi), which prevails among the Madigas of the Ceded districts, is apparently not in vogue among those of the Telugu country, where, however, there are, in some places, a class of prostitutes called Matangi, Matamma, or Matha, who are held in much respect. In connection with the Basavi system, it is recorded, in the Madras Law Report, 1892, that "upon the whole, the evidence seems to be to establish that, among the Madigas, there is a widespread custom of performing in the temple

at Uchangidurgam, a marriage ceremony, the result of which is that the girl is married without possibility of widowhood or divorce; that she is a liberty to have intercourse with men at pleasure; that her children are heirs to her father, and keep up his family; and that Basavis' nieces, being made Basavis, become their heirs. The Basavis seem in some cases to become prostitutes, but the language used by the witnesses generally points only to free intercourse with men, and not necessarily to receipt of payment for use of their bodies. In fact, they acquire the right of intercourse with men, without more discredit than accrues to the men of their caste for intercourse with women who are not their wives".

The ceremony of initiation into Matangihood is fully described by Emma Rosenbusch (Mrs. Clough)*. In the Canarese country, e.g., at Tumkur in Mysore, the ceremony of initiation is performed by a Vakkaliga priest. A portion of the front courtyard of the house is cleaned, and smeared with cow-dung. On the space thus prepared, a pattern (muggu) of a lotus is drawn with red, yellow, and white powders. The outline is first drawn with rice or ragi (*Eleusine Coracana*) flour deftly dropped from between the thumb and index finger. The interspaces are then filled in with turmeric and kunkuma powder. Five small pots are arranged, one in the centre, and one at each corner of the pattern. By the side of the pots are placed a ball of sacred ashes, a new cloth, a piece of turmeric, camphor, and plantain fruits. Plantain stems are set up at the corners of the pattern. A string is passed seven times round the four conners pots, and tied to the central pot. The woman who is about to become a Matangi should live on fruits and milk for five days previous to the ceremony. She is dressed in a white sari, and seats herself on the muggu close to the central pot. A bamboo basket, containing a pot bearing the device of two foot-prints (of Ellamma), an earthen or wooden receptacle, an iron lamp, and a cane, is placed on her head. The Asadi sings songs about Ellamma, and the Vakkaliga priest throws rice over the novice's head, feet, knees, and shoulders, and ties two bottus (marriage badges), called respectively Ellamma's and Parasurama's bottu, on her neck. The new and old Matangis bawl out Ekkalde Jogavva. The ceremony closes with the drinking of toddy by the Matangis and Asadis. The basket (adlige) containing the various articles enumerated is the badge of a Matangi, who carries it with its contents, and a few leafy twigs of the margosa tree (*Melia Azadirachta*). The basket is wrapped up in a red or brown cloth, and may not be placed on the ground. At the Matangi's house, it is hung up by means of a rope, or placed in a niche in the wall. It may be noted that the Madigas call the intoxicant toddy paiu (milk).

---

* *While Wearing Sandals, or Tales of a Telugu Pariah tribe.*

For the following interesting note on the Matangi institution, I am indebted to an article by Mr. A. Madhaviah*. "About ten miles to the south-west of Cumbum, in the Kurnool district, and within a mile of the village of Tudimilla, there is a narrow pass between two hillocks known as Surabeswara Kona. Besides the more common presences, we find here the following shrines :—

(a) Sapthamathas (seven mothers).

(b) A curious temple, in which are found the idols of Jamadhagni Bagawan—the father of Parasurama and the local rishi—his wife Renuka Devi, and the Surabi.

(c) Opposite to this temple is the curious shrine, not very much bigger than a railway pointman's box, dedicated to Mathangi. In this temple are found no less than five idols arranged in the following order :—(1) a three-headed snake; (2) another three-headed snake; (3) a female body, with the palms joined reverentially in the worshipping posture in front, with the lower half of the body snaky in form, and with a canopy of snaky hoods above; (4) Mathangi proper—a female figure of about 15 inches in height, made of stone—with a short skirt, below which the feet are visible, but no upper garment, and wearing a garland round the neck. The right hand holds a snake-headed stick, while the left has an adlika, a kind of sieve; (5) another similar figure, but without even the skirt.

We shall now proceed to enquire who this Mathangi was, and how she came to be worshipped there. Jamadhagni Maharishi, known also as Bagawan on account of his godly power and virtues, married Ranuka, the daughter of Renu, and had five sons by her, the youngest of whom was the famous Parasurama, an incarnation of Vishnu. 'Once upon a time', says the Bhagavatapurana, 'Renuka having gone to the Ganga, saw the king of the Ghandarvas wearing garlands of lotus, to play with the Apsaras. Having gone to the river to fetch water, she, whose heart was somewhat attracted by Chitaratha (the king of the Gandharvas) who was playing, forgot the time of Yajna (sacrifice). Coming to feel the delay, and afraid of the curse of the Muni, she returned to the hermitage, and placed the pitcher before the Muni, and remained standing with folded palms. The Muni (Jamadhagni), coming to know of the unchasteness of his wife, got enraged, and said 'O my sons! kill this sinner'. Although thus directed, they did not do so. The said (Parasu) Rama, who was well aware of the power of the Muni in respect of meditations and asceticism, killed, being directed by his father, his mother along with his brothers. The son of Satyavati (Jamadhagni) was pleased, and requested Rama to pray for any favour. Rama desired the reanimation of those killed, and their forgetfulness of the fact of

*Madras Christ. Coll. Mag., XXIII (New Series V), 1906.

their having been killed. Immediately did they get up, as though after a deep sleep. Rama, who was conscious of the powers of his father in regard to asceticism, took the life of his dear ones'.

"The version locally prevalent is somewhat different. Jamadhagni Bagawan's hermitage was near this Kona, and he was worshipping the god Surabeswara, and doing tapas (penance) there. One day, his wife Renuka Devi went, very early in the morning, to the river Gundlacama to bathe, and fetch water for her husband's sacrificial rites. She was accompanied, as was her wont on such occasions, by a female slave of the chuckler (leather-worker) caste, as a sort of bodyguard and attendant. While she was bathing, the great warrior Karthaviriyarjuna with a thousand arms happened to fly across the sky on some business of his own, and Renuka saw his form reflected in the water, and was pleased with it in her mind. It must be mentioned that she never used to take any vessel with her to fetch water, for her chastity was such that she had power to roll water into a pot-like shape, as if it were wax, and thus bring it home. On this day, however, she failed to effect this, try what she might, and she was obliged to return home emptyhanded. In the meanwhile, the sage, her husband, finding that his wife did not return as usual, learnt through his 'wisdom sight' what had happened, and ordered his son Parasurama to slay his sinful mother. Parasurama went towards the river accordingly, and, seeing his mother returning, aimed an arrow at her, which severed her head from her body, and also similarly severed, with its unspent force, the head of the chuckler woman who was coming immediately behind his mother Parasurama returned to his father without even noticing this accident, and when his father, pleased with his prompt obedience, offered him any boon, he prayed for the re-animation of his mother. Jamadhagni then gave him some holy water out of his vessel, and told him to put together the dismembered parts, and sprinkle some water over them. Parasurama went off in great delight and haste, and, as it was still dark and early in the morning, he wrongly put his mother's head on the chuckler woman's trunk, and sprinkled water on them. Then, seeing another head and another body lying close by, he thought that they belonged to the female slave whom he had unwittingly killed, and he put them also together, and re-animated them. He was extremely vexed when he found out the mistakes he had committed, but, as there was no rectifying them without another double murder, he produced the two women before his father, and begged to be forgiven. The sage finally accepted the person with his late consort's head as his wife, and granted to the other woman the status of an inferior deity, in response to her prayers, and owing to her having his wife's body. This was the origin of Mathangi.

"There are some permanent inam (rent-free) lands belonging to this shrine, and there is always a Madiga 'vestal virgin' known as Mathangi, who is the high priestess, or rather the embodied representative of the Brahman-chuckler goddess, and who enjoys the fruits of the inams. Mathangi is prohibited from marrying, and, when a Mathangi dies, her successor is chosen in the following manner. All the chuckler girls of the village, between the ages of eight and ten, who have not attained puberty, are assembled before the shrine, and the invoking hymns are chanted amid a flourish of trumpets, drums, and other accessories. The girl who becomes possessed—on whom the goddess descends—is the chosen vessel, and she is invested with the insignia of her office, a round sieve, a bunch of margosa (*Malia Azadirachta*) leaves, a snake-headed bamboo stick, a piece of cotton thread rope with some cowries (Cypraea *moneta* shells) strung on it, and a small vessel of kunkuma (coloured aniline powder). A vow of lifelong celibacy is also administered to her. Curiously enough, this shrine is venerated by all castes, from the Brahman downwards. We were informed that, at the time of worship, the chuckler priestess dances about in wild frenzy, and she is given toddy to drink, which she not infrequently spits on her devotees, and even Brahmans regard this as auspicious, and not in the least polluting. We had the pleasure of witnessing a 'possessed dance' by the reigning Mathangi, with her drummer in attendance. She is a chuckler woman, about thirty years of age, and, but for the insignia of her office, not in any way differing from the rest of her class. Though unmarried she had several children, but this was apparently no disqualification. We were standing before the shrine of the seven mothers when the drummer invoked the goddess by chanting a Telugu hymn, keeping time on his drum. The meaning of the hymn was to this effect, as far as we could make out :—

Sathya Surabesa Kona! Gowthama's Kamadhenu! the headless trunk in Sathya Surabesa Kona! your father Giri Razu Kamadeva Jamadhagni Mamuni beheaded the trunk; silently Jamadhagni cut off the arms; did you, the headless trunk in Kamadhenuvanam, the headless trunk of Jamadhagni, your father's golden sword, did you ask to be born a virgin in the snake pit?

"While chanting the above, the drummer was dancing round and round that woman, and beating wildly on his drum. The woman began to tremble all over, and soon it was visible that the goddess had descended on her. Then the drummer, wilder and more frantic than ever, began to praise the goddess in these words :—

Are you wearing bells to your ankles, O mother? Are you wearing cowrise, O mother? Dancing and singing, O mother! We pray to thee, O mother! Possessed and falling on the ground, I implore thee, O mother! O mother, who went to Delhi and Oruganti

with a sieve in the right-hand, with a wand in the left; with bells tinkling at her ankles, the mother went to Oruganti town, the mother went away.

"During this chant, the woman vies with the drummer and dances fiercely round and round, always facing him. Then comes the appeasing chant, which the drummer drawls out in a quivering and solemn tone, and without dancing about :—

By the feet of the thirty-three crores, by the feet of the sixty crores, by the feet of the Devas, peace!

"The woman then stands with closed eyes, panting for breath, and quite exhausted."

"On ordinary days, the Mathangi goes about the villages, collecting the offerings of her devotees, and, we take it, she is never in much want. There are also local Mathangis in other villages, but they are all said to be subordinate to the Tudimilla woman, who is the high Pontiff of the institution. We were informed that there was an old palmyra-leaf manuscript in existence, describing the institution and the ceremonies (mostly tantric and phallic) in detail".

Among the Madigas of Tumkur in Mysore, the Matangis must apparently belong to one of two septs, Belliyoru or Malloru.

The Madiga Asadis, who are males, have to go through an initiation ceremony very similar to that of the Matangi. But a necklet of pebbles is substituted for the bottu, and the Vakkaliga priest touches the novice's shoulders with flowers, turmeric powder, and kunkumam. The Asadis are musicians who sing songs and recite stories about Ellamma. They play on a musical instrument called chaudike, which is a combination of a drum and stringed instrument. The Matangis and Asadis, both being dedicated to Ellamma, are eminently qualified to remove pollution for many castes who are Ellamma Vokkalu or followers of Ellamma. A lotus device, or figures of Pothu Raja and Matangi, are drawn on the ground, after it has been cleansed with cow-dung. The Matangi, with her insignia, sits in the centre of the device, and the Asadis, sitting close by, sing the praises of Ellamma to the accompaniment of the chaudike. The Matangis and Asadi then drink toddy, and go about the house, wherein the former sprinkle toddy with the margosa twig. Sometimes they pour some of the toddy into their mouths, and spit it out all over the house. The pot, in which the toddy is placed, is, in some places, called pallakki (palanquin).

The Asadis' version of the story of Ellamma is as follows. She is the goddess for all, and is present in the tongues of all except dumb people, because they have to pronounce the syllable Elli (where)

whenever they ask a question containing the word where. She is a mysterious being, who often exhibits herself in the form of light or flames. She is the cause of universe, and the one Sakthi in existence thereon. She is supposed to be the daughter of Giriraja Muni and Javanikadevi, and the wife of Jamadhagni Rishi. Her son is Parasurama, carrying a plough. The town where she lives has three names, Jambupuri. Isampuri, and Vijayanagara, has eighty-seven gates, and is fortified by seven walls. She is believed to have for her dress all kinds of snakes. Several groves of margosa trees are said to flourish in her vicinity. She is worshipped under many names, and has become Lakshmi, Gauramma, and Saraswati in Brahman houses, or Akkumari in Vakkaliga houses. To the Idigas she is Gatabaghya Lakshmi, to the Kurubas Ganga Mari, to the Oddes Peddamma and Chinnamma, and so on. She is said to have proceeded on a certain day to the town of Oragallu, accompanied by Jana Matangi. On the way thither, the soles of Matangi's feet blistered, and she sat down with Ellamma beneath a margosa tree. After resting a short time Matangi asked Ellamma's permission to go to a neighbouring Idiga (Telugu toddy-drawer), and get some toddy to drink. Ellamma objected, as the Idiga Gauda was a Lingayat, and Matangi would be compelled to wear the lingam. When Matangi persisted, Ellamma transformed herself into an ant-hill, and Matangi, in the guise of a young woman, went to the Idiga Gauda with her cane (Jogi kolu) and basket, and asked for toddy the Gauda became angly, and, tying her to a date-palm (*Phaenix sylvestris*) beat her, and gave her cane and basket to his groom. Matangi was further ill-treated by the Gauda and his wives, but escaped, and went to the Gauda's brother, who treated her kindly, and offered her toddy, of which he had sixty loads on bullocks. All this he poured into the shell of a margosa fruit which Matangi held in her hand, and yet it was not filled. Eventually the toddy. The Gauda became angly, and, tying her to a date-palm full. So pleased was Matangi with the Idiga's treatment of her, that she blessed, him, and instructed him to leave three date-palms untapped as Basavi trees in every grove. She then returned to Ellamma, and it was resolved to afflict the Gauda who had treated her badly with all kinds of diseases. Still disguised as a young woman, she went to him with sweet-smelling powders, which he purchased for a large sum of money. But, when he used them, he became afflicted with manifold diseases, including small-pox measles, cancer, asthma, gout, rheumatism, abscesses, and bed-sores. Matangi then appeared before him as an old fortune-teller woman, whom the Idiga consulted, and going as he was told by her, was cured. Subsequently, learning that all his misfortunes were due to his want of respect to Matangi, he became one of Ellamma's Vokkalu.

"The Madigas", Mr. H. A. Stuart informs us,* "will not take food or water from Pariahs, nor the latter from the former, a prejudice which is taken advantage of in the Kalahasti Raja's stables to prevent theft of gram by the Pariah horse-keepers, the raw gram being sprinkled with water by Madigas in the sight of the Pariahs."

There are Telugu proverbs to the effect that "under the magili system of cultivation, even a Madiga will grow good crops", and "not even a Madiga will sow before Malapunnama".

Writing concerning the Madigas, † the Rev. H. Huizinga states that "they live in hamlets at a respectable distance from the villages of the caste people, by whom they are greatly despised. Their habits are squalid in the extreme, and the odour of a Madiga hamlet is revolting. They perform all the lowest kinds of service for the caste people, especially bearing burdens and working in leather. They take charge of the ox or buffalo as soon as it dies. They remove the skin and tan it, and eat the loathsome carcase. which makes them specially despised, and renders their touch polluting. Some of the skins are used for covering the rude drums that are so largely used in Hindu festivals, and beaten in honour of the village deities. The caste men impress the Madigas into their service, not only to make the drums, but also to beat them at their feasts. It may be mentioned that nearly ten per cent of the Madigas are nominal Christians, and, in some parts of the Nellore district, the Christians form over half of the Madiga population. This changes their habits of life and also their social position. Eating of carrion is now forbidden, as well as beating of drums at Hindu festivals, and their refusal in this particular often leads to bitter prosecution at the hands of the caste people. The main duty of the Madigas is the curing and tanning of hides, and the manufacture of rude leather articles, especially sandals, trappings for bullocks. and large well-buckets used for irrigation. The process of tanning with lime and tangedu (Cassia auriculata) bark is rough and simple. (Tangedu is said**, to be cut only by the Madigas, as other classes think it beneath their dignity to do it.) As did their forefathers, so the Madigas do to-day. The quality of the skins they turn out is fair, and the state of the development of the native leather trade compares very favourably with that of other trades such as blacksmithy and carpentry. The Madiga's sandals are strong, comfortable, and sometimes highly ornamental. His manner of working, and his

*Manual of the North Arcot district.

†A Chatterton, Monograph of tanning and working in leather, Madras, 1904.

**Manual of the Kurnool district.

tools are as simple as his life. He often gets paid in kind, a little fodder for his buffalo, so many measures of some cheap grain, perhaps a few vegetables, etc. In the northern districts, the Madigas are attached to one or more families of ryots, and are entitled to the dead animals of their houses. Like the Vettiyan in the south, the Madiga is paid in kind, and he has to supply sandals for the ryots, belts for the bulls, and all the necessaries of agriculture; and for these he has to find the requisite leather himself; but for the larger articles, such as water-buckets, the master must find the leather. Of late years there is a tendency observable among Madigas to poach on each other's monopoly of certain houses, and among the ryots themselves to dispense with the services of family Madigas, and resort to the open market for their necessaries. In such cases, the ryots demand payment from the Madigas for the skins of their dead animals. The hides and skins, which remain after local demands have been satisfied, are sold to merchants from the Tamil districts, and there is generally a central agent, to whom the various sub-agents send their collections, and by him they are dried and salted and sent to Madras for tanning. In the Kistna district, children have little leather strings hanging from the left shoulder, like the sacred cord of the Brahman, from which is suspended a bag containing something put in it by a Madiga, to charm away all forms of disease from the infant wearer".

In some places bones are collected by the Madigas for the Labbais (Muhammadans), by whom they are exported to Bombay.

The god of the temple at Tirupati appears annually to four persons in different directions, east, west, north and south, and informs them that he requires a shoe from each of them. They whitewash their houses, worship the god, and spread rich-flour thickly on the floor of a room, which is locked for the night. Next morning the mark of a huge foot is found on the floor, and for this a shoe has to be made to fit. When ready, it is taken in procession through the streets of the village, and conveyed to Tirupati, where it is presented at the temple. Though the makers of the shoes have worked in ignorance of each other's work, the shoes brought from the north and south, and those from the east and west, are believed to match, and make a pair. Though the worship of these shoes is chiefly meant for the Pariahs, who are prohibited from ascending the Tirupati hill, as a matter of fact all, without distinction of caste, worship them. The shoes are placed in front of the image of the god near the foot of the hill, and are said to gradually wear out by the end of the year.

At a pseudo-hook-swinging ceremony in the Bellary district, as carried out at the present day, a Bedar is suspended by a cloth pass-

ed under his arms. The Madigas always swing him, and have to provide the hide ropes, which are used.*

In an exceedingly interesting account of the festival of the village goddess Uramma, at Kudligi in the Bellary district, Mr. F. Fawcett writes as follows. "The Madiga Basivis (dedicated prostitutes) are given alms, and join in the procession. A quantity of rice and ragi flour is poured into a basket over which one of the village servants cut the throat of a small black ram. The carcase is laid on the bloody flour, and the whole covered with old cloths, and placed on the head of a Madiga, who stands for some time in front of the goddess. The goddess is then carried a few yards, the Madiga walking in front, while a hole is dug close to her, and the basket of bloody flour and the ram's carcase are buried. After some dancing by the Madiga Basivis to the music of the tom-tom, the Madigas bring five new pots, and worship them. A buffalo, devoted to the goddess after the last festival, is then driven or dragged through the village with shouting and tomtoming, walked round the temple, and beheaded by the Madiga in front of the goddess. The head is placed in front of her with the right foreleg in the mouth, and a lamp, lighted eight days previously, is placed on top. All then start in procession round the village, a Madiga, naked but for a few margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, and held by two others, leading the way, Behind him are all the other Madigas, carrying six hundred seers of cholum (Sorghum: millet), which they scatter; and, following them, all the other villagers. It is daybreak, and the Madiga who led the way, the pujari (priest), and the women who followed him, who have been fasting for more than twenty-four hours, now eat. The Madiga is fed. This Madiga is said to be in mortal terror while leading the procession, for the spirit or influence of the goddess comes over him. He swoons before the procession is completed. At noon the people collect again at Uramma's temple, where a purchased buffalo is sacrificed. The head is placed in front of the goddess as before, and removed at once for food. Then those of the lower Sudra castes, and Madigas who are under vows, come dressed in margosa leaves, with lamps on their heads, and sacrifice buffaloes, sheep and goats to the goddess". A further account of the festival of the village goddess Udisalamma, at Bandri in the Bellary district, is given by Mr. Fawcett. "A Madiga", he writes, "naked but for a few leaves round his waist, leads the procession, and, following him, are Madigas with baskets. Fear of the goddess comes on the Madiga. He swoons, and is carried to the temple, and flung on the ground in front of the goddess. After a while he is revived, bathed, and given new clothing. This man is one of a family, in which this

*Manual of the Bellary district.

curious office is hereditary. He must be the son of a married woman, not of a Basivi, and he must not be married. He fasts from the beginning of the festical till he has done what is required of him. A young ram—the sacrifice sheep—is taken up by one of the Poturazus, as if it were a child, its hind legs at either side of his waist and its forelegs over his shoulders, and he bites its throat open and shows his bloody mouth to the people. He throws it down, and the Madigas remove it'.

In an account of a festival, during times of epidemic, at Masulipatam, Bishop Whitehead writes as follows.* "On the last day, a male buffalo, called Devara potu (he who is devoted to the goddess), is brought before the image, and its head cut off by the head Madiga of the town. The blood is caught in a vessel, and sprinkled over some boiled rice, and then the head, with the right foreleg in the mouth, is placed before the shrine on a flat wicker basket, with the rice and blood on another basket just below it. A lighted lamp is placed on the head, and then another Madiga carries it on his own head round the village, with a new cloth dipped in the blood of the victim tied round its neck. This is regarded here and elsewhere as a very inauspicious and dangerous office, and the headman of the village has to offer considerable inducements to persuade a Madiga to undertake it. Ropes are tied round his body and arms, and held fast by men walking behind him, to prevent his being carried off by evil spirits, and limes are cut in half and thrown into the air, so that the demons may catch at them instead of at the man. It is believed that gigantic demons sit on the tops of tall trees ready to swoop down and carry him away, in order to get the rice and the buffalo's head. The idea of carrying the head and rice round a village, so the people said, is to draw a kind of cordon on every side of it, and prevent the entrance of the evil spirits. Should any one in the town refuse to subscribe for the festival, his house is omitted from the procession, and left to the tender mercies of the devils. This procession is called Bali-haranam, and in this (Kistna) district inams (lands rent free) are held from Government by certain families of Madigas for performing it. Besides the buffalo, large numbers of sheep and goats, and fowls are sacrificed, each householder giving at least one animal. The head Madiga, who kills the animals, takes the carcase, and distributes the flesh among the members of his family. Often cases come into the Courts to decide who has the right to kill them. As the sacrifice cannot wait for the tedious processes of the law, the elders of the village settle the question at once, pending an appeal to the Court. But, in the town of Masulipatam, a Madiga is specially licensed by the Municipality for the purpose, and all disputes are avoided".

*Madras Museum Bull. V. 3, 1907.

In some localities, during epidemics of small-pox or cholera, the Madigas celebrate a festival in honour of Mariamma, for the expenses of which a general subscription is raised, to which all castes contribute. A booth is erected in a grove, or beneath a margosa or *Strychnos Nux-vomica* tree, within which a decorated pot (karagam) is placed on a platform. The pot is usually filled with water, and its mouth closed by a cocoanut. In front of the pot a screen is set up, and covered with a white cloth, on which rice, plantains, and cakes are placed, with a mass of flour, in which a cavity is scopped out to hold a lighted wick fed with ghi (clarified butter), or gingelly oil. A goat is sacrificed, and its head, with a flour-light on it, placed close to the pot. The food, which has been offered to the goddess, is distributed. On the last day of the festival, the pot is carried in procession through the village, and goats are sacrificed at the four cardinal points of the compass. The pot is deposited at a spot where three roads meet, and a goat, pumpkins, limes, flowers, etc., are offered to it. Everything, except the pot, is left on the spot.

The Madigas sometimes call themselves Jambavas, and claim to be descended from Jambu or Adi Jambuvadu, who is perhaps the Jambuvan of the Ramayana. Some Madigas, called Sindhuvallu, go about acting scenes from the Mahabaratha and Ramayana, or the story of Ankalamma. They also assert that they fell to their present low position as the result of a curse, and tell the following story. Kamadhenu, the sacred cow of the Puranas, was yielding plenty of milk, which the Devas alone used. Vellamanu, a Madiga boy, was anxious to taste the milk, but was advised by Adi Jambuvadu to abstain from it. He, however, secured some by stealth, and thought that the flesh would be sweeter still. Learning this, Kamadhenu died. The Devas cut its carcase into four parts, of which they gave one to Adi Jambuvadu. But they wanted the cow brougt back to life, and each brought his share of it for the purpose of reconstruction. But Vellamanu had cut a bit of the flesh, boiled it, and breathed on it, so that, when the animal was recalled to life, its chin sank, as the flesh thereof had been defiled. This led to the sinking of the Madigas in the social scale. The following variant of this legend is given in the Mysore Census Report, 1891. "At a remote period, Jambava Rishi, a sage, was one day questioned by Isvara (Siva) why the former was habitually late at the Divine Court. The rishi replied that he had personally to attend to the wants of his children every day, which consequently made his attendance late: whereupon Isvara, pitying the children, gave the rishi a cow (Kamadhenu), which instantaneously supplied their every want. Once upon a time, while Jambava was absent at Isvara's Court, another rishi, named Sankya, visited Jambava's hermitage, where he was hospitably entertained by his son Yugamuni. While taking his meals, the cream that had been served

was so savoury that the guest tried to induce Jambava's son Yugamuni, to kill the cow and eat her flesh; and, in spite of the latter's refusal, Sankya killed the animal, and prevailed upon the others to partake of the meat. On his return from Isvara's Court, Jambava found the inmates of his hermitage eating the sacred cow's beef; and took both Sankya and Yugamuni over to Isvara's Court for judgment. Instead of entering, the two offenders remained outside, Sankya rishi standing on the right side and Yugamuni on the left of the doorway. Isvara seems to have cursed them to become Chandalas or outcaste. Hence, Sankya's descendants are, from his having stood on the right side, designated right-hand caste or Holeyas; whilst those who sprang from Yugamuni and his wife Matangi are called left-hand caste or Madigas". The occupation of the latter is said also to be found on the belief that, by making shoes for people, the sin their ancestors had committed by cow-killing would be expiated. This mode of vicariously atoning for deliberate sin has passed into a facetious proverb, 'So and so has killed the cow in order to make shoes from the skin', indicating the utter worthlessness and insufficiency of the reparation.

The Madigas claim to be the children of Matangi. "There was, "Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,* "formerly a Matanga dynasty in the Canarese country, and the Madigas are believed by some to be descendants of people who were once a ruling race. Matangi is a Sanskrit name for Kali, and it is possible that the Madigas once played an important part in the worship of the god. The employment of Chakkiliyans and Madiga women in Shakti worship gives some colour to this supposition". According to Fleet† "the Matangas and the Katachchuris are mentioned in connection with Mangalisa, who was the younger brother and successor of Kirttivarma I, and whose reign commenced in Saka 489 (A.D. 567-8), and terminated in Saka 532 (A.D. 610-11). Of the Matangas nothing is known, except the mention of them. But Matanga means 'a Chandala, a man of the lowest caste, an ouscaste, girata mountainer, a barbarian, and the Madigas, *i.e.*, the Mahangs of this part of the country, usually call themselves Matangimakkalu, *i.e.*, the children of Matangi or Durga, who is their goddess. It is probable, therefore, that the Matangas of this inscription were some aboriginal family of but little power, and not of sufficient importance to have left any record of themselves". There are allusions to Matangas in the Ramayana, and in Kadambari, a Sanskirt work. the chieftain of the Cabaras is styled Matanga. The tutelary deity of the Madigas is Mathamma or Matangi, who is said to be worshipped by the Komtis under the name of Kanyakaparameswari. The relations between the Madigas and Komatis are dealt with in the note

*Madras Census Report, 1891.

†Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts of the Bombay Presidency, 1882.

on the latter caste. There is a legend to the effect that Matangi was defeated by Parasu Rama, and concealed herself from him under the tanning-pot in a Madiga's house. At the feast of Pongal, the Madigas worship their tanning pots, as representing the goddess, with offerings of fowls and liquor. In addition to Matangi, the Madigas worship Kattamma, Kattappa, Dandumari, Muneswara, and other deities. Some of their children are named after these deities, while others receive Muhammadan names in fulfilment of vows made to Masthan and other Pirs.

When asked concerning their caste, the Madigas always reply "Memu pedda inti vallamu", *i.e.*, we are of the big house. The following legend is current in the Cuddapah district concerning a pool in the Rayachoti taluk called Akkadevatalakolam, or the pool of the holy sisters. "A thousand years ago, there lived near the pool a king, who ruled over all this part of the country. The king had as his commander-in-chief a Madiga. This Madiga made himself powerful and independent, and built himself a residence on a hill still called Madiga Vanidoorgam. At least he revolted, and defeated the king. On entering the king's palace, he found seven beautiful virgins, the king's daughters, to all of whom he at once made overtures of marriage. They declined the honour, and, when the Madiga wished to use force, they all jumped into this pool, and delivered their lives to the universal lord"*.

The following are some of the more important endogamous sub-divisions among the Madigas:—

Gampa dhompti, basket offering.

Ginnna or thel dhompti, tray or cup offering

Bhbmi	do	earth offering
Chatala	do	winnowing basket offering
Sibbi	do	brass vessel offering
Chadarapa	do	square space on the ground offering

These sub-divisions are based on the way in which the members thereof offer food, etc., to their gods during marriages, *e.g.*, a Gampa

*Manual of the Cuddaph District.

dhompti on the floor. Each sub-division possesses many exogamous septs, of which the following are examples:—

Belli, silver
Chinthala, tamarind
Chatala, winnowing basket
Darala, thread
Emme, buffalo
Gavala, cowry shells
Golkonda, a town
Jalam, slowness
Kambha, post
Kappala, frog
Kalahasti, a town
Kathithe, donkey
Kaththi, knife
Kudumala, cake
Kuncham, tessel
Midathala, locust
Mallela, or mali, jasmine
Nannuru, four hundred
Pothula, buffalo
Pasula, cow
Ragi, *Eleusine Coracana*
Sikili, broom
Thela, scorpion

There seems to be some connection between the Madigas, the Mutrachas, and Gollas. For, at times of marriage, the Madiga sets aside one thambulam (betel leaf and areca nut) for the Mutracha, and, in some places, extends the honour to the Golla also. At the marriage ceremonies of the Puni Gollas, an elaborate and costly form of Ganga worship is performed, in connection with which it is the Madiga musicians, called Madiga Pambala vandlu, who draw the designs in colour-powders on the floor.

The Madigas observe the panchayat or tribal council system for the adjustment of disputes, and settlement of various questions at issue among members of the community. The headman is called Pedda (big) Madiga, whose office is hereditary; and he is assisted by two elected officers called Dharmakartha and Kulambantrothu.

Widow remarriage (udike) is freely permitted, and the woman and her children are received in Madiga society. But care is taken that no one but the contracting parties and widows shall witness the marriage ceremony and no one but a widower is allowed to avail himself of the form*. A man may get a divorce from his wife by payment to her of a few rupees. But no money is given to her, if she has been guilty of adultery. The bride's price varies in amount, being higher if she has to cross a river. The elaborate marriage ceremonial conforms to the Telugu type, but some of the details may be recorded. On the muhurtham (wedding) day, a ceremony called pradhanam (chief thing) is performed. A sheep is sacrificed to the

*Mannual of the Bellary district.

marriage (araveni) pots. The sacrificer dips his hands in the blood of the animal, and impresses the blood on his palms on the wall near the door leading to the room in which the pots are kept. The bridegroom's party bring betel nuts, limes, a golden bead, a bonthu (unbleached cotton thread), rice, and turmeric paste. The maternal uncle of the bride given five betel leaves and areca nuts to the Pedda Madiga, and, putting the bonthu round the bride's neck, ties the golden bead thereon. The ceremony concludes with the distribution of pan-supari in the following order : ancestors, Mutrachas, Gollas, Madigas, the Pedda Madiga, and the assembled guests. The Pedda Madiga has to lift, at one try, a tray containing cocoanuts and betel with his right hand. In his hand he holds a knife of which the blade is passed over the forefinger, beneath the middle and fourth fingers, and over the little finger. This ceremony is called thonuku thambulam, or betel and nuts likely to be split on the floor. The bridegroom, after a bath, proceeds to the temple, where cloths, the bashingam, bottu (marriage badge), etc., are placed in front of the god, and then taken to a jammi tree (*Prosopis spicigera*), which is worshipped. The bottu is usually a disc of gold, but, if the family is hard-up, or in cases of widow remarriage, a bit of turmeric or folded mango leaf serves as a substitute for it. On the third day, the wrist threads (kankanam) are removed, and dhomptis, or offerings of food to the gods, are made, with variations according to the dhompti to which the celebrans belong. An illustration may be taken from the Gampa dhompti. The contracting parties procure a quantity of rice, jaggery (crude sugar), and ghee (clarified butter), which are cooked and moulded into an elongated mass, and placed in a new bamboo basket (gampa). In the middle of the mass, which is determined with a string, a twig, with a wick at one end, is set up, and two similar twigs are stuck into the ends of the mass. Puja (worship) is performed, and the mass is distributed among the daughters of the house and other near relations, but not among members of other dhomptis. The bride and bridegroom take a small portion from the mass, which is called dhonga muddha, or the mass that is stolen. The bottu is said* to be "usually tied by the Madiga priest known as the Thavatiga, or drummer. This office is hereditary, but each successor to it has to be regularly ordained by a Kuruba guru at the local Madiga shrine, the chief item in the ceremony being tying round the neck of the candidate a thread bearing a representation of the goddess, and on either side of this five white beads. Henceforth the Thavatiga is on no account to engage in the caste profession of leather-work, but lives on fees collected at weddings, and by begging. He goes round to the houses of the caste with a little drum slung over his shoulder, and collects contributions".

