

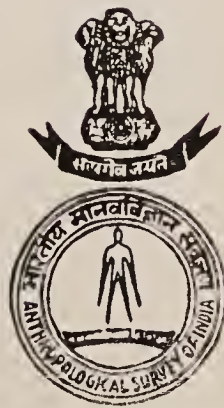
THE PALIYAN OF KERALA

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N. SUSEELA DEVI

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ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA
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THE PALIYAN OF KERALA

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Introduction

The Paliyan are one of the scheduled tribes of Kerala and Tamilnadu. In Kerala they are distributed in Peermedu and Udumbanchola taluks of Idikki District. According to 1971 Census there are eight hundred and ninety souls of Paliyans in Kerala.

Some informations on the Paliyan are available in Castes and Tribes of South India by Thurston (1909). A brief account of the life of the Paliyan is given in 'Travancore Tribes and Castes' by L.A.K. Iyer (1939). A.D. Luiz has described the Paliyan of Kerala very briefly in his book 'Tribes of Kerala' (1962). Peter Gardner has studied in detail the Paliyan of Madura and Ramnad districts (1969 & 1972). No detailed study has been done on them in Kerala. The present attempt, therefore has been made to prepare an ethnographic report on the Paliyan of Kerala. This will also help to bring out the comparative life of the Paliyan with that of other region including the recent changes in their way of life.

Method of study

I collected some first hand informations about the Paliyan from available reports and literatures. In the field before starting actual survey I collected some basic informations from the State Officials who have regular contact with these people. The tribal development officer gave me preliminary informations about them. Once I accompanied him to the settlements of the Paliyan. It appeared that the Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement were more backward and development activities were mostly concentrated on them. The Tribal Development Officer also suggested to me to select Kumaly settlement for my study. I selected Kumaly settlement for my intensive field work. I also visited other settlements and collected data for comparative assessment.

The techniques employed in collecting data were interview, observations, genealogies, case histories, group discussions and interview in structured schedules. At times, whenever it was possible, I also participated in their activities.

Field work

The field work was conducted in two phases. In each phase it was continued for a period of two months. The first phase of the field work was carried out during April to June, 1978 and the second phase of the field work was done during March to May, 1979.

Field situation

In the beginning it was difficult to establish rapport with the people. As my first visit to the settlement was with the tribal development officer, the people were under the impression that I too belonged to the tribal development office and I had gone there to study about poor conditions of their life and to give them more help and benefits from the tribal development office. It was also a coincidence that on the same day of my first visit some goats were distributed among them by the tribal development officer. But when I told them about my purpose of work they started showing disinterest in me. I was always asked by them whether this study would bring any immediate benefits to them. It was obvious that they expected some money for spending their time in answering my queries. Their argument was that they are living on the daily income which they earn either by selling fire wood or by working as daily labour. For that they have to leave the place early morning.

Later on my acquaintance with the womenfolk helped me to a great extent to make the people convinced about the importance of my work. I could make friendship with some of the Paliyan women who helped me in getting reliable informations on various aspects of their life.

It was very difficult to collect data on their income as they do not have any regular job or they do not keep regular account. Most of the Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement

depend on collecting and selling firewood in Kumaly market. They were at times hesitant in telling me how much fire wood they collected and how much they earned out of it.

Paliyans of Chakkupallam were suspicious about my visit. Some of them complained that the officials were under the impression that the Paliyans living in Chakkupallam were more advance and there was no need of giving any government assistance to them. A few Paliyans own a good amount of land and cardamom plantations there. The converted Paliyan who live in Anakkara settlement also said that they were not getting any government assistance and the Indian Missionary Society had not implemented any programmes for their economic development.

In the beginning I faced some difficulties in understanding the conversation of the Paliyan. The Paliyan talk a dialect of Tamil. The youngsters can talk Malayalam as well as Tamil. They helped me in understanding the conversation of the old Paliyan.

Historical account of the Paliyan

In the earlier reference (Thurston, 1909) the Paliyan were described as a nomadic and food gathering tribe. They subsisted mainly on the roots, leaves, wild fruits and honey. They supplemented their food with the meat of the animals like sambar, wild boar, etc. They used to trap these animals in pit falls carefully covered up with twigs and leaves. They lived in grass huts, sometimes on platforms up trees, in caves under rocks. They hardly covered their body with grass or leaves. Weddings were conducted without ceremonies. This description throws some light on the way of life of the Paliyan in the past.

The picture of the present-day Paliyan is different. There have been changes in their traditional life style. Now the Paliyan have taken to various occupations. These include cultivation, labour work in cardamom plantation, collecting and selling of firewood, collecting of honey, etc. Some of them are employed in government offices as forest guard, watchman, peon.

The meaning of the name, could not be collected from the Paliyan living now. They do not remember about the origin of their name. But in Luiz account (1962) it is seen that the Paliyan claim that their name originated from 'valli', a palichi (Paliyan female) who was the wife of god Subramanyam. It is also mentioned that it may be a corrupt form of *Pallien* connoting a good tracker. According to Gardner (1972) Paliyan is a regional expression of Paraiyan, "the ancient". In different works the Paliyan are spelled differently like Paliyan, Palliyan, Palliyar. In the census report the Paliyan are enumerated as Palleyan, Palliyan and Palliyar. In different places the people might have spelt it differently. They are also referred to as Paliyan or Paliyanmar by other caste people. In this report I have spelt them as Paliyan.

No authentic account of the origin of the Paliyan tribe is available. One set of scholars hold that they were the early Dravidians driven to the hills by the Aryan while another set of scholars maintain that they are the descendents of people who took shelter in these hills when the carnatic wars were raging in the southern districts.