The Madiga marriages are said to be conducted with much brawling and noise, owing to the quantity of liquor consumed on such oc-

*Manual of the Bellary district.

casions. Among the Madigas, as among the Kammas, Gangimakkulu, and Malas, marriage is said not to be consummated until three months after its celebration. This is apparently because it is considered unlucky to have three heads of a household within a year of marriage. By the delay, the birth of the child should take place only in the second year, so that, during the first year, there will be only two heads, husband and wife.

At the first menstrual period a girl is under pollution for ten days, when she bathes. Betel leaves and nuts, and a rupee are placed in front of the Pedda Madiga, who takes a portion thereof for himself, and distributes what remains among those who have assembled. Sometimes, just before the return of the girl to the house, a sheep is killed in front of the door, and a mark made on her face with the blood.

The Madigas dispose of their dead both by burial and cremation. The body is said to be "buried naked, except for a few leaves. Children are interred face downwards. Pregnant women are burnt. The bier is usually made of the milk-hedge (*Euphorbia* Tirucalli) plant".* The grave is dug by a Mala Vettivadu. The chinnadhinam ceremony is performed on the third day. On the grave a mass of mud is shaped into the form of an idol, to which are offered rice, cocoanuts, and jaggery (crude sugar) placed on leaves, one of which is set apart for the crows. Three stones are arranged in the form of a triangle, and on them is set a pot filled with water, which trickles out of holes made in the bottom of the pot. The peddadhinam is performed, from preference on a Wednesday or Sunday, towards the close of the third week after death. The son, or other celebrant of the rites, sets three stones on the grave, and offers food thereto. Food is also offered to the crows by the relations of the deceased, and thrown into a river or tank (pond), if the crows do not eat it. They all go to a tank, and made on the bank thereof an effigy, if the dead person was a female. To married women, winnows and glass bangles are offered. The bangles of a widow, and waist-thread of a widower, are removed within an enclosure on the bank. At night stories of Ankamma and Matangi are recited by Bainedus or Pambalas, and if a Matangi is available, homage is done to her.

In some places, Madigas have their own washermen and barbers. But, in the northern districts, the caste washerman does their washing, the cloths being steeped in water, and left for the washerman to take. "The Madigas," Mr. Francis writes,** "may not use the wells of the better classes, though, when water is scarce, they get over this last

*Manual of the Bellary district.

**Gazetteer of the Anantapur district.

prohibition by employing some one in the higher ranks to draw water for them from such wells, and pour it into their chatties. In other districts they have to act as their own barbers and washermen, but in Anantapur this disability is somewhat relaxed, as the barbers make no objection to let them (and other low castes such as the Malas) use their razora for a consideration, and the dhobis will wash their clothes, as long as they themselves first unroll them, and dip them into the water. This act is held to remove the pollution, which would otherwise attach to them".

Like many castes, the Madigas have beggar classes attached to their community, who are called Dakkali and Mastiga. The Dakkalis may not enter the Madiga settlement. They sing songs in praise of the Madigas, who willingly remunerate them, as their curses are believed to be very effective. The Mastigas may enter the settlement, but not the huts. It is said to be a good omen to a Lingayat, if he sees a Mâdiga coming in front.

Gosangi is often used as a synonym for Madiga. Another synonym is Puravabatta, which is said to mean people older than the world by six months. At the Madras census, 1901, Chakara, Chundi, and Pavini or Vayani were returned at sub-castes, and Mayikkan was taken as the Malabar equivalent for Madiga.

Concerning the Madigas of Mysore, Mr. T. Ananda Row writes as follows.* "The Madigas are by religion Vaishnavites, Saivites, and Sakteyas, and have five different gurus belonging to mutts at Kadave, Kodihalli, Kongarli, Nelamangala, and Konkallu. The tribe is sometime called Jambava or Matanga. It is divided into two independent sub-divisions, the Desabhaga and the others, between whom there is no intermarriage. The former, though under the above named mutts, acknowledge Srivaishnava Brahmins as their gurus, to whom they pay homage on all ceremonial occasions. The Desabhaga division has six sub-classes, viz., Billoru (bowmen); Malloru (mallu=fight); Amaravatiyavaru (after a town); Munigalu (Muni or rishi); Yenamaloru (buffalo); Morabuvvadavaru (those who place food in a winnow). The Madigas are mostly field labourers, but some of them till land, either leased or their own. In urban localities, on account of the value in the rise of skins, they have attained to considerable affluence, both on account of the hides supplied by them, and their work as tanners, shoe-makers, etc. Only 355 persons returned gotras, such as Matangi, Mareecha, and Jambava-rishi". At the Mysore census, 1891, some Madigas actually returned themselves as Matanga Brahmans, producing for the occasion a certain so-called Purana as their charter.

*Mysore Census Report, 1901.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Report on the Mysore Census of 1881' compiled for Government by LEWIS RICE, C.I.E., Secretary to the Government of Mysore, Bangalore: Mysore Government Press, 1884., page 69.

HOLAYA OR HOLEYA.....447,421 MADIGA.....174,824. The outcastes are composed of the *Holaya* and the *Madiga*, the former the lowest division of the Balagai or right hand faction, the latter the lowest of the Yedagai or left hand faction. They are returned as of the strength noted in the margin. The *Holaya* out number and *Madiga* in the proportion of about 2½ to 1. Onethird of the Holaya belong to Mysore District and they also abound in Hassan, Bangalore and Kadur Districts. The *Madiga* are most numerous where the Holaya are fewest, namely in Chitaldroog, Tumkur and Kolar Districts. There are also large numbers in Bangalore District. Both Holeya and Madiga are considered unclean by the four orthodox castes, and all contact with them avoided. A Holeya having to deliver anything to a Brahman places it on the ground and retires to a distance; when meeting in a street or road, the Holeya moves as far as possible away from the path of his superior. The Madiga are leather-dressers, an occupation in which the Holeyas seem not to engage. The outcaste population, which numbered 813,975 in 1871, had fallen in 1881 to 622,245 or 23.55 per cent.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Census of India, 1891 'Assam by E.A. GAIT, of The Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Census Operations in Assam, VOL. I—Report, Shillong: Printed at the Assam Secretariat Printing Office, 1892 page 277.

GROUP 43—LEATHER WORKERS

Chamar, Muchi:

349. The great leather-working castes are the Chamar and the Muchi. They are found mainly in Sylhet and Cachar, but are also present in small numbers in the other districts of the province, where, however, they are usually immigrants. The Chamar is a tanner, while the Muchi is a leather dresser and cobbler. The latter ranks higher than a Chamar, and although he is supposed to be an offshoot from that caste, he himself vigorously denies the connection. In 1881 the total number of both castes combined was only 13,531, against 28,216 on the present occasion. This large increase is somewhat puzzling; it is doubtless due in part to immigration, but must also partly be ascribed to differences of classification.

Statement No. 74, Showing The Strength and Distribution of the Chamar and Muchi Castes

District	Chamar	Muchi
Cachar	6,088	3,131
Sylhet	8,016	3,162
Goalpara	155	382
Kamrup	458	173
Darrang	329	544
Nowgong	202	266
Sibsagar	1,467	1,996
Lakhimpur	1,103	638
Hill districts	61	45
TOTAL	17,879	10,337

350. Under the same group are included 26 Madgis, Madgi, Sarki who are Telugu leather-workers, 101 Sarkis or Nipalese cobblers, and 11 Kharals or leather-workers from the North-west Provinces.

Extract on 'MADIGA' from 'Census of India, 1891, Volume XIII, Madras, The Report on The Census by H.A. STUART, of The Indian Civil Service; Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society; Member of The Royal Asiatic Society, Superintendent of Census Operations, Madras, Madras: Printed by The Superintendent of Government Press 1893 page 302.

532. MADIGA: 678,307—This is the great leather-working caste of the Telugu districts. The name Madiga is said to be a corrupt form of Matanga, a descendant of the sage Matanga Muni, and according to a tradition current in the caste, the Madigas or Matangas have fallen into their present object position owing to the curses of their ancestor, Matanga Muni. There was formerly a Matanga dynasty in the Canarese country, and the Madigas are by some believed to be the descendants of people who were once a ruling race*. One of their most important sub-divisions is Matangi.

The total number of sub-divisions returned is 443, of which the most important are the following:—

Sub-division	Strength	Local distribution
Campa . . .	9,499	Nellore (1,158), Cuddapah (5,026), Anantapur, (1,622), North Arcot (1,610).
Gosangi . . .	7,974	Kistna (5,938).
Matangi . .	23,817	Kistna (6,307), Nellore (5,239), Cuddapah (9,076), Kurnool (2,973).
Ura	29,763	Cuddapah (17,755), Kurnool (5,063) Nellore (3,518), Bellary (1,298), North Arcot (1,386).

Over 5,32,500 individuals have returned Madiga both as main caste and sub-division.

*Fleet's *Canarese Dynasties*, P. 10. Matangi is a Sansk name for Kali and it is possible that the Madigas once played an important part in the worship of this goddess, who is probably of Dravidian origin. The employment of Chakkiliyan and Madiga women in *Shakti* worship gives some colour to this supposition.

The Madigas affect to worship the Hindu Gods but their favourite deity is Matangi. They have priest of their own caste, called Dasaris. Early marrigae, though not compulsory, is very common. Widows are allowed to remarry, but the ceremony is much less formal than the first marriage, and Mr. Cox describes these second unions as concubinage.* Divorce is allowed for mere disagreement. Both cremation and burial are in vogue, but the latter is the more common. The only funeral ceremony they perform is scattering some cooked rice, to be eaten by crows, on the second and the fifteenth days after death.

During the celebration of village festivals, an unmarried Madiga woman, called for the occasion Matangi, abuses and spits upon the people assembled; and they do not take this as an insult, because they think that her spittle removes the pollution. The woman is, indeed, regarded as the incarnation of the goddess herself. Similarly the Malas use very obscene language towards the Madigas, when the god or goddess is taken in procession to the streets of the caste people.

*North Arcot Manual, p. 303.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Census of India, 1891, *Volume XXV (In* 4 *Parts) Mysore, Part-I Report with Appendices by V. N. NARASIMMIYENGAR, Provincial Superintendent of Census Operations in Mysore pages* 254 *and* 255.

MADIGS: The village self-government is incomplete without these indispensable elements. The Holaya is variously known as the Kulvadi, Toti, Chakra & C., and the village policeman, when not of the Bedar caste, belongs to this order. The origin of the name of Chakra is involved in uncertainty, but it is surmised that it has refernece to the initial syllable of the word *Chandala* and Chakara became Chakara by vulgar handling. In some parts of the Malnad, the outcastes are also styled the black people ( ). At what time and for what reason this distinguishing epithet was bestowed on these classes, it is not easy to ascertain. It may possibly point to an ethnical difference at a time when the indigenous lower castes were swallowed up by the advancing tide of A'ryan inroads; or their tawny complexion in contradistinction to the fair or olive colour of the inhabitants of the Malnad may have given rise to the name.

In the disintegration which the village autonomy has undergone by the lapse of time and under the advancing tide of civilization, the services of the Toti and Nirganti or water-regulator not unoften devolve on persons of the Madiga caste.

The Holayas' condition is low enough in all conscience, but *inter se* he considers himself of a superior caste to the Madigs, upon whom he looks down from a social or racial stand-point. The caste inequalities even among these lowest levels are infinite, and there is no depth among them below which there is not a lower. The Holaya belongs to the right-handed faction, while the Madig brings up the rear on the opposite side.

The Madig is the village cobbler; he removes the carcases of the village cattle, skins them and is bound to supply the village community with agricultural articles made of skin or leather, such as the thongs of the bullocks, buckets for lifting water, & c. & c. The hypothesis has often been advanced, not without much plausibility, that the out-castes are the real aborigines, ethnically non—A'ryan. Their habits and customs, religious observances, the low position accorded to them in Hindu society and the by-no-means attractive environments amidst which they are usually found, seem to lend an air of probability to this theory. But beyond the broad margin which separates them from the castes above, the supposed A'ryan waves in prehistoric times did not drive them into the forests and inaccessible nature's fastnesses, as in the case of several other un-

doubtedly autochthonous races. The out-castes are with certain restrictions members of village and urban populations. The proposition is not therefore devoid of a large element of doubt for unquestioned acceptance. The out-castes present numerous minor divisions, mostly dependent on geographical and lingual differences, such as the *Kannada* and *Telugu Madigs*. The Madiga caste is 239,575 strong, being 4.85 per cent of the total population, and about 13 per cent of the class. As has been already remarked, the desire for ennobling each caste is not absent even in its lowest representatives. Mythology comes readily to the rescue of the people seeking for a hypernatural origin, and the Madiga of Bangalore give the following legend of their own descent.

"At a remote period, Jambava *Rishi*, a sage of that name, was one day questioned by I'svara (Siva) why the former was habitually late at the Divine Court. The *Rishi* replied that he had personally to attend to the wants of his children every day, which consequently made his attendance late: whereupon I'svara, pitying the children, gave the *rishi* a cow (Kamadhenu) which instantaneously supplied their every want. Once upon a time, while Jambava was absent at I'svara's Court, another *rishi*, named Sankhya, visited Jambava's hermitage, where he was hospitably entertained by his son Yugamuni. While taking his meals, the cream that had been served was so savoury that the guest tried to induce Jambava's son, Yugamuni, to kill the cow and eat her flesh; and in spite of the latter's refusal, Sankhya killed the animal and prevailed upon the others to partake of the meat. On his return from I'svar's Court, Jambava found the inmates of his hermitage eating the sacred cow's beef; and took both Sankhya and Yugamuni over to I'svara's Court for judgment. Instead of entering, the two offenders remained outside, Sankhya *rishi* standing on the right side and Yugamuni on the left of the doorway. I'svara seems to have cursed them to become *Chandalas* or out-castes. Hence, Sankhya's descendants are, from his having stood on the right side, designated *Right-hand caste* or Holayas; whilst those who sprang from Yugamuni and his wife Matangi are called *Left-hand* caste or Madigs". The occupation of the latter is said also to be founded on the belief that by making shoes for people, the sin their ancestors had committed by cow-killing would be expiated. This mode of vicariously stoning for deliberate sin has passed into a facetious proverb, 'so and so has killed the cow in order to make shoes from the skin,' indicating the utter worthlessness and insufficiency of the reparation.

The Madigs are by religion *Vishnuvaits Sivaits* and *Sokteyas*, and have five different gurus or Maths at *Kodave, Kodiholli, Kongarli,*

Nelamangala and *Konkallu*, all within the Province. As per above legend, the tribe is sometimes called *Jambavas* or *Matangas*. The caste is divided into two independent sub-divisions, the *Desabhaga* and *Others*, between whom there is no intermarriage. The former, though respectively under the above named maths, acknowledge Srivaishnava Bramhans as their gurus, to whom they pay extraordinary homage on all ceremonial occasions. The Desabhaga division has six sub-classes, viz., :—

1. Billoru
2. Balloru
3. Amaravatiyavaru
4. Munigalu
5. Yanamaloru and
6. Morabuvvadavaru

Intermarriage exists only between these clans. They do not take food from barbers, washermen, Holayas and Musalmans; but only employ the washermen of the Musalmans to do their washing.

The Madigs in the province are decidedly an indigenous class and are most numerous in the Tumkur, Bangalore and Kolar Districts; but comparatively less so in Chitaldurg and Mysore, which again are ahead of the Western Division. They are mostly field-labourers, but some of them till land, either leased or their own. In urban localities, on account of the rise in the value of skins, the Madigs have attained to considerable affluence both on account of the hides supplied by them and their work as tanners, shoe-makers, & ca.

Extract on "MADIGA" from Madras Census Report, Census of India 1901, *Part I-Report, Vol. XV By FRANCIS. W. page* 166.

MADIGA (755,316) : Telugu leather-workers (C.R. 1891, para 532, Buchanan's *Mysore, etc.*, Vol. I, p. 175; *Mysore C. R.* 1891, p. 254,255 *North Arcot Man*: Vol. I. p. 239).

Extract on "MADIGA" from Census of India, 1901 Volume-XXIV, Mysore, Part-I Report by T. ANANDA ROW, B.A., Director of Statistics in charge of Census Operations, Mysore, Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing in Mysore, page 535-536.

MADIGA : (Tamil-Chakkaliyan, Hindustani—Chummar).

(Population :—276,821; 139,386 or 50.3 per cent males, of whom 82,184 or 29.68 per cent are unmarried, 51,143 or 18.4 per cent married, and 6,059 or 2.1 per cent widowers; 137,435 or 49.6 per cent females, of whom 62,014 or 22.4 per cent are unmarried, 55,167 or 19.9 per cent married and 20,254 or 7.3 per cent widows. There are 301 or 0.1 per cent *literates,* of whom 314 or 0.1 per cent are literate in Provincial Vernaculars and only 2 or 0.0 per cent in English. There are 314 or 0.1 per cent *infirm,* of whom 35 or 0.01 per cent are Insane, 160 or 0.05 per cent Deaf-mute, 156 or 0.05 per cent Blind and 63 or 0.02 per cent Leprous. Actual Workers or wage earners number 90,624 or 32.7 per cent, of whom 7,170 or 2.5 per cent are in their Traditional Occupation (leather workers) as principal means of livelihood, 2,579 or 0.93 per cent in it as subsidiary. 45,597 or 16.4 per cent are engaged in Agriculture while 37,857 or 13.6 per cent are engaged in other occupations).

1. This indigenous rural caste shows that it has 40,130 or 16.9 per cent more now than in 1891. Distributed by Districts, these people are to be found all over the Province, nearly 88 per cent being in the Eastern Division.

2. The Madigas the village cobbler. He removes the carcases of the village cattle, skins them, and is bound to supply the village community with agricultural articles made of skin or leather, such as, the thongs of the bullocks, buckets for lifting water, etc. The outcastes are, with certain restrictions, members of village and urban populations. They present numerous minor divisions mostly dependent on geographical and lingual differences, such as the Kannada and Telugu Madigas.

3. The Madigas are, by religion, Vaishnavites, Saivites and Sakteyas, and have five different Gurus or Mutts at Kadave, Kodihalli, Kongarli, Nelamangala and Konkallu, all within the Province. The tribe is sometimes called Jambavas or Matangas. The caste is divided into two independent sub-divisions, the Desabhaga and the others, between whom there is no intermarriage. The former, though respectively under the above named Matas, acknowledge Srivaishnava Brahmins as their Gurus, to whom they pay homage on all ceremonial occasions. The Desabhaga division has six sub-classes, viz., 1.

Billoru, 2. Malloru, 3. Amaravatiyavaru 4. Munigalu, 5. Yanamaloru and 6. Morabuvvadavaru.

4. Intermarriage exists only between these clans. They are allowed a plurality of wives, who are divorced only for adultery. Puberty is no bar for marriage, nor are widows condemned to lead a life of celibacy. They eat meat of all kinds including carrion. They bury their dead. They do not take food from Barbers, Washermen, Holeyas and Musalmans, but only employ the washermen of the Musalmans to do their washing.

5. The Madigas in the Province are decidedly an indigenous class, and are found in every town and village. They are mostly field labourers, but some of them till land, either leased or their own. In urban localities, on account of the rise in the value of the skins, the Madigas have attained to considerable affluence, both on account of the hides supplied by them and their work as tanners, shoe-makers, etc.

6. Only 355 persons have returned Gotras such as Matangi (36), Mareecha (39) and Jambavarishi (13).

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Census of India, 1911, Volume XXI, Mysore, Part I—Report by V. R. THYAGARAJA AIYAR, M.A., Superintendent of Census Operations, Mysore State, Bangalore: Printed at the Government Press 1912, pages 152 and 153.

To demonstrate the value of these remarks, the constitution of a few sub-castes of certain castes (Agasa, Beda, Holeya, Kuruba, Madiga, Nayinda, Vakkaliga, Vodda) are examined with reference to their origin, rigidity of rules of endogamy and commensality, caste councils and penalties on breach of the rules which differentiate different sub-castes of the same caste.

(a) Origin :

Agasa—The main endogamous divisions, *Kannada* and *Telugu*, are based on the languages they speak. Two endogamous divisions of the Telugu section *Murikinati* and *Pasupanati*, are indicative of the country of origin.

Beda—The endogamic division of *Uru*, *Gudlu* and *Monda* are due to their original habits. (*Uru*, dwellers in villages; *Gudlu*, living in temporary huts: and *Monda*, begging); that of *Myasa* is probably owing to the peculiar customs which they observe, e.g., circumcision, abstaining from eating fowls and pigs.

Holeya—There are divisions comprising endogamous groups based on the language they speak, Kanarese, Telugu and Tamil. Of the Kanarese-speaking division, the groups of *Gangadikara* and *Morasu* probably point to the Vakkaligas of those names under whom the sub-castes took refuge when they were first dispossessed of the lordship of the soil; the groups *Dasa* (servant), *Hagga* (rope) and *Magga* (weaver) had their origin in the different occupations followed.

Kuruba—There are three chief endogamous divisions: (1) *Halu* (milk) or *Sada* (pure) as they abstain from liquor; (2) *Ande*, because they used to catch the milk of their sheep in a bamboo cylinder or *ande;* (3) *Kambali* (blanket), as they weave coarse blankets and their women dress themselves with aprons of the material.

Madiga—The two main divisions are based on the language they speak, Kanarese and Telugu. Each language division has three endogamous groups which are named after the manner in which the bride and bridegroom eat the common marital meal or *Buvva* in a *Tanige* (dish), a *Hedige* (basket) or a *Mora* (winnow).

Nayinda—The caste has, according to the language spoken by the members, two main divisions each of which has further subdivisions. All these divisions and sub-divisions are said to be endogamous. Among the Kanarese-speaking division are *Morasu*

which indicates the country of origin (e.g., Morasu Vakkaliga) and *Silavanta* (one of good character) which is probably from their being strict vegetarians and abstaining from liquor. Among the Telugu-speaking division, are *Nadigaru* which means people of the country, *Raddibhumi*, which denotes that they originally came from the tracts of the Raddis, e.g., Bellary, Cuddapah, and other Telugu tracts, and *Kudipaita* in which group women wear their garment in a peculiar way.

Vakkaliga—The sub-castes, *Reddi, Morasu, Gangadikara, Nonaba*, point to the territories they lived in formerly. *Hallikara* points to the profession, i.e., that of breeding cattle. Each of these, e.g., *Morasu* contains endogamic groups. Some endogamic groups, e.g., *Raddi, Palyadasime*. speak Telugu.

Vodda—The names of the endogamous divisions *kallu* (stone), *Mannu* (earth), and *Uppu* (salt) point to the traditional occupation.

Some sub-caste names among Brahmans point to the original homes of the people named; and some sub-caste names among Lingayats point to the occupation or caste from which these were converted.

(b) Rigidity of the rules of endogamy and commensality :

Agasa—The groups of endogamous divisions do not eat together or intermarry.

Beda—Intermarriage is not allowed; commensality probably is in vogue.

Holeya—Tamil Holeyas take food in the Houses of Kannada and Telugu sections, while the latter do not return the compliment, regarding the Tamil Holeyas as inferior in origin. The Gangadikar Holeyas, however, do not eat in the houses of even other Kannada Holeyas. Endogamy is strictly observed.

Kuruba—The divisions are strictly endogamous. Male members may dine together.

Madiga—The Kannada Madigas do not intermarry with the Telugu-speaking Madigas.

Nayinda—Endogamy is strictly observed.

.. *Vakkaliga*—Endogamy is strictly observed. Commensality is in vogue.

Vodda—By changing the occupation to a stone worker, a Mannu-Vodda may marry a girl of the Kallu-Vodda section. These two sections do not eat with Uppu-Voddas, who are sweepers in

towns. Kallu-Voddas are acknowledged to be superior to other classes and do not eat with them.

(c) Caste Councils :

Sufficient information is not available as to whether sub-caste councils are affiliated to common caste council. The jurisdiction seems to be territorial over the caste or connected group of endogamous groups, rather than over the endogamous group only. The Morasu Vakkaligas, for instance, are divided into *Kattemanes*, each of them being presided over by a *Yajaman* or *Gauda*, Several *Kattemanes* form a *Nadu* (division of country) and at the head of each *Nadu* is a *Nadu Gauda*. Several such *Nadus* form a *Desa* (or country) presided over by a *Desayi Gauda* or *Bhumi Gauda*. There are two such, one at the head of the Telugu section and another at the head of the Kannada section of this caste. The goldsmiths are recognised by the other Panchalas as the head of their clan and are given caste jurisdiction.

(d) Nature of penalties on breach of rules which differentiate the sub-castes of the caste :

Breach of rule of endogamy is severely punished. As regards offences against rules of food, the caste *panchayats* are disposed to be lenient.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Census of India, 1911,' *Volume XXI, Mysore, Part I Report by V. R. THYAGARAJA AIYAR, M.A., Superintendent of Census Operations, Mysore State, Bangalore : Printed at the Government Press* 1912, *page* 171.

MADIGA (308,083): The caste is most numerous in Tumkur, Bangalore, Koar and Chitaldrug Districts. They are, by tradition, workers in leather but hardly one in twenty of the actual workers returned follows the occupation now. A little less than one-third are cultivators while four-ninths subsist by labour (agricultural and other). Madigas belong to the 9 Phanas group of castes. They speak Kannada or Telugu according to the locality they live in. There are some immigrants into the State from the southern parts of the Madras Presidency and these speak Tamil; but their number is insignificant. Among the Kannada and Telugu Madigas (who do not intermarry) there are three endogamous divisions:

(1) *Tanige Buvvadavaru or Tale Buvyanavallu :*

(2) *Hedige Buvvadavaru or Gampa Buvvanavallu; and*

(3) *Mora Buvvadavaru* :

There are two other divisions known as *Jambavas* and *Dakkaloru.* The Jambavas are the *gurus* of the Madigas and consider Panchalas as their patrons. The Jambavas talk Telugu and among them hypergamy prevails, their women not being allowed to marry into the other divisions. Dakkaloru are considered to be the *Halemakkalu* (hereditary hondsmen) of the Madigas and are treated by them as outcastes. Madigas have a number of exogamous divisions known as *Kulas* named after trees and animals. There is no limit of age for marriage in either sex. Polygamy is allowed. The bride price is Rs. 12. Widow marriage is allowed and freely practised. Divorce is granted for adultery. Dedication of girls as Basavis is common in this caste. Some families have the custom of devoting the eldest girls to this life; while in many cases, a girl is so dedicated in pursuance of some vow taken at a time of illness or other distress. They do not perform *Sradhas.* Madigas reside in quarters outside the main village and apart from *holegeri.* They are not allowed to use the common village well. Madigas freely take in recruits from all castes except Holeyas. The Madigas worship *Mariamma, Masanamma, Matangi, Pujamma, Akkayamma, Kalamma, Chowdamma, Durgamma, Gangamma* and *Yellamma.* Their patron saint is *Aralappa.* A section among them known as *Desabhagadavaru* are Vaishnavas, having as their gurus Satanis or Srivaishnava Brahmans. It is stated that a Western Chalukya king Mangalesa (567-610 A.D.) conquered the Matangas. Who these were has not been definitely settled and it is conjectured that they were hill tribes and that Madigas are their descendants. (Mys. Eth. Mon.)

Extract on "MADIGA" from Census of India, 1921 Volume XXI Hyderabad State Part I—Report by MOHAMED RAHMATULLA, Superintendent of Census Operations, Hyderabad State, Hyderabad-Deccan : Printed at the Government Central Press 1923, pages 252 and 253.

MADIGA, (669,203) : The Telugu leather-workers and village menials. The Madigas have two main divisions : Kanara Madigas and Telugu Madigas, who neither inter-marry nor interdine. Each of these is broken up into numerous sub-tribes, which vary greatly in different districts. Some of the names, such as Dappu Madiga, Perike Madiga, etc., undoubtedly refer to the professions the sub-castes have followed, while others, for example, Lambada Madiga, Koya Madiga, Bedar Madiga, etc., refer to the caste from which the sub-castes have been recruited. The Madiga sub-caste found in large numbers in Telingana and in the Kanarese districts of Marathwara, probably represents the original nucleus of the caste. These Madigas make their living by manufacturing sandals, leather ropes and buckets and other leather articles. A brief description of the more important sub-castes of the Madigas may not be out of place here. The Mashti Madigas are story-tellers and beggars and occasionally exhibit acrobatic feats before the public. The Sindhollu, Chindiwandlu or Bogam Madigas are the courtezans of the Madiga caste. They attend all Madiga ceremonies. The Ashadron or Sandewam are vagrant beggars, who earn a living by enacting plays based upon stories from the Maha-Bhagawatam. The Bengali Madigas are a wandering class of jugglers and conjurers, who seem to have migrated from Bengal. Though they appear to have no connection whatsoever with the local Madigas, yet, as they occupy the lowest position in the Hindu society, they have come to be enrolled among the Madigas. The Bindalas discharge the functions of priests to the Madiga caste and perform their religious rites. They profess to be possessed and foretell events and exorcise ghosts. The Dappu Madigas seem to be identical with the Lambada Madigas, and are attached to each Lambada tanda (camp). They act as musicians to the Lambadas, playing, at their religious ceremonies, on the dappu, a sort of drum. The Kallu-Kundalwad (the toddy-potwallas) are engaged as carriers of earthen pots filled with Sendhi (the juice of the wild date-palm) to the market. This occupation has degraded them and no pure Madiga will eat or marry with them. The Dasari Madigas are spiritual advisers to those Madigas who profess to belong to the Vaishnava sect. They occupy the highest social level among the various sub-castes and stand in hypergamous relation to their disciples, and abstain from beef. In the same way, the Jangam Madigas claim a high social position among the Madiga sub-castes and minister to the spiritual needs of the Saiva Madigas. They also

abstain from beef and do not interdine with members of other sub-castes.

The exogamous sections of the caste are mostly of the territorial type, only a few being totemistic. A Madiga cannot marry outside the sub-caste nor inside the section to which he belongs. He may marry the daughter of his elder sister or maternal uncle and paternal aunt. Two sisters may also be married to the same man. Members of other castes are received into the Madiga caste. A betel leaf is out on the tongue of the novice, who has to give a feast to the Madigas in the neighbourhood, eat with the new associates and remove their dishes. The hut in which this ceremony takes place is burnt at the close of the feasting. The Madigas practise both infant and adult marriage, but the former mode is considered the more respectable; girls are also dedicated to their tutelary deities. These girls, known as Jogins, become prostitutes, but their children are admitted to the full privileges enjoyed by the ordinary members of the caste. Polygamy is allowed. The second wife is usually a widow or a divorced woman.

The Madigas have no scruples about their diet. They eat beef, horse-flesh, pork, fowls, mutton and the flesh of animals which have died a natural death. The bear is held in special respect. No Madiga will injure or kill the animal. A bride-price varying from Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 is paid to the parents of the girl. The Madigas are more Animistic than Hindu in their beliefs. Their tribal deity is Matangi. They worship other village deities and Hanuman and Mahadev as well. The dead are usually buried, except in the case of women in pregnancy, and lepers.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Census of India, 1921, *Volume XXIII, Mysore, Part I-Report by V. R. THYAGARAJA AIYAR, M. A., Superintendent of Census Operations, Mysore State, Bangalore : Printed at the Government Press,* 1923, *page* 115.

(ii) .....

(iii) Madiga is one of the two depressed classes. The members of these communities have of late called themselves "Adidravidas" etc., or are shown as Panchamas; and when such entries are found on a slip it is not possible to state to which of the two castes the slip pertains. A large number of slips this time had such entries and in the absence of any means of distinguishing the two communities they were all put under Holeya. This is apparently the cause of the decrease under "Madiga" balanced no doubt by an increase to correspond under "Holeya" which however cannot be distinguished from the normal increase. The total for the two castes is still less than the total for last Census and for this the reason is not apparent.

(iv) .....

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Madras District Gazetteers, Anantapur, by W. FRANCIS, Indian Civil Service, Madras: Printed by Addision & Co., 1905, *page* 35.

. . . . After the Boyas in point of numbers, rank the Madigas, the leather-workers and coolies of the community. They eat beef and drink heavily and are the unclean and are required to live in hamlets called Madigageris, outside the villages. Like others of the lowest castes, they may not enter the temples, nor may they use the wells of the better classes, though when water is scarce they get over this last prohibition by employing some one in the higher ranks to draw water for them from such wells and pour it into their chatties. In other districts they have to act as their own barbers and washermen, but in Anantapur this disability is somewhat relaxed, as the barbers make no objection to let them (and other low castes such as the Malas) use their razors for a consideration and the dhobis will wash their clothes as long as they themselves first unroll them and dip them into the water. This act is held to remove the pollution which would otherwise attach to them.....

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'Madras District Gazetteers, Godavari, by F. R. HEMINGWAY, Anantapur,' by W. FRANCIS, Indian Civil Services, Madras : Printed by The Superintendent, Government Press 1907, *page* 60.

CHAPTER III—PRINCIPAL CASTES

MADIGAS : The Madigas are a numerous caste whose traditional occupations are tanning and shoe-making. Some of them say they are the descendants of a saint or demi-god called Jambhamuni and a woman called Puramasi who disturbed the saint in his contemplation and became his wife.

They are subdivided into the occupational classes of Madiga Dasaries (priests), Madiga Payikis (sweepers), the Kommalas (who blow horns) and the ordinary Madigas who follow the traditional callings of tanning and shoemaking. These will not dine together or intermarry. The last of them is by far the most numerous. The Dasaris are considered socially the highest, and the Payikis the lowest, of the subdivisions.

Madigas are much despised by other castes because they are leather-workers and eat beef and even carrion, and they take much the same low social position as the Malas. Their curious connection with the Komatis has been mentioned in the account of that caste above. Their marriage and other ceremonies are very similar to those of the Malas. Their special caste goddess is Matangi, who they say was defeated by Parasu Rama and concealed herself from him under the tanning-pot in a Madiga's house. At Pongal they worship their tanning-pots, as representing the goddess, with offerings of fowls and liquor.

The begging castes specially attached to the Madigas are the Dekkalas, Mastidis and Tappitas or Bagavatas. Of these the Dekkalas are musicians who sing the praises of their patrons' ancestors, the Mastidis are gymnasts, and the Tappitas are the same as the Madiga Bogams, and are the dancers and prostitutes of the caste.

Extract on "MADIGA" from 'A Manual of the Kurnool District in the Presidency of Madras,' compiled by NARAHARI GOPALAKRISTNAMAH CHETTY, Deputy Collector, Pyapali, Kurnool, Madras: printed by R. Hill, at the Government Press 1886, *pages* 141 & 142.

Malas and Madigas:

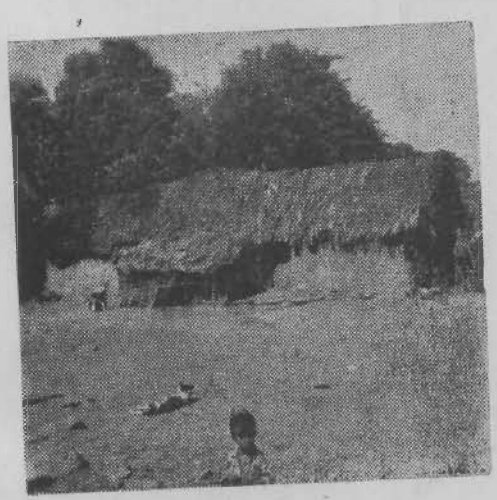
The former belong to the right-hand and the latter to the left-hand caste, and they often quarrels. Of late their condition has slightly been improved since the arrival of the Missionaries, who have established schools for their children and exercise a tacit influence in their favour. Many of these have become Christians; almost all the Protestant Christians are from these classes. The favourite deity of the Madigas is Matanga, an ancient Rishi from whom they trace their origin. In 1867 Madigas were converted *en-masse* by the Baptist Missionaries in the Markapur Taluk. Immediately afterwards a malarious fever carried off many of them. They attributed the calamity to their change of faith and consequent displeasure of Matanga, and many reverted to their former faith. Malas live chiefly by weaving & c.; Madigas by tanning leather and making shoes, & c.



A fine specimen of a Madiga female.



Madigas are cobblers but play musical instruments on occasions. Behind is their temple.

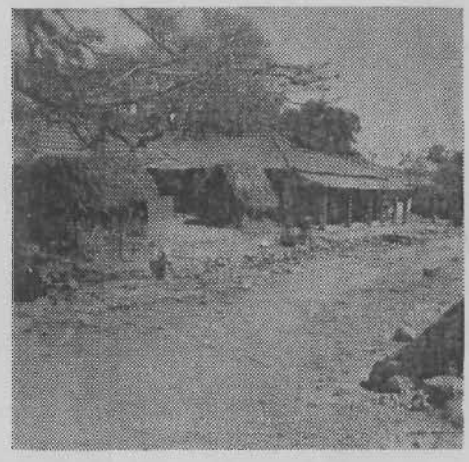


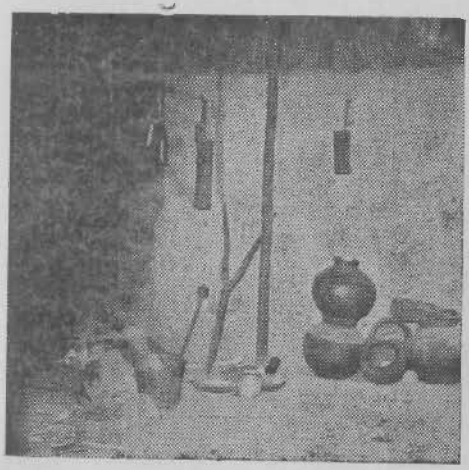
Like all untouchables, Madigas live in huts far from caste Hindus.



Source of potable water is this well.

The rich Madigas reside in sturdier houses than the poor, whose haven are huts.

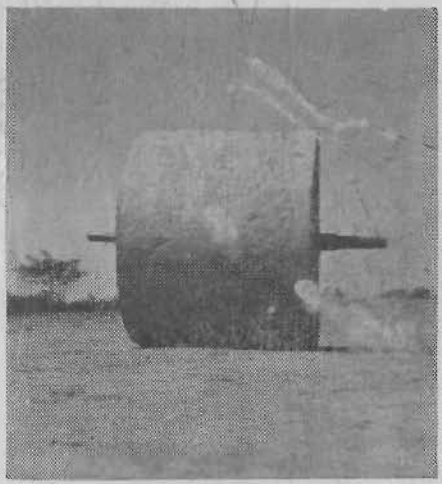




The Madiga kitchen explains poverty.



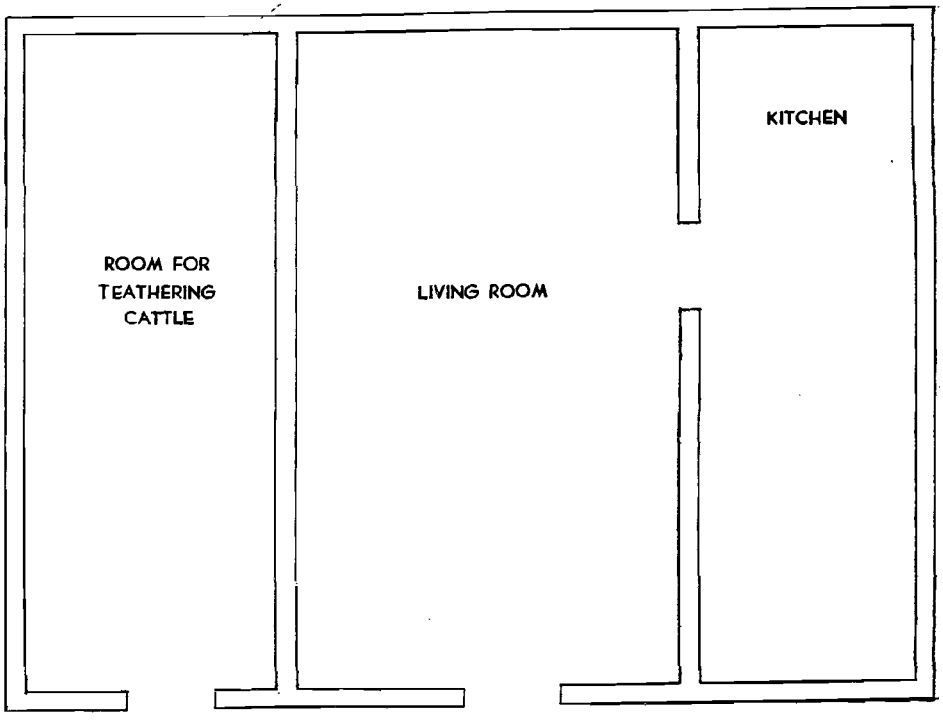
Madiga cobblers are beef eaters who nurse bullocks for food and leather.



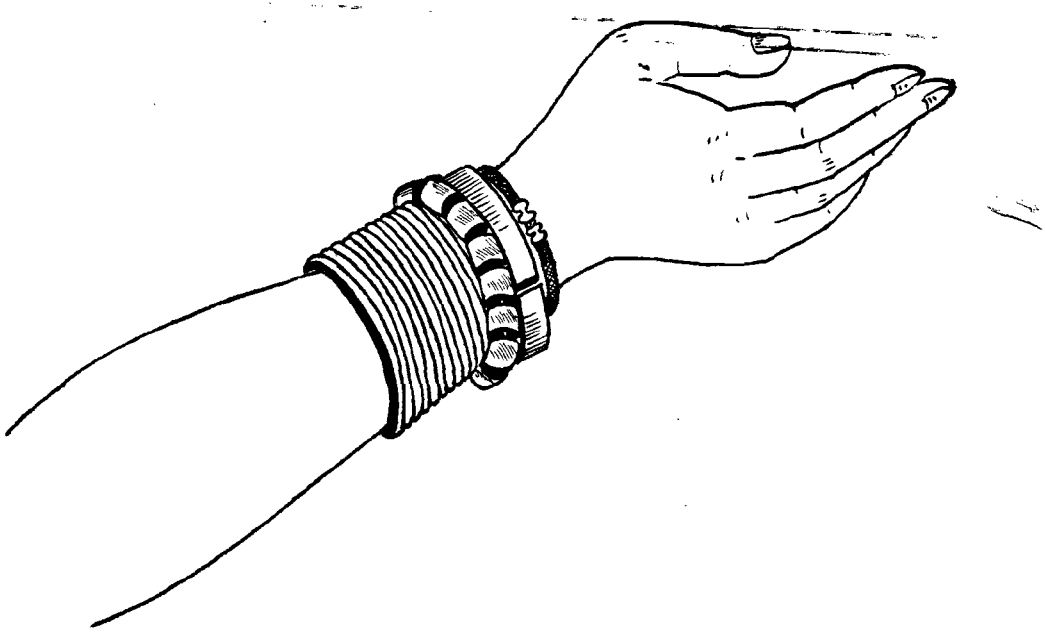
This rolling stone dehusks paddy.



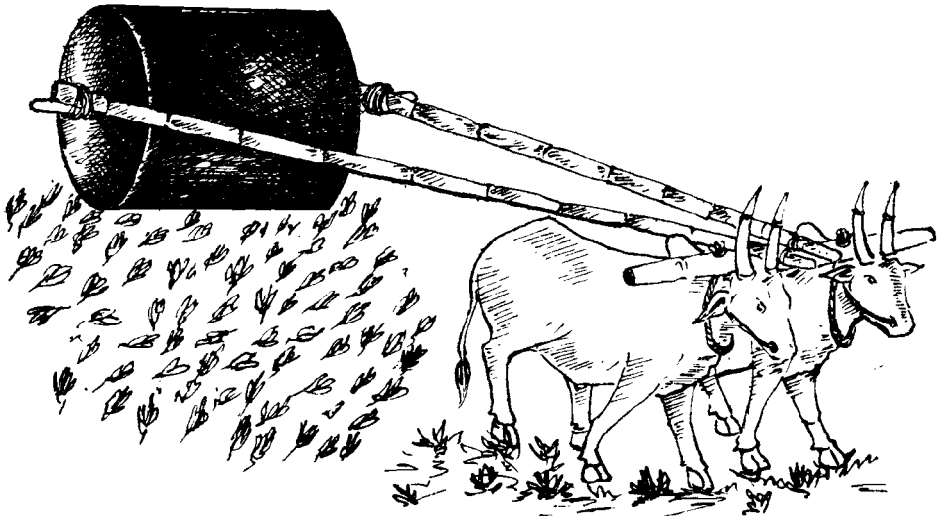
A Madiga hut



Ground plan of the Madiga hut.



Wrist ornaments of a Madiga Woman.



Ragi harvesting.

MALA

Originally belonging to the Telugu country* and of the right hand faction (Valakai), Mala is a scheduled caste in Madras State. This caste of agrestic serfs, numbering 2060 in the 1961 Census, is mostly concentrated in the Hosur Taluk of Salem District. A detailed study was conducted in the Palayamcottah Village in Hosur Taluk of Salem District and Venkitareddipalayam near Minjur in Ponneri Taluk of Chingleput District, in 1963. The information furnished in this note is mainly based on this study.

Both in 1921 and 1931 Censuses, Mala had been grouped under Depressed Classes for the State as a whole except Kanyakumari District and Shencottah Taluk of Tirunelveli District (which then formed part of Travancore State). In Government of India, Scheduled Castes Order 1936, it has been declared as a Scheduled Caste. In the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lists, modification order 1956, Mala is treated as a Scheduled Caste throughout the State except Kanyakumari District and Shencottah Taluk of Tirunelveli District (Census of India. 1961, Vol. I Part V-B (ii) pp. 70-74). It is also a Scheduled Caste in the whole of Andhra Pradesh and some districts of Maharashtra and Mysore States according to the 1956 Order.

There is a mention of Maila in the same order which appears to be identical with Mala. Only one person has been returned as Maila during the 1961 Census.

After 1930 in their desire to elevate their social position, the bulk of the Mala desired to designate themselves as Adi-Andhra. Even in the present Census many persons belonging to the Mala Community returned themselves as Adi-Andhra. The scope of this report is limited to the Mala Caste of the Madras State.

The Malas have often been equated with the Paraiyans of the Tamil country and the Holeyas of the Kanarese country. The similarity between the Mala, the Paraiyan and the Holeya is so great that the Malas settled in the Tamil speaking areas often go by the name of Vaduga Paraiyans and Manna Paraiyans. Similarly, when the Holeyas settle in the same region they go by the name of Morasu Paraiyans. The local Telugu land owning castes of Reddis and

*According to 1961 Census Malas number 1,745,466 in Andhra Pradesh 4,317 in Mysore and 234 in Maharashtra State.

Kammas, call the Tamil Paraiyans by the term Mala. It is also reported that in the areas adjoining the Kanarese country of Hosur in Dharmapuri District, the indigenous Holeyas are called as Malas by the Telugu speaking Kapus.

Regarding the derivation of the word 'Mala', Thurston quoting Dr. Opert says that the word is "derived from a Dravidian root meaning a mountain which is represented by the Tamil 'Mala', Telugu 'Mala' etc. so that 'Mala' is the equivalent of Paraiyan, and also of Mar or Mhar and the Mal of western and central Bengal". (Thurston 1909, IV, 330). According to C. P. Brown's Telugu dictionary, it is derived from Maila, dirty. (Thurston, IV, 1909, 330). According to the Dravidian Etymological Dictionary, in Kanarese Mala denotes low or base; in Telugu the word Mala denotes outcastes, Pariah, vile, base, mean, ignoble (Burrow and Emeneau, 1961, 321).

Traditionally, the Malas are weavers of course clothes and work as farm labourers. Thurston has reported that they had criminal propenquities (Thurston, IV, 348-349). Different functional groups with varied traditional occupations have been reported by Thurston. To quote, "The Malas have their own dancing girls (Basavis), barbers and musicians (Bainedus), Dasaris or priests, and beggars and bards called 'Mastigas' and Pambalas (Drum people) (Thurston, 1909, IV. 330-331).

No clue could be obtained from the field regarding the legends of their origin except that some elderly people claim that their ancestors came to these parts from Mysore during the time of Tippu Sultan. However a legend narrated by Thurston regarding their origin is worth mentioning.

"According to a legend, the goddess Parvati, whilst on a journey with her Lord Parameshvarudu, discarded one of her unclean (Maila) clothes from which was born a little boy. This boy was engaged as a cattleherd in the house of Parameshvarudu. Parvati received strict injunctions from her Lord that she should on no account allow the little Mala to taste cream. One day, however, the boy discovered some cream which has been scraped from the inside of the pot sticking to a wall. He tasted it and found it good. Indeed so good was it that he came to the conclusion that the udder from which it came must be even better still. So one day, in order to test his theory, he killed the cow. Then came Parameshvarudu in great anger and asked him what he had done, and. to his credit be it said, the boy told the truth. Then Parameshvarudu cursed the lad and all his descendants and said that from henceforth cattle should be the meat of the Mala—the unclean". (Thurston 1909, IV, 346-347).

II. Distribution & Population Trend :

As indicated earlier Malas are found, besides Madras, in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Mysore. In Madras State they are found mostly in the bordering areas adjoining Andhra Pradesh in Madras District and in the Hosur Taluk of Dharmapuri District adjoining Mysore State, the concentration being in the latter area. In 1961, a total of 2,060 Malas have been returned from the State of Madras out of which 1,023 are males and 1,037 are females. The districtwise rural, urban population is given below.

District	Total	Rural	Urban
Madras	70	..	70
Salem	1,981	1,981	..
North Arcot	1	1	..
Madurai	8	8	..

The Mala population of Madras State forms 0.034% of the total population of Scheduled Castes in the State. The bulk of the people live in rural areas accounting for 96.60% of the total population. Only 3.4% are returned from the urban areas. The sex ratio of the caste as per 1961 Census returns, works out to be 1,013 females per 1,000 males. Below is given the population trend of Malas through the different census decades. In 1921 from Chingleput and Salem Districts. 2,920 and 3,178 Males respectively have been returned, while in the 1931 Census 7,137 Malas have been returned from Chingleput District alone. (Madras C. R. 1921 p. 121 and Madras C. R. 1931 p. 309). The fall in population, can be accounted for the return of the bulk of Mala under Adi Andhra in 1961. 400 males and 404 females fall in the age group of 0-14 which accounts for 39% of the total population of the caste. Under 15-44 age group 439 males and 433 females have been returned which forms 42%. Under the age group 45 and above 184 males and 199 females have been returned which forms 19.0% of the total population.

III. Family, Clan, Kinship and Other Analogous Divisions :

The internal social structure of the Mala consists of endogamous sub-divisions and exogamous clans and lineages. The Malas of Hosur Taluk report that there are four endogamous divisions among them, namely, Reddibhoomi, Pakunatti, Sarindle and Daindla, the second of which is more common in this area. According to the Census Report of 1891, "the sub-divisions of the Malas which are

numerically strongest are Arava, Kanta, Murikinadu, Pakanati and Reddibhoomi. To these may be added Sarindla, Savu, Saindla and Dindla". (Thurston 1909, IV, 345). Regarding the origin of these sub-divisions Thurston gives the following legend. "A Mala married 18 wives one from each kulam or tribal division. The God Polerama, objecting to the sacrifice of sheep and goats, wanted him to offer up a woman and chind in substitution for the animals and the Mala broke the news to his wives, one of whom eloped with a Reddi and gave origin to the Reddibhoomis (Bhumi, earth). Another ran away, and gave rise to the Pakanatis (eastern country). A third hid herself and escaped by hiding. Hence her descendants are called Daindla Vandlu, concerning whom there is a proverb, "Dagipoyina Vandlu Daindla Vandlu" or "Those who escaped by hiding are Daindlas". One of the wives who fled to the forest, found her way out by clearing the jungle, and her descendants are called Sarindla (straight). The wife who consented to be sacrificed with her child was restored to life by Polerama and gave rise to the *Savu* (death) or Saindla (belonging to death house) section. The Daindlas are said to be Tamil Paraiyans, who settled down in the Telugu country, and adopted, the manners and customs of the Malas. Some call themselves Arava (Tamil) Malas. They are employed as servants in European houses, horse keepers etc." (Thurston. 1909, IV, 345). "Each sub-division is further divided into many exogamous clans. So, the Pakinatti division has Sakkilodu, Pillamodulu, Nallanodu, Kavilodu, Uthirodu, Moosinodu, Indukoorudu, Bosanodu, Pothukundodu and Pamulodu clans. The clans of a sub-division are further grouped into a dual organisation for the purpose of marriage. The first five clans form the Annan-Thambudu (agnate) clans among whom marriage is tabooed, while the latter five clans form the 'Maman-machchan' (collateral) clans from whom the agnates can marry. Thus a member of the Sakkilodu clan can only marry from a member from the five latter clans and *vice-versa*.

Each evogamous clan is divided into many totemic lineages named after, plants, animals and objects of nature. Thurston gives a list of totemic septs some of which are as follows :

Bandi (cart), Dhona (Mosquito), Pillai (Cat), Allam (Ginger), Malli (Jasmine), Pala (Milk) etc. (Thurston 1909, IV, 347-348).

Both simple and joint families are met with among the Malas. After marriage, the wife is brought to the husband's house. Descent, lineage and inheritance are reckoned through the male line. The average size of the family is 4-5 members.

A family divides itself either when it becomes unwieldy or in case of some quarrel. Under these circumstances the married sons may construct a new hutment nearabout. As long as the members

of the family remain under the same roof, they cook in the common kitchen and eat together. Cooking and serving of food will be separated along with the division of the family.

The male members and the unmarried girls assume the clan of their father. In case of marriage, the women automatically join their husband's family and receive the clan name of the latter. The sons share equally, movable and immovable property of the father after the latter's death. The unmarried women have the right of maintenance till they are married. They do not inherit the paternal property except gifts and presents, received during the time of marriage or some other occasions.

IV. **Dwelling, Dress, Food, Ornaments etc. :**

In the rural areas they invariably settle in hamlets, on the outskirts of the village, away from the main habitation. In the urban areas, however, they are found to live intermingled with other castes mostly the lower social status. The hamlet, where the Mala dwell, is locally known as 'Cheri'.* The Cheri is connected with the main village usually by a foot path, or in some cases a cart road, which may run through the hamlet. In the villages they have water sources of their own, which the Caste Hindus would not use. In some urban areas the Government have provided protected water supply and lights. There is no regular settlement pattern. The huts are in one cluster and are irregularly constructed and may face any direction according to the extent conditions. Huts are of both square and rectangular and sometimes circular in shape. They may be either one roomed or two roomed, depending on the number of members in the family. There is no regular allocation of use of space for different purposes. Cooking, dining, sleeping, storing are all done inside the hut itself. Most of the houses are mud walled and straw thatched without any ventilation. They are low and face different directions. The houses do not have any gable wall and the roofing slopes on all the four sides. The materials used for the roof are palmyrah leaves, reinforced by a layer of paddy straw, which are fixed and tied with straw ropes. The walls are plastered with red clay. The flooring is mud plastered and daubed with cow-dung. Re-thatching is done whenever the occasion demands as in case of leakage.

The dress of the Malas is simple and is not different from that of the region where they inhabit. The males wear 'lungis' of four cubit in length wrapped round the loin and reaching up to the ankles.

*This is a common term for the hamlets of Harijans (SCs.). Now-a-days hey do not like theirsettlement to be called by this term. They prefer he term 'colony' to 'cheri'.

Occasionally, they may wear a towel over the shoulders as an upper cloth. While they are at work they wear only a small loin cloth. On ceremonious and festive occasions, or when they go out to the urban areas, the youngsters wear shirts and baniyans in addition to the loin cloth. The women, young and old, wear 'Chela' (Saree) of 6 yards in length, the 'Pallav' of which is thrown on the left shoulder. In Hosur, it has been noticed that the Mala women throw the Pallav on the right shoulder. When the women go out for work, they pull up the lower edge of the saree and tuck it in the waist so that the portion below the knees become bare. This perhaps facilitates easy movements during work. The young women wear blouses while the old cover their bosom with the saree. Young boys wear nicker and shirts and the girls wear 'pavadai' (skirt) and blouse. Small children are found moving about naked. The hair style of the women is a little different from that of the local people. A lock (koppu) is made out at the back and the same is tucked to form roundish in shape and kept a little to the right-side of the occiput. The young girls plait the hair into locks. Men crop their hair and keep dressed up when they are away from work. In former days, the men used to grow their hair long and tie into a lock at the back. The frontal portion and the sides up to the earlevel are shaved. Even today a few elderly people follow the traditional pattern of hair style.

The Mala women do not appear to be very fond of ornaments. In the nose they wear 'Mukku Pottuka' (nose screws) on both the alae. At the lower end of the septum of the nose is worn, 'Bullakku'. These ornaments are mostly made of cheap metals but a few well-to-do may use silver or gold. In the lower ear-lobes are worn cheap stone studded 'kammal' (ear studs) and 'mattal' mostly made of cheap metals. Glass and plastic bangles known as 'Chai Ghazlu' are used by young women. Unmarried women and girls use coloured (yellow, black and red) beads, (Thanda) strung on thread, as neck chains. Cheap factory made aluminium or steel rings known as 'Ungaram' are also worn by them, Silver chain like 'Kolusu' with ornamentation are worn by them. Silver chain like 'Kolusu' with ornamentation are worn by young women as anklets. 'Bottu' (marriage badge) and 'Mettu' (toe rings) are worn only by the married women. A few old men have been seen wearing 'Anjolu', cheap stone studded ear ornaments, which the youngsters, however, do not like to wear. Yet another ornament worn by the men is the factory made steel 'Ungaram' (rings).

Rice, Cholam and ragi form the staple food of the Mala, the latter two being more frequently used. These are cooked in solid or semi solid forms and consumed along with some vegetable and occasionally non-vegetarian dishes. They generally take meals

thrice a day. The morning and mid-day meals are in the form of semi-solid gruel. At night, cooked rice along with some sauce or side dish is consumed. This is the principal meal for them. They eat fish, mutton, beef, pork and chicken. They eat carcasses, but the flaying job is done by the Madiga or the Chakkiliyan who live nearby. It is also reported that rats, rabbits and gauna are consumed by them occasionally.

Chewing (betel-leaves, arecanut, tobacco and lime) is much liked by them. They can forego a meal but cannot miss chewing. Among the beverages, tea and coffee are relished by most of them. Seldom they prepare these at home, but take from the nearby tea shop. Consumption of alcoholic beverage is also resorted to, though very rarely.

The household equipments are scanty and cheap. Every household possesses some earthen pots for cooking and storing water, a few aluminium plates and glasses for serving food and water and a few cheap wooden metal ladles and spoons. They sleep either inside the hut or in front of it, for which grass and palmyra leaf mats are used. One may come across a few improvised cots in a few households. Cheap plastic combs and mirrors, steel boxes, torches and framed photographs could also be seen in some houses.

V. Environmental Sanitation, Health and Hygiene :

The inside of the houses is kept neat and clean by periodically daubing it with cow dung paste. The outside of the houses, however, is not kept clean strewn with hay and rubbish. During rainy season rain water stagnates, in the pits and holes found in plenty, in and around the settlement. There is no separate provision for toilets and therefore, the space in between two huts is used as a bath after having temporarily converted it into an enclosure by hanging a couple of clothes on either side. Women and children may make use of this space as urinal. They are not very particular of taking bath regularly, nor the clothes kept cleaned. Occasionally the clothes are got cleaned by the Vannan, who wash only for the scheduled castes. In case of minor ailments, they resort to indigenous medicines and approach a local medical practitioner only in serious cases.

VI. Language and Literacy :

The ancestral language of the Malas is Telugu. Even after having settled in the Tamil country for generations, they still speak Telugu at home. The regional language, Tamil, is spoken with outsiders and with the other Tamil castes of the locality.

Literacy among the Malas is comparatively very low. The 1961 Census reveals that only 5.2% Malas are literates when the general literacy rate for the State is 31.4% and for the Scheduled Castes as a whole works out to be 14.7%.

Out of a total of 107 literates, 92 (86%) are males and 15 (14%) are females. This, when compared with the literacy rates for the Scheduled Castes as a whole for the State (male 81% and female 19%) is slightly higher in the case of males and lower in the case of females. In the urban areas the literacy rate is higher than in the rural areas, the former accounting for 31% and the latter 4.3%. The largest percentage of literates are found in the age group ot 0-14 which accounts for 11.8%. Next to that comes 15-19 age group with 10.7% and the lowest is in the 45 and above age group with 4.4%. Educational levels by age groups for the Malas as collected during the 1961 Census is given below:

TABLE

Age groups (in years)	Educational level		
	Literates without educational level	Primary or Junior basic	Matriculation & above
1	2	3	4
5—9	19	2	..
10—14	16	17	..
15—19	8	5	..
20—29	14	2	1
30—44	19	..	..
45 + ...	3	1	..
TOTAL .	79	27	1

This shows that only 1 person out of 107 literates among the Malas could study upto matriculation and above. 27 have studied upto primary or junior basic and the rest are literates without any educational level.

VII. Economic Life:

"The chief traditional occupation of the Mala had been coarse cloth weaving and working as farm labourers for Sudras; a few cultivate their own land. Those who cannot weave subsit by day-labour. As a rule they stick to one master, and are engaged in cultivation all the year round". (Thurston, 1909, IV, 350).

According to their tradition, once they were wealthy and prosperous as long as goddess Lakshmi was gracious to the Malas. They account for their present poverty and change of occupation thus. "One day Lakshmi went up to one of the chief men, who at that time was very busy at work upon a web of cloth, and began to make love to him. At any other time this would have been acceptable, but just then, being seen busy, he asked the goddess to go away. She, however, took no notice, and only bothered him the more. Where upon loosing his temper he hit her over the head with the heavy sizing bursh which he was using. This hurt the feeling of Lakshmi to such an extent that she left the Malas, withdraw her favour, and transferred it to the Komatis. Since then the Malas have been poor". (Thurston, 1909, IV, 362-363.)

In the present day most of them eke out their living either by cultivation or by wage earning. According to the 1961 Census returns, out of the 1109 workers, 692 are males and 417 are females. The participation rate is more among the males than the females. 472 males and 365 females work as cultivators and 48 males and 10 females work as agricultural labourers, all in rural areas. Thus 80.7% of the workers are engaged in farm living. Only 9 males in the rural areas have been returned as practising household industry. 1 male and 4 females have been returned as engaged in Trade and Commerce, 2 females are engaged in Mining and Quarrying, one male is engaged in household industry and one female is engaged in construction work. It is reported that a good number of Scavengers engaged in the Madras town are Malas, though they are returned as Adi Andhra. 12 males in the urban areas have been returned as engaged in Transport while 149 males and 35 females are engaged in other services both in urban and rural areas. Other services include white collar jobs and menial jobs in the Government Offices.

The agricultural practices of the Community do not in any way differ from those of the region. They use the same type of agricultural implements and the methods of cultivation remain the same. They are not very enthusiastic in changing over to new methods of cultivation and manuring.

In Venkattareddipalayam almost all the Mala workers are engaged as agricultural labourers. Only one, among them, owns land. A few of the Malas in this village own a few herds of cattle. A few others rear cattle owned by the neighbouring caste Hindus. No one here is engaged in weaving though they claimed that their fore-fathers were engaged in it. Many of their relatives in Andhra Pradesh, they report, are still engaged in weaving coarse cloth.

The information furnished below about the income and expenditure pattern of the Malas of Venkattareddipalayam provides some insight into the economic condition of these people. Out of the 37 households here, 22 come in the income group of Rs. 25 or less per month, 13 are in the income group of Rs. 26-50 and 2 in the Rs. 51-75 group. Food forms the bulk of their expenditure which works out to be 73.1%. Next to food comes the expenditure on smoking and chewing which comes to 17.2%. 7.1% is spent on dress. The information also reveals that out of 37 households 34 are in debts of varying amounts. The average debt per household has been worked out as Rs. 21.88. Much of the debts have been incurred on unproductive purposes like marriages, death or other social functions.

VIII. Life Cycle :

Puberty :

The horror of pollution during puberty is recognised by the Malas. In former days the menstruating girl is kept, in a seclusion hut, away from the dwelling place. She is allowed to join the family after 15 days and after a ritual purification ceremony. Today the menstruating girl is allowed to remain secluded at one part of the house which is separated by bamboo and palmyra leaf screens. These screens are burnt during the time of purification. The girl remains secluded for 15-16 days is not expected to be seen by others, especially by the menfolk. Food is served to her in her enclosure for all the 15 days and the vessels used by her are not used in the household. On the 16th day 'Isoga' is performed when turmeric paste is smeared on the body (Nalangu) and she is given a ceremonial bath and adorned with new clothes. The clothes worn by the girl during the period of pollution is given away to the Dhobi woman. The 'Dasari' (priest) presides over the purification ceremony. Close relatives are some times fed during this occasion.

Birth :

Pregnancy is diagnised by the stoppage of the periodic menstruation after marriage. The information will be passed on to her parents and in case of the first pregnancy the parents visit her in

the ninth month of pregnancy to conduct 'Soolvalavi', a feast arranged in honour of her fertility. Food habits are not changed during the pre-natal period. It has been reported that in former days charms made of dried umbilical cord is highly prized as a remedy for sterility. (Thurston, 1906, 265).

The delivery usually takes place in an inner room of the house attended by some experienced elderly woman of the village. The latter is given a rupee and some pan-supari for the services rendered by her. If there is difficulty in child birth, the services of a trained midwife or a doctor is sought. To ward off evil spirits, a sickle and some nim (Melia Azadirachta) are kept upon the place of delivery. Thurston reports of a custom practised by the Malas for easy delivery. "Some mother, who has had an easy time, is called in, and presents the labouring woman with betel etc. Should this not be effective, a line of persons is to be drawn up from the well to the house, and water is passed from hand to hand until it reaches the 'easy time' woman, who gives the water to the sufferer". (Thurston 1909, IV, 369).

After the placenta has come away, the umbilical cord is cut and the former is put in a pot and buried in the back yard. The new born child is washed and adorned with new clothes. It is then laid on a winnowing basket, which has been previously filled with a measure of paddy, and covered with a cloth. Turmeric water and sacred ash are sprinkled over the child which would signify purification from pollution. The custom of branding the new born child with hot needle in all vital places, over twenty in all, has been reported. (Thurston, 1909, IV, 369). This custom is not in vogue today.

For the first one or two days after delivery, the woman is usually allowed to starve. She is given at this time a preparation of dried ginger and jaggery. From the third day onwards she is given the normal diet of rice and curries. The first bath is not taken till the third, fifth or some times seventh day. Birth pollution is observed for 15 days after which the mother resumes her normal duties.

On the 16th day 'Thrushtikazhithal' (name giving ceremony) is observed when the entire hut in which delivery took place is cleaned and smeared with cow dung. The new born child is brought dressed in new clothes and a name is given by the Dasari or in his absence the Pandakkar or the caste head man. Ear boring ceremony called 'Sevilukuttelu' is performed after the child has attained one or two years.

Marriage :

Marriage, either from the same lineage or from the same brother clan is prohibited. Neither they take girls nor do they give girls in marriage to other castes. Though they consider the Tamil Paraiyans as of the same social status and exchange food and water with them, invite each other in their social functions, inter marriage is tabooed. The marriageable age for the girls, usually is after puberty and for the boys above 20 years. Child marriages are very rare. In 1961 out of the 480 married women only 4 have been reported as married in the age group of 0-14. Monogamy is the usual practice, though polygymous marriages have also been reported in a few cases.