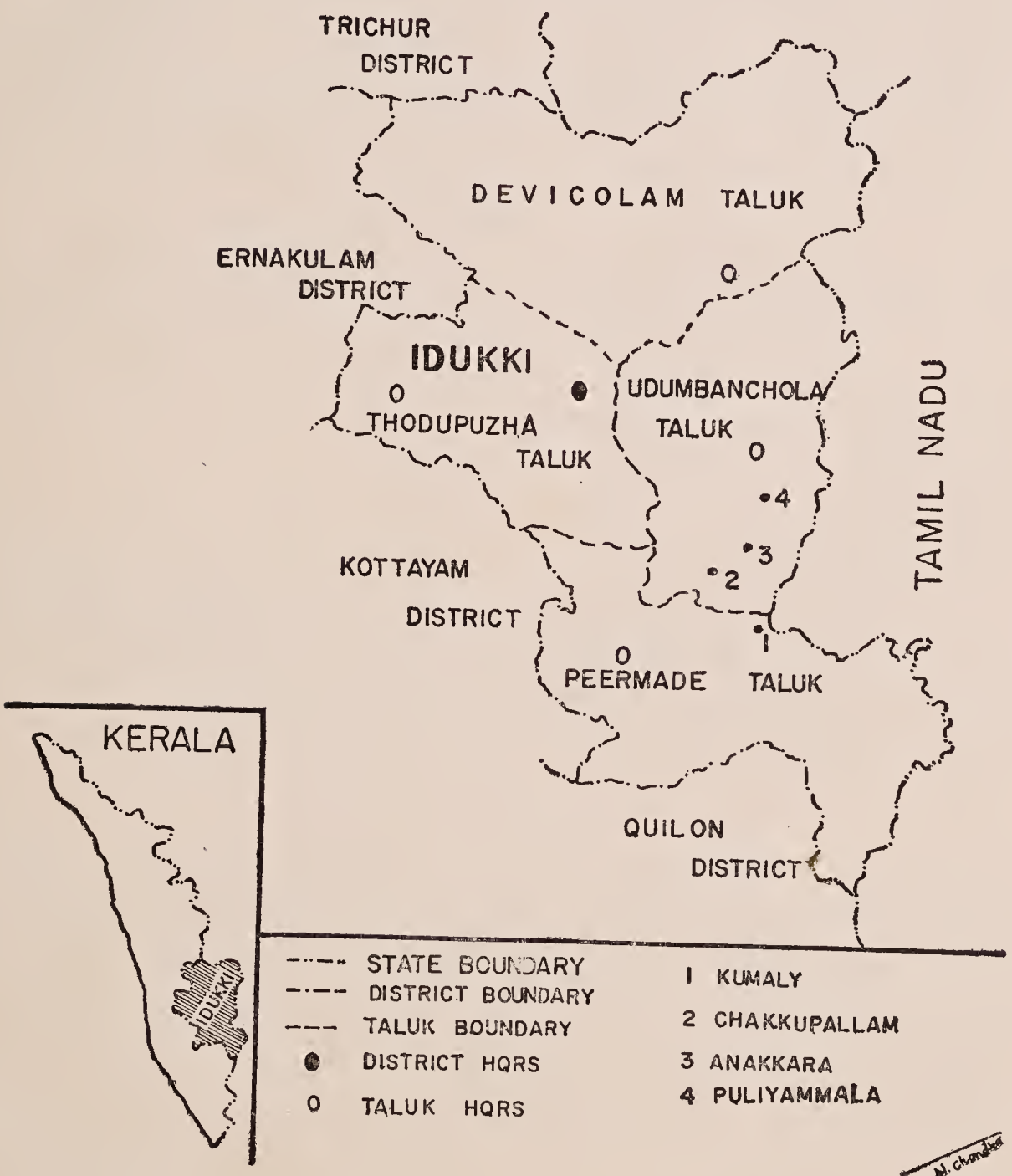
The Paliyan of Kerala are said to have migrated from Cudalloor in Madura district in Tamil Nadu. According to L.A.K. Iyer formerly the Paliyans of Vadanmettu lived in Nelliyan, Puliyadi and Tamarakulam near Cudalloor in Madura district. They migrated to the Cardamom hills in Travancore on the advice of a Pandaram chief.

Another popular legend is that the chief of the Kallar at Madura had two wives. As a result of dissension between the two, the children of the junior wife took shelter in the hills for fear of maltreatment and their progeny came to be known as Paliyans.

The Paliyan living now in Thekkady Range and Kumaly Range also said that their ancestors had migrated from Cudalloor in Madura district in Tamil Nadu. But they do not remember vividly the reason for migration to this place. They say that they had migrated to the Cardamom hills of Travancore during the reign of a local king. They were asked by the local king of Travancore to take refuge in these hills and they were called Paliyans.

THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE

DISTRIBUTION OF PALIYANS IN IDUKKI DISTRICT



CHAPTER I

The Place and the People

Location

Habitat of the Paliyan lies between 76° 55' and 77° 70' north latitude and between 9° 35' and 11° 55' east longitude in the Idikki district of Kerala State.

Topography of the area is undulating and the forest is deciduous in nature.

Climate

The south west monsoon bursts usually in the beginning of May. The heaviest rainfalls occur from June to August.

The pre-monsoon showers which occur during April are of great importance, since the plantation programme is dependent on this. The north east monsoon begins in October and lasts for nearly two months. During this period, morning is usually fine and bright. Thunder shower is common in the afternoon.

The dry weather commences by the latter half of December and continues upto February. The summer begins by the first half of March and lasts upto the second or third week of May.

Flora and fauna

The forests in which the Palian live now are rich in mango tree (*Mangifera indica*) Jack fruit tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) Anjili (*Atrocarpus hirsuta*), Elava (*Salanalia malabarica*), veeti (*Dalbergia talifolia*) Teak (*Tectonagrandis*), Venga (*Pterocarpos marsupium*), Maruthi (*Terminalia penulculata*), Vatta (*Maccarange roseburghu*), Kumbil (*Gmchina arborea*). Nai Kumbil (*Callicarpalanata*).

The following climbers are seen in the forest. *Entola Phareoloides*, *Butea Parviflora*, *Strychnos Colubrina*, *Dioserea* species, *Accaria intreia*, *Accasia Pinnala*, *Pterobia indicum*, *Caesalpinia menusoides*, *Butea purviflora*, etc.

Now the variety of jungle fruits and tubers are scanty in the tribal settlements. About twenty years back the area was infested with wild elephants (*Elephas maximus*) gaur or Indian bison (*Bosgarus*) and Tiger (*Panthera tigris*). Now the wild elephants, tigers, wild bears, etc., are confined to the Periyar wild life sanctuary. These animals are now not seen in the area of tribal settlements. The fauna includes wild boar (*sus scrota*) spotted deer or chital (*Azis axis*), sambar (*cervus unicolor*) Black raped Hare (*Lepus migricollis*) flying squirrel (*Petaurista* sp).

Birds of different kinds are seen in the forest. Some of them jungle Myna, wood peckers, Rose ringed and blue winged parakeets, jungle fowl, etc., are common birds of the locality.

Population variation

The total population of the Paliyan enumerated between 1901-1971 census are listed below.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number</i>
1901	183
1911	289
1921	229
1931	483
1941	591
1961	1354
1971	890

There is variation in the population of the Paliyan during 1901-1971. It is difficult to ascribe any definite reasons for the unsteady growth of the population of the Paliyan.