Selection of spouses is the responsibility of the parents though marriage by mutual consent and elopement are also reported. Formerly one could take away by force his paternal aunts daughter or maternal uncle's daughter (Thurston 1906, 15) and marry her. After marriage the girl stays with her husband and becomes a member of her husband's lineage. Payment of bride price is practised, the amount varying from Rs. 10 to Rs. 100 depending on the economic status of the parties concerned. In majority of the cases the amount paid by way of bride price is Rs. 12.

The initiation for a marriage always comes from the groom's side. The groom's parents make enquiries about all girls of marriageable age in the area and a particular family known for its social status is selected. If the horoscope of the girl is available a priest is consulted to find out the agreeability. A sum of Rs. 2 is paid to him. Then the kith and kin of the groom in the company of an important person of the village visit the bride's house to apply for her hands. If the bride's parents agree for the alliance, the bride price is discussed and fixed. The amount is either paid in full or by parts. This is known as 'Paiyna Mudippu'. The date for the marriage is also fixed during the betrothal which is known as 'Nischiya Thambulam'. Then betel leaves and arecanuts are exchanged. The groom's party then dines in the bride's house symbolising their willingness for the alliance. Marriage usually takes place at the house of the groom. The Pandal is erected and decorated with flowers.

On the eve of the marriage, the bride's party arrives and stays in a temple or any other public place in the vicinity of the village. This is known as 'Iduthi'. The groom is taken in a procession round the village and reaches his house. Then a party of 4 to 5 persons consisting of village elders and close relatives of the groom go to invite the bride's party to the marriage house. If the bride-price is not paid in full by the groom's party during betro-

thal, the same is realised now and then, and then only, they start moving to the marriage house. After an informal 'Nalangu', the relatives are treated to a feast.

On the marriage day, after a ceremonial bath, the bridal pair decked in marriage finery sit side by side on a plank in the marriage booth. Saffron coloured threads known as 'Kankanam' are tied around their wrists. Usually a Pandakari officiates the marriage rites. It is reported that now-a-days the ceremonies are carried through in the presence of a prominent person of the area and the marriage is solemnised. The ceremony itself is simple. The groom stands up after exchange of garlands with the bride, and then ties the Tali (marriage badge) around her neck. The Tali, round shaped and looking like a coin, is known as 'Bottu'. The ceremonies terminate with the removal of 'Kankanam' from the wrists of the couple. A feast usually follows the marriage and the guests in return are expected to make small presents to the bride or the groom. On the next day the groom with the bride goes to her place for 'Maralu' (feasting). There they dine together in a common plate symbolising their unity in the thick and thin of their life.

The Malas freely allow remarriage of widows and divorced women. It has been reported that there are persons who have married seven times in succession. Such people, they claim, command much respect in the Mala Society.

According to the 1961 Census returns 43.20% of males and 46.78% of females among the Malas are married. In the age group of 0-14—99.50% are unmarried while 0.50% are married. The latter are all females. In the 15-44 age group 19.15% are never married, 77.18% married and 3.22% are widowed and 0.45% divorced. Under the age group of 45 and above 0.26% are never married, 63.71% married, 35.76% widowed and the rest divorced or separated. Widowed females are much more than that of the males in all the age groups.

Death :

The Malas dispose of their dead, both by burial and by cremation, though the former is more common. Cremation is practised mostly by the affluent section of the caste as it entails much expenditure. There appears to be slight variation in the practices connected with death among the Vaishnavite and Saivite sections of the Caste. The former allows the person to die inside the house while the latter, fearing pollution, removes the person outside the door, as soon as it is recognised that death is at hand. (Thurston, 1909, IV, 371).

Before the dead body is taken to burial ground, it is bathed and smeared with oil, sandal paste etc. After death the dead body is kept with the head directed towards the South because they believe "Yamudu the god of death and the lord of Hades, is god of the South". (Thurston, 1909, IV, 372). After the arrival of the kiths and kins the dead body is carried on a bier to the burial ground where a grave has already been prepared. In carrying a dead body the feet is carried first. The body is placed in the grave on its back with its head towards the South and face upwards. After this the body is covered with leaves and then filled with earth. All who attended the function, return after a bath. Members of the bereaved family revisit the place of burial on the next day and pour a little ghee and milk near the grave. Cooked rice with vegetables is also placed near the grave to be eaten away by the Crows "one of which must have received the spirit of the dead".

The period of pollution extends over 16 days and on the 16th day, the house is cleaned and all polluted members take an oil bath. A feast is also given on the occasion to close relatives, if pocket permits. The eldest son is the principal mourner and he has to do all the rites connected with death of his father. The 'Dasari' or in his absence the 'Pandakari' presides over the death ceremonies.

IX Religion :

Malas belong to Hinduism, though some of them have recently been converted to Christianity. The Hindu Malas are either vaishnavites or saivites, the former being more than the latter. During the 1961 Census all have been returned as professing Hindu religion.

Besides the deities of the Hindu pantheon, they worship their indigenous deities like Ankamma, Madamma, Polaramma, Kaliamma and Mariamma. The latter are represented by roughly hewed stone images placed under a tree by the side of the village. They are periodically smeared with turmeric and saffron. In olden days they performed animal sacrifices to these deities, but in the wake of social mobility movements this practice has been stopped. The traditional village jatras have been abandoned and at present Ugathi (Telugu New Year's day) and Thai Pongal (Tamil New Year's day) are celebrated with enthusiasm. During these festive occasions they dress themselves up in new clothes and offer Pongal (cooked rice) to the deities. In Venkattareddipalayam they have a Perumal (Vishnu) temple in their cheri which is periodically visited and worshippd by the members of the Community.

X. Inter Community Relationship :

As mentioned earlier, the Malas are equated with the Paraiyans of the Tamil country. They form one of the communities with a very low social status. Though in the urban areas untouchability is not practised against them. in the rural areas they are still treated as untouchables. They live away from the main village site and are not allowed to enter the houses of the caste people like the Reddies, Vellalas and Brahmins, nor are they permitted to draw water from the common village well. They eat carcasses—a fact which they try to hide from out-siders. In some places they are not admitted inside the village tea shops run by the caste Hindus. They have their own priests barbers and washermen. The services of the Caste Brahmins are limited to the telling of auspicious occasions for marriage, for which they are paid in cash. In former days they used to help each other in shaving the hair, but now in the urban areas they get their hair cut or shaved in the barber shops. The Vannan who serves for the untouchable castes serve for the Malas as well.

The Reddis and Vellalas, for whom the Malas work as agricultural labourers, would not take water from them nor do they like to enter the latter's huts. The Tamil Paraiyas, who stand almost on the same social status as those of the Malas and the lower castes like Madigas, Chakkilis etc., eat and drink with them. The Malas consider the Tamil Paraiyan as their brethren and hence accept food and water from them. The Madigas and Chakkilis are considered to be lower in social status, and as such, would not accept food and water from them.

XI. Structure of social control and leadership :

In the rural areas the Caste Panchayat, by and large, controls the social structure of the Malas. This institution is neither very weak nor cannot be considered to be very powerful. Matters relating to social behaviour like marriage, death, festivals etc. are generally controlled by the Caste Panchayat. Cases of elopement, adultery, inter caste marriage etc. come up before the Panchayat for decision. The Panchayat hears the complaints and levies small fines on delinquent members. Thus, it is this institution which is empowered to decree-divorces, tries the person who has committed adultery and imposes fines on him. In the case of a woman who has committed adultery with a person outside the caste, the former is excommunicated.

The head of the Caste Panchayat is the 'Pandakari'. He presides over the Panchayat meetings, and officiates in marriage, death etc. in the absence of the Dasari. In the Venkattareddipala-

yam there is no Dasari and as such all his duties are shouldered by the Pandakari. The Pandakari is assisted in his duties by a 'Dhoori' and a 'Chalavadi'. All these offices are hereditary but it is open to the caste elders to elect some one other than the hereditary member to these posts. The fines collected by the Caste Panchayat are usually spent on local festivals or for the upkeep of the village temple.

XII. Social reform and welfare :

In the 1930s when the country was in the grip of various social movements in different regions, the downtrodden depressed classes of the peninsula clamoured for changes in their caste appellation. The terms Paraiya, Holeya, Mala, Madiga etc. they felt, sounded derogatory and conveyed a sense of contempt. Thus in the Telugu country has depressed classes, the bulk of which formed Malas and Madigas, opted the designation of Adi-Andhra; in the Kanarese country the Holeyas opted Adi Karnataka; in Tamilnad the Paraiyans, Pallans etc. were designated as Adi Dravida and in the Malayalam country the Pulayans and other depressed castes termed themselves as Adi Kerala. But for the last, the movements picked up momentum which is borne out by the fact that in the 1931 Census 'Castes' like Adi Andhra, Adi Karnataka, Adi Dravida etc. have been returned from different regions in large numbers while the returns of individual castes like Mala, Madiga, Paraiyan, Pallan etc. showed a corresponding decrease, though the former castes do not find mention in the 1921 or earlier Censuses.

Even today the tendency of self elevation in the Social status by the change in the names is very much marked. The Parayans of Kerala like to call themselves as Sambavar while the Kuravans feel elevated if called by the term Sidhanar. Some sections of the chamars (leather working caste of the North India) like to be called themselves as Jatav.

In the case of the Malas, the eagerness to change their caste name, so as to enable them to shed the stigma of derogation, degradation and contempt is clear from the fact that they joined hands with their traditional rivals, the Madigas. At one time the rivalry was so great that in order to avoid fueds and conflicts between the two castes the Government had to take appropriate steps. The Malas considered themselves to be superior in status and would not like the Madigas to be exalting itself unduly. They could not stand the sight of the use of horses and canopies in the marriage processions of the Madigas (Madras Census report p. 347). In spite of all these, the Malas joined hands with the Madigas along with other depressed castes in the common goal of achieving higher social status through the change in the caste name.

Yet another process of synchronism was the adoption of Hindu Sanskritic deities like Vishnu, Siva, Krishna etc. in their pantheon. Many of the Malas joined the Saivite and the Vaishnavite sects and started adopting Siva and Perumal (Vishnu) as their guardian deity. The Malas of Venkattareddipalayam, as mentioned earlier, established a Perumal temple for themselves, though it is out of bounds for the Caste Hindus.

Ritualistic purity through abstention from the consumption of liquor and flesh and the ceasure of animal sacrifices was considered to be helpful in attaining their goal of self-elevation in the social hierarchy and as such many Malas piously practised them. Some of the curious customs like branding of the new born child, and wearing of charms for sterility had been given up.

With the advent of freedom for India, legislations to remove untouchability and measures to ameliorate their social and economic conditions have been taken up by the Government. These and other factors contributed much to restore confidence among the Scheduled Castes including the Malas. Now, they would not like the term 'cheri' for their hamlet, they prefer to call 'colony' instead. The youngesters identify themselves not as 'Mala' but as Adi Andhra or 'Harijan'. They claim that the higher caste Hindus take water from them and would not hesitate to enter their houses. They do not like to disclose that they still worship Ankamma and Mariamma. The Malas of Venkattareddipalayam claimed that they worshipped only Perumal. Only after much persuation and probing that they disclosed the practice of payment of bride price.

One may wonder whether with all these the Malas have achieved their goal of raising their social status. In the urban areas they did elevate their social status to a great extent. In the rural areas, however, though in general the 'horror' of untouchability and the contempt towards the untouchables have decreased, the Malas still remain aloof from the Hindu caste structure and hierarchy, unattended by the 'pure' village functional castes of Barber, Washerman and the Brahmins and treated as impure by the clean castes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Thurston E:—Ethnographic notes in Southern India, Madras—1906.
2. Thurston E: and Rangachari K—Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Vol. IV, Madras 1909.
3. Yeates, M.W.M.—Census of India 1931, Madras Part I—Report
4. Census of India 1961, Paper 2 of 1960.
5. Census of India 1961, Vol. 1—Part V-B.
6. Census of India, 1961 Madras—Vol. IX—Part V-A(i) and (ii).
7. Burrow T. and Emeneau, M-B—A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary, Oxford—1961.
8. Census of India 1961, Vol. I Part V-A (i) Special Tables for Scheduled Castes.
9. Government of India, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes—Lists Modification Order, 1956.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'The Tribes and Castes of Bombay', by R. K. ENTHOVEN, Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire, Commander of the Order of Leopold II, Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Ethnography, Bombay Presidency. Issued under the orders of the Government of Bombay—Volume II—Bombay: Printed at the Government Central Press, 1922 *page* 422.

MALA : A sub-division of Bhois.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India' by : R. V. RUSSELL of the Indian Civil Service, Superintendent of Ethnography, Central Province, assisted by : RAI BAHADUR HIRA LAL Extra Assistant Commissioner, Published under the Orders of The Central Provinces Administration in Four Volumes—Vol. IV—Macmillan and Co., Limited, St. Martin's Street, London 1916 *pages* 156 *to* 158.

MALA : A low Telugu caste of labourers and cotton-weavers. They numbered nearly 14,000 persons in the Central Provinces in 1911, belonging mainly to the Chanda, Nagpur, Jabbulpore, and Yeotmal Districts, and the Bastar State. The Marathas commonly call them Telugu Dhers, but they themselves prefer to be known as 'Telangi Sadar Bhoi', which sounds a more respectable designation. They are also known as Mannepuwar and Netkani. They are the Pariahs of the Telugu country, and are regarded as impure and degraded. They may be distinguished by their manner of tying the head-cloth more or less in a square shape, and by their loin-cloths, which are worn very loose and not knotted. Those who worship Narsinghswami, the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu are called Namaddar, while the followers of Mahadeo are known as Lingadars. The former paint their foreheads with vertical lines of sandal-paste, and the latter with horizontal ones. The Malas were formerly zealous partisans of the right-handed sect in Madras, and the description of this curious system of faction given by the Abee Dubois more than a century ago may be reproduced :[1]

"Most castes belong either to the left-hand or right-hand faction. The former comprises the Vaishyas or trading classes, the Panchalas or artisan classes and some of the low Sudra castes. It also contains the lowest caste, viz. the Chaklas or leather workers, who are looked upon as its chief support. To the right-hand faction belong most of the higher castes of Sudras. The Pariahs (Malas) are also its great support, as a proof of which they glory in the title of Valangai Maugattar or Friends of the Right Hand. In the disputes and conflicts which so often take place between the two factions it is always the Pariahs who make the most disturbance and do the most damage. The Brahmans, Rajas and several classes of Sudras are content to remain neutral and take no part in these quarrels. The opposition between the two factions arises from certain exclusive privileges to which both lay claim. But as these alleged privileges are nowhere clearly defined and recognised, they result in confusion

[1]Hindu Manners. Customs and Ceremonies, ed. 1897, pp. 25, 26.

and uncertainty, and are with difficulty capable of settlement. When one faction trespasses on the so-called right of the other, tumults arise which spread gradually over large tracts of territory, afford opportunity for excesses of all kinds, and generally end in bloody conflicts. The Hindu, ordinarily so timid and gentle in all other circumstances of life, seems to change his nature completely on occasions like these. There is no danger that he will not brave in maintaining what he calls his rights, and rather than sacrifice a little of them he will expose himself without fear to the risk of losing his life. The rights and privileges for which the Hindus are ready to right such sanguinary battles appear highly ridiculous, especially to a European. Perhaps the sole cause of the contest is the right to wear slippers or to ride through the streets in a palanquin or on horseback during marriage festivals. Sometimes it is the privilege of being escorted on certain occasions by armed retainers, sometimes that of having a trumpet sounded in front of a procession, or of being accompanied by native musicians at public ceremonies". The writer of the *Madras Census Report* of 1871 states[1]. "It is curious that the females of two of the inferior castes should take different sides to their husbands in these disputes. The wives of the agricultural labourers side with the left hand, while their husbands help in fighting the battles of the right, and the shoemakers' wives also take the side opposed to their husbands. During these festival disturbances, the ladies who hold political views opposed to those of their husbands deny to the latter all the privileges of the connubial state". The same writer states that the right-hand castes claimed the prerogative of riding on horseback in processions, of appearing with standards bearing certain devices, and of erecting twelve pillars to sustain their marriage booths; while the left-hand castes might not have more than eleven pillars, nor use the same standards as the right. The quarrels arising out of these small differences of opinion were so frequent and serious in the seventeenth century that in the town of Madras it was found necessary to mark the respective boundaries of the right and left-hand castes, and to forbid the right-hand castes in their processions from occupying the streets of the left hand and *vice versa*. These disturbances have gradually tended to disappear under the influence of education and good Government, and no instance of them is known to have occurred in the Central Provinces. The division appears to have originated among the members of the Sakta sect or the worshippers of Sakti as the female principle of life in nature. Dr. L. D. Barnett writes[2]:

"The followers of the sect are of two schools. The 'Walkers in the Right Way' (*Dakshinachari*) pay a service of devotion to

1 Page 130.

2. *Hinduism*, in 'Religions Ancient and Modern' Series, P. 26.

the deity in both male and female aspects, and except in their more pronounced tendency to dwell upon the horrific aspects of the deity (as Kali, Durga, etc., they differ little from ordinary Saivas and Vaishnavas. The 'Walkers in the Left Way' (*Vamachari*), on the other hand, concentrate their thought upon the godhead in its sexually maternal aspect, and follow rites of senseless magic and—theoretically at least—promiscuous debauchery". As has been seen, the religious differences subsequently gave rise to political factions.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'The Castes and Tribes of H.E.H. THE NIZAM'S DOMINIONS, by: SYED SIRAJ UL HASSAN of Merton College, Oxford, Trinity College, Dublin, and Middle Temple, London, one of the Judges of H.E.H. the Nizam's High Court of Judicature: Lately Director of Public Instruction, Volume—I Bombay: The Times Press, 1920 *pages* 428 *to* 438.

LXII

MALA : Mala, Dher, Antyaja, Panchama—a very numerous Telugu caste of menials and village servants, supposed to be identical with the Mahara of Maharashtra, the Holders of the Karnatic and the Pariahs of the Tamil country. Black in complexion, short and sturdy in physique, distinct from any other caste of the Dominions, the Malas probably represent the oldest inhabitants of the country. They are found in every village, living apart from other residents. As village messengers and watchmen they receive a part of the village *Baluta.*

Origin

The etymology of the name Mala is uncertain. Some derive it from the Sanskrit word *Mala,* which means dirt, and is said to refer to their traditionary origin from Parvati's menstrual clothes Others suppose it to be a corruption of *Maïlawaru,* by which name the Melas, as scavengers, were formely known. But to derive the word from the Canarese and Tamil *Maler,* a hill, is more conceivable, for it is not improbable that the people, as old dwellers on the soil, were driven to the hilly tracts by the pressure of later immigrants and came to be known as Malas, or hillmen. Some of the Mala tribes, as Mala Aryans, still cling to the hilly tracts, which supports this view.

The Madiga legend, ascribing the creation of the worlds and mankind to Jambavant and his sons, makes a reference to the Malas, as being desended from 'Chinnaya' born of Parvati's soiled clothes and the tender of Siva's cow Kamadhenu. Chinnaya killed the cow and for this offence he was degraded by Siva and condemned to become a cow-skinner and beef-eater.

The Malas have other designations, such as Dher, by which they are known to the Mohamedans ; Antyaja, of Sanskrit origin, signifying 'last born' or created after every other being had been brought into existence ; Pancham, also a Sanskrit word, interpreted the fifth creation of god after the first four, Brahman, Kashatriya, Vaishya and Sudra, had been created.

Internal Structure

The Mala community is a large one and, being distributed over a wider range of country, has been broken up into numerous endogamous groups. Some of these are :—

(1) Andhawant
(2) Are Mala
(3) Arva Mala
(4) Badge Mala
(5) Begar Mala
(6) Bhat Mala
(7) Birja Mala
(8) Boya Mala
(9) Chalka Mala
(10) Dadi Mala
(11) Das Mala
(12) Dhol Mala
(13) Gunta Mala
(14) Gurram Mala
(15) Gurge Mala
(16) Hatker Mala
(17) Jethi Mala
(18) Jina Mala
(19) Karne Mala
(20) Ladwant
(21) Landa Mala
(22) Mala Ayyawar
(23) Mala Bogam
(24) Mala Dasri
(25) Mala Jangam or Chalwadi
(26) Mala Mannewar
(27) Mala Mashti
(28) Nayatakani Mala
(29) Pachi Mala
(30) Pambalwad
(31) Racha Mala

(32) Shiva Kantha Mala

(33) Somavanshi Mala

(34) Telga Mala

(35) Tilwan Mala

(36) Tuka Mala

(37) Varne Mala

Are Malas: Were originally Maratha Mahars who immigrated into Telangana and became permanent settlers into the country.

Arva Mala: Malas who have come from the Tamil country and settled among the Telugu Malas.

Begar Mala: They serve as 'Begaris' or free labourers.

Bhat Malas: Earn their livelihood by begging and singing praises in honour of Hindu gods.

Das Mala: Are carpenters. They do not eat from the hands of any other caste, nor do other castes eat from them.

Dhol Mala: Serve as drummers in the ceremonies of the Koya caste.

Erkala Mala: The members of this sub-caste make bamboo baskets.

Gunta Malas: Are also weavers, and seem to derive their name from the Telugu word *'Gunta'* meaning a pit. They work on their looms sitting inside the pit. They weave coarse cotton cloth similar to 'khadi'.

Gurram Malas: Yayanga Kunda, Sadi Langas, and Chandals are regarded as the lowest of all the Mala sub-castes and earn their living by begging from the Mala caste only. They live in huts made of the leaves of the Shendi tree on the outskirts of the villages. Regarding the degradation of the Gurram Malas it is said that a member of the sub-caste was employed to return the horse brought for the procession in a Mala marriage; but before he came back the marriage feast was over and he was compelled to dine off what was left.

Landa Malas: Dress skins and animals.

Mala Ayyawar or Nityalu: They belong to the Vaishnava sect, and abstain from eating beef and pork.

Mala Bogams: Are prostitutes of the Mala caste.

Mala Dasri : Spiritual advisers of the Malas who are Trimanidharis. They worship Mylar Linga.

Mala Jangam : Gurus of the Malas who are Vibhutidharis. They are also known as 'Shiva Nagmayya', being the worshippers of the God Shiva. They say they have five *gotras* (1) Nandi, (2) Vrashabha, (3) Bhrangi, (4) Yadra, (5) Sakanda.

Mala Mashti : Are acrobats and earn their living by performing physical feats.

Nayatakani Malas : Are weavers.

Pachi Malas : Are weavers so designated as they weave cloth from the untwisted yarn.

Pambalwad : The priests of the Mala caste, for whom they perform religious ceremonies. They have received this name from a musical instrument on which they play during worship. In the Karnatic they are known by the names Bone, Garu and Bendalas.

Shiva Kantha Malas : Weavers and cultivators. They have a legend that they sprang from the poison which Shiva drank, but which, being unable to retain in his throat, he disgorged. This poison was one of the fourteen gems obtained when the ocean was churned by gods and demons with the Mandar mountain serving as a staff and the serpent Wasuki as a rope.

Tuka Mala : Are masons.

Very little is known regarding the rest of the sub-castes. The exogamous sections are either of the territorial or totemistic type ; but the totems do not appear to be held as taboo by the members of the caste bearing the names.

Sur-names

Kankawaru	Pyaramwaru
Nokalawaru	Neelamwaru
Parsawaru	Mayakatawaru
Yerpolawaru	Holnoru
Kirmandoru	Jallewaru

Mala Jangams allege that they have *gotras* as below, borrowed partly from the Veershaiva Jangams and partly from the Brahmans; but these *gotras* appear to have no bearing on the regulation of marriages :—

Nandi	Vrashabha	Bhrangi
Vamdeva	Sakanda	Goutama

Besides these gotras they have family names also such as

Madnollu	Bandrollu
Rajalollu	Pabollu
Komalollu	Kandollu

A sort of hypergamy prevails. Mala Jangams and Dasris take girls in marriage from other Mala castes, but do not give their own daughters in return. At the time of admission into the caste the girl's arm and tongue are branded by a lighted 'Nim' (Melia indica) twig. After this, these girls are not allowed to go to their parents.

A man can marry two sisters, but two brothers cannot marry two sisters. A man must marry within his sub-caste. Inter marriages within the same section are avoided. A man may marry the daughters of his maternal uncle, paternal aunt and elder sister.

Outsiders are admitted into the caste. The ceremony of admission consists in branding the tongue of the nevice with a burning 'nim' twig or a hot piece of gold or silver. The new-comer has to eat a betel-leaf chewed previously by a Mala. A goat is sacrificed on the occasion and a feast given to the members of the caste. After the meal the neophyte has to remove the dishes and the hut in which the dinner was eaten is burnt.

Both infant and adult marriages are practised by the caste. Immediately after marriage the girl is sent to her husband by the Vadibiyam ceremony. Cohabitation before puberty is tolerated. If an unmarried girl commits adultery with a casteman and the fact is known, she is compelled to marry her lover by an inferior ceremony. A fine is imposed on a girl committting adultery with a man of higher castes. Polygamy is permitted without limit.

Marriage

The marriage ceremony of the Telugu Mala comprises the following rites, which have been fully described in the pasages on the Kapu caste :—

Vadiyam	Kankanam
Papawanam	Talwal
Parthanam	Bashingam
Ravireni	Brahmamodi
Lagnam	Nagvelly
Kanyadan	Plou
Padghattan	Arundhatidarshan
Jitaguda	Vapagintha
Pusti Mittalu	Vadibiyam Sari

On the *Nagvelli* day, Ganga Puja is celebrated with great pomp. At the time of going round the *Polu*, the parents of the bride make presents to the bridegroom consisting of implements of husbandry, a *Thali* (metal-plate) and *Lota* (metal-pot) and the bride also receives a present from her husband known as *Avali* and amounts to Rs. 5. Among the Gunta Mala the *Avali* is valued at Rs. 4. Among Begar Malas, at the time of *Polu*, the bride takes in her hand a churning-staff and the bridegroom a plough and their feet are washed by married females. In Adilabad, the wedding ceremony is performed at the bridegroom's house under a booth erected for the purpose. The bride and the bridegroom are bathed, dressed in new clothes and wedded by the *Anterpat* ritual.

The marriage in the Karnatic differs in essential points from that in vogue in Telangana and, among other rites, include :—

Hogitoppa : Or the fixing of an auspicious day with the consent of both parties, the occasion being celebrated with a feast.

Bad : The goddess Ellamma is invoked and, in her name, a piece of cloth is tied round the neck of a *Matangi* (and old devoted woman of the Madiga caste).

Uditamba : The bride is presented with wheat, arecanuts, betel-leaves and pieces of cocoanut kernel and brought to the bridegroom's house.

Yaniarshani : Smearing the bridal pair with oil and turmeric paste. *Kankans* made of thread are tied on their wrists.

Maniavana: The bride, the bridegroom and their mothers are also annointed and bathed seated in a circle of 12 pots encircled by raw cotton thread. The thread is then collected in a heap and a pearl being placed on it, water is poured over the pearl.

Halgampa: A branch of the 'Badh' (Ficus Indica) tree is brought by the maternal uncle of the bridegroom and planted under the wedding booth. This right is claimed by the maternal uncle, but, in his absence, any other relative, who is regarded as the maternal uncle for the time being, performs the ceremony.

Lagnam: In this the bride and the bridegroom are made to stand opposite each other, the former on *Sindoli* and the latter on *Jota.* The *Antarpat,* or a piece of cloth on which five pictures (one of a snake, the second of Linga, the third of Shiva, the fourth of five pettalled flower and the fifth of the sacred bull) are painted, is held between them, benedictory *mantras* are chanted and turmeric coloured rice is thrown on the couple. The bridegroom is afterwards made to tie the *Mangalsutra* round the neck of the bride. After this, the bride and the bridegroom throw coloured rice on each other's heads, this part of the rite being called *Akikal.*

Bhum: The family gods are offered 24 cakes, without sugar, and other preparations; four married women on the bridegroom's side and four married women and one man on the bride's side are then inivited to partake of the food, seated before the gods. The leavings are buried in a pit dug for the purpose, on the spot where they dined.

Mirongi: The bride and bridegroom are taken on a bullock to the Hanuman's temple and made to worship the deity. A cocoanut is broken before the god and the pieces are distributed among the assembly. An adult bride follows her husband on foot on this occasion.

Nagvelly: The bride and bridegroom, seated in a square made by arranging four pots, are bathed and the Kankanas, or wedding bracelets on their wrists, are untied and fastened to the Banian post planted previously by the maternal uncle under the booth.

Chagol: A goat is killed and a feast is provided to relatives and friends by the bride's parents. A procession is formed and the bridegroom and bride are conducted to the

bridegroom's house, and on their arrival at the entrance, cocoanuts are distributed to the assembled guests. A grand feast, given by the bridegroom's parent's concludes the ceremony.

Dedication of Basavis

It is customary among the Malas to dedicate their girls and boys to the service of temples. These girls are called Murlis, Basavis or Parvatis and the boys are called Potraja. The ceremony of dedication consists in wedding the girl or boy to a sword or to the temple deity.

Dedication of Basavis or Parvatis

After the *Devaka,* or marriage guardian diety, has been installed under the wedding booth the girl to be wedded is brought in with her forehead adorned with *bashingam* and is seated by the side of a woman holding a sword in her hand. *Bashingam* is also tied to the sword to represent the bridegroom. *Anterpat* is held between the girl and the sword and they are wedded in accordance with rites in vogue among the Mala caste. Such *Basavis* earn their livelihood afterwards by Prostitution. In the case of *Murlis, Bashingams* of the leaves of 'Palas' (*Butea frondosa*) and *Mango* (*Mangnifera indica*) are used and *Benadalod* conduct the wedding service. A spot is plastered with cowdung and upon it a square is traced with turmeric powder. The Murli is seated upon this and the Bindla priest ties round her neck two strings, one of black beads and the other of leather pieces, the former allowing her to pursue the profession of begging, while the latter gives a religious sanction to her becoming a prostitute. A Basavi woman is seen begging armed with a 'trident' (an iron rod with three barbed prongs) on her shoulder and a begging basket in her hand, while two cowrie wreaths are hung from her neck down to her ankles. She is strictly prohibited from begging when she is unclean. Basavi women are allowed to cohabit with members of their own caste or of other castes if higher to them in social standing. The *Parvatis* closely resemble the *Murlis* in their begging uniform and other respects. The only distinction between them lies in the fact that the former add to the profession of prostitutes the arts of singing and dancing and that they are strictly prohibited from combing their hair. These women are very few in number and are rarely met with in the Districts. They are enjoined to wear ornaments solely of brass when begging, but after their return they may adorn themselves as they please.

Potraja

The boys dedicated in the name of a god are called *Potraja*. These are subsequently permitted to marry in their own caste. The Name Potraja is derived from the Telugu words 'Pot' (a he-buffalo) and 'Raja' (owner) and are so designated because they officiate as priests when he-buffaloes are sacrified, to their tutelary deities. Their hair is never shorn and is always unkempt. Their services are in request when cholera or small-pox breaks out among the community. During such epidemics, he-buffaloes are sacrificed to the diety presiding over the prevailing disease. The Buffalo to be sacrificed is made to stand in front of the goddess and the Potraja, as if possessed by the goddess, tears the throat of the animal with his teeth and besmearing his body with the blood of the beast, begins to dance and foretell the future.

Widow-Marriage

A widow is allowed to marry again but she cannot marry her late husband's brother. *Tiru* or bride-price, ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 50 is paid to the parents of the widow by the bridegroom. The ceremony is very simple. A *sari* and a *choli* are presented to the bride and a *tali* is tied round her neck by the widows attending the ceremony. A feast is given to the caste people.

Divorce

Divorce is permitted on the ground of the wife's adultery and is effected with a sanction of the caste council. As a symbol of separation, some salt is tied in the woman's garment and she is driven out of the house. She is afterwards allowed to remarry by the same rites as widows.

Inheritance

The Mala follow the Hindu law of inheritance. Females inherit in default of males. A dedicated girl is entitled to share equally with her brothers in the property. A nephew, if he be a son-in-law, gets a share of his father-in-law's estate.

Religion

The Malas are in reality animistic in their creed and prefer the worship of the deities of nature and diseases to that of the great gods of the Hindu pantheon. Their chief objects of worship are Pochamma, Ellamma, Mariamma, Maisamma, Mutyalamma, to whom offerings of goats, sheep and he-buffaloes are made in the month of Ashadha (June-July), the offerings being eaten by

the votaries subsequently. Of late, the sectarian influences so prevalent among the Telugu and Tamil classes have spread to this caste also and the Malas are accordingly divided between Vibhutidharis (Saivas) and Tirmanidharis (Vaishnavas). As the great sectarian gurus (the Aradhi and Shri Vaishnava Brahmins) cannot stoop to serve at their houses, the Malas have created their own priests, the Mala Jangams officiating as priests and giving spiritual advice to the Vibhutidharis, members of the caste and Mala Dasris, initiating them into the secrets of Vaishnavism. With all this, and excepting a very few members forming the upper enlightened layer of the society, the Malas still cling persistently to their primitive animistic creed.

The Malas pay devotion to deified heroes, and Chinna Keshava Swami is worshiped with offerings of sweetmeats on Saturdays, on the first day of the year and on the Ganesh Chauth (the light fourth of Bhadrapad), the members of each household officiating as priests and consuming the offerings after the Puja.

Mala Jangams daily worship the Siva Lingam, to which food is offered before the first meal. They pay reverence to Basvanna occasionally. Females revere Gauri and also Nagalu, (the deity presiding over serpants). The Gods of the Hindu pantheon are honoured by the caste.

Mala Dasri and Jangams are their Gurus. Pambalwads, or Bendlawads, attend the marriage ceremonies and Jangams and Dasris attend the death rites.

Child Birth

On the third day after the birth of a child, the *Purud* ceremony is performed, when a goat is killed, the head is placed on the rim of the pit in which the child's umbilical cord has been buried, and the body is cooked and a feast provided to guests and friends. The head forms the perquisite of the midwife. On the 21st day, the mother goes to a well, offers puja to its rim, marches three times round it and returns home with a jar filled with water. The water is sprinkled throughout the house and the mother is rendered ceremonially pure. The child is named generally on the fifth day after its birth.

Disposal of the Dead

The dead are either buried or burnt, according to the pecuniary circumstances of the family of the deceased. In the case of burning, the ashes and bones are collected on the third day

after death and thrown into a river and the bones are buried under a platform. In the case of burial, the corpse is laid in the grave with its head pointing to the south. Among Tirmanidharis, as soon as death occurs, a Mala Desri is sent for and a fowl is sacrificed and cooked by him. He then puts tirtha, holy water, wine and a little portion of the cooked fowl in the mouth of the dead body which is then removed and buried. After burial, the bier bearers and other mourners bathe and the rest of the cooked fowl and wine are distributed among them as a blessing from the Dasri. Mourning is observed ten days for the married and three days for the unmarried. During mourning the Vibhutidharis abstain from flesh, Tirmanidharis treat the Mala Dasris with a feast of meat and wine at the grave on the 3rd, 5th and 10th days; while Vibhutidharis throw food to birds on the 3rd day after death. Jangams and Dasris attend the grave of the deceased and walk three times around it with lighted torches in their hands.

The Mala Jangams bury their dead in a sitting posture with the face to the north. No mourning is observed. On the 10th day a feast is given to the caste members. Some Vibhutidharis also bury their dead in a sitting posture.

On the Pitra Amawasya day alms are given to the Jangams and Dasris in the names of the departed ancestors.

Among Begar Malas, the house is cleansed on the 10th day after death and the relatives of the deceased go to a river or a well and worship it, offering a cocoanut. They then return to the house bearing an earth pot full of water with which sweet food is afterwards prepared.

Social Status

The Malas occupy the lowest and the most degraded position in Hindu society, being superior only to Madigas in social rank. Their touch is regarded as unclean by the higher castes, the village barber will not shave their heads nor will the village washerman wash their clothes. The wells of the higher castes cannot be used by them and they are therefore obliged to have their own separate reservoirs of water. They eat the leavings of all castes except Madigas and Dakkalwara. In matters of diet they have few scruples and eat beef, mutton, pork, horse flesh, fowls, field rats and the flesh of animals that have died a natural death. They also indulge freely in strong drinks.

Occupation

The Malas are labourers, servants, grooms and village-watchmen. They are the chief free labourers, *Begars*, of the land. They

are very grateful for a little kindness and will willingly show the road to travellers in sun or rain, at midnight or mid day. They form part of the village *Baluta* and are paid in corn and grain for the duty they render to the public. Some of them weave coarse cotton cloth. A few only have taken to cultivation, but in most cases they are engaged as farm labourers and never allowed by village farmers to acquire permanent tenures.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Caste in India—Its Nature, Function, and Origins' by : J. H. HUTTON C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc., Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, pages 68 & 69.

Fully Right Hand castes include at any rate the following : Balija, Banajiga and Komati (trading castes), Vaniyan (who yoke one bullock only), Chaliyan and Seniyan (weaving Castes), Janappan (hemp dressers), Kusavan (potters), Melakkaran (musicians), Shanan (toddy drawers), Ambattan (barbers), Vannan (washermen), Idaiyan (shepherds), Vellala, Paraiyan, *Mala,* Holeya (cultivating castes), Kurava, Odde, Irula, Vedan and Vettuvan (mostly labourers). In addition to the above there seem to be, as already stated, the women of the Chakkiliyan or Madiga caste, but the Right or Left-handedness of castes differs apparently to some extent with locality. Thus the Kaikolans[71], a weaver caste associated with Devanga, belong to the Left Hand, but the Devadasis (dancing girls) and Nattuvans (teachers of dancing girls), drawn from the Kaikolan caste, belong to the Right Hand. Conversely, there are sections both of Komatis[72] and Chaliyans[73] which belong to the Left, while the same applies to some of even the MALA in at any rate the Kurnool and Cuddapah districts. There the normal Right-Hand Mala are reported to be spoken of as *Pekinati-vandhlu* or as *Reddi-Bhumivandhlu :* the Left-Hand Mala call themselves *Murikinativandhlu,* a name said to be applied also to a class of Brahmans. These divisions of the Mala caste are endogamous; the women of the Right Hand do not wear glass bangles nor pierce the left nostril; they remove the bodice at marriage, and they forbid the remarriage of widows. The women of the Left Hand wear the *paita* over the left shoulder except at marriage.[74]

71. Thurston, Castes and Tribes, III. p. 40.

72. Ibid., I p.35 .

73. Ibid; II; p. 11.

74. Personal information from the Venerable P.B. Emmet, formerly Archdeacon of Nandyal in the Kurnool District of Madras. *Murikinati* probably = Murakanadu, a set of Brahmans following the White Yajurveda (wilson, Indian caste, II, p. 52). Pekinati possibly = Veginadu; see Wilson; loc. cit., p. 54.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Caste in India—Its Nature, Functions, and Origins' by : J.H. Hutton, C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc., Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press page 244.

The doctrine of soul-substance as a fertilizer is naturally not less applicable to animals than to human beings, and it is therefore not surprising to find the MALA of southern India and Ahir at the Gaidaur festival causing their cattle—the young in particular—to trample a pig to death, after which, according to the ancient custom, the corpse of the pig is eaten by the Ahir who thus share in the tarnsfer of the porcine life-substance to their cattle. In the case of the Korava, who have a similar practice, an instance of the substitution of a human being for the more usual pig is actually on record,[67] the unfortunate having been buried to his neck before the cattle were driven over him.

67. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, III, pp. 463 sq.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Caste in India—Its Nature, Function, and Origins' by J.H. HUTTON, C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc., Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page 285 (Glossary).

MALA : A Telugu caste of field labourers and village servants (corresponding to Pulayan).

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Caste in India' Its Nature, Function, and Origins by: J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc., Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, page 11.

....The caste is split up into a large number of sections, some of which show traces in their customs of the former existence of a matrilineal system, while one section, the Morasu, is noticeable for a custom by which at the marriage of the first daughter, or alternatively at the birth of the first grandchild into a family, the bride's mother or the wife of the grandfather's eldest son must amputate at least one joint of the third and fourth fingers of her right hand at a temple of Bhairava. The custom was practised at any rate up to the end of the last century.[5] Some of the Panta Reddis of Conjeevaram have totemistic septs which taboo the totems with which they are associated. Generally speaking, the inhabitants of the Andhra country appear to be more volatile and 'temperamental' than their neighbours, and in particular are noted for the outbreaks of rioting between the castes of the Right Hand and of the Left, two ancient factions in which the low castes of MALA and Madiga are respectively prominent as protagonists. The Chindu dance performed by Madigas with bells on their legs at marriages, and festivals generally, has had to be prohibited in several districts on account of its infuriating effect on the MALAS, and of the resulting riots.[6] The Tamil seems generally to be of a harder-headed, more practical turn of mind than the Telugu, similar musical gifts being combined with a peculiar aptitude for mathematics and physics.....

---

[5]. *Vide* Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, V, pp. 75 sqq.

[6]. *Vide* infra, p. 69.

Extract on "MALA" from 'The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, of Great Britain and Ireland—Vol. LVI, published by The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 52, Upper Bedford Place, Russell Square, London, W.C. I. pages 91 to 103.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE MALAS—AN OUTCASTE INDIAN PEOPLE

by

SYDNEY NICHOLSON

The Malas are the largest section of the "untouchables" in the Telugu country of the Madras Presidency. In the Census Report for 1911 their numbers are given as 1,511,312, which, seeing that the Telugu people roughly number about 15,500,000 gives them a percentage of nearly 10 of the total population. It will be seen, therefore, that whatever their social status, their numerical strength makes them a factor in India's problem which cannot be neglected. During the last two or three decades there has been a great movement of the Malas towards Christianity, and such converts are enumerated as Christians and are not included in the Mala total.

The distribution of the Malas is irregular, though they are to be found in considerable numbers in every district. The district which contains the highest number is Kistna, with over 300,000. Next comes Godaveri with 266,000, Nellore with 168,000 and Guntur with 147,000. Each of these districts is largely occupied with irrigated rice lands, and it is safe to say that the Malas are found in the largest numbers where there is the greatest amount of agricultural labour to be performed. Following on the rice areas, the black cotton tracts claim the heaviest population of this outcaste tribe.

Whatever may have been the origin of the name "mala", they are held to be unclean, and no word is too mean to apply to them. The Malas themselves are not proud of their name, and if possible, they avoid the utterance of it. Many of the wandering minstrels speak of themselves and their caste as *Chennuni Dasalu*, or Servants of Chennudu. At other times they speak of themselves and Ramanuja Mathasthalu, or the people belonging to the religion of Ramanuja—probably because, at the time of Ramanuja's great attempt at reform, many of the Malas became his followers. Recently the educated section of the community have begun to call themselves Adhi-Andhras, the "first Telugus".

As with every other community in India, the Malas, though not a caste in the accepted sense of the word, are nevertheless divided and subdivided in a way as bewildering as though they belonged to the caste of the twice born.

First, it is necessary to call attention to the division which exists all through South India between the Right-hand and Left-hand castes. Among the Malas *there are both Right and Left-handed sections.* How this comes about it is difficult to discover. My own conjecture is that originally the Malas all belonged to the Right-hand. Most of the Right-hand castes are Saivite in faith, and from many references it appears as though the Malas were originally followers of Siva. The story of the first Mala[1] would support this hypothesis. To-day, in the Eastern Telugu country at any rate, most of them are Vaishnavites. The change came about, I believe, in the days of the reformer Ramanuja, who made a serious attempt to bring within the fold of Hinduism those who before had been regarded as outside the pale. The Malas welcomed this attempt and became disciples of Ramanuja in great numbers and, as before mentioned, to-day many of them call themselves members of the religion of Ramanuja. When they changed their faith they also changed their "hand" and began to wear the cloth over the left shoulder, but at the time of weddings all Malas revert to what was, I believe, their old custom, and wear the cloth over the right shoulder.

There is one section of the Malas who always wear the cloth over the right shoulder. These are the Reddi-Bhumaluvandlu. They are supposed to have been late arrivals into the Ceded Districts, and there is a tradition which says that they came down into the Telugu country from the Central Provinces. The theory of their late arrival receives some support from the fact that in no place, so far as I have been able to discover, have they are village rights or service lands. It will be found on inquiry, if they have such lands, that they have been acquired by purchase.

In the first place, then, we have to recognize the division of these people into Right and Left-hand communities. These, again, are divided as follows :—

Right-hand	Reddi-Bhumalu
Left-hand	Murikinati and Pokanati

Apart from the distinction noted concerning the manner of wearing the cloth, there are other visible distinctions between the sections. The Reddi-Bhumalu women are not supposed to

[1]. *See* Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, IV, 346—7.

wear glass bangles; they should wear brass ones. Also, at the time of marriage a Reddi-Bhumalu bride is not supposed to wear the little bodice or *ravika*.

The Pokanati and Murikinati women wear the cloth over the left shoulder and tie it in the same way, and both sections are allowed to wear glass bangles; but the Pokanati women are not allowed to pierce the nostrils or to wear a nose jewel. The Murukinati women pierce the left nostril.[2]

Pokanad is a tract of country running roughly from Madras in the east to Cuddapah in the west, and from Nellore in the north to the border of the Mysore State in the south. The Pokanati section is found to be more numerous in this area than in any other part of the Telugu districts. Indeed, in the extreme west of the Telugu districts the Pokanati section is not known.

Murikinad is the country which stretches westward from the western limits of the Eastern Ghats (Cuddapah) to the Nizam's Dominions. North and south it covers the country from the Nizam's Dominions to Mysore.

If we accept the suggestion made above that the Reddi-Bhumalu are late immigrants coming from some country in the north, then we have found fairly reasonable ground for the naming of the different sections. It is said that the Reddi-Bhumalu came into the Telugu country along with the Reddis, presumably their masters, and that that is the reason for giving them the name.

The sections are strictly endogamous. Concubines are sometimes taken from a different section, but no regular marriage can be performed. Even after conversion to Christianity the antipathy to intermarriage between the sections continues.

If more than one section is resident in a village, then each section has its different headman, but the affairs of the village are controlled by the more numerous section.

For the purpose of internal administration, and not in any way connected with caste, the sections in a village are divided into *Metis*. Each *Meti* provides an elder for the caste *panchayat*

---

[2]. A legend to account for the three divisions is given in Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, ; c., IV, 346. The reason there given for the change of nand-the women of the Marikinati section began to wear the cloth over the left shoulder as an expression of disapproval of the action of the two unfaithful wives—would not account for the fact that the Pokanati women, now at any rate, also wear the cloth over the left shoulder,.

(council) and the perquisites of the village are divided according to the *Meti*. One *Meti* will be entitled to a quarter share, another to a half share, and so on. It would appear as though the *Meti* was a further development of the united family system. There is no limit to the number of *Metis* which may exist in a village; in some only one is found, in another there may be as many as twelve.

Numerically the Murikinati section seems to be the largest, and in some ways they assume a superior attitude to the other sections. Not only will they not intermarry, but they will not "interdine" with either of the other two sections, nor will they touch food prepared by them.

Gotrams or Clans

Each of the above sections is divided into *gotrams* or clans, with the exception of the Reddi-Bhumalu, and among them I have not been able to discover any separation into clans. My enquiry has been limited mainly to the Ceded Districts, and it is possible that outside that area there may be some such sub-divisions which I have not been able to trace.

The Pokanati and Murikinati sections are divided into many clans, and in every instance that I have been able to investigate the clan or *gotram* name refers to something which is strictly taboo. The name the people give to the thing which is to be avoided is *Varjitam*. Most of my enquiries have been made among those Malas who have embraced Christianity, and among them and, I believe, among others, too, the *gotram* is gradually being forgotten. I feel convinced that formerly the *gotram* was universal among the Malas, and even to day one of the most serious reproaches which can be hurled against a man is that he has "neither caste nor clan" (*kulam, gotram leni vadu*).

The following are some of the *gotrams* I have been able to discover :—

Ragi : Ambavaram, Jammalamadagu Taluk. The *pipal* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) is taboo to them.

Raganna : This clan will not sow nor eat the grain *Ragi* (*Eleusine coracana*).

Munagala : Horse-radish tree (*Moringa pterygosperma*)

Vankaya : Brinjals.

Jambi : The tree (*Acacia Suma*) is taboo.

Roti : An inflected form of *Rolu,* the grindstone. This clan will not eat the grain which falls to the earth from the grindstone.

Yerragaddala : Will not cultivate or use onions.

Sandra : Will not use the *Sandra* (*Acacia sp.*) tree for any purpose.

Kodi : Will not eat or keep fowls.

Gurram : The horse.

Pilli : The cat.

Amudapu : Castor oil.

Poyi : Fireplace. Will not use a proper fireplace, but only stones, and in this case the word also is taboo.

Maredu : Bel fruit and tree (*Aegle marmelos*) taboo.

Yellamgoddu : Bear taboo. Worship the animal, but will not see it if they can help it.

Palu : Milk taboo, but will eat ghee and take butter milk.

Are : Are tree (*Bauhinia racemosa*) taboo.

Avisi : Common flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) taboo.

Gokula : From Go=Cow, *plus Kulam*=clan.

Cowherds. These do not use doors or door-frames to their house but only a mat. (I cannot trace the connection here).

Kanige : Kanige tree taboo (*Pongamia glabra*).
Visanakarra : Will not use fans.

So far as I have been able to discover no metal is used as a *gotram* name. This can scarcely be said to indicate that the *gotrams* and their taboos were prior to the discovery of metals, as the horse, whose introduction into India is thought to be late, is among them, and also Brinjals which are believed to have been brought to India by the Portuguese.

House-names

Each *gotram* is again divided into *house-names,* and every Mala is known by his own name and his house-name, in very much the same way as we are known by our Christian and surnames.

There seems to be no limit to the number of house-names, and they have apparently risen in many different ways. Some of them are "place" names notifying the place or village from which the family comes or came, as for example, "Owk," a village in the Kurnool District. Others are evidently nicknames given on acccount of some personal peculiarity. Among these I have found the following ; *tittula,* meaning "thin" ; *gajji,* meaning "itch" ; *pasi,* meaning "miserly". Occupation names are also common, as *maddela,* meaning "drummer" ; *paggalu,* "weavers of ropes," etc.

The *gotrams* and house-names are strictly exogamous. The wife takes the clan and house-name or her husband.

The men belonging to each particular "house" are related to each other as "brothers", and to the men of other houses in the same section as "brothers-in-law". Men belonging to different sections, that is the three main divisions, may speak to one another in terms of brother or brother-in-law, but it is allowed only by courtesy and not as a right.

Below are given a few examples of marriages showing the endogamous nature of the section and the exogamous nature of the clan and house.

	Bridegroom	*Bride*
Section	Pokanati	Pokanati
Gotram	Kanige	Visanakarra
House	Chitala	Palem
Section	Reddi-Bhumalu	Reddi-Bhumalu
Gotram	Rachella	Rachella. Only one clan in this Seckon Vidhi.
Section	Reddi-Bhumala	Reddi-Bhumala
Gotram	Rachella	Rachella
House	Soranna	Akkidasari
Section	Murikinati	Murikinati
Gotram	Maradikayya	Not known
House	Bairu Totti	Kokatam
Section	Murikinati	Murikinati
Gotram	Visanakarra	Mamidi
House	Maddela	Owk

How far the house-names are limited to a particular clan or section I did not enquire.

The Rev. Gordon Bennett of the Wesleyan Mission, Hyderabad, tells me that the three main divisions of Reddi-Bhumalu, Pokanati and Murikinati do not exist in the Hyderabad territory, and there does not seem to be anything which would correspond to these great subdivisions of the Ceded Districts. He divides the Mala community of Hyderabad into two main divisions—

A. According to hereditary occupation, and

B. According to religion or religious avocation.

He also gave me a list of common house-names which had been collected by him. Many of the words used were new to me, and are probably corrupt. Quite a number are evidently place-names, whilst still others are occupation-names. There are others, however, which would appear like caste totems, in which case they would have originally been, whatever they are now, clan or gotram names. Such are *Pilli* (cat), *Kokku* (bandicoot), *Eddu* (bull), and *Gorre* (sheep). A personal investigation might have helped to distinguish more clearly between what were true house-names and what were old clan-names.

Caste Organization

Generally speaking a village consists of only one section of the caste. One does not find, except in rare instances, people of the Murikinati and Pokanati sections living in the same village. The Reddi-Bhumalu may live, indeed as a rule they do live, alongside one of the other sections, but, as already stated, this section has no right to the village perquisities and lands.

The community is divided into *Metis*. This word may be derived from the word meaning a plough and so may indicate the plough's share. On the other hand, the people say that it means "big", in which case it would be derived from a word meaning "chief or Lord". Whatever the derivation may be, *Meti* now means a "share", and each family has a certain share in the service lands and in the perquisites which accrue to the community. The size of the share varies and is calculated in fractions of a rupee (i.e. ½, ¼, ⅛, 1/16, etc.). If there is more than one *Meti*, then the elders of the governing *Panchayat* are selected from the different *Metis* according *to the* amount of share held. The village site is also divided up in the same way, and, in the event of one *Meti* multiplaying more rapidly than the others, and thus requiring

more house-room, possibilities for serious dispute arise. Lack of knowledge of this system of internal polity often leads Government officers into wrong decisions when troubles of this kind are brought before them for settlement.

The office of village elder is largely hereditary, and it is only in the event of excessive incompetence that the caste would change an elder or refuse to allow the office of a deceased elder to be taken by his son. The number of elders may vary from four to twelve, but usually there is an even number, and it is before this council of elders that all disputes are first brought. If a man has any complaint against a neighbour he informs the elders, and they arrange to meet in council the next day. The complainant is expected to provide liquid refreshment and also monetary compensation to the elders for the loss of their time. If the case is a simple one, the elders settle it themselves, but if the case is of a serious nature they may call in others from their own caste or from the other eight castes.

When the elders are gathered together the accused is summoned by the *Salavadi* or caste messenger. The proceedings are orderly and, if any outsider or any of the women who have not been called on to give evidence venture to interrupt, they are pelted with filth, or a grindstone is hung round their neck. It sometimes happens that the enquiry is not just the elders may have taken bribes, and in that event there is provided a court of appeal which will be referred to later.

After the enquiry the elders pronounce their decision. If the culprit confesses that he has been at fault and prostrates himself before all who are assembled, he will be leniently dealt with, but if he is bold and unrepentant a heavy fine will be imposed. If he is boastful and rude, he will be pelted with filth, a millstone will be hung round his neck and he will be spat upon. Or he may be trussed like a fowl and left exposed to the sun and heat.

Should the man, after the enquiry, pay his fine and submit without trouble the matter will be ended—for a time—but he will be ever seeking for an opportunity of injuring the man who has been the cause of bringing him into such disgrace.

The Chetti

Reference was made above to the provision of a court of appeal in the event of dissatisfaction. This is the appeal to the *Chetti*. The whole country was divided into areas over which these caste magistrates had jurisdiction. What the areas were I have not been able to discover, but in the days of my residence

in the Jammalamadagu Taluk of the Cuddapah district, the *Chetti* for that area was resident in Gandi-kotta and ruled over the whole of one Taluk at least. These men always belong to the Linga Balja caste and are Saivites. They have power over nine castes among whom are the Malas. And it is remarkable that strict Saivites, as these men are should have authority over a community who pride themselves in being called the followers of Ramanuja. The *Chetti*, because he has the power of outcasting, is the most powerful man in the neighbourhood, and it speaks well for their honesty of purpose that few of them were ever men of wealth or substance.

In the event of an appeal the accused applies to the *Chetti*, who will institute a new enquiry. The accused has to provide the Chetti's costs and other expenses involved. There is no laxity in the carrying out of the enquiry. None but those concerned are allowed near, and, if anyone transgresses the canons of the *Panchayat*, they are severely punished. No one is allowed to speak without the permission of the *Chetti* and all must abide by his decision, however rich or great they may be. The members of the *Panchayat* are usually chosen from the elders of the community concerned, but occasionally others noted for their ability in speech are chosen to sit on the council. The fines imposed are divided between the *Chetti* and the *Panchayat* members and the caste. Generally speaking, the fines levied upon the people of the Mala community do not exceed Rs. 100.

Should the guilty man refuse to abide by the decision of the *Chetti* he will be outcasted; that is, besides being refused permission to draw from his caste well and the use of the common grinding stone, the barber, the potter, the washerman, and the merchant will refuse to serve him. Under conditions of that kind the man must either conform or leave the district.

I am informed that in the old days the regular method of administration was as follows: (1) The village elders; (2) The *Chetti;* (3) the third-class *Guru;* (4) the second-class *Guru;* (5) the great *Guru.*

The whole country was divided and each Chetti, Minor *Guru*, and Great *Guru* had his clearly defined area of jurisdiction. In former days in the Ceded Districts there are said to have been four Great and eighteen Minor *Gurus.* How many *Chettis* there were I do not know, but their area of jurisdiction cannot have been great, as they had to be easily accessible.

Both *Gurus* and *Chettis* were married men, and the office in each case was hereditary.

The Salavadi

The *Salavadi* is the caste beadle, and his name is derived from *Salaha,* meaning Council, and *wadhi,* meaning complaint. In the east of the Ceded Districts he is always a Mala, but he fulfils the office of beadle or messanger not only for his own caste, but also for the whole of those other eight castes which are subjects to the *Chetti,* and also for the Reddis, who are not so subject.

He may carry on, and usually does, other business, but, when his services are required for disputes, weddings or funerals, he must leave his own work and carry out his official duty. As payment he receives presents according to the wealth and generosity of those on whose business he goes, and also a daily allowance for food.

He possesses, as badge of office, a large brass spoon about 1½ feet in length, the bowl of which will hold about one pint or less. In the middle of the handle is a little shrine with an image of the bull of Siva, and at the end of the handle is a chain about 4 feet in length to which a bell is attached. If this bell is sounded before the house of a Hindu it is counted as a bad omen, for the *Salavadi* at a funeral walks in front of the bier and at each step he allows the bell to hit his leg, thus causing it to ring. There is a peculiarity about this badge of office in that at all ceremonies it receives its own share of betel, grain etc., just as though it were a man. Thus at all the ceremonies the *Salavadi* receives a double share. In former times the *Salavadi* was allowed to take one spoon measure of every sort of grain in the weekly market, but this custom is now dead, and he simply receives what the merchants choose to give him.

The origin of the *Salavadi* is told in the following story :—

Long ago some Balji people came from the West country to the East for trade. One day they stayed in the house of a Golla, who was very rich in cattle, and they, wishing to take some of his cattle back to their own country, bargained and paid the price. They were unable, however, to drive the cattle beyond the village bounds. Thus far would they go, but no further. At last they stole a Mala boy, who was a herd in the house of the Golla. Him they put into a bag and tied him on to the back of a cow. This cow they led with a rope, and all the other cattle followed without

trouble. After reaching their own country the Baljis brought the youth up with great kindness, and in course of time got him a wife from his own country, and gave him a *birudhu* or token in the form of a spoon. To this day the Baljis are most favourably disposed towards the Malas, and often finance them in their cases against the Reddis, especially in connection with the Chindu dance.

* * * * *

The same sections, *gotrams*, and house-names are, to some extent, found amongst the other and higher castes as are found among the Malas. I give below a few instances which have come under my personal knowledge.

In the village of Chinnavenuturla, Jammalamadagu Taluk, Cuddapah District, the house-name *"Kota"* is common to both Sudras and Malas. They call one another by "brother" names, but not by "brother-in-law" names.

In Akumalla, Koilkuntla Taluk, Kurnool District, the house-name *"Sriramulu"* is common to both Sudras and Malas. They also call one another "brother" names.

In Dommera-nandyal, Jammalamadagu Taluk, Cuddapah District, both Sudras and Malas are called *"Manchala"* (cot), most probably a *gotram* name. They call one another by "brother" names, and it is said that, until quite recently, the Sudra women used to stand, as they would do on the approach of their own men, when a Mala man came along.

In Perusomala Koilkuntla Taluk, Kurnool District, both Sudras and Malas are called *"Madham"*, and in Nemaladinne (same Taluk) *"Pothula"*.

In Uppalapad, Jammalamadagu Taluk, the house name *"Marem-Reddi-waru"* is common to Malas and Sudras, and they call one another by "brother" names. Among the Sudras of the same village is also another house-name, *"Viram-Reddi-waru"*, who evidently stand in the marriage line to the *Marem-Reddi-waru, and they call* THE *Males by "brother-inlaw" names, and are so called by the Malas.*

Whether the common possession of a house-name or a *gotram* name is an indication of a common origin I could not say, but the use of familiar terms of address would seem to suggest that at one time the caste distinction was not nearly so rigid as it has since become.

The Dasari or Malia Priest

The Malas are not allowed into the temples or shrines of the orthodox Hindu, and have a religious organization of their own. The priests are called *Dasaris,* servants or slaves. All the *Dasaris* are *Vaishnavites.*

There is usually a *Dasari,* or as they are sometimes called, a *Nambi,* for every three or four villages. Some few of them have *inam* and temple service lands, but the majority live on the charity of the people and the offerings they receive at the time of deaths, marriages, haircutting, etc., when their services are necessary. They are also minstrels, and relate in song the story of Chennudu and of Pedda Muni, the great Mala sage. There is in the West Telugu country a class called *Varapu Desari,* who act as *pujaris* for the Sudras, and in all districts the *Dasaris* receive certain emoluments from Sudras for singing at weddings and funerals. They receive alms from *all* classes.

Occasionally disturbances take place on account of the Saivites' objection to the *Dasaris.* Coming into their streets and quarters, and it is at such times as these that *pavadam* (resuscitation of a dead person) is supposed to take place. I am told that the performance of this miracle takes place as follows. The people firmly believe that, if a *Dasari* is offended, he will revenge himself for the smaller offences by piercing his cheeks or his side; for more serious insult by cutting open his bowels; and for a very serious offence by killing himself, usually by severing his head from body. If one kills himself in this way, the news is said to be immediately and miraculously conveyed to every *Dasari* and *Nambi* in the country, and they all come as quickly as possible to the place where the body lies. Until their arrival the body has been kept covered with a new cloth and water constantly sprinkled over it to keep the wounds from drying up. When the *Gurus, Dasaris* and others are collected, some of them show their miraculous power by frying fish, which come to life again on being placed in water, others by cutting limes in halves and making them join together again; the remainder sing hymns to Chennudu and call on the name Govinda. The chief *Dasaris* or *Gurus* then dig a hole, and in it light a sacred fire of sandal-wood which must be kindled by the friction between two pieces of wood. All assembled round the sacred fire, and join in the recitation of the *dandakam* (blank verse), after which the *Dasaris* dance the Request Dance. The *Guru* then takes a lotus flower (simulated by placing betel leaves in a small brass vessel), and puts it in a plate along with the severed head. The plate is then carried three times round the corpse by the deceased's wife if he was

married, and, if not, by a *Basavi* or dedicated prostitute. The Guru takes the head and joins it to the trunk, the junction being plentifully daubed with sacred earth. Another new cloth is then spread over the corpse, and over all a network of flowers. The *Dasaris* again walk round the corpse calling on Yembaru Manara, repeating at the same time the *Tirumantram* of Ramanuja Kurumayya, the chief *Guru,* then strokes the corpse from head to foot three times with his staff, after which he places his foot on the head and calls on the body to rise.

Though the ability of the *Dasaris* to perform the above marvel is implicity believed, yet I have never met anyone who has seen it done, and in this respect it is like the famous rope trick of the Indian juggler. I have met those who say that they have seen it attempted. On one occasion it failed because the wife was unwell and the "pollution touched (it) and it became a corpse". On another occasion the ceremony was not carried out with fitting reverence and failed in consequence.

The *Dasaris* have certain badges of office which are said to have been given to them by Chennudu after the conquest of Vijayanagar. These consist of an iron staff, a copper pot, a tiger skin, and an antelope skin.

The old *Dasari* families say that they received permission to practise their profession from the ancient kings, or even from Chennudu himself, and they further say that they still possess the copper inscriptions which were given to their ancestors and the old badges of office. There are, on the other hand, *Dasaris* who take up the profession because they desire an easy life, or because they have a call.

To become a *Dasari* it is necessary to be ordained to the office by Kurumayya, the caste *Guru.* The ceremony is as follows : Kurumayya takes an image of Chennudu and bathes it, after which he worships it with an offering of flowers. He reads the *mantram* and then makes a fire in a small hollow in front of the image ; the fire is the *home-gundam* or sacred fire of sandal-wood. The initiate, newly bathed, comes forward, worships the feet of the *Guru* and prostrates himself before the image. Meanwhile the branding-irons, of which there are two, one of the *chank* (conch) and one of the *chakram* (wheel), have been heating in the fire. These are now taken by the *Guru* and the candidate is branded on the right shoulder with the *Chank* and on the left shoulder with the *chakram.* The branding must be properly done and must leave a permanent mark, as in after years, this is equivalent to the licence from the *Guru,* and if it is not there the man may be

excommunicated as a *Donga-Dasari*. After the branding the *Guru* whispers the *Tiru-mantram* into the ear if the initiate, and he is given sacred water (sugar and *tulasi* leaves mixed with water) to drink from the *chank*. Before drinking, and whilst still holding the shell in his hand, he says: "I am guilty. I am your slave". After this he is at liberty to collect alms and to wear the *namam*, but he is not a fully-fledged *Dasari* before he has attended the festival held at Ahobilam in the Nallamalai hills, nor till he has bowed at the feet of Sri Tiruvallur Jiyyangar, the head priest of the South Indian Vaishnavas, from whom he receives a blessing.

Dasaris, like nearly every other little community in India, are divided into different sections, and I have been able to trace four different kinds :—

1. In the village of Paspala, there is a section who call themselves *Paspala Ayya-varu*. These put on the *namam* with saffron instead of vermilion. They say that their ancestors were possessed of the power of killing people by means of spiritual aid, and they profess still to retain this power. One of their ancestors was Alugu Singari, who had a horn in the middle of his head. On one occasion when there was no rain he spread his cloak on the ground and prayed to Chennudu to send rain. The rain came in abundance, but neither the *Dasari* nor his clock got wet.

2. *Godugulu-varu*.—These were they who held the war umbrella for Chennudu in the war which the people say was waged about Vijayanagar between the Saivities and Vaishnavites and in which Chennudu led the latter forces. One of their ancestores was Chenna Dasari, who killed himself and performed *pavadam* in the town or Owk, the Brahmans of which place had obstructed the procession of Chennudu's umbrella, which was being taken to Ahobilam. This umbrella is still carried in procession each year from Kona Uppalapad near Yadiki in the Anantapur District, and passes through Owk on its way to Ahobilam.

3. *Padigelu-varu*.—These carried the *padige* or cobra's hood, which is one of the kingly emblems, before Chennudu in the same war.

4. *Telapuri-varu*.—This section of the *Dasaris* live in Telapuri near Banganapalle. It is said that their ancestor, Tirumala Dasari, brought a dead cow to life through kicking it. The point to note, however, in connection with this section is that although they are Malas, they are regarded as *Gurus* by the washerman caste, the barber, the potter, and the Dommaras, and are received without caste distinction to the present time.

No attempt to define the duties of the *Dasaris* as caste priest can be atempted without going into a detailed description of the marriage and death customs of the people. Suffice it to say that, where in the higher castes a Brahman is called in for ministerial duties, the Mala calls in his *Dasari*.

Laws of Inheritance and Succession

Brothers usually do not desire to divide any family inheritance, but wish, as far as possible, to remain united. Parents desire to keep the family intact, and it is never their wish, and it is against all tradition, for any of their sons to leave the family roof to seek fortune otherwhere. The root of the united family system is the dislike to a division of the family possessions.