Table 1. *Distribution of the Paliyan in Idukki district*

Name of the settlement	Range	Taluk	Village	No. of households
Kumaly	Thekkady	Peermedu	Periyar	62
Chakkupallam	Kumaly	Udumbanchola	Chakkupallam	71
Anakkara	Kumaly	Udumbanchola	Vandan mettu	31
Puliyamala	Kumaly	Udumbanchola	Pampadum para	48

The settlements of the Paliyan are located in Thekkady Range and Kumaly Range of Peermedu and Udumbenchola taluks of Idukki district. They call the settlement *Kudi*. Udumbenchola taluk has the maximum concentration of the Paliyan.

Thekkady Range

The altitude of Thekkady Range is about 2800 feet above the sea level. The total area of the range is 330 sq. miles. Kumaly Paliyan settlement and Mannan settlement are the only tribal settlements in this range. The Periyar Lake is situated in Thekkady Range. Thekkady Range was declared as protected wild life sanctuary. So the movement of the tribals in this area is restricted. According to the soil conservation department the total area of the tribals habitation is about one hundred hectares.

Kumaly Range

The altitude of Kumaly Range is 3200 ft. above sea level. The total area of the Kumaly Range is 3004 sq. miles. The Kumaly Range is known as the Cardamom hill reserve forests. There are three settlements of the Paliyan in this range which are distributed in Chakkupallam, Anakkara and Puliyan mala.

Kumaly settlement

The data for the present report were mostly collected from the Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement which is about one Kilometer away from Kumaly. Kumaly is an important place in Peermedu taluk in Idukki District. Thekkady, the headquarters of Periyar wild life sanctuary is three kilometers away from Kumaly. Buses fly from different parts of Kerala to Thekkady which go via Kumaly. The road is linked by Kottayam Kumaly road. There is also a bus service between Kumaly and Madurai which is only one hundred and thirtyfour kilometers away from Kumaly. Kumaly is developing very fast. People from different parts of Kerala have migrated to this place for the purpose of agriculture and business. Since it adjoins the Tamilnadu boarder a lot of Tamilians also visit

this place. They own some shops here. The Paliyan visit Kumaly market very often to sell the firewood from the forest and also to buy things from the shops at Kumaly.

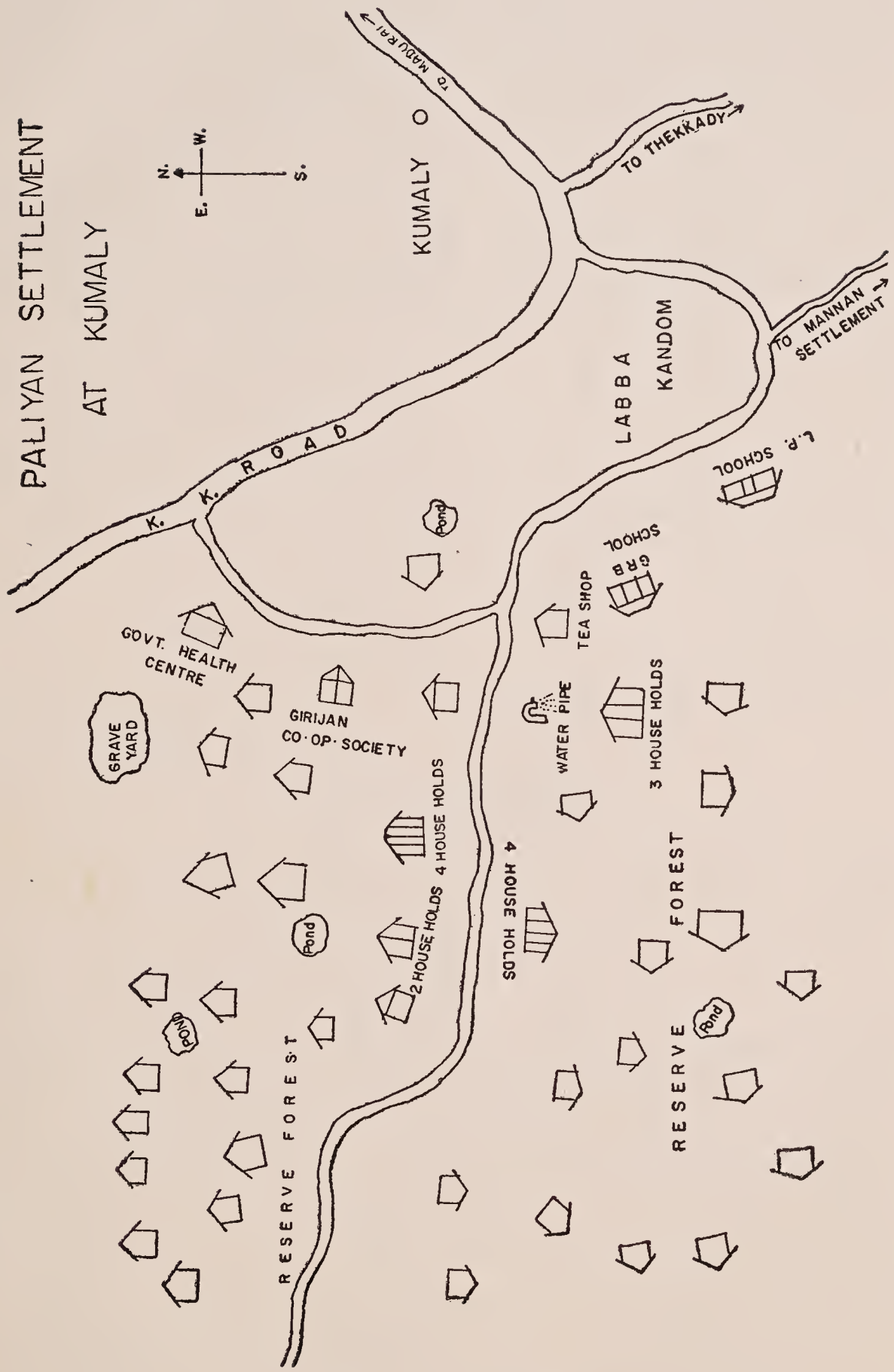
There are Post Office, Police Station, Government High School, and other government offices and a theatre in Kumaly. Besides, there are shops for provisions, stationary articles, textile articles, vegetables, and hotels, lodges, tourist homes and tea, liquor, arrack shops, etc. Kumaly forest Range office is located here.

Paliyans and Mannans are the only tribes found in Kumaly tribal settlements. They live on the northern and southern ends of the reserve forest. The non-tribals such as Izhavas, Christians, Muslims, Pulayar, Nairs, etc., live on the eastern part of the tribal settlements which is revenue area. The non tribals migrated to Kumaly about twenty years ago. The tribal settlement is easily accessible. In Kumaly tribal settlement there are a government residential Basic School, a tribal nursery school and a craft centre for the tribals run by the tribal Development Office. There is also a tribal lower Primary School, where the students of various communities study, and a government health centre.