It may be stated as a general fact that if the brothers of a family divide, it is because their wives do not agree with one another, and it is on their persuasion that the division comes about. If such a division takes place during the lifetime of the parents the first thing is to make provision for them afterwards, the remaining property and furniture is divided *equally* among all the brothers. This is done through a *Panchayat*. If the younger brothers agree, it is usual to give some furniture—a plough or something—as an extra to the eldest son. In former times this was regarded as a right and not a concession.

The ancestral house and lands are divided from *west to east*, and the most westerly portion of either house or lands is given to the eldest son, and so on to the youngest, who takes the most easterly portion. If the land varies in quality, in order to get a more equitable division it may be divided from north to south, in which case the eldest son takes the most northerly part.

If the parents choose to live with one of the sons instead of being separate, their portion is reduced proportionately. If they live separately, at their death the property they had been allowed is again divided up among the brothers. If they have lived with one of the sons, then what is left in the way of land and houses goes to that son, *but all movable property, jewels etc.* are divided out.

A daughter has absolutely no claim on any of her parent's property, neither can she claim maintenance. It is on this account that a girl looks to marriage as her only goal. The most she can hope for from her brothers is a cloth, or a jacket, and a few day's food when she goes to visit them at periods a year of two apart.

If one of the brothers dies and leaves a widow without children, she is entitled to remain in the house which belonged to

her husband, and to enjoy his property until she dies. She must, however, live *there* and must, before the eyes of her husband's people, show that she is living a good life; if not, she loses all claim. On no account is she entitled to dispose of either movable or immovable property. Should she determine to leave the old house she is only entitled to take with her those jewels which, as a widow, she is allowed to wear. She may not take the nose ring, the wedding token or the toe rings, or the silver belt, all of which are worn by married women only. It is a common thing for a childless widow to adopt the son of either the husband's elder or younger brother, and she will probably arrange for his marriage with her brother's daughter.

Before closing I want to say a word about the *Binuku* or *Biluku-varu*, the people without rights. Such are found in many villages, and they are quite distinct from the Reddi-Bhumalu section, who, as was stated before, do not have service lands or the right to village perquisites. The *Binukus* possess no *inam* lands, and have no claim on village perquisites, neither can they be called on for village service. Sometimes an *inamdar* who has no children might adopt a *Binuku* child, who would thus become entitled to lands and rights.

These *Binukus* are very often the offspring of irregular connections; children of parents who belonged to different sections. More rarely they are immigrants from some other village, who have settled down in a distant place because they have done something which prevents their safe return. Probably they have run off with a Sudra or a Madiga woman.

Even the land on which these people build their houses is not, and cannot become, their own; they are allowed to stay only on sufference. Trouble often arises in a village through a *Binuku* family attempting to dispose of the house site. Because of their origin, and because they have no rights, the rest of the people regard them very lightly. "They have no house in the village, nor field in the forest". They must in all factions help the people who have given them house room. They are a striking example of the sins of the fathers being visited on the children, for in marriage they must seek their partners among people who, like themselves, are landless and portionless.

Extract on "Mala" from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India, by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger Society d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Correspondante, K. RANGACHARI, M.A., of the Madras Government Museum Volume IV—K to M. Government Press, Madras: 1909 pages 329 to 387.

Mala :—"The Malas", Mr. H. A. Stuart, writes* are the Pariahs of the Telugu country. Dr. Oppert derives the word from a Dravidian root meaning a mountain, which is represented by the Tamil malai, Telugu mala, etc. so that Mala is the equivalent of Paraiyan, and also of Mar or Mhar and the Mal of Western and Central Bengal. I cannot say whether there is sufficient ground for the assumption that the vowel of a Dravidian root can be lengthened in this way. I know of no other derivation of Mala. (In C.P. Brown's Telugu Dictionary it is derived from maila, ditry). The Malas are almost equally inferior in position to the Madigas. They eat beef and drink heavily, and are debarred entrance to the temples and the use of the ordinary village wells, and have to serve as their own barbers and washermen. They are the musicians of the community, and many of them (for example in the villages near Jammalamadugu in the Cuddapah district) weave the coarse white cotton fabrics usually worn by men."

The Malas will not take water from the same well as the Madigas, whom they despite for eating carrion, though they eat beef themselves.

Both Malas and Tamil Paraiyans belong to the right hand section. In the Bellary district the Malas are considered to be the servants of the Banajigas (traders), for whom they do certain services, and act as caste messengers (chalavathi) on the occasion of marriages and funerals. At marriages, six Malas selected from certain families, lead the procession, carrying flags, etc. and sit in the pial (verandah) of the marriage house. At funerals, a Mala carries the brass ladle bearing the insignia of the right hand section, which is the emblem of the authority of the Desai or headman of the section.

The Malas have their own dancing girls (Basavis), barbers, and musicians (Bainedus). Dasaris or priests, and beggars and bards called Mastigas and Pambalas (drum people) who earn their living by reciting stories of Ankamma, etc. during the funeral ceremonies of some Telugu castes, acting as musicians at marriages

---

*Madras Census Report, 1891.

and festivals to the deities, begging, and telling fortunes. Other beggars are called Nityula (Nitiyadasu, immortal). In some places, Tsakalas (washerman caste) will wash for the Malas, but the clothes must be stepped in water, and left till the Tsakala comes for them. The Malas will not eat food prepared or touched by Kamsalas, Medaras, Madigas, Beri Chettis, Boyas, or Bhatrazus. The condition of the Malas has in recent times, been ameliorated by their reception into mission schools.

In a case, which came before the High Court of Madras on appeal a few years ago, a Mala, who was a convert to Christianity, was sentenced to confinement in the stocks for using abusive language. The Judge, in summing up, stated that "the test seems to be not what is the offender's creed, whether Muhammadan, Christian, or Hindu, but what is his caste. If he belong to one of the lower castes, a change of creed would not of itself, in my judgment, make any difference, provided he continues to belong to the caste. If he continues to accept the rules of the caste in social and moral matters, acknowledges the authority of the headmen, takes part in caste meetings and ceremonies, and, in fact, generally continue to belong to the castes, then, in my judgment, he would be within the purview of the regulation. If, on the other hand, he adopts the moral standards of Christianity instead of those in his caste, if he accepts the authority of his pastors and teachers in place of that of the headman of the caste, if he no longer takes part in the distinctive meetings and ceremonies of the caste ..... then he can no longer be said to belong to one of the lower castes of the people, and his punishment by confinement in the stocks is no longer legal".

Between the Malas and Madigas there is no love lost, and the latter never allow the former, on the occasion of a festival, to go in palanquins or ride on horseback. Quite recently, in the Nellore district, a horse was being led at the head of a Madiga marriage procession, and the Malas followed, to see whether the bridegroom would mount it. To the disgust of the Madigas, the young man refused to get on it, from fear lest he should fall off.

The Malas will not touch leather shoes, and if they are slippered with them, a fine is inflicted, and the money spent on drink.

Of the share which the Malas take in a village festival in the Cuddapah district, an excellent account is given by Bishop Whitehead.* "The village officials and leading ryots," he writes,

*Madras Diocesan Record, 1905.

"collect money for the festival, and buy, among other things, a barren sheep and two lambs. Peddamma and Chinnamma are represented by clay images of female form made for the occasion, and placed in a temporary shrine of cloth stretched over four poles. On the appointed evening, rice is brought, and poured out in font of the idol by the potter, and rice, ghi (clarified butter), and curds are poured on the top of it. The victims are then brought and their heads cut off by a washerman. The heads are placed on the ground before the idol. The people then pour water on the heads, and say 'speak' (paluku). If the mouth opens, it is regarded as a sign that the goddess is propitious. Next, a large pot of boiled cholam (millet) is brought, and poured in a heap before the image, a little further away than the rice. Two buffaloes are then brought by the Malas and Madigas. One of the malas, called the Asadi, chants the praises of the godess during the ceremony. The animals are killed by a Madiga, by cuting their throats with a knife, one being offered to Peddamma, and the other to Chinnamma. Some of the cholam is then taken in baskets, and put under the throat of the buffaloes till it is soaked with blood, and then put aside. A Madiga then cuts off the heads of the buffaloes with a sword, and places them before the idol. He also cuts off one of the forelegs of each, and puts it crosswise in the mouth. Some of the cholam is then put on the two heads, and two small earthen saucers are put upon it. The abdomens are the then cut open, and some of the fat taken out, melted, and put in each saucer with a lighted wick. A layer of fat is spread over the eyes and mouths of the two heads, some of the refuse of the stomach is mixed with the cholam soaked in blood, and a quantity of margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves put over the cholam. The Asadi then takes some of this mixture, and sprinkles it round the shrine, saying 'Ko, bali', i.e., accept the sacrifice. Then the basket is given to another Mala, who asks permission from the village officials and ryots to sprinkle the cholam. He also asks that a lamb may be killed. The lamb is killed by a washerman, and the blood allowed to flow into the cholam in the basket. The bowels of the lamb are taken out, and tied round the wrist of the Mala who holds the basket, and puts it round his neck. He then goes and sprinkle the cholam mixed with blood, etc. in some cases round the village, and in others before each house, shouting 'Ko, bali' as he goes. The people go in procession with him, carrying swrods and clubs to drive away evil spirits. During the procession, limes are cut in half, and thrown into the air to propitiate evil spirits. Other lambs are killed at intervals during the course of the procession. In the afternoon, the carcases of the two buffaloes offered the night before are taken away by the Malas

and Madigas. One is cut open, and some of the flesh cooked near the shrine. Part of it, with some of the cholam offered before the images, is given to five Mala children, called Siddhulu, i.e., holy or sinless, who, in some cases are covered with a cloth during the meal. The rest is eaten by Malas. The remainder of the carcases is divided among the Malas and Madigas, who take it their own homes for a feast. The carcases of the lambs belong to the Malas and washermen. The carcase of the barren sheep is the perquisite of the village officials, though the Kurnam, being a Brahmin, gives his portion away".

At a festival to the village goddess which is held at Dowlaishweram in the Godavari district once every three years, a buffalo is sacrificed. "Votive offerings of pots of buttermilk are presented to the goddess, who is taken outside the village, and the pots are emptied there. The head of the buffalo and a pot of its blood are carried round the village by a Mala, and a pig is sacrificed in an unusual and cruel manner. It is buried up to its neck, and cattle are driven over it until it is trampled to death. This is supposed to ensure the health of men and cattle in the ensuing year".**

In connection with a village festival in the Godavari district, Bishop Whitehead writes as follows.† "At Ellore, which is a town of considerable size and importance, I was told that in the annual festival of Mahalakshmi about ten thousand animals are killed in one day, rich people sending as many as twenty or thirty. The blood then flows down into the fields behind the place of sacrifice in a regular flood, and carts full of sand are brought to cover up what remains on the spot. The heads are piled up in a heap about fifteen feet high in front of the shrine, and a large earthen basin, about 1½ feet in diameter, is then filled with gingelly oil and put on the top of the heap, a thick cotton wick being placed in the basin and lighted. The animals are all worshipped with the usual namaskaram (folded hands raised to the forehead) before they are killed. This slaughter of victims goes on all day, and at midnight about twenty or twenty-five buffaloes are sacrificed, their heads being cut off by a Madiga pujari (priest), and, together with the carcases, thrown upon the large heaps of rice, which have been presented to the goddess, till the rice is soaked with blood. The rice is collected in about ten or fifteen large baskets, and is carried on a large cart drawn by buffaloes or bullocks, with the Madiga pujari seated on it. Madigas sprinkle the rice along the streets and on the walls of the

**Gazetteer of the Godavari district.

†Madras Museum Bull. V. 3, 1907.

houses, as the cart goes along, shouting poli, poli (food). A large body of men of different castes, Pariahs and Sudras, go with the procession, but only the Madigas and Malas (the two sections of the Pariahs) shout poli, the rest following in silence. They have only two or three torches to show them the way, and no tom-toms or music. Apparently the idea is that, if they make a noise or display a blaze of lights, they will attract the evil spirits, who will swoop down on them and do them some injury, though in other villages it is supposed that a great deal of noise and flourishing of sticks will keep the evil spirits at bay. Before the procession starts, the heads of the buffaloes are put in front of the shrine, with the right forelegs in their mouths, and the fat from the entrails smeared about half an inch thick over the whole face, and a large earthern lamp on the top of each head. The Pambalas play tom-toms, and chant a long story about Gangamma till day break, and about 8 A.M. they put the buffalo heads into separate baskets with the lighted lamps upon them, and these are carried in procession through the town to the sound of tom-toms. All castes follow, shouting and singing. In former times, I was told, there was a good deal of fighting and disturbance during this procession, but now the police maintain order. When the procession arrives at the municipal limits, the heads are thrown over the boundary, and left there. The people then all bathe in the canal, and return home. On the last day of the festival which, I may remark, lasts for about three months, is small cart is made of margosa wood, and a stake fixed at each of the four corners, and pig and fowl are tied to each stake, while a fruit, called dubakaya, is impaled on it instead of the animal. A yellow cloth, sprinkled with the blood of the buffaloes, is tied round the sides of the cart, and some margosa leaves are tied round the cloth. A Pambala sits on the cart, to which are fastened two large ropes, each about 200 yards long. Then men of all castes without distinction, lay hold of the ropes, and drag the cart round the town to the sound of tom-toms and music. Finally it is brought outside the municipal limits and left there, the Pariahs taking away the animals and fruits".

The following detailed account of the Peddamma or Sunkulamma jatra (festival) in the Kurnool district, is given in the Manual. "This is a ceremony strictly local, in which the entire community of a village takes part, and which all outsiders are excluded from participating in. It is performed whenever a series of crops successively fail or cattle die in large numbers of murrain, and is peculiarly adapted, by the horrible nature of the attendant rites and the midnight hour chosen for the exhibition of its most ghastly scenes, to impress the minds of an ignorant

people with a belief in its efficacy. When the celebration of the jatra is resolved on, a dark Tuseday night is selected for it, and subscriptions are collected and deposited with the Reddi (headman) or some respectable man in the village. Messengers are sent off to give intimation of the day fixed for the jatra to the Bynenivadu, Bhutabaligadu, and Poturaju, three of the principal actors in the ceremony. At the same time a buffalo is purchased, and, after having its horns painted with saffron (turmeric) and adorned with margosa leaves, is taken round the village in procession with tom-toms beating, and specially devoted to the sacrifice of the goddess Peddamma or Sunkulamma on the morning of the Tuesday on which the ceremony is to take place. The village potter and carpenter are sent for, and ordered to have ready by that evening two images of the goddess, one of clay and the other of juvi wood, and a new cloth and a quantity of rice and dholl (*peas: Cajanus indicus*) are given to each of them. When the images are made, they are dressed with the new cloths, and the rice and dholl are cooked and offered as naivedyam to the images. In some villages only one image, of clay, is made. Meanwhile the villagers are busy erecting a pandal (booth) in front of the village chavidi (caste meeting house), underneath which a small temple is erected of cholam straw. The Bynenivadu takes a handful of earth, and places it inside this little temple, and the village washerman builds a small pyal (dais) with it, and decorates it with rati (streaks of different coloured powders). New pots are distributed by the potter to the villagers, who, according to their respective capabilities, have a large or small quantity of rice cooked in them, to be offered as kumbham at the proper time. After dark, when these preparations are over, the entire village community, including the twelve classes of village servants, turn out in a body, and, preceded by the Bynenivadu and Asadivandlu, proceed in procession with music playing to the house of the village potter. There the image of the goddess is duly worshipped, and a quantity of raw rice is tied round it with a cloth. A ram is sacrificed on the spot, and several limes are cut and thrown away. Borne on the shoulders of the potter, the image is then taken through the streets of the village, Bynenivadu and Asadivandlu dancing and capering all the way, and the streets being drenched with the blood of several rams sacrificed at every turning of the road, and strewed with hundreds of limes cut and thrown away. The image is then finally deposited in the temple of straw already referred to, and another sheep is sacrified as soon as this is done. The wooden image, made by the carpenter, is also brought in with the same formalities, and placed by the side of the image of clay. A pot of toddy is similarly brought in from the house of the Idigeavadu (toddy-drawer) and set before the imagaes. Now

the devarapotu, or buffalo specially devoted to the sacrifice of the goddess, is led in from the Reddi's house in procession, together with a sheep and a large pot of cooked rice. The rice in the pot is emptied in front of the images and formed into a heap, which is called the kumbham, and to it are added the contents of many new pots, which the villagers have ready filled with cooked rice. The sheep is then sacrificed, and its blood shed on the heap. Next comes the turn of the devarapotu, the blood of which also, after it has been killed, is poured over the rice heap. This is followed by the slaughter of many more buffaloes and sheep by individuals of the community, who might have taken vows to offer sacrifices to the goddess on this occasion. While the carnage is going on, a strict watch is kept on all sides, to see that no outsider enters the village, or steals away any portion of the blood of the slaughtered animals, as it is believed that all the benefit which the villagers hope to reap from the performance of the jatra will be lost to them if an outsider should succeed in taking away a little of the blood to his village. The sacrifice being over, the head and leg of one of the slaughtered buffaloes are severed from its body, and placed before the goddess with the leg inserted into the mouth of the head. Over this head is placed a lighted lamp, which is fed with oil and buffalo's fat. Now starts a fresh procession to go round the village streets. A portion of the kumbham or blood stained rice heaped up before the image is gathered into two or three baskets, and carried with the procession by washermen or Madigas. The Bhutabaligadu now steps forward in a state of perfect nudity, with his body clean shaven from top to toe, and smeared all over with gore, and taking up handfuls of rice (called poli) from the baskets, scatters them broadcast over the streets. As the procession passes on, bhutams or supernatural being are supposed to become visible at short distances to the carriers of the rice baskets, who pretend to fall into trances, and, complaining of thirst, call for more blood to quench it. Every time this happens, a fresh sheep is sacrificed, and sometimes limes are cut and thrown in their way. The main streets being thus sprinkled over with poli or blood-stained rice, the lanes or gulleys are attended to by the washermen of the village, who give them their share of the poli. By this time generally the day dawns, and the goddess is brought back to her straw temple, where she again receives offerings of cooked rice from all classes of people in the village, Brahmins downwards. All the while, the Asadivandlu keep singing and dancing before the goddess. As the day advances, a pig is half buried at the entrance of the village, and all the village cattle are driven over it. The cattle are sprinkled over with poli as they pass over the pig. The Poturaju then bathes and purifies himself,

and goes to the temple of Lingamayya or Siva with tom-toms and music, and sacrifices a sheep there. The jatra ends with another grand procession, in which the images of the goddess, borne on the heads of the village potter and carpenter, are carried to the outskirts of the village, where they are left. As the villagers return home, they pull to pieces the straw temple constructed in front of the chavidi, and each man takes home a straw, which he preserves as a sacred relic. From the day the ceremony is commenced in the village till its close, no man would go to a neighbouring village, or, if he does on pressing business, he would return to sleep in his own village. It is believed that the performance of this jatra will ensure prosperity and health to the villagers and their cattle.

"The origin of this Sunkulamma jatra is based on the following legend, which is sung by the Byneni and Asadivandlu when they dance before the images. Sunkulamma was the only daughter of a learned Brahmin pandit, who occasionally took pupils, and instructed them in the Hindu shastras gratuitously. One day, a handsome youth of sixteen years came to the pandit, and announcing himself as the son of a Brahmin of Banares come in quest of knowledge, requested that he might be enlisted as a pupil of the pandit. The pandit, not doubting the statement of the youth that he was a Bramin, took him as a pupil, and lodged him in his own house. The lad soon displayed marks of intelligence, and, by close application to his studies made such rapid progress that he became the principal favourite of his master, who was so much pleased with him that at the close of his studies, he married him to his daughter Sunkulamma. The unkown youth stayed with his father-in-law till he became father of some children, when he requested permission to return to his native place with his wife and children, which was granted, and he accordingly started on his homeward journey. On the way he met a party of Mala people, who, recognising him at once as a man of their own caste and a relation, accosted him, and began to talk to him familiarly. Finding it impossible to conceal the truth from his wife any longer, the husband of Sunkulamma confessed to her that he was a Mala by caste, and, being moved by a strong desire to learn the Hindu shastras, which he was forbidden to read, he disguised himself as a Brahmin youth, and introduced himself to her father and compassed his object; and, as what had been done in respect to her could not be undone, the best thing she could do was to stay with him with her children. Sunkulamma, however, was not to be so persuaded. Indignant at the treachery practiced on her and her parent, she spurned both her husband and children, and returning to her village, sent for her

parent, whose house she would not pollute by going in, and asked him what he would do with a pot defiled by the touch of a dog. The father replied that he would commit it to the flames to purify it. Taking the hint, she caused a funeral pile to be erected, and committed suicide by throwing herself into the flames. But, before doing so, she cursed the treacherous Mala who had polluted her that he might become a buffalo, and his children turn into sheep, and vowed she would revive as an evil spirit, and have him and his children sacrificed to her, and get his leg put into his mouth, and a light placed on his head fed with his own fat".

The following additional information in connection with the jatra may be recorded. In some places, on a Tuesday fifteen days before the festival, some Malas go in procession through the main streets of the village without any noise or music. This is called mugi chatu (dumb announcement). On the following Tuesday, the Malas go through the streets, beating tom-toms, and proclaiming the forthcoming ceremony. This is called chatu (announcement). In some villages, metal idols are used. The image is usually in the custody of a Tsakala (washerman). On the jatra day, he brings it fully decorated and sets it up on the Gangamma mitta (Gangamma's dais). In some places this is a permanent structure, and in others put up for the jatra at a fixed spot. Asadis, Pambalas, and Bainedus, and Madiga Kommula vandlu (horn-blowers) dance and sing until the goddess is lifted up from the dais, when a number of burning torches are collected together, and some resinous material is thrown into the flames. At the same time, a cock is killed, and waved in front of the goddess by the Tsakala. A mark is made with the blood on the forehead of the idol, which is removed to a hut constructed by Malas with twigs of margosa (*Melia Azadirachata*), *Eugenia Jambolana* and *Vitex Negundo*. In some villages, when the goddess is brought in procession to the outskirts of the village, a stick is thrown down in front of her. The Asadis then sing songs, firstly of a most obscene character, and afterwards in praise of the goddess.

The following account of "the only Mala ascetic in Bharatavarsha" (India) is given by Mr. M. N. Vincent.* The ascetic was living on a hill in Bezwada, at the foot of which lay the hamlets of the Malas. The man, Govindoo by name, "was a groom in the employ of a Muhammadan Inspector of Police, and he was commissioned on one occasion to take a horse to a certain town. He was executing his commission, when, on the way,

*East and West, 6th May, 1907.

and not far from his destination, the animal shied and fell into the Krishna river, and was swept along the current, and poor Govindoo could not help it. But, knowing the choleric temper of his employer, and in order to avoid a scolding, he roamed at large, and eventually fell in with a company of Sadhus, one of whose disciples he became, and practiced austerities, though not for the full term, and settled eventually on the hill where we saw him occupying the old cave dwelling of a former Sadhu. It appears that there was something earthly in the man, Sadhu though he was, as was evidenced from his relations with a woman votary or disciple, and it was probably because of his phase of his character that some people regarded him as a cheat and a rogue. But this unfavourable impression was soon removed, and, since the time he slept on a bed of sharp thorns, as it were in vindication of his character, family though it had been, he has been honoured. A good trait in the man should be mentioned, namely, that he wrote to his parents to give his wife in marriage to some one else, as he had renounced his wordly ties".

At Vanavolu, in the Hindupur taluk of the Anantapur district, there is a temple to Rangaswami, at which the pujari (priest) is a Mala. People of the upper castes frequent it, but do their own puja, the Mala standing aside for the time.*

It is noted, in the Madras Census Report, 1891, that the chief object of worship by the Balijas is Gauri, their caste deity. "It is said that the Malas are the hereditary custodians of the idol of Gauri and her jewels, which the Balijas get from them whenever they want to worship her. The following story is told to account for this. The Kapus and the Balijas, molested by the Muhammadan invaders on the north of the river Pennar, migrated to the south when the Pennar was in full flood. Being unable to cross the river, they invoked their deity to make a passage for them, for which it demanded the sacrifice of a first-born child. While they stood at a loss what to do, the Malas, who followed them, boldly offered one of their children to the goddess. Immediately the divided before them, and the Kapus and the Balijas crossed it, and were saved from the tyranny of the Muhammadans. Ever since that time, the Malas have been respected by the Kapus and Balijas, and the latter even deposited the images of Gauri, the bull and Ganesa, which they worshipped in the house of a Mala. I am credibly informed that the practice of leaving these images in the custody of Malas is even now observed in some parts of Cuddapah district and elsewhere".

*Gazetteer of the Anantapur district.

An expert Mala medicine-man has been known to prescribe for a Brahman Tahsildar (revenue Officer), though the consultation was conducted at a most respectful distance on the part of the honoured physician.

Mala weavers are known as Netpanivandlu (Nethapani, weaving word). According to the Census Report, 1891, the sub-divisions of the Malas, which are numerically strongest, are Arava, Kanta, Murikinadu, Pakanati, and Reddi Bhumi. To these may be added Sarindla, Savu, Saindla and Daindla. Concerning some of these divisions, the following legend is current. A Mala married eighteen wives, one from each kulam or tribal division. The god Poleramma, objecting to the sacrifice of sheep and goats, wanted him to offer up a women and child in substitution for the animals, and the Mala broke the news to his wives, one of whom elopsed with a Reddi and gave origin to the Reddi Bhumis (bhumi, earth). Another ran away, and gave rise to the Pakanatis (eastern country). A third hid herself, and escaped by hiding. Hence her descendants are called Daindla vandlu, concerning whom there is a proverb "Dagipoyina vandlu Dandla vandlu" or "Those who escaped by hiding are Daindlas". One of the wives, who fled to the forest, found her way out by clearing the jungle, and her descendants are called Sarindla (straight). The wife who consented to be sacrificed with her child was restored to life by Poleramma, and gave rise to the Savu (death) or Saindla (belonging to a death house) section. The Daindlas are said to be Tamil Paraiyans, who settled down in the Telugu country, and adopted the manners and customs of the Malas. Some call themselves Arava (Tamil) Malas. They are employed as servants in European houses, horse-keepers, etc.

In connection with the origin of the Malas, the Rev. S. Nicholson writes as follows. "Originally the Malas belonged to the kudi paita section of the community, *i.e.*, their women wore the cloth over the right shoulder, but now there are both right and left paita sections, and this must be taken as the principal division. The right hand (right paita) section is again divided into (a) Reddi Bhumalavaru, (b) Pokunativaru. The left hand (left paita) section are Murikinativaru. The following legend professes to account for the existence of the three divisions. When Virabahuvu went to the rescue of Harischandra, he promised Kali that, if she granted him success, he would sacrifice to her his wives, of whom he had three. Accordingly, after his conquest of Vishvamithrudu, he returned, and called his wives that he might take them to the temple in order to fulfil his vow. The wives got some inkling of what was in store for them, and one of them took

refuge in the house of a Reddi Bhumala, another ran away to the eastern country (Pokunati), while the third though recently confined, and still in her dirty (muriki) cloth, determined to abide by the wish of her lord. She was, therefore, sacrificed to Kali, but the goddess, seeing her devotion, restored her to life, and promised to remain for ever her helper. The reason given for the change in the method of wearing the cloth is that, after the incident described above took place, the women of the Murikinati section, in order to express their disapproval of the two unfaithful wives, began to wear their cloths on the opposite, viz. the left, shoulder. In marriages, however, whatever the paita of the bride, she must wear the cloth over the right shoulder.

"The Reddi Bhumalu and Pokunativaru say that the reason they wear the cloth over the right shoulder is that they are descendants of the gods. According to a legend the goddess Parvati, whilst on a journey with her lord Parameshvarudu, discarded one of her unclean (maila) cloths, from which was born a little boy. This boy was engaged as a cattle herd in the house of Parameshvarudu. Parvati received strict injunctions from her lord that she should on no account allow the little Mala to taste cream. One day, however the boy discovered some cream which had been scrapped from the inside of the pot sticking to a wall. He tasted it, and found it good. Indeed, so good was it that he came to the conclusion that the udder from which it came must be even better still. So one day, in order to test his theory, he killed the cow. Then came Parameshvarudu in great anger, and asked him what he had done, and, to his credit be it said, the boy told the truth. Then Parameshvarudu cursed the lad and all his descendants, and said that from henceforth cattle should be the meat of the Malas—the unclean".

The Malas have, in their various sub-divisions, many exogamous septs, of which the following are examples:—

(a) **REDDI BHUMI**

Avuka, Marsh
Bandi, cart
Bommala, dolls
Bejjam, holes
Dakku, fear
Dhidla, platform or back-door
Dhoma, gnat or mosquito
Gera, street
Kaila, measuring grain in threshing
Katika, collyrium
Naththalu, snails
Paida, money or gold
Pilli, cat
Rayi, stone
Samudrala, ocean
Silam, good conduct
Thanda, bottom of a ship

(b) **POKUNATI**

Allam, ginger
Dara, strem of water
Gad, cart
Gone, sack
Gurram, horse
Maggam, loom
Mailari, washerman
Parvatha, mountain
Pindi, flour-powder
Pasala, cow
Thummala, Sneezing

(c) **SARINDLA**

Boori, a kind of cake
Ballem, spear
Bomidi, a fish
Challa, butter milk
Chinthala, tamarind
Duddu, money
Gali, wind
Karna, ear
Kaki, crow
Mudi, knot
Maddili, drum
Malle, Jasmine
Putta, ant-hill
Pamula, snake
Pidigi, handful
Semmati, hammer
Uyyala, see-saw

(d) **DAINDLA**

Dasari, priest
Doddi, court or backyard
Gonji, *Glycosmis pentapylla*
Kommala, horn
Marri, *Ficus bengalensis*
Pala, milk
Thumma, *Acaciaarabica*

Concerning the home of the Malas, Mr. Nicholson writes that "the houses (with mud or stone walls, roofed with thatch or palmyra palm leaves) are almost invariably placed quite apart from the village proper. Gradually, as the caste system and fear of defilement become less, so gradually the distance of their houses from the village is becoming less. In the Ceded Districts, where from early times every village was surrounded by a wall and moat, the aloofeness of the houses is very apparent. Gradually, however, the walls are decaying, and the moats are being filled, and the physical separation of the outcaste classes is becoming less apparent".

Mr. Nicholson writes further that "according to their own traditions, as told still by the old people and the religious mendicants, in former times the Malas were a tribe of free lances, who, 'like the tiger, slept during the day, and worked at night'. They were evidently the paid mercenaries of the Poligars (feudal chiefs) and carried out raids and committed robberies for the lord under

whose protection they were. That this tradition has some foundation may be gathered from the fact that many of the house-names of the Malas refer to weapons of war, *e.g.*, spear, drum, etc. If reports are true, the old instinct is not quite dead, and even today a cattle-stealing expedition comes not amiss to some. The Malas belong to the subjugated race, and have been made into the servants of the community. Very probably, in former days their services had to be rendered for nothing, but later certain inam (rent-free) lands were granted, the produce of which was counted as remuneration for service rendered. Originally these lands were held quite free of taxation, but, since the advent of the British Raj, the village servants have all been paid a certain sum per month, and, whilst still allowed the enjoyment of their inam lands, they have now been assessed, and half the actual tax has to be paid to Government. The services rendered by the Malas are temple service, jatra or festival service and village service. The village service consists of sweeping, scavenging, carrying burdens, and grave-digging, the last having been their perquisite for a long ages. According to them, the right was granted to them by King Harischandra himself. The burial grounds are supposed to belong to the Malas, and the site of a grave must be paid for, the price varying according to the position and wealth of the deceased, but I hear that, in our part of the country, the price does not often exceed two pence. Though the Brahmans do not bury, yet they must pay a fee of one rupee for the privilege of burning, besides the fee for carrying the body to the ghat. There is very little respect shown by the Malas at the burning-ghat, and the fuel is thrown on with jokes and laughter. The Malas dig graves for all castes which bury, except Muhammadans, Oddes, and Madigas. Not only on the day of burial, but afterwards on the two occasions of the ceremonies for the dead, the grave-diggers must be given food and drink. The Malas are also used as death messengers to relatives by all the Sudra castes. When on this work, the messenger must not on any account go to the houses of his relatives though they live in the village to which he has been sent.

"The chief occupations of the Malas are weaving, and working as farm labourers for Sudras; a few cultivate their own land. Though formerly their inam lands were extensive, they have been in the majority of cases, mortgaged away. The Malas of the western part of the Telugu country are of a superior type to those of the east, and they have largely retained their lands, and, in some cases, are well-to-do cultivators. In the east, waving is the staple industry, and it is still carried on with the most primitive instruments. In one corner of a room stands the

loom, with a hole in the mud floor to receive the treadles, and a little window in the wall, level with the floor, lights the web. The loom itself is slung from the rafters, and the whole can be folded up and put away in a corner. As a rule, weaving lasts for eight months, of the year, the remainder of the year being occupied in reaping and stacking crops, etc. Each weaver has his own customers, and very often one family of Malas will have weaved for one family of Sudras for generations. Before starting to weave, the weaver worships his loom, and rubs his shuttle on his nose, which is supposed to make it smooth. Those who cannot weave subsist by day labour. As a rule, they stick to one master, and are engaged in cultivation all the year round. Many, having borrowed money from some Sudra, are bound to work for him for a mere pittance, and that in grain, not cash".

In a note on a visit to Jammalamadugu in the Cuddapah district, Bishop Whitehead writes as follows.* "Lately Mr. Macnair has made an effort to improve the methods of weaving, and he showed us some looms that he had set up in his compound to teach the people the use of a cheap kind of fly-shuttle to take the place of the hand-shuttle which is universally used by the people. The difficulties he has met with are characteristic of many attempts to improve on the customs and methods of India. At present the thread used for the hand shuttle is spun by the Mala Women from the ordinary cotton produced in the district. The Mala weavers do not provide their own cotton for the clothes they weave, but the Kapus give them the cotton from their own fields, pay the women a few annas for spinning it, and then pay the men a regular wage for weaving it into cloth. But the cotton spun in the district is not strong enough for the fly-shuttle, which can only be profitably worked with mill-made thread. The result is that, if the fly-shuttle were generally adopted, it would leave no market for the native cotton, throw the women out of work, upset the whole system on which the weavers work, and, in fact, produce wide-spread misert and confusion."