There are four petty tea shops and two small grocery shops near to the tribal settlement and these shops are run by Muslim, Christian and Pulayan people respectively. In these shops grains, spices, tapioca, match boxes, dry fish, oil and a variety of other things are sold. It was observed that the tribals drink coffee or tea generally from a tea shop run by a Muslim when they go to forest. One arrack shop is also doing business by the side of these shops.

Oli (natural springs) are the main source of water Pump set has been introduced in the Paliyan settlement about ten years back. For the last few years it has gone out of order. Two wells are being dug by the Block Development Office for the use of Mannans and Paliyans in that area. The area has been electrified five years back. But none of the Paliyan household is having electricity.

THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE



The burial place of the Paliyan is known as *Savakottai* which is far from the settlement.

Paliyan settlement at Kumaly has sixtytwo households. The houses are scattered here and there. Some of them are on the slopes of hills and some of them are clustered together in the levelled area. In some huts more than one household live.

In one case four households are living together in a single hut. All the four households are related very closely. In all the households cooking is done separately and they are economically independent. Sometimes they exchange their cooked food among themselves. It was learnt that these households were granted houses by the tribal development office and after the completion of these houses they will shift to the houses and the will live in independent houses.

The members of the households in the settlement are related to one another. The Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement have migrated from Chakkupallam. The Paliyan of Chakkupallam, Anakkara and Kumaly are related to each other. They meet together when there are occasions like marriage, death, puberty ceremony and so on.

Anakkara settlement

Anakkara settlement lies in Kumaly Range. The altitude of this area is about 3200 ft above the sea level. It is situated in a picturesque region surrounded by mountains. The total area of the settlement is 269 acres.

The Paliyan living in Anakkara settlement have embraced Christianity. The missionary works started among the hill tribes in early 19th century. The Indian Missionary society at Tinnevely took initiative in spreading Christianity among these tribes. The Paliyan of Anakkara belong to the Indian Missionary society. There are thirtyone households in this settlement.

The Indian Missionary society at Tinnevely have established a church and a lower Primary school in Anakkara settlement. Besides, they have constructed twenty houses for the converted Paliyan.

In the past the converted Paliyan were regarded as one of the *Qakajatis* (polluting caste) by the non converted Paliyan and the latter did not accept any cooked food from the former. No such restriction is observed now. Some of the converted Paliyan have reverted to the Hindu Paliyan settlement.

The general economic conditions of the Hindu and the Christianised Paliyan are almost same. The Missionary works did not improve the economic conditions of the latter. The Indian missionary society have not implemented any programmes for their economic development. Most of them are employed in cardamom plantations as labourers. Both men and women go for labour work in cardamom plantation. They have a marginal land holding *i.e.* about one or one and a half acres per family. The land is leased out for *pattam* or *Otti*. In case of *pattam* one third of the product is given to the land owner and in case of *otti* the land owner gets nothing till he clears the loan.

There is no difference in the pattern of dress among the converted and the non converted Paliyan. The Christinised Paliyan follow christian customs for performing marriage, naming ceremony, etc. Marriage is performed in the church.

Table 2. *Population of the Paliyan in Kumaly and Anakkara settlement*

Name of settlement	M	F	Total
Kumaly	113	117	230
Anakkara	69	73	142
Total	182	190	372
%	46.3	53.7	

The total population of the Paliyan in Kumaly and Anakkara settlements is 372. The percentage of female population is more.

Age group

Population of the Paliyan in Kumaly and Anakkara according to age group is represented in Table No. 3 & 4.

Table 3. *Population of the Paliyan in Kumaly according to age group*

Age group	M	F	Total	
0-4	11	19	30	
5-9	16	16	32	
10-14	9	7	16	33.9%
15-19	11	9	20	
20-24	16	15	31	
25-29	14	12	26	33.5%
30-34	6	8	14	
35-39	10	11	21	
40-44	6	4	10	19.6%
45-49	2	3	5	
50-54	3	6	9	
55-59	8	4	12	
60 and above	1	3	4	13.0%
	113 (49.17)	117 (50.9)	230	100

Table 4. *Population of the paliyan in Anakkara according to age group*

Age group	M	F	Total		
0-4	17	12	29		
5-9	5	15	20		
10-14	7	6	13	43.7	
15-19	8	8	16		
20-24	5	6	11		
25-29	10	7	17	30.98	31.0
30-34	5	8	13		
35-39	8	7	15	19.71	19.7
40-44	0	0	0		
45-49	0	2	2		
50-54	3	0	3		
55-59	1	1	2	5.63	5.6
60 and above	0	1	1		
	69	73	142		
	(48.5%)	(51.5%)			

Education

Literacy and level of education among the Paliyan in Kumaly and Anakkara are given in Table No. 5 and 6.

Table 5. Literacy and level of education among the Paliyan in Kumaly

Age group	Illiterates			Lower Primary			Upper Primary			High School		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
5-9	6	5	11	9	12	21	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-14	6	4	10	3	2	5	—	1	1	—	—	—
15-19	8	6	14	3	2	5	—	—	—	1	—	1
20-24	6	9	15	7	6	13	2	—	2	1	—	1
25-29	5	10	15	6	2	8	2	—	2	1	—	1
30-34	4	5	9	2	3	5	—	—	—	—	—	—
35-39	7	9	16	3	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	—
40-44	4	4	8	1	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	—
45-49	2	3	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
50-54	3	6	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55-59	8	4	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
60 and above	1	3	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	60	68	128	34	29	63	5	1	6	3	—	3
			(64%)			(31.5%)			(3%)			(1.5%)

Table 6. Literacy and level of education among the Christianised Paliyan of Anakkara settlement

Age group	Illiterates			Lower primary			Upper Primary			High School			Graduates		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
5-9	0	9	9	5	6	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-14	3	4	7	2	2	4	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
15-19	6	4	10	—	3	3	1	1	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
20-24	3	3	6	1	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	1
25-29	3	5	8	3	—	3	—	—	—	—	4	2	—	—	—
30-34	3	7	10	—	—	—	1	1	2	—	1	—	—	—	—
35-39	8	6	14	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
40-44	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45-49	—	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
50-54	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	1	—	1
55-59	1	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
60 and above	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
			70			24			6			12			2

13.04% of the total population comes under the age group of 0-4. 86.96% of the total population are above the age group 0-4. Of them 64% are illiterates and 31.5% have taken to lower primary level. 3% of the total population have attended upper primary classes and only 1.5% have studied upto high school. In the age group above 40 all of them are illiterates. Only one person who belongs to the age group 15-19 has studied in S.S.L.C class. He has failed thrice in the S.S.L.C. examination. No female member has reached upto upper primary level.

Among the Christinised Paliyan one boy has studied upto B.A. standard.

CHAPTER II

Material Culture

The Paliyan who were leading a nomadic way of life had very simple and a few material possessions in the past. They used to shift from one place to another in search of edible tubers and fruits. Temporary huts were constructed for that reason. That were made of bamboo, reeds and a kind of grass called *pothapullu*. Their implements included only *vettukathi* (Iron bill look) and digging stick.

Now the material possessions of the Paliyan are not that meagre compared to that of the past. Changes have taken place on account of the impact of cash economy as well as for the continuous contact with the other advanced communities. They are increasingly using the material items of the other advanced communities.

The material possessions of the Paliyan are not uniform in all their settlements. Those who are economically well off have a good number of personal belongings. In Kumaly settlement most of the Paliyan have very simple and a few material equipments. Some aspects of their material culture are described in the following pages :

Dwellings

The dwellings of the Paliyan in Kumaly settlement can be classified as follows :

Govt. built houses (one room, kitchen & veranda)	4
Huts with thatched roof and walls with reeds and grass	20
Slanting roof fixed on two poles and no walls	10
Huts with thatched roof and mud wall and partitioned as kitchen and room	5
	<hr/> 39

The ground plan of the hut is rectangular in shape and these vary in sizes. Plinth is not raised. The roof is thatched with *etta Ila* (Reed leaves) and *Pothapullu*. The whole structure of the huts rests on wooden posts. Walls are made of grass, bamboo wattle and reed leaves. Some of the huts are lacking doors. In some of the huts door are also made of splitted bamboo, reed leaves and *pothapullu*. The doors are fastened to the walls by means of string.

No partition wall is made when the hut is occupied by a single household. It is mainly a single roomed apartment. The space in the hut is used for both cooking and sleeping purposes. Hearth is made in one end of the hut by keeping three stones in triangular position. In some of the huts *paranu* (a flatform like structure made of bamboo or reeds) is made for keeping things to be dried. The utensils are kept by the side of the hearth. The clothes and other things are hung from the wooden pegs or bamboo rods of the walls. During winter and rainy season they sleep around the fire. So fire-wood is burnt in the middle of the hut which is called *kanapu*. There is only one entrance in the hut. In some of the huts more than two households live. In such cases partition walls are made. Bamboo wattle or reed leaves are used for making partition walls.

The material used for the huts are wood, bamboo, reeds and *pothapullu* which are available in the forest. Both men and women participate in making the hut. Generally women help in bringing the necessary articles such as wooden post, bamboo pole reeds, grass, etc., from the forest. Fixing the wooden posts into the ground, thatching the roof, etc., are done by men. While thatching the roof the women assist the men in providing the necessary articles on the top of the bamboo structure. Sometimes the Paliyan employ their fellow men for making the hut and they are paid for their service. When Neerar, an informant constructed a hut it was observed that he employed Kannan another informant on daily wage basis which was ten rupees per day.

There are four govt. houses which were built in early nineteen sixties. One thousand four hundred rupees were granted for each house. The government houses have a room, a kitchen and a veranda. The walls and the roof are made of stone and tile respectively. These are the only houses which can be locked when they go to cut wood. It was noticed that the relatives of these households keep their trunk having good clothes, steel vessels in these houses. Recently fifty houses were being constructed by the tribal development office. The estimate of each house was Rs. 2,500/-. The pattern of the houses appeared to be the same as described above.

House hold equipments

Utensils : The utensils of the Paliyan household mainly consist of earthen vessels and aluminium vessels. These are bought either from Kumaly market which is very near to their settlement or from Cumbam market in Tamilnadu which is about 30 kilometers away from Kumaly. Some of them have brass vessels called *venkalapana*. They bought these vessels from Cumbam. This is used for storing water. Before they go for work they store water in the *venkalapana* and the mouth of it is tied with a cloth. A few among them have some steel vessels such as steel plates, glasses, etc.

Most of the Paliyan households have the *ammikallu* and the *thirikallu* (grinding mills). The *ammikallu* is used for grinding coconut and other spices for curries and the *thirikallu* is used for powdering ragi. The *thirikallu* is made of stone, cut into two circular discs. Now the use of *thirikallu* for powdering ragi has come down because the consumption of ragi is reduced now. They consume more rice these days. But the *thirikallu* is a must for performing marriage rituals. When the *tali* (marriage badge) is tied the bride and the bridegroom should stand respectively on the upper and lower disc of the grinding mill. So this stone should be placed in the middle of the wedding pandal.

Three households have wooden *ural* (pestle) and *ulakka* (mortar). It is used for husking paddy or pounding grain.

The ural and ulakka are made by the Paliyan out of a jungle wood called *vengamaram*.

The Paliyan sleep on *paayi* or *panambu* (mat) which they sometimes make out of reeds. Some of the Paliyan households have mats which they have purchased from Kumaly market. The Paliyan woman know the art of making bamboo *panambu* (mats), *kidiyam* (winnowing fan), *Kutta* (basket). It was told that the state Bank of Travancore is going to grant loan of two hundred rupees per individual for making baskets, mats, etc., for the purpose of sale. About twelve Paliyan women were planning to apply for the loan.

Implements : *Kedali* (axe), *Manvetti* or *koonthali* (spade), *Mannumanthi* or *kolamkori*, *poovali* (water can) *vettukathi* (Iron bill hook) *pannaruval* (sickle), etc., are their important implements. They buy these implements from Kumaly market or from Cumbam market.

Kodali (axe) is an important tool among the Paliyan. It is used for cutting trees and wood. When they go to forest to collect firewood they carry *Kodali* and *vaakkathi* (Iron bill hook) with them.

Manvetti or *koonthali* (spade) is used for preparing the soil for cultivating pepper, tapioca, beans, etc.

Vettukathi (Iron bill hook) is used for cutting the trees, clearing the vegetation, cutting bamboo and reeds.

Panneruval (sickle) is used for striping reeds for making mats, baskets, winnowing fan, etc.

Kothu is a tool specially used at the time of cultivating beans. It is an iron blade bent downwards and is fitted to a wooden shaft. It is used for loosening the soil between the beans plant.

Kolamkori or *Mannumanthi* is used for digging about one and a half feet deep pit for planting the cardamom seedlings. Three households have this implement in Kumaly settlement.

Poovali (water can) is used for watering the cardamom seeds and the seedlings, etc.

Furniture : In Kumaly settlement only one household possesses cots, tables, stools and chairs. In some households *korandi* is used. This is a wooden plank of about 1½' length and is used for sitting purpose. The Paliyan make it with jungle wood. In Chakkupallam settlement most of the households are furnished with cots, chairs, tables, benches, etc.

Clothing : The Paliyan wear very simple dresses when they are at work or when they are in their houses. *Veshti or mundu*, sari, blouse, etc., of modern style are also very commonly used by them. During work or in house the men wear *mundu* (an oblong piece of cloth of 4 unbits) or Kaili (coloured lungi). They also wear shirts or vests.

The Paliyan woman wear *chela* (coloured sari). Upper part of the body is covered with *chatta* (blouse) and bodice. The traditional style of wearing *chela* is different from the plain people. At present the women wear sarees in the manner as the plains people do. The Paliyan women are very much fond of movies. When they go for movies they dress up nicely. Most of them have bought at least two pairs of good dresses (mostly nylex sarees). They have bought small steel trunks from Kumaly market to keep their dresses.

Boys wear knickers and shirts. Girls wear skirt, blouse and frocks. Girls between the age of fifteen to seventeen wear skirt, blouse and *davini* (half sari). Young men wear pants and shirts.

They do not take bath regularly and also they do not change or wash their clothes regularly. So the dresses of them are stinking when they are in the house.

Ornaments : Paliyan men used to wear ear studs in the past but they do not use it now. Most of the Paliyan woman use it now. Most of the Paliyan woman in this settlement wear ornaments made of aluminium, steel, glass, plastic, gold, silver, etc. They wear *Kammal* (ear stud), *mookuthi* (nosering) *Kuppivala* (glass bangle), *changala* (neck chain) *mothiram* (ring), *kolusu* (anklets of silver).

Married women wear *minchi* (toe ring). However wearing

of *minchi* is not compulsory. They have adopted this from other caste people. Only a few women have golden ear studs and nose rings.

Married women wear *tali* (cup shaped gold piece). *Tali* is tied in *manja charadu* (yellow thread). In Kumaly settlement only a few married women wear *tali* and most of the women use only a *charadu* (thread). They can not afford to buy *tali* because of their poor economic condition.

In Kumaly settlement only one Paliyan woman has gold neck chain of about four soverigns which was bought from the income derived from pepper. Most of the married and unmarried women and girls wear *Kolusu* (silver anklets).

The Paliyan woman aspire for better, dresses and ornaments. They have started saving money from their earnings in order to buy good clothes and gold ornaments. Saroja aged about thirtyfive years is a widow. She goes for collecting firewood and sell it in Kumaly market. She bought gold ear stud worth of two hundred and twenty rupees from Cumbam merket in 1978 and a *Kolusu* worth about one hundred and eighty rupees from Vandiperiyar in 1979.

The Paliyan women are fond of decorating their hair with flowers. They spend money for buying flowers.

Transistors were found in most of the households. They are specially fond of hearing Tamil songs. They carry the transistors with them whenever they go out.

A time piece was found in one household. It was bought from Cumbam market on instalment scheme. A few Paliyan men have wrist watches. Both men and women wear chappals when they go for work. They buy it from Kumaly market.

Food and drink : Ragi was their staple food at one stage in the past. They also used to eat the wild tubers like *vallikizhangu*, *vettlavallikizhangu*, *mulluvallikizhangu* and *noorankizhangu*. They were habituated of taking the seeds and leaves of a kind of plant called *thandakeera* which was available in plenty in the forest. It is said that they collected the seeds

of *thandakeera* and fried it for sometime. After frying it powder was made in *thirikallu* (grinding mills). They ate this powder mixed with honey. These were the main food of the Paliyan in those days.

There has been a marked change in their consumption pattern. Now rice has become their main food. Only at times they prepare *katti* or *kali* out of ragi or maida flour. Now the young people and the children prefer rice to ragi.

Cooking is generally done only once a day. They cook rice and a *Kolambu* (curry) at night. *Kolambu* is prepared out of vegetables like tomato, ladies finger, bringal, potato, beans, onion, dal, etc. The curry is prepared by boiling these vegetables with dal and adding ground coconut with chilly, coriander seeds, jeera, onion, etc. Coconut oil or gingelly oil is used as cooking medium.

During festival days they cook food in the morning as well as in the night. On that day they cook rice two to three other items of currise.

Both men and women do cooking. Men are not customarily prohibited from cooking. Menstruating women are prohibited from cooking.

The Paliyan leave for work at about 8.00 A. M. They do not cook food in the morning. Some food cooked in the previous night is kept for the morning. When they go to forest they eat *palamchoru* (over night cooked rice). If it is not available they drink coffee or tea from the nearby tea shops. They have developed the habit of drinking coffee or tea and eating *palaharams* like *iddli*, *dosai appam* and *puttu* from the tea shops. But the extent of such consumption depends on their economic position. Small babies are carried along with them while going for work. The other children are left in the house and they are provided with tapioca or bun in the afternoon.

The Paliyan eat non-vegetarian food also. Provided if they can afford to it. They eat dry fish available in the local market. During April-May they catch fish from the Pariyar river in

the wild life sanctuary. It was observed that during this period the Paliyan living in other settlements also come for fishing in the Periyar river. They stay by the side of the river for one or two weeks and catch fish and dry it spreading on the surface of the rocks. They carry the dry fish when they return to their respective settlements. The Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement go for fishing in the morning and return in the evening.

They eat meat of various kinds of animals, like goats, wild pigs, rabbits deer, samber, wild fowl, etc. They do not eat beef. Once the area was rich with these kinds of animals. But now a days they rarely get these animals. Meat consumption has come down these days. They do not have any hunting implements. In earlier days they used to trap these animals by digging a pit and covering the pit with twigs and leaves. They have started taking milk and milk products very recently. In Kumaly settlement no one keeps cow. It was observed that in two Paliyan households milk was bought from a Christian family in order to give milk to their children.

Most of the Paliyan men are addicted to drinking. They drink arrack. Arrack shops and liquor shops are found every where in this area.

CHAPTER III

Economic Activities

The Paliyan were food gatherers about five decades ago. In the past they did not have any fixed hut. They wandered in the forest. They mainly depended on edible tubers, roots, wild fruits, etc., for their subsistence. They cultivated ragi on the slopes of the hills by following shifting cultivation method. Digging stick and iron bill hook were their main implements. They collected honey too from the forest. They hunted some animals like wild pigs, sambar, rabbit, etc., which supplemented their food. They did not use any hunting weapons. They used to trap these animals in a pit specially made for this purpose. There has been some changes in their present economic activities. Now they are engaged in different occupations.