The following detailed account of the ceremonies in connection with marriage, many of which are copied from the higher Telugu castes, is given by Mr. Nicholson. "Chinna Tambulam (little betel) is the name given to the earliest arrangements for a future wedding. The parents of the boy about to be married enquire of a Brahman to which quarter they should go in search of a bride. He, after receiving his pay, consults the boy's horoscope, and then tells them that in a certain quarter there is loss,

*Madras and Tinnevelly Dioces. Mag. June, 1908.

in another quarter there is death, but that in another quarter there is gain or good. If in the quarter which the Brahman has intimated as good there are relations, so much the better; the bride will be sought amongst them. If not, the parents of the youth, along with an elder of the caste, set out in search of a bride amongst new people. On reaching the village, they do not make their object known, but let it appear that they are on ordinary business. Having discovered a house in which there is a marriageable girl, after the ordinary salutations, they, in a round-about way, make enquiries as to whether the warasa or marriage line is right or not. If it is all right, and if at that particular time the girl's people are in a prosperous condition, the object of the search is made known. If, on the other hand, the girl's people are in distress or grief, the young man's party go away without making their intention known. Everything being satisfactory, betel nut and leaves are offered, and, if the girl's people are willing to contract, they accept it; if not, and they refuse, the search has to be resumed. We will take it for granted that the betel is accepted. The girl's parents then say 'If it is God's will, so let it be; return in eight or nine days, and we will give you our answer'. If, within that time, there should be death or trouble of any sort in either of the houses, all arrangements are abandoned. If, when going to pay the second visit, on the journey any of the party should drop on the way either staff or bundle of food, it is regarded as a bad omen, and further progress is stopped for that day. After reaching the house of the prospective bride on the second occasion, the party wait outside. Should the parents of the girl bring out water for them to drink and wash their faces, it is a sign that matters may be proceeded with. Betel is again distributed. In the evening, the four parents and the elders talk matters over, and, if all is so far satisfactory, they promise to come to the house of the future bridegroom on a certain date. The boy's parents, after again distributing betel, this time to every house of the caste, take their departure. When the party of the bride arrive at the boy's village, they are treated to toddy and a good feed, after which they give their final promise. Then, having made arrangement for the Pedda Tambulam (big betel), they take their departure. This ends the first part of the negotiations. Chinna Tambulam is not binding. The second part of the negotiations, which is called Pedda Tambaulam, takes place at the home of the future bride. Before departing for the

ceremony, the party of the bridegroom, which must be an odd number but not seven, and some of the elders of the village, take part in a feast. The members of the party put on their religious marks, daub their necks and faces with sandal paste and akshinthulu (coloured rice), and are sent off with the good wishes of the villagers. After the party has gone some few miles, it is customary for them to fortify themselves with toddy, and to distribute betel. The father of the groom takes with him as a present for the bridle a bodice, fried dal (pea : *Cajanus indicus*), cocoanut, rice, jaggery, turmeric, dates, ghi, etc. On arrival at the house, the party wait outside, until water is brought for their faces and feet. After the stains of travel have been washed off, the presents are given and the whole assembly proceeds to the toddy shop. On their return, the Chalavadhi (caste servant) tells them to which households betel must be presented, after which the real business commences. The party of the bridegroom, the people of the bride, the elders of the caste, and one person from each house in the caste quarter, are present. A blanket is spread on the floor, and grains of rice are arranged on it according to a certain patter. This is the bridal throne. After bathing, the girl is arrayed in an old cloth, and seated on a weaver's beam placed upon the blanket, with her face towards the east. Before seating herself, however, she must worship towards the setting sun. In her open hands betel is placed, along with the dowry (usually about sixteen rupees) brought by her future father-in-law. As the bride sits thus upon the throne, the respective parents question one another, the bride's parents as to the groom, what work he does, what jewels he will give, etc. Whatever other jewels are given or not, the groom is supposed to give a necklace of silver and beads, and a gold nose jewel. As these things are being talked over, some one winds 101 strands of thread, without twisting it, into a circle about the size of a necklace, and then ties on it a peculiar knot. After smearing with turmeric, it is given into the hands of the girl's maternal uncle, who, while holding his hands full of betel, asks first the girl's parents, and the whole community if there is any objection to the match. If all agree, he must then worship the bridal throne, and, without letting any of the betel in his hands fall, place the necklace round the bride's neck. Should any of the betel fall, it is looked upon as a very bad omen, and the man is fined. After this part of the performance is over, and after teasing the bride, the uncle raises her to her feet, and, taking from her hands the dowry, etc., sends her off. After distributing betel to every one in the village, even unborn babies being counted, the ceremony ends, and, after the usual feast has been partaken of, the people all depart to their various homes.

"The wedding, contrary to the previous ceremonies, takes place at the home of the bridegroom. A Brahman is asked to tell a day on which the omens are favourable, for which telling he receives a small fee. A few days before the date foretold, the house is cleaned, the floor cow-dunged, and the walls are white-washed. In order that the evil eye may be warded off, two marks are made, one on each side of the door, with oil and charcoal mixed. Then the clothes of the bride and bridegroom are made ready. These, as a rule, are yellow and white, but on no account must there be any indigo in them, as that would be a sign of death. The grain and betel required for the feast, a toe-ring for the bridegroom, and a tali (marriage badge) for the bride, are then purchased. The toe-ring is worn on the second toe of the right foot, and the tali, which is usually about the size of a sixpence, is worn round the woman's neck. The goldsmith is paid for these not only in coin, but also in grain and betel, after receiving which he blesses the jewels he has made, and presents them to the people. Meanwhile, messengers have been sent, with the usual presents, to the bride's people and friends, to inform them that the auspicious day has been fixed, and bidding them to the ceremony. In all probability, before the preparations mentioned above are complete, all the money the bridegroom's people have saved will be expended. But there is seldom any difficulty in obtaining a loan. It is considered an act of great merit to advance money for a wedding, and people of other and richer castes are quite ready to lend the amount required. In former days, it was customary to give these loans free of interest, but it is not so now. The next item is the preparation of the pandal or bower. This is generally erected a day or two before the actual marriage in front of the house. It consists of four posts, one at each corner, and the roof is thatched with the straw of large millet. All round are hung garlands of mango leaves, and cocoanut leaves are tied to the four posts. On the left side of the house door is planted a branch of a tree (*Nerium odorum*), to which is attached the kankanam made in the following way. A woollen thread and a cotton thread are twisted together, and to them are tied a copper finger-ring, a piece of turmeric root, and a betel leaf. The tree mentioned is watered every day, until the whole of the marriage ceremonies are completed. As a rule, the whole of the work in connection with the erection of the pandal is carried out by the elders, who receive in payment food and toddy. At this time, also, in fire-places for the cooking of the extra amount of food are prepared. These are simply trenches dug in the mud floor of the house, usually three in number. Before they are dug, a cocoanut is broken, and offered over the spot. A journey is now made to the potter's for the pots required

in the cooking of the marriage feast. This in itself is quite a ceremony. A canopy is formed of an ordinary wearing cloth supported at its four corners by four men, whilst a boy with a long stick pushes it into a tent shape in the middle. Beneath the canopy is one of the women of the bridegroom's family, who carries on a tray two sacred lamps, an eight-anna piece, some saffron (turmeric), akshinthulu, betel, frankincense, cocoanut, etc. On arriving at the potter's house, the required pots are placed in a row outside, and a cocoanut, which has been held in the smoke of the incense, is broken into two equal parts, the two halves being placed on the ground about a yard apart. To these all the people do puja (worship) and then take up the pots, and go home. The eight anna piece is given to the potter's, and on the return thence, the procession is accompanied with music, and the women sing songs. Meanwhile, the groom, and those who have remained at home, have been worshipping the goddess Sunkalamma. The method of making this goddess, and its worship, are as follows. Rice and green gram are cooked together, and with this cooked food a cone is made minus the point. A little hollow is made on the top, and this is filled with ghi (clarified butter), onions, and dal. Four wicks are put into it, so forming a lamp. A nose jewel is stuck somewhere on the outside of the lamp, two garlands are placed round it, and the whole is decorated with religious marks. This goddess is always placed in the northeast corner of the house, called the god's corner, which has been previously cleaned, and an image of Hanuman, or some other deity, is drawn with rice-powder on the floor. Upon this drawing the image of Sunkalamma is placed. Before her are put several little balls of rice, with which ghi has been mixed. The worship consists in making offerings of frankincense and camphor, and a cocoanut, which is broken in half, the halves being put in front of the goddess. A ram or a he-goat is now brought, nim (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves are tied round the horns, religious marks are made on the forehead, water is placed in its mouth, and it is then sacrificed. After the sacrifice has been made, those assembled prostrate themselves before the image for some time in silence, after which they go outside for a minute or two, and then, returning, divide the goddess, and eat it. The groom now has his head shaved, and the priest cuts his finger and toe nails, eyelashes, etc. The cuttings are placed, along with a quarter of a rupee which he has kept in his mouth during the process, in an old winnowing tray, with a little lamp made of rice, betel and grain. The priest, facing west and with the bridegroom in front of him, makes three passes with the tray from the head to the foot. This is supposed to take away the evil eye. The priest then takes the tray away, all the

people getting out of the way lest the blight should come on them. He throws away what is useless, but keeps the rest, especially the quarter of a rupee. After this little ceremony, the future husband takes a bath, but still keeps on his old clothes. He is given a knife, with which to keep away devils, and is garlanded with the garlands which were round the goddess. His toe-ring is put on, and the next ceremony, the propitiation of the dead, is proceeded with. The sacrificed animal is dismembered, and the bones, flesh and intestines are put into separate pots, and cooked. Rice also is prepared, and placed in a heap to which the usual offerings are made. Then rice, and some of the flesh from each pot, is placed upon two leaf plates. These are left before the heap of rice, with two lamps burning. The people all salute the rice, and proceed to eat it. The rice on the two plates is reserved for members of the family. By this time, the bride has most likely arrived in the village, but, up to this stage, will have remained in a separate house. She does not come to the feast mentioned above, but has a portion of food sent to her by the bridegroom's people. After the feast, bride and bridegroom are each anointed in their separate houses with nalugu (uncooked rice and turmeric). When the anointing of the bride takes place, the groom sends to her a cloth, a bodice, cocoanut, pepper and garlic. The bride leaves her parents' house, dressed in old clothes. Her people provide only a pair of sandals, and two small toe-rings. She also carries a fair quantity of rice in the front fold of her cloth. Again a procession is formed as before for the cooking pots, and another visit is paid to the potter's house, but, on this occasion, in place of eight annas grain is taken. The potter presents them with two widemouthed pots, and four small-mouthed pots, two of which are decorated in four colours. As before, these are placed in a row outside, and again the party, after worshipping them, takes them to the bridegroom's house. These pots are supposed to represent Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, and, as they are being carried to the house, no pregnant woman or mother with small children should meet them, or they will have trouble. On arriving at the house, and before entering, a cock is sacrificed, and a cocoanut offered. (In some places, a goat is killed in front of the room in which the marriage pots are kept, and marks are made with the palms of the hands covered with the blood on the side-walls of the entrance). Water is sprinkled on the door step, and the pots are taken inside. During the whole of the above performance, the pots are held in the hands, and must not be put down. After entering the house, grain is spread on the floor in the north-east corner, and upon this are placed the pots, one upon the other, in two or four rows. The topmost pot is covered with

a lid, and on the lid is placed a lighted lamp. From the beams exactly above the lamps are suspended, to which are fastened small bundles containing dates, cocoanut, jaggery, sugar, and saffron. Round each pot is tied a kankanam (wrist-thread). These pots are worshipped every day as long as the wedding ceremonies last, which is usually three days. Not only so, but the lamps are kept continually burning, and there is betel arranged in a brass pot in the form of a lotus ever before them. Beneath the pandal is now arranged a throne exactly similar to the one which was used on the occasion of the Pedda Tambulam. Until now the bride has kept to her separate house, but she now dresses in her new clothes. Putting on the sandals she brought from her own home, she proceeds to the house of the bridegroom. There she waits in the pandal for her future husband, who comes out dressed in his wedding garments, wearing his sandals, and carrying a blanket, gochi,* shoulder-cloth, and knife. Both bride and bridegroom now have fastened on to their foreheads a kind of philactery or nuptial crown called bhasingalu. They are also garlanded with flowers, in addition to which the bridegroom has tied on to his wrists the kankanam. In order that the two most intimately concerned persons may not see one another (and up to this point they have not done so), a screen is erected, the bride standing on one side, and the bridegroom on the other. As a rule, they each of them keep their heads bent during the whole of the proceedings, and look as miserable as possible. Indeed, it would be breach of etiquette for either of them to appear as though they were enjoying the ceremony. Except for the screen, the two are now face to face, the groom looking towards the east, and the bride towards the west. Upon the bridal throne there is now placed for the bride to stand upon a basket filled with grain, and for the groom the beam of a loom. The screen is now taken away, and the priest, a Dasari, asks whether the elders, the Mala people generally, and the village as a whole, are in favour of the marriage. This he asks three times. Probably, in former times, it was possible to stop a marriage at this point, but now it is never done, and the marriage is practically binding after Pedda Tambulam has been gone through. Indeed, in hard times, if the bride is of marriageable age, the couple will live together as man and wife, putting off the final ceremony until times are better. The groom now salutes the priest, the bride places her foot on the weaving beam, and the groom places his foot upon that of the woman as a token of his present and continued lordship. After this, the bride also is invested with the Kankanam. After the groom has worshipped

*Gochi, a clout, a truss or flap; a waist-cloth, C.P. Brown, Telugu Dictionary.

the four quarters of heaven, the priest, who holds in his hands a brass vessel of milk, hands the golden marriage token to the groom, who ties it round the bride's neck. This is the first time during the ceremony that either of them has looked on the other. Before the groom ties the knot, he must ask permission from the priest and people three times. The priest now dips a twig of the jivi tree (*Ficus Tsiela*) into the milk, and hands it to the husband, who, crossing his hands over his wife's head, allows some of the drops to fall upon her. The wife then does the same to the husband. After this, the rice which the bride brought with her in her lap is used in a similar blessing. The priest, holding in his hand a gold jewel, now takes the hands of the two in his, and repeats several passages (charms). Whoever wishes may now shower the pair with rice, and, after that is done, the priest publicly announces them to be man and wife. But the ceremonies are not yet ended. The newly married pair, and all the assembled party, now proceed to the village shrine to worship the God. Before doing so, the cloths of the newly wed pair are tied together by the priest. This knot is called the Brahma knot, and is a sign that God had ordained the two to be man and wife even in a previous birth. After the God has been worshipped and an offering of betel made to the four quarters, the party return to the house accompanied by weird music and much tom-tom. The women, as a rule, sing wedding songs, and the husband and wife are shaded by a canopy. Arrived at the threshhold of the house, the fear of the evil eye is made the reason for another ceremony. Before either crosses the threshhold, passes are made from their head to their feet with black and red water. On the threshhold is placed a brass bowl full of grain, upon which is a gold nose jewel. The man and woman must each touch this with the right foot, after which they may enter the house without fear. After entering the house, the evil eye is again removed, this time with a cocoanut, which is afterwards thrown away. Those who have unlucky twists of hair must at this time, besides the above ceremony, sacrifice a goat. After entering the house, the whole party worship Lakshmi. Long ago, the tradition runs, this goddess was very gracious to the Malas, and, in consequence, they were wealthy and prosperous. One day, however, Lakshmi went up to one of the chief men, who at that time was very busy at work upon a web of cloth, and began to make love to him. At any other time this would have been very acceptable, but just then, being very busy, he asked the goddess to go away. She, however, took no notice, and only bothered him the more. Whereupon, losing his temper, he hit her over the head with the heavy sizing brush which he was using. This hurt the feelings of Lakshmi to such an extent

that she left the Malas, withdrew her favour, and transferred it to the Komatis. Since then, the Malas have been poor. The husband next dips his hands into a plate of milk three times, each time placing his wet hand on the wall. After him, the bride does the same. The two then, sitting down, eat rice and milk off one plate. This is the first and only time that husband and wife eat together. The bashingams are now taken off, and the wife is relieved from the burden of rice she has thus far carried in her lap. The next ceremony is called the Bhumalu, and is a feast for the husband, his wife, and blood relations only. Not more than ten, and not less than six must partake, and these must all be husbands or wives, *i.e.*, the party must consits of either three or five couples. The feast consists of the most expensive food the people can afford, and is eaten on two consecutive days. A blanket is spread on the floor, and on this raw rice is placed in a cloth, with betel leaves arranged in the form of a lotus at the four corners. Here and there are placed red rice, sandal, and turmeric and a new lamp is lit. Three children are brought in, and are made to stand before the rice. The parties who are to partake now come in couples, and one of the children ties upon their wrists the kanakanam, another daubs them with sandal paste, and another with red rice. The food is placed on two plates, one for the women and one for the males. All the women sit round the one, and the men round the other. Whilst eating, they must not drop a single grain. Should they do so, it is not only unlucky, but is also the cause of serious quarrels, and the fault is punishable with a heavy fine. After the feast is over, the heap of rice is worshipped, and the children are sent off with a little present each. The pair are again anointed with nalugu. This is done twice every day for three days, but no widow is allowed to do it. Before anointing, the people about to do it must present a cocoanut and jaggery. When the cocoanut and jaggery are given, they must be in strips, and put into the bride's mouth partly projecting. The groom must take hold of the projecting part with his teeth, and eat it. The same performance is gone through with betel leaf. A doll is now made with cloths, having arms, legs, etc. The newly-married couple are made to play with it, being much teased the while by the onlookers, who sing lullabys. The two now have their hands and feet anointed with turmeric, and are bathed. This is done on three consecutive days. On the third day is the nagavalli. The bride and her husband are escorted under a canopy to some ant heap outside the village. The man digs a basketful of earth with his knife, which was given to him, and which he has never relinquished, and the wife carries it to the house. There the earth is made into four heaps, one near each post. A hollow is left

at the top of each heap, which is filled with water. During the time they have been fetching the earth, the people who remained at home have been worshipping aireni pots representing Lakshmi, but they now come outside to the pandal. The pair are escorted all round the village, accompanied with music. They must not walk, but must be either carried or driven. After their return to the pandal, they are seated on the nagavalli simhasanam. Four small pots are placed in the form of a square, and round these is wound a fence of thread, which must not be broken in the process. On the pots are placed bread and meal. The bridal pair again put on their bridal crowns, and the man, taking his knife, digs a few furrows in the ground, which his wife fills with grain. The husband then covers up the grain with his knife, after which his wife sprinkles water over the whole, and then gives her husband some gruel. The bread and meal, which were placed on the pots, are eaten by the relatives of the husband publicly in the pandal. After this ceremony is over, the pair are again anointed, during which process there must be music and singing. The next day, the whole of the party set off for the bride's house, where the marala pendli, or second marriage, is performed. Before setting out, the husband and wife bow down at the feet of the elders, and receive their blessing. The husband must provide an abundance of 'toddy' for all. They stay in the house of the bride's people for three days, and then another feast is made. On the fourth day, all, except the relations of the bride, return to their villages, but, before their departure, the bride again pays homage to the departing elders, who bless her, and give her a small present of money. On their return, they are met outside the village, and are escorted to the husband's house with music. The married pair usually remain in the house of the bride's mother for a month, and during that time they never change their wedding garments, or take off the garlands of flowers. The parents of the bride-groom present their daughter-in-law with new clothes, but these must not have any indigo in them. If the bride is past puberty, at the end of the month the father and mother-in-law will return with the married couple to the husband's village. If the girl has not reached puberty, she will only spend a short time in her husband's house, and will afterwards be continually going backwards and forwards between the two houses. At the time of puberty, the matter is made known to all parties concerned. The Chalavadhi must be the bearer of the news, and he is treated to as much food and drink as he can take, and is also given presents. When the messenger goes, he must carry with him dal, jaggery, sugar candy, etc. The neighbours come out to see how much he has brought, and, if the amount is small, they make a fuss. During the ceremonies which

ensue, the girl is made to sit down, and is blessed by the women sprinkling her with nalugu, and is also given sweetmeats to eat. The time is made merry by song and music. After bathing, the girl is made to take food out of a dish along with three married women. She is then made to touch a thorn tree three times, and also plucks the leaves. Upon returning to the house, she is made to touch the cooking instruments and pots. At this time, if anyone has lent her beads or ornaments, they are taken, and, after being threaded on new strings, are returned to the lenders. If the day on which a girl reaches puberty is an unlucky day, it is considered a bad sign for the husband. On the second occasion the husband comes for his wife, and there is much rejoicing. After being detained for four or five days, they go to their permanent home, the house of the husband's father, and there is at that time much weeping. The mother tells the girl to be obedient to her husband and parents-in-law, and says that it will be better for her to throw herself into a well and die than to return home disgraced.

"There are slight differences in the ceremonies described above according to the district and sect of the people. In the eastern Telugu country, during the marriage ceremonies, there is a sort of bridesmaid, who accompanies the bride on the day of the wedding. In the western country, largely under the influence of the Canarese, the bridemaid is scarcely distinguishable from the real bride, but she is not, as at home, an unmarried girl, but must be a mature woman following the functions of a married life. There is another slight difference between the two sections concerning the Bhumala ceremony. The Vaishnavites, after the arranged people have partaken of the feast, distribute the remainder of the food; the Saivites, on the other hand, if any food is left, bury it somewhere inside the house".

"Malas may be married many times, and indeed it is not considered respectable to remain a widower. A widower is unable to make arrangements for the marriage of others, to take part in any of the ceremonies connected therewith, except in the capacity of a spectator. It is not the correct thing for a man to have two wives at one time unless the first one is barren, or unless there is other good cause. A woman must on no account marry again. She need not, according to Telugu morals, be ashamed of living, after she is widowed, with another man as his concubine, but at the very mention of marriage, she covers her face with shame. If such people become Christians, it is a most difficult thing to overcome their prejudice, and persuade them to become legally man and wife. Almost the only way to do so is by refusing to marry their children. In the Canarese

country, there is a kind of half marriage (chitra kattinchinary, they have tied her cloth), which may be attained by widows. It is not reckoned as a proper marriage, nor is the woman considered a concubine. The ceremony for this is not performed at the great length of an ordinary marriage, but it must receive the sanction of the elders. In spite of their sanction, the man must pay a fine imposed by the caste guru. The woman is permitted to wear the tali or marriage token, but not bangles or other jewels usually worn by a married woman. The children are part inheritors, and are not entirely without rights, as the children of concubines are. A man's second wife must wear two talis—that of the first wife as well as her own".

The following variants of the Pedda Tambulam ceremony, which is performed during the marriage rites, may be noted. As soon as all are assembled in the front yard of the bride's house, a blanket is spread on the floor, and covered with a cloth. About ten seers of cholam (millet : *Sorghum*) are heaped up, and a brass vessel (kalasam) is placed thereon. By its side, a lamp is kept burning. A Dasari, or a Mala priest, stands on one side of it, and a married woman of the other. The names of the Gods are mentioned, one after the other, and the woman throws two betel leaves and a nut on the kalasam for each name uttered. The bride is then brought from within the house, and the leaves and nuts are tied up in a cloth. This, with the kalasam, is put in the bride's cloth, and she is led inside. In some places, the ceremony is more elaborate. For the betrothel ceremony some leading men of the village, and the headmen of the bride and bridegroom's villages are required to be present. The Chalavati (caste servant) hands over a bag containing betel leaves areca nuts, pieces of turmeric, and Rs. 4-6 to the headman of the bride's village. All these articles are displayed on a new bamboo sieve, or on the lid of a bamboo box. The two headmen discuss the proposed match, and exchange betel and nut thrice. After this, the bride-elect (chinnapapa) is brought from the house, and seated on a plank or on a cloth roller (dhone). Three handfuls of betel leaves and areca nuts are placed in her lap. Her maternal uncle then puts on her neck a string of unwoven unbleached cotton thread dyed with turmeric. The bride's headman asks the assembly if he may proceed with the thonuku ceremony. With their permission, he takes from a sieve betel leaves, nuts, and a cocoanut with his right hand, using only the thumb, first, and ring fingers. While doing this, he is expected to stand on one leg, and to take up the various things, without letting even a single leaf or nut fall. In some places, the headman has the privilege of doing this seated near the sieve. In other places, he is said to hold a knife in his

hand, with a blade passed below the middle finger, and over the first ring finger.

In connection with birth ceremonies, Mr. Nicholson writes as follows. "During labour, a sickle and some nim (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves are always kept upon the cot, to ward off evil spirits, which will not approach iron. Difficulty during labour is considered to be the effect of kharma, and the method employed for easing it is simple. Some mother, who has had an 'easy time', is called in, and presents the labouring woman with betel, etc. Should this not be effective, a line of persons is drawn up from the well to the house, and water is passed from hand to hand until it reaches the 'easy time' woman, who gives the water to the sufferer. This last resort is only sought in extreme cases, but, when it is appealed to, even the caste people will join in the line and help. After the placenta has come away, the child is placed on a winnowing basket, which has been previously filled with grain, and covered with a cloth. The umbilical cord is cut, and the child is washed, and branded with a hot needle in all places, over twenty in all, which are considered vital. When the umbilical cord is cut, some coin is placed over the navel for luck. This, with the grain in the basket, is the midwife's perquisite. Should the child present with the cord round its neck, a cocoanut is immediately offered. If the child survives, a cock is offered to the gods on the day the mother take her first bath. The placenta is put in a pot, in which are nim leaves, and the whole is buried in some convenient place, generally in the backyard. The reason for this is to be that, unless the afterbirth was buried, does or other animals might carry it off, and ever after the child would be of a wandering disposition. The first bath of the mother takes place on the third, fifth, seventh, or ninth day after delivery. Every house in particular quarter sends a potful of hot water. All the pots are placed near the spot where the afterbirth was buried. The mother then comes from the house supported by two women, carrying in her hand the sickle and nim leaves. After worshipping the four mud gods which have been placed on the spot, she takes her seat on the cot on which she was confined, and after having her body covered with turmeric, and her head anointed with a mixture of rice, chunam (lime) and turmeric, she is bathed by the women in attendance. After the bath, both the mother and child are garlanded with a root strung on strings, and worn round the neck and wrists. One of these is eaten every day by the mother. The mother rises and enters the house, but before doing so, she worships the four quarters on the threshold. The women who assisted in the bathing operation go to their homes, and bathe their own children, afterwards returning to

take part in a feast provided by the parents of the newly-born child. On this day also a name is given to the child. If all previous children have died, the child is rolled in leaf plates and rice, after which the nose and ears are pierced. The rice is given to the dogs, and the child is named Pulligadu (used up leaf plates) or Pullamma according to sex. Should the parents consider that they have a sufficiently large family, they name the child Salayya or Salakka (enough). There are several superstitions about teething. If the teeth come quickly, people say that the afterbirth has not been buried deeply enough. Should the top teeth come first, it is supposed to imply danger to the maternal uncle, who generally gives his daughter in marriage to his nephew. He is called, and brings with him a cocoanut, the inner shell of which he crushes on the child's head. This must be done without looking on the child. In order that girls may not grow hair on their faces, their lips and chins are rubbed with the afterbirth. The dried navel is highly prized as a remedy for sterility.

In connection with death ceremonies, Mr. Nicholson writes as follows. "There is a difference in the ceremonies performed by the Vaishnuvite and Saivite sects. The former allow their people to die in the house; the latter, fearing pollution, remove the person outside the door, as soon as it is recognised that death is at hand. The following description relates chiefly to the Vaishnuvites or Namdaris, but, however possible, the difference of ceremony between the two sects is noticed. As soon as it is recognized that a person is at the point of death, the wife and children or near relations, gather round the rough string cot, and ask what the dying person's last wishes are. However bad a life may have been led, the dying words are considered imperatively binding. If at all possible the son or brother of the dying person will give a little food and a drink of water; and, if there is no one to perform this office—the rite which entitles the dying to heaven—great is the grief. 'May you have no one to give you water to drink' is a most bitter curse. As soon as life has departed those who are standing by will close the eyes and mouth, and stop the nostrils and ears. The two great toes are tied together, whilst the wife and sons burn incense at the head of the corpse. A lamp is lit, and left in the house. Before this, the near relations have heard that things were serious, and have come to render assistance. They now bring water for the bathing, and some go to bazaar for sweetmeats, etc. required in the subsequent ceremonies. Some of the elders go to call the Dasari, or priest, and, by the time he arrives, rice will have been prepared, and the blood of a fowl sprinkled over the place where the death occurred. It should be mentioned that the head of

the dying is always placed to the south. Yamudu, the god of death and lord of Hades, is god of the south. Consequently, if the dead arose, if facing south he would go to the evil place. By lying on the back with the head to the south, they rise facing north, and so escape an evil fate. When the food is prepared, the corpse is removed outside, bathed, and wrapped in a new cloth. Betel nut and leaf are ground and put into the mouth, whilst the priest puts the namam (the mark of Vishnu) upon both the forehead of the corpse and of the bearers. After the bathing of the corpse, and before it is wrapped in the new cloth, a small square piece is torn out of the cloth, and presented to the Nambi of the temple. The corpse being prepared, the priest and the wife and relations of the deceased, along with the bearers, eat a small portion of the food which has been got ready. Immediately upon rising after having eaten, the corpse is lifted, and placed upon a rough bier, wrapped in a cloth, and the party proceed to the burying ground. The priest goes first singing a funeral hymn, and at the end of each verse all the people cry Govinda (one of the names of Vishnu). Following the priest comes the Chalavadhi carrying his belt and insignia of office. At every other step the bell is rung by coming in contact with his leg. After the Chalavadhi comes the corpse carried by men who are, according to Telugu relationship, brothers (actual brothers, or sons of father's brother or mother's sister). In the case of a married woman, the bearers must be either husband or brothers. Following the corpse comes the wife or son, bearing water and fire. Shortly before reaching the burial-ground, a halt is made. The son sprinkles a little water on the ground, and the bier is placed upon the spot with the fire at the head. The face is then uncovered, and all look upon the dead features for the last time. The reason given for the halt is that upon one occasion, according to tradition, the bearers became exhausted, and, when they rested the bier upon the ground, the corpse arose alive. In carrying a dead body, it is always carried feet first. The grave, which has been prepared before-hand, and which is usually not more than three feet deep, is reached, and the body is placed therein with the head towards the south. In the case of a male after being placed in the grave, the waist-cord and toe-rings are removed, and left in the grave. In the case of a woman, the glass bracelets, bell-metal toe-rings, and bead necklace are left, but no jewels of value or the marriage token are left. After this is over, the body is covered with leaves of the tangedu tree (*Cassia auriculata*). As a rule, Vishnuvites, before covering the body with the leaves, take off the cloth in which it is wrapped, leaving it naked. This is supposed to be emblematic of the nakedness

with which we enter upon life. The corpse is burried face upwards, and it is considered a means of future happiness to the deceased if those assembled throw earth into the grave. The nearer the relationship of those doing so, the greater is the happiness conferred. Hence it is always desired that a son should be present. After the grave has been filled up half way with earth, three stones are placed, one at the head, one in the middle, and one at the feet. Only the Vishnuvites do this. Upon the middle of these stones stands the priest, while the relatives of the deceased wash his feet, and put upon them the namam or sign of Vishnu. Whilst standing thus, they bargain and haggle as to what fee is to be paid. After this is over, the grave is completely filled in, and great care is taken that the corpse is so covered that it may not be disturbed by jackals and other animals, at any rate before the fifth day. If it should be disturbed, heaven will not be reached. So the Telugu curse 'May the jackals eat your tongue' as a curse of damnation. The Saivites bury their dead in the cloth, face downwards. After the grave has been filled in, the fire carried by the son is placed at the head of the grave, and incense is burnt. Then the water carried from the house is sprinkled over the grave, and the procession departs homeward. On their way, they stop at some wayside well, and wash away their defilement, afterwards sitting on the edge of the well to chew betel and eat sweetmeats. They may also pay a visit to the temple, where they again sit and gossip, but perform no worship. If the deceased be a woman leaving a husband the talk will be about arrangements for the marriage which will shortly take place. Immediately the body is taken from the house for burial, the lamp which was first lighted is extinguished, and another lighted in its place. Then those who stay at home (the women do not usually attend a funeral) clean sweep the house, plastering it with cow-dung. After this, they wait outside the house for the return of the burial party. The blood relations who have attended the burial come, and without entering the house, glance at the newly-lighted lamp, afterwards going to their own homes, where, before entering, and without touching any of the pots, they must bathe in hot water. Toddy flows freely at the close of a funeral. Indeed, this is one of the occasions when excess is most common. From now until the fifth day, when the Divasalu ceremony takes place, fire and a lamp are lighted at the grave each evening at sunset.