The Paliyan inhabit the forest areas of Thekkady Range and Kumaly Range. In the past the area inhabited by the Paliyan were thick forest and was rich in edible tubers, roots and fruits. It was also infested with wild animals like elephants, tigers, bison, etc. Now the wild animals have disappeared from their habitat. The area has been opened up to the immigrants. The reservation of the forest area and the declaration of Thekkady Range as wild life sanctuary and the introduction of cardamom plantation have reduced their scope for food gathering. Now the Paliyan have taken to settled life.

The Paliyan have taken to various new economic activities. The primary occupation of the Paliyan living in Kumaly is collecting fire-wood from the forest and selling it in Kumaly market. The Paliyan living in other settlements such as Chakkupallam, Puliyan mala and Anakkara are mostly employed in Cardamom plantations as labourers. Some of the Paliyan practise agriculture. They grow cardamom, pepper, plantain, tapioca, paddy, beans, ginger, tea, coffee turmeric, etc., on their own land. Some of them go for daily labours

work. Only a few persons are employed in government offices as forest guard, watchman, peon.

Landholdings of the Paliyan in Kumaly settlement

Paliyan settlement at Kumaly is located in the reserve forest area of Thekkady Range. The reserve forest boundary has been marked. But the area of the habitation of the Paliyan has not yet been surveyed. Each household has acquired some land in the reserve forest area. Though the land has not yet been surveyed the land holdings of the Paliyan in Kumaly settlement have been recorded approximately. The Paliyan are enjoying the concession of cultivating the land free of tax. The *pattayam* (right of ownership) has not yet been given to them.

Table 7. *Land holdings of the Paliyan in Kumaly settlement*

Amount of land in acres	No of household	%
Landless	7	11.3
Less than 2	37	59.7
3 to 5	16	25.8
6 to 8	2	3.2
Total	62	100.00

It is seen from the Table No. 7 that 11.3% of the households are landless. 59.7% of the households have less than two acres of land. Only 3.2% of the households possess above five acres of land. The pattern of land holdings among the Paliyan are not uniform in all the settlements.

In Anakkara settlement it has been found that most of the converted Paliyan have a small amount of land i.e. one and half acres of land. In Chakkupallam settlement most of the Paliyan have two to three acres of land. In Chakkupallam and Anakkara settlement the *pattayam* has been given to them. Most of them are not cultivating their land. The land is transferred to the other communities, on the basis of *pattam* or *otti*.

Table 8. *Showing the engagements of the Paliyan in Kumaly settlement*

Name of work	Number of persons		
	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture & Agricultural labour	12	3	15
Cardamom plantation labour or other cooli work	12	10	22
Collecting & selling firewood	48	56	104
House keeping	—	3	3
Baby sitting	—	3	3
Studying	12	6	18
Govt. employees	4	—	4
* Not having any work	25	36	61

* Including age group 0-4 years.

The works vary according to the seasons. Collecting and selling of fire wood can be done althrough the year. But during rainy season it is very difficult to go to the forest for collecting firewood.

Collecting and selling firewood

The Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement ake out their livelihood mainly by collecting and selling firewood. They collect firewood from Thekkady Range. Since the Thekkady Range has been declared as protected wild life sanctuary collection of minor forest produce and firewood are legally prohibited. Yet the Paliyan go for collecting the same. The forest officials are not taking any action against them. In the past they collected firewood for their domestic use only. But now it is collected mainly for market. There is a great demand for firewood in Kumaly market because number of tea shops, hotels and tourist homes have came up in Kumaly on account of the Periyar wild life sanctuary. The Paliyan are supplying firewood to most of these tea shops and hotels there.

Both men and women go for collecting firewood and selling it in Kumaly market. 104 persons are engaged in collecting and selling firewood. They go to collect firewood at about

8.00 a.m. and return home in the night. While returning they bring rice and other provision for their use. The women carry their babies on their back tying in a *chela*, other children are left with grand mother or with their elderly children.

The Paliyan reach Kumaly market with the bundles of firewood in the evening. Where they divide the big bundle into a number of small bundles. In 1978, it is told, they sold one bundle for five rupees and in 1979 they were selling it for six rupees. They sell the firewood and buy things for their daily necessity from the shops at Kumaly market or from the shops near to their settlement. It is observed that they carry two to four bundles of firewood per day. Daily they walk five to eight kilometers for collecting firewood. They go to the interior forest of Thekkady Range. These areas are infested with wild elephants.

Husband and wife together earn fifteen to twenty rupees daily by selling firewood. Usually on Sunday they do not go for any work.

In other settlements the Paliyan collect firewood from the forest for their domestic use but not for the purpose of sale. Heaps of firewood are preserved in some of the households in Cheakkupallam and Puliyan mala settlements. They collected it for the use during rainy season.

Collection of Minor Forest Produce

The Paliyan collect minor forest produce like honey, dammar, etc.

Collection of honey: The season for honey collection is between March to May. During this period most of the Paliyan go to the interior forest of Thekkady Range to collect honey. Since the Thekkady Range is declared as protected wild life sanctuary, the scope of collecting minor forest produce from the forest is reduced now. Sometimes they are asked by the forest officials to collect honey for them. They are permitted to collect firewood and honey against permission only.

Generally they move in group which consists of members of

two or three households. These members are very close relatives. When they go to the interior forest for collecting honey they return to the settlement after a week or ten days. They carry the necessary things for collecting honey as well as some provisions for cooking in the forest. They construct temporary huts there with bamboo and reeds.

Women also accompany their husbands when they go for collecting honey, women cook food and also assist the men in searching out the beehives in the tree. The man climbs on the trees and release the beehives from the trees. In order to chase the bees from the beehives smoke is applied by means of *chulunthu kettu*. This is made out of twigs and leaves. Women collect honey from the hives found on the ground or within their reach. Sometimes they get good amount of honey and at times they return with disappointment.

They used to make offerings of coconut, banana, betel leaves, betel-nuts, etc., to the *vanadevata* in the past. After collecting honey they used to keep honey in seven *couva* leaves as offerings to the *vanadevata*. Honey was consumed only after making the offerings for *vanadevats*. But now-a-days they are not very much particular about these offerings.

The Paliyan give the opinion that there are two kinds of honey, i.e., *vanthen* or *thukkuthen* which is found in big trees or rocks and *cheruthen* or *puttuthen* which is found on the ground or into the hollow of trees. *Vanthen* and *cheruthen* are collected by the big and small bees respectively. *Cheruthen* costs more because of its medicinal value.

In 1978 when I was conducting the first phase of field work it was noticed that the Paliyan were selling honey to the local shops directly. No contractor or agent was involved in the sale of honey. During that time they sold *vanthen* at the rate of six rupees per bottle and *cheruthen* at the rate of twelve rupees per bottle.

In 1979 I observed that Girijan co-operative society was trying to collect honey at the rate of six rupees per one kilogram and dammar at the rate of four rupees per one kilogram. But

the Paliyan feel that they get more if they sell it to the local shop than what they get from the society. The society advances some money to them when they go for collection of minor forest produce.

A case of honey collection may be described here. Suryan aged about sixtyfive years went to collect honey along with his two sons, daughters in law and their children on 19.4.79 and returned to the settlement on 29.4.79. He took thirty rupees from Girijan co-operative society as advance. He bought rice and other provisions with that money and carried it with them. They carried aluminium vessels for cooking and tins for collecting honey. They went to the interior forest of the Thekkeady Range. They constructed temporary huts in the forest and lived there for ten days. They returned to the settlement on the tenth day. They collected honey worth about two hundred and forty rupees. They shared the honey equally according to the number of members. If they go in group to collect honey they share the amount equally.

Labourers in Cardamom Plantations

The area of the Kumaly Range is known as Cardamom Hill Reserve. The Paliyan settlement of Chakkupallam, Anakkara and Puliyan Mala are surrounded by cardamom plantations. Most of the Paliyan in these areas are engaged as labourers in cardamom plantations.

From Kumaly settlement twenty two persons go to work in cardamom plantations during the season. They have to walk five to ten kilometers to reach the plantations. The work is available in cardamom plantations only for nine months from June to February. There is no work during March to May.

The people are selected according to the area of operation of the cardamom plantations, generally men dig pit for planting the cardamom seedlings. Weeding and plucking of cardamom are done by women.

Daily wage of a labourer in cardamom plantation is seven rupees fourteen paise. In 1978 it was six rupees eightysix paise.

The wage is given at the end of the week, *i.e.*, on Saturday. They work 8.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. The union members have the privilege of getting bonus, blanket allowance, etc. Blanket allowance is rupees fifty per head now. It was only thirty rupees in 1978.

The non-union member get seven rupees as daily wage. They are free to find work in any other plantations. In Chakkupallam settlement most of them have joined the union.

Most of the Christinised Paliyan are engaged as cardamom plantation labourers. During off season it is difficult for them to find out work. Sometimes they go for other kind of labour work.

Agriculture

In the past, the Paliyan were cultivating ragi by following shifting cultivation method and ragi was considered as their staple diet. With the reservation of the forest area shifting cultivation was not possible for them. They settled down in the reserve forest and now have started cultivating cash crops such as pepper, tapioca, cardamom, plantain, beans, ginger, coffee, tea, turmeric, etc.

Most of the Paliyan in Kumaly are still not interested in agriculture. 59.7% (Table 7) of the households possess less than two acres of land and 11.3% of the household are landless. So most of them are having uneconomic land holding. They cannot depend on land for their subsistence. It was a general trend to lease out land some five years back. The land was given to the Goundan or other plains men for *pattam* or *varam* and they used to go for working in plantations. 19.3% of the household have started cultivating their land in Kumaly settlement. Only a few Paliyan depend on agriculture for their subsistence. In Chakkupallam, Anakkara and Puliyan Mala settlements some of them own four to five acres of cardamom plantations.

In Kumaly settlement the Paliyan do not have *Kandam* (wet land). Paddy is not grown there. Rice is bought from

the market. In Chakkupallam and Anakkara settlement some of them have got *Kandam*. They grow paddy there. In Chakkupallam settlement a few Paliyan possess plough and oxen.

Pepper cultivation

Pepper and cardamom are grown largely in this area. But the Paliyan have taken to the cultivation of pepper and cardamom very recently. The Block Development Office have supplied pepper vines to some of the households. Seven households planted pepper vines on their land in Kumaly settlement, and the plants were in the growing stage.

It was found that four households are deriving some income from pepper. Mani, a Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement and who is a forest guard of Thekkady Range, owns a pepper garden of about two acres. In 1978 he got an income of Rs. 8,000 from this garden. In 1979 as the yield was poor he got only Rs. 5,000 Pappan another Paliyan of Kumaly settlement has got an income of Rs. 1500 from pepper cultivation.

Cultivation of bean

During April-May beans are grown in this area. It is grown for both consumption and sale. The ground is cleared for beans cultivation after the first pre-monsoon shower. The earth is loosened by means of spade and the seeds of beans are put into the small pit. When it is sprouted and bears three leaves the soil between the two plants are loosened by means of *Kothu*. It produces yield within a month. The yield is repeated for four times.

During the season of bean cultivation the Paliyan give their land to plainmen on *pattam* or *varam* to cultivate beans. In the case of *pattam* some money is given in advance to the landowner and in the case of *varam* one third of the products is given to the land owner. Sometimes two to three acres of land are given for very nominal amount.

In 1978 Chiniamma, a Paliyan informant, had given her one

and half acres of land to a Goundan for cultivating beans. He had agreed to give her rupees fifty as *pattam*. But he gave her only twenty rupees. Another informant had given his one and a half acres of land to a Pandikkaran (Tamilian) for cultivating beans. He gave him fifty rupees as *pattam*.

One informant told me that in 1978 April he cultivated ten kilograms of bean seeds on his land. He bought the bean seeds at the rate of five rupees per kilogram. He spent fifty rupees for buying seeds and twentyfive rupees for engaging labourers. He sold beans for about one hundred and sixty rupees. So he got a profit of eightyfive rupees.

When I revisited the area in 1979 during March-May it was observed that most of the Paliyan were cultivating beans on their land. About half kg of bean seeds and five rupees per household were supplied from the Block Development Office. Some of them had taken one hundred to two hundred rupees as loan from Girijan Co-operative Society. Some of them saved some money by selling firewood for cultivating beans.

During the season one kilogram of beans costs about forty to fifty paise. The plainsmen visit the settlement to buy beans from the Paliyan.

Cardamom cultivation

In Kumaly settlement five households grow cardamom on their land. Since the Paliyan are employed cardamom plantations most of them are aware of the techniques of cultivating cardamom. In Kumaly settlement one informant has grown cardamom in two acres of land in 1978. Another informant has grown about hundred plants of cardamom on his land. In 1979 February he sold cardamom with hundred and fifty rupees. There were three more informants who also have cultivated some cardamom on their land.

It was reported that most of the Paliyan living in Chakku-pallam and Puliyan Mala were allotted two to three acres of land for cultivating cardamom. But the fact is that only a few of them were cultivating their land and enjoying the benefits of

cardamom cultivation. Most