"The Divasalu ceremony, which is observed by all castes which follow the Ramanuja matham or Satani cult, is generally performed at the dead of night, and with as much ceremony as possible. All the Namdaris in the village are invited, each being

separately called by the Kondigadu, who is a kind of messenger belonging to the Dasari or Mala priest. In former days, many of the Sudras used to attend this ceremony, but of late, either through Malas more openly eating the flesh of cows, or for some other reason, they rarely attend, and, if they do so, it is with great secrecy. The Nambi, however, who is a Satani, should attend. Indeed, it is he who is the performer of the ceremony. The flesh required for the sacrifice is found by slaughtering a sheep or a goat. Before killing it, holy water is poured into its mouth, and incense is burnt before it. When the animal has been dismembered, the head, guts, and blood are cooked in one pot, the bones in another, the flesh in a third, whilst in a fourth pot bread is baked. Toddy and arrack (native spirit) are also placed in readiness. After these preparations, the Nambi draws upon the floor, on the spot where the death occurred, the ashtakshari (eight cornered) mantram, repeating the while magical words. The mantram is usually drawn with trieble lines, one black, one yellow, and one white. At each corner are placed a cocoanut, betel, dates, and a lump of molasses, whilst a rupee is placed in the middle at one side. The words repeated are in Tamil, and, roughly translated, are as follows: 'This is the mantram of Manar Nambi. This is the holy water of the sacred feet of ..... Nambi. This is the secret of holiness of the 108 sacred places. These are the means for obtaining heaven. They are for the saving of the sinner. This drawing is the seal of the saints. Countless sins have I committed; yet by thought on the saints is sin cleansed'. After the completion of the drawing the officiating priest puts the holy mark of Vishnu on the foreheads of those who bring the vessels of cooked food. Then, to the east side of the drawing, he makes two little piles of millet. He then asks (in Tamil) for the pot containing the head, and for the toddy. The two bearers bring the pots, keeping exactly together, and, as they reach the Nambi, each must exchange places with the other. The priest then inscribes on one pot the wheel (Chakra), and one other the conch shell, these being the sacred symbols of Vishnu. Before doing so, he wets the leaves of the tulasi plant (*Occimum sanctum*) in a rice plate, and places the min a brass veseel containing holy water by his side. Then, with the conch shell which he carries, he pours some of the holy water into each pot, afterwards placing the pots upon the hepas of millet. Next a leaf plate is placed in the middle of the drawing. Upon it is placed some of each variety of food cooked, along with milk and ghi. Over all, another plate is placed as a cover. During this time, so that no one may see the ceremony, a sheet or blanket is held up before the Nambi as a screen. He then takes two little sticks with cotton-wool in a notch at the end, and puts

them to steep in castor-oil. Whilst they are steeping, he takes a cocoanut, and, after breaking it, pours the milk into the vessel containing holy water, and places the two pieces by the side of the heaps of grain upon which are the two pots. Then, taking up the two sticks, and having made passes with them over the whole drawing, he lights them and holds them aloft above the screen, so that the people on the other side may see them. All then bow down, and worship the two lights. Then the bearers of the corpse are invested with the namam, after which the whole of those assembled drink of the holy water in the brass vessel. A little holy water, betel etc. are now put into the rice plate, which is afterwards covered with soil upon the top of the grave. The party then eat the small portion of food which may be left, and, after trimming the lamp, proceed to their homes. The Nambi who officiates is supposed to be particularly holy. If he is wicked and unclean, and yet draws and sits upon the magic diagrams, he will bring loss and sorrow upon his own head.

"There is no other ceremony until the night of the twelfth day. On this day, not only is the floor plastered with cow-dung, but the whole house is cleaned outside and in. All the inmates of the house bathe, shave, and put on clean clothes. Then, as on the fifth day, an animal is killed, and the flesh is cooked exactly as before. In the north-east or god's corner, the panchakshari (five cornered) diagram is inscribed, and a handful of rice is put in the middle. As before, cocoanut etc. are placed at the five corners, and before the drawing are placed five copper images. The Dasari who performs the ceremony places two leaf plates before these images, and, breaking a couple of cocoanuts, sacrifices to them. After this, the Nambi, Dasaris, Kondigadu, corpse-bearers, and bearers of the pots, each drink two measures of toddy, and eat some of the flesh cooked in the second pot. The party, consisting entirely of males, now take as much food as will be required for the forthcoming ceremony, and proceed towards the grave, which has been previous to this plastered and decorated, and a little shrine erected at the head. On their arrival, a diagram, called panchakshari is drawn on the grave in black, yellow and white. At the five corners are placed cocoanut, lime, etc. In the middle is placed a leaf plate with food on it, and a cocoanut is offered, the two halves being placed one on each side of the plate. A lamp is now lighted, and placed in the little shrine at the head of the grave, which the Nambi worships. It may be noted that the ashtakshari diagram is the sign of Vishnu or Narayanamurti, and the panchakshari is the sign of Siva. The reason for both being used is the Vishnu is the preserver, and Siva the destroyer. If Siva alone is wor-

shipped, he will only cease from destroying; if Vishnu alone is worshipped, he cannot keep from destruction. Hence there is a sort of compromise, so that the benefits rendered by each god may be reaped. The Nambi now invests all the males present with the namam, and, if there is a widow, she is made to put on the bottu or small circular mark, the symbol most often being associated with Siva. The widow is made to sit in the middle of the house, with a leaf plate set before her. There she is stripped of all the jewels she wore as a married woman. Afterwards she is taken inside by some widows, and, after bathing, dons a cloth which has been brought for her by her brothers. Her own cloth is left outside, and must be sent from there to the washerman. It afterwards becomes a perquisite of the Dasari. If the deceased was a married woman, the widower would be deprived of his toe-ring, bathed, and clothed in a new cloth.

"On the occasion of Divasalu, blood relatives are all supposed to be present, and the ceremony is an expensive one, poor people often spending on the occasion alone as much as they can earn in a couple of months. The first ceremony is not so expensive, and will only cost about five rupees. All the male relatives of the dead man, or the brothers-in-law of a dead woman, must bring a little rice and some sticks of incense. If they are quite unable to attend the ceremony, they will clean their own houses, and will then perform some ceremony to the deceased. The relatives of the wife who come to the ceremony will not proceed to the house, or even to the caste quarters, but will go to the toddy shop, whence they send word of their arrival. As soon as the head of the house hears of this, he also proceeds to the toddy shop, and each one treats the other to drink. If they do not wish to drink, the one will pour a little liquor into the palm of the other. This ceremony is called chadupaputa (the taking away of bitterness), and without it they cannot visit one another's houses. These relatives must only partake of food on the night of their arrival and next day, but on no account must they linger till the light is lit on the thirteenth day.

"The above ceremony is that performed by the Namdaris or Vaishnuvites, who are not afraid of pollution, but who must do all things according to a prescribed ritual. We will now consider the ceremonies of the Mondis or Saivites, who think little of ceremony, but much of defilement. These take the dying person outside and as soon as it is realised that the end is near, all arrangements are made as to who is to cook, carry the corpse, etc. Before the breath has left the body, some go to the bazaar to purchase a new cloth. The women smear themselves with turmeric as at a wedding, and put a circular red mark (bottu) on

the forehad, whilst the men smear ashes on their foreheads. As soon as the food is cooked, the dead body is washed, and placed upon a bier. Most of the Vishnuvites do not use a bier. The corpse is carried to the grave, accompanied with fire and water as in the Vishnuvite ceremony, Shortly before the grave-yard is reached, a halt is made. The cloth which has been placed over the face is torn, and a cooking pot is broken, after which the body is taken to the grave, and buried without covering, lying prone on the face. After the earth has been filled in, the son of the deceased takes an earthern water-pot full of water, and bores a hole in it, so that the water may escape. He then makes three circuits of the grave, allowing the water to flow on the ground. After each circuit, he makes a fresh hole in the pot. He then goes away without looking back on the grave. When the funeral party, which consists only of men, reaches the house, they find that some of the old women have made a heap of cow-dung, at the top of which is a little hollow filled with water. Those who have returned from the grave dip their great toes in this water, and then linger on the threshold to worship the lamp which is inside. After this, the lamp is taken, and thrown outside the village, and, on their return, they bathe in hot water. The Saivites perform the first ceremony for the dead on the third day, and they have neither Nambi nor priest, but perform the whole ceremony themselves. Like the Vishnuvites, they thoroughly cleanse and plaster the house. There is no animal sacrifice, but food is prepared with vegetables. A tray is plaited from the twigs of the tamarind tree **(Tamarindus indica)**, and in this is placed a leaf plate containing food, frankincense, betel, etc. This food offering is carried to the grave along with fire and water at about eight O' clock in the morning. The man who carries the food must wear only a torn cloth, and yet with this he must manage to cover his head. On reaching the grave, they worship. The tray is left at the head of the grave, and the people retire a short distance, and there wait until a crow or kite comes, and takes food from the tray. The more quickly this occurs, the greater the merit obtained by the deceased. They never go away until either the one or the other of these birds comes. They afterwards proceed to the well, and bathe fully. On the twelfth day, another ceremony is performed. In the morning, all those taking part in the ceremony proceed to some place outside the village where they shave, and put on clean clothes which have come direct to that place from the washerman. They then go to some temple, and there obtain a little holy water, with which they afterwards sprinkle themselves, the widow, and the house of the deceased. The widow is then arrayed in all her clothes and jewels and is taken weeping to the 'widow's harbour'. There a

stone image is set up, and worshipped. Then the woman's jewels are taken off, and her bracelets broken. Sweet food is cooked and partaken of, all bathe, and return to their homes. After this ceremony, poor people will stay in their houses for three days, and rich people for a much longer period. For several years, on the anniversary of the death, some little ceremony is usually performed."

In connection with Mala Dasaris, to whom reference has already been made, Mr. Nicholson writes as follows. "There is a considerable number of individuals who obtained their living through religious mendicancy. They are known as Dasaris. There is usually a Nambi or Dasari for every three or four villages. Some few Dasaris have inam (rent-free) lands, but the majority live on the charity of the people. They do not ask alms, but sing hymns in honour of chennudu or peddu muni. They also officiate as a sort of priest and their services are requesitioned at the time of death, marriage, hair-cutting and the creation of Basavis and Dasaris. The Dasari who officiates at a wedding ceremony cannot act in a case of death. There is in the west Telugu country, a class called Varapu Dasari, who act as pujaris for the Sudras, and in all places the Dasari receives certain emoluments from Sudras for singing at wedding and funerals. They receive alms from all classes. Occasionally disturbances take place on account of the Saivites objecting to the Dasaris coming into their streets, and it is at such times as these that pavadamu is said to take place. It is firmly believed that, if a Dasari is offended, he will revenge himself in smaller offences by piercing his cheeks or side, for a serious offence by killing himself, generally by severing the head from the body. If one kills himself in this way, the news is said to be immediately and miraculously communicated to every Dasari and Nambi in the country. They all come to the place where the body lies. Until their arrival, this has been kept covered with a new cloth, and water is constantly sprinkled over it, to keep the wounds from drying up. When the Gurus, Dasaris, and others are collected, they show their magic power by frying fish, which come to life again on being placed in water, and by cutting limes in two and making them join together, while the remainder sing hymns to Chennudu, and call on the name of Govinda. The Gurus then dig a hole, and in its light the sacred fire of sandal-wood, which must be kindled by the friction of two pieces of wood. All assemble before this sacred fire, and join in singing or reciting the Dandakamu, after which the Dasaris dance a dance called the request dance. A lotus flower is simulated by arranging betel leaves in a small chembu (metal vessel), and this is placed in

a plate along with the severed head. The tray is then carried three times round the corpse by the wife of the deceased if he was married; if not, by his mother, and, if he had no kin, by a Basavi. The head is then taken by the Guru, and fixed properly to the trunk, the junction being plentifully daubed with sacred earth (tirumani). A new cloth is then spread over the corpse, and a network of flowers over all. The Dasaris again walk round the corpse, calling on Tembaru Manara, repeating at the same time a mantram. Then Kurumayya, the caste Guru, strokes the corpse from head to foot three times with his staff, after which he places his foot on the head of the corpse, and calls on the body to rise. The ability of the Dasaris to perform this marvel is implicitly believed in. Some I have asked have seen it attempted, but one occasion it failed because the wife was unwell (under menstruel pollution). On another occasion, the ceremony was not carried out with fitting reverence, and failed in consequence.

"The chief people among the Dasaris are Guru, Annalayya, Godugulayya (umbrella men), and Tuttulayya (horn-blowers). The Dasaris have got certain badges of office, which are supposed to have been given by Chennudu on the conquest of Vijayanagar. (According to tradition, between the 8th and 11th centuries A.D. there was great rivalry between the Saivite and Vishnuvite sects, and it is supposed that Kurumayya, fighting on the side of the Vishnuvites, by the aid of the god Chennudu was able to suppress and overcome the followers of Siva. He thus became the Guru of the Malas). The Dasari's insignia consist of an iron staff, copper pot, tiger skin, antelope skin, etc. Besides these, some of the chief Dasaris are said to possess copper inscriptions given to them by the kings of Vijayanagar, but these they refuse to allow any one to see".

Concerning the practice of making Basavis (dedicated prostitutes), Mr. Nicholson writes as follows: "The origin of the Basavis is said to be thus. In former times, the Asadhis had the duty and privilege of dancing and singing before the God, but this office was always performed by a male. On one occasion, there was no male to take up the duties, and, as there was no prospect of further children, one of the daughters was appointed to the work, so that the livelihood would not be lost. Then no one came forward to marry the girl, and she found it impossible to live a good life. The fact, however, that she was a servant of the God kept her from disgrace, and from that time it has been customary to dedicate these girls to the God's service. Now-a-days, the girl goes through a ceremony with a knife, which is placed in front of the God, and, as at ordinary weddings, there are all the various ceremonies performed, and feasts eaten. If at

the time of the wedding, any man wishes to have a sort of proprietary right, he may obtain the same by paying a sort of dowry. The elders of the village must give their consent to the dedication, and usually signify this by eating out of the same plate as the bride. In the west Telugu country, parents who have good looking daughters, no matter what their class, give them as Basavis. But, in the east Telugu country, only the Asadhi, Beineni, and Pambala people do so. A Basavi can never be widowed, and people say they are consecrated to the God. Consequently, their life, though a life of sin, is not considered so by the Gods. Yet by a strange inconsistency, men consorting with Basavis are immediately branded as loose men. The first few years of Basavi's life are full of profit, and it is probably for this reason that parents are willing thus to sacrifice their daughters. Afterwards when the charms of youth are passed, the Basavi resorts to begging or with two or three more obtain a precarious livelihood by music and dancing. Their children have a share in the maternal father's property.

"The above account of a Basavi's dedication applies to the Asadhis or singing beggars. The following is a more detailed description of the ceremony as performed by the Dasaris. The girl to be dedicated is dressed in a white ravike and cloth, after which she is conducted to the priest who is to officiate. He burns the signs of a chank and chakram on the girl's shoulders, presenting to her at the same time holy water. After this, the priest receives the guruvu kanika, which consists not only of five rupees, but also five seers of rice, five cocoanuts, five garlics and a quarter of a seer of betel nuts. The person giving the girl away now receives permission from the people and Guruvu, and attaches the marriage symbol to the girl's neck. Before the tali is tied, the girl is made to sit on a blanket, upon which has been drawn the 'throne', with her hands which clasp the Garuda stambha tied together with a wreath of flowers. Before the hands are unbound, in place of the usual dowry of about twenty rupees, five duddu (copper coins) are given into the hand of the priest. All assembled now worship the beggar's staff, and, on proceeding to the place of lodging, food is given to the Dasaris. Usually the ceremonies are performed before the village shrine, but, at times of festival, they are performed before the God, in honour of whom the festival is being held. On returning to the village, the girl is obliged, for five consecutive Saturdays, to go round the village accompanied by a Dasari, to whose food and comfort she has to attend. This is, no doubt, a public announcement of the profession the girl has had put upon her. When puberty is arrived at, a feast is given, and thenceforward the girl is her own mistress".

The Malas worship a variety of deities, including Gurappa, Subbarayadu, Gunnathadu, Sunkalamma, Polerамma, Gangamma and Gontiyalamma. In connection with the worship of the goddess Gontiyalamma, Mr. F. R. Hemingway writes, in a note on the Malas of the Godavari district, that "the special caste deity is Gontiyalamma, the mother of the five Pandava brethren. They say that Bhima threatened to kill his mother, who took refuge under an avireni pot (painted pot used at weddings) in a Mala's house. For this she was solemnly cursed by her sons, who said that she should remain a Mala woman for ever. In commemoration of this story, a handful of growing paddy (rice) is pulled up every year at the Dasara festival, and, eight days later, the earth adhering to its roots is mixed with turmeric and milk made into an image of the goddess, and hidden under the avireni pot. For the next six months this image is worshipped every Sunday by all the villagers in turn, and, on the Sivaratri night, it is taken round the village, accompanied by all the Malas bearing pots of rice and other food carried in a kavadi, and is finally thrown with much ceremony into a river or tank (pond or lake). This rite is supposed to mean that the goddess is the daughter of the caste, that she has lived with them six months, and that they are now sending her back with suitable gifts (the rice, etc.) to her husband. A common form of religious vow among Malas is to promise to send a cloth and a cow with the goddess on the last day of the rite, the gifts being afterwards presented to a married daughter". It is noted by Mr. Hemingway that both Malas and Madigas hold a feast in honour of their ancestors at Pongal—an uncommon rite.

In the Godavari district scarcity of rain is dealt with in various ways. "It is considered very efficacious if the Brahmans take in procession round the village an image of Varuna (the god of rain) made of mud from the tank of a river or tank. Another method is to pour 1,000 pots of water over the lingam in the Siva temple. Malas tie a live frog to a mortar, and put on the top of the latter a mud figure representing Gontiyalamma. They then take these objects in procession, singing 'Mother frog, playing in water, pour rain by pots full'. The villagers of other castes then come and pour water over the Malas".* Mr. Nicholson writes that, to produce rain in the Telugu country, "two boys capture a frog, and put it into a basket with some nim (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves. They tie the basket to the middle of a stick, which they support on their shoulders. In this manner

*Gazetteer of the Godavari District.

they make a circuit of the village, visiting every house, singing the praises of the god of rain. The greater the noise the captive animal makes, the better the omen, and the more gain for the boys, for, at every house, they receive something in recognition of their endeavour to bring rain upon the village fields".

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by EDGAR THURSTON, C. I. E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondent Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by: K. RANGACHARI, M.A., of the Madras Government Museum — Volume I A & B, Government Press, Madras, 1909 page 24.

ALLAM: (ginger) —. An exogamous sept of Mala.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by : K. RANGACHARI, M. A., of the Madras Government Museum — Volume I A & B, Government Press, Madras, 1909 *page* 38.

.....The barber who shaves Europeans must not be a caste barber but is either a Muhammadan or a non-caste man. Quite recently a youthful Ambattan had to undergo ceremonial purification for having unconsciously shaved a Paraiyans, Paraiyans, MALAS, and other classes of the lower orders, have their own barbers and washermen. Razors are, however, sometime lent to them by the Ambattans for a small consideration, and cleansed in water when they are returned. Parasitic skin diseases are said to originate from the application of a razor, which has been used on a number of miscellaneous individuals. And Well-to-do Hindus now keep their own razor; which the barber uses when he comes to have them.....

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by : K. RANGACHARI, M. A., of the Madras Government Museum — Volume I. A&B, Government Press, Madras, 1909 *pages* 60 *and* 61.

ASADI :— The Asadis of the Bellary district are summed up, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "a sub-caste of MALA or Holeya, which, in Bellary, are almost interchangeable terms. They are prostitutes and dancers". Among the Madigas, men called Asadi, who have undergone an initiation ceremony, go about, in company with the Matangis (dedicated prostitutes), playing on an instrument called the chaudike, and singing the praises and reciting the story of Ellamma. (*See Madiga.*)

Extract 'MALA' from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by; K. RANGACHARI, M. A., of the Madras Government Museum — Volume I. A&B, Government Press, Madras, 1909 *page* 130.

BAINEDU :— The bainedu, or Bainedi, as they are called in the Census Report, 1901, are the musicians and barbers of the MALAS and Madigas. At the peddadinamu death ceremony of the Gamallas, a Mala Bainedu takes part in the recitation of the story of Ankamma, and in making the designs (muggu) on the ground.

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by : K. RANGACHARI, M. A., of the Madras Government Museum — Volume I, A&B, Government Press, Madras, 1909 *pages* 256 *and* 257.

BOMBADAI (a fish): A gotra of Medara. The equivalent Bomidi occurs as an exogamous sept of MALA. Members of the Vamma gotra of the Janappan abstain from eating this fish, because, when some of their ancestors went to fetch water in a marriage pot, they found a number of this fish in the water collected in the pot.

BOMMA (a doll): An exogamous sept of Padma Sale. The equivalent Bommala occurs as an exogamous sept of MALA. The Bommalatavallu are said* to exhibit shows in the Vizagapatam district.

*Manual of the Vizagapatam District.

Extract on 'MALA' from "Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E., Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Etranger, Societe d' Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante, Societa Romana di Anthropologia, assisted by : K. RANGACHARI, M. A., of the Madras Government Museum — Volume I A&B, Government Press, Madras, 1909 *page* 262.

BOORI (Cake) : An exogamous sept of MALA.

Extract on 'MALA' from Census of India, 1891, *Volume XIII Madras, The Report on The Census, by H. A. STUART, of The Indian Civil Service; Fellow of The Royal Statistical Society; Member of the Royal Asiatic Society, Superintendent of Census Operations, Madras, Madras: Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press,* 1893 *pages* 248 *and* 249.

391. MALA: 1,362,531—The Malas are the Pariahs of the Telugu country. Dr. Oppert derives the word from a Dravidian root meaning a mountain, which is represented by the Tamil *malai*, Telugu *mala*, etc., so that Mala is the equivalent of Paraiyan, and also of Mar or Mhar and the Mal of western and central Bengal. I cannot say whether there is sufficient ground for the assumption that the vowel of a Dravidian root can be lengthened in this way. I know of no other derivation of 'Mala'.

The number of sub divisions of Mala appearing in the census returns is 313 of which the following are the largest:—

Sub-Division	Strength	Local Distribution
Arava . . .	49,743	North Arcot (35,067) Nellore (11,771).
Kanta . . .	61,206	Vizagapatam (30,046) Ganjam (21,665).
Murikinadu . .	48,814	Cuddapah (31,950), Kurnool (11,455).
Pakanati . .	92,790	Nellore (31,583), Cuddapan (30,890), North Arcot (30,209).
Reddi Bhumi . .	96,126	Nellore (58,906), Cuddapah (12,885), Kurnool (10,232), Kistna (9,960), North Arcot (4,029).

As many as 861,310 Malas have returned Mala as the sub-division also. Nearly one half of these are in the Godavari district. **Arava** (i.e., Tamil) Malas are probably Paraiyans. I have no information about any of these sub-divisions.

The Malas like the Paraiyans are said to have been weavers at one time, but very few are engaged in this occupation at the present day. Most of them are now labourers. Like the Telugu people generally, the majority of the Malas are nominally Vaishnavites, but their real allegiance is given to the demons and village deities. They have priests of their own, called Mala Dasaris. There is no rule prescribing early marriage, but the statistics show that marriage before puberty is common. Divorce

is free, but if a man sends his wife away for no serious fault on her part, he must make a money payment to her, and if she is the one who makes the divorce, then whatever the cause, her next husband must pay a fine which goes not to the previous husband, but to the caste. The re-marriage of widows is permitted, but the second marriage is attended with much less formality than the first. Malas eat flesh, including beef, and have no caste restrictions regarding the consumption of liquor. They have no titles.

Extract on "MALA" from Census of India, 1901, Vol. I, India, Ethnographic, Appendices being the Data upon which the aste Chapter of the Report is based by H. H. RISLEY, I. C. S., C. I. E. Officer of the French Academy, Corresponding Member of Berlin Anthropological Society, Calcutta

Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India 1903 *page* 16.

SUMMARY OF MEASUREMENTS

Scytho-Dravidian Type

MADRAS (DECCAN), (In order of Cephalic Index).

(E. THURSTON, ESQUIRE)

Number of subject	Name of the tribe or caste	Language or Dirlec Locality	DIMENSIONS OF HEAD						PROPORTIONS OF DIMENSIONS OF NOSE HEAD						PROPORTIONS OF NOSE				STATURE		
			Length (Glabello-occipital)			Breadth (Extreme)			Cephalic Index			Height			Breadth			Nasal Index					
			Average	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum	Averag	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum
30	MALA	Telugu Bellary	184	198	168	142	148	134	77.1	85.9	70.3	48	52	44	36	41	34	76.2	93.2	66.2	1639	1750	1538

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Census of India, 1901, *Volume XII, Burma, Part-I Report by C. C. LOWIS, of The Indian Civil Service, Superintendent, Census Operations, Rangoon : Office of The Superintendent of Government Printing, Burma,* 1902 *page* 110.

161. MALA: The Mala is the Telugu Paraiyan caste. The majority of the Malas in Burma are coolies. There were altogether 18,522 in the province on the 1st March 1901. It is not clear from the figures how many there were in 1891. They appear to have been shown under some other head in that year. The following particulars regarding them are taken from the Madras Census Report for 1891 :—

"Malas, like the Paraiyans, are said to have been weavers at one time, but very few are engaged in this occupation at the present day. Most of them are now labourers. Like the Telugu people generally, the majority of the Malas are nominally Vaishnavites, but their real allegiance is given to the demons and village deities. They have priests of their own called Mala Dasaris. There is no rule prescribing early marriage, but the statistics show that marriage before puberty is common. Divorce is free. * * * Malas eat flesh, including beef, and have no caste restrictions regarding the consumption of liquor".

Extract on 'MALA' from 'Madras Census Report' Census of India 1901 *Part-I Report, Vol. XV by FRANCIS, W. page* 166.

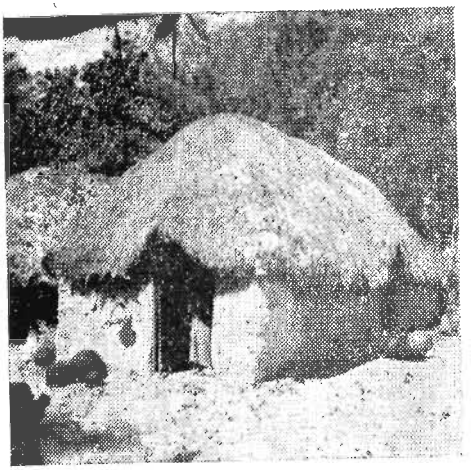
MALA

(1,405,027)

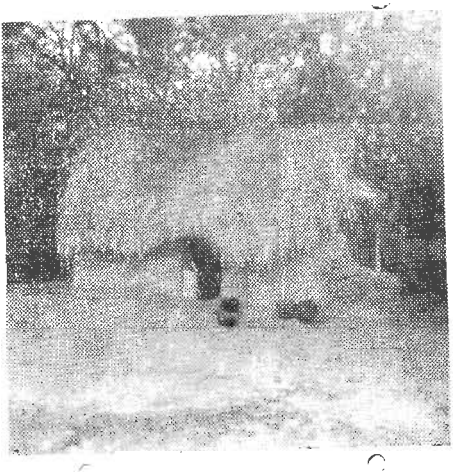
Agricultural labourers and cotton weavers. In the Kistna District they have their own dancing-girls called Mala Bogams, their own barbers known as Bainedis, their own priests styled Mala Dasaris and their own-beggars, termed Pambalas and Mastigas. They will not eat meals prepared by Kamsalas, Medaras, Muc'chis or Madigas, and will not even use the same wells as the Madigas, whom they despise for eating carrion though they eat beef themselves. (C.R. 1891, para 391 : North Arcot Man. Vol. I, p. 234).

Extract on 'MALA' from Census of India, 1921, Volume XXI Hyderabad State, Part-I Report by MOHAMMED RAHMATULLA Superintendent of Census Operations, Hyderabad State, Hyderabad-Deccan; Printed at The Government Central Press, 1923 pages 253-254.

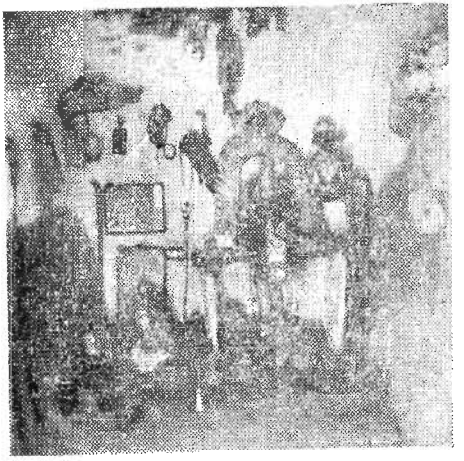
MALA, (375,748): Village watchmen and menials in Telingana, akin to the Mahars of Marathwara. The community has numerous endogamous groups. The exogamous groups are either of the territorial or totemistic type. Mala Jangams and Mala Dasaris take girls in marriage from other Mala castes, but do not give their own daughters in marriage to members of other Mala caste. A man must marry within his sub-caste. He can marry two sisters, but two brothers cannot marry two sisters. One can marry the daughter of one's maternal uncle, paternal aunt or elder sister. Outsiders are admitted into the caste. The tongue of the novice is burnt with a burning **nim** twig, or a hot piece of gold or silver. A goat is sacrificed on the occasion and a feast given to the members of the caste. The hut, in which these ceremonials are gone through, is burnt after the close of the dinner. Both infant and adult marriages are practised. The bride receives a present from the bridegroom, known as **avali** and amounting to Rs. 4 or Rs. 5. The customs of dedicating boys and girls to deities prevails. Widow remarriage is allowed. **Tiru** or bride-price, ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 50 is paid to the parents of the widow by the bridegroom. Divorce is allowed and the divorced women can remarry. The Malas are, in reality, Animistic in their creed and prefer the worship of the deities of nature and diseases to the gods of the Hindu pantheon. Like the Mahar and Madiga, the Mala eats all sorts of flesh. The Malas are village watchmen, labourers and grooms. They are the chief free labourers **(begars)** of the land. They form part of the village **baluta** and are paid in kind for the duties discharged. Some of them weave coarse cotton cloth.



One of the huts of the Mala hamlet in Minjur.



Another of the Mala huts.



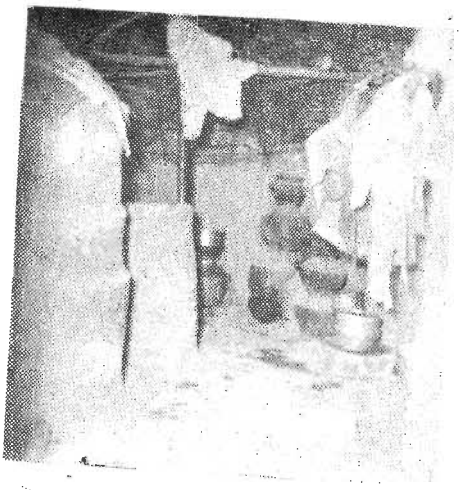
The deities which Malas Worship.



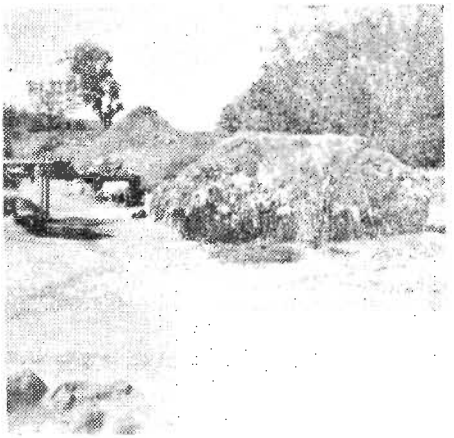
A street in the hamlet where Malas live at Minjur near Madras.

One of the lucky huts at a Street light.





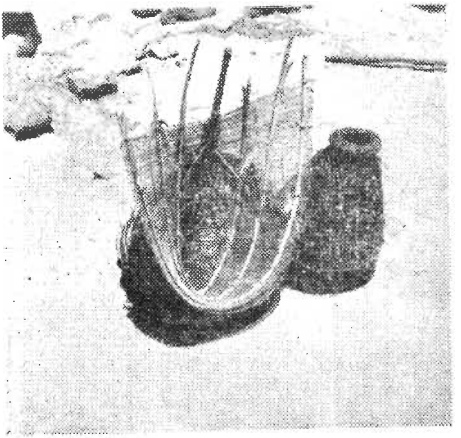
Grain Silos, water receptacles and clothes. Every hut has them.



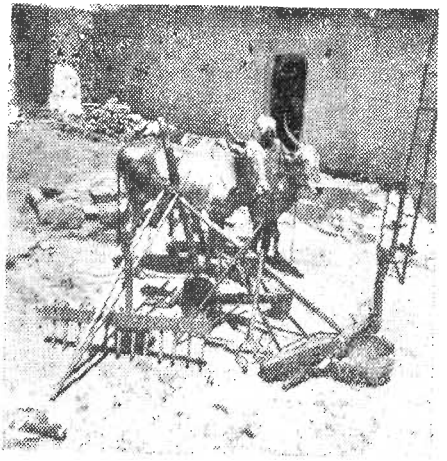
Many huts make a hamlet. This at Minjur is Malas own.

Mala girl bedecked as bride.





Primitive fishing snare is still in use.



The farmer's paraphernalia for ploughing.



Malas are untouchables. This belle bids exception. looking every inch a native charmer.



A Mala Couple at home.



The effects of a Mala home.

Not all of these are cooking Vessels. The big ones hold water, dear in drought.





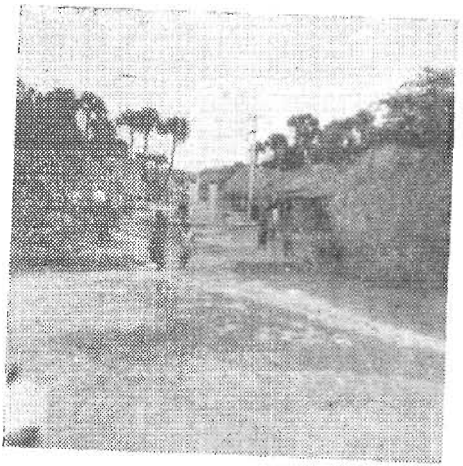
A Mala female of Minjur.



The Gods of Mala Worship.

Wearing cheap ornaments, the untouchable Malas, in rugged form, are yet beautiful.





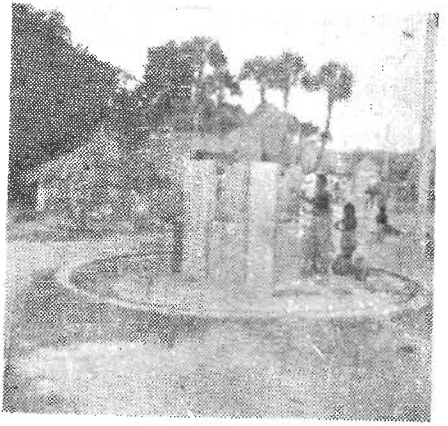
The Mala hamlet in Minjur.



A section of manpower among Malas.



Two specimens of Mala feminine.



The Well for Malas. These untouchables may not vitiate potable water elsewhere.

GIPN—S5—4 R. G. India/73—7-7-75—500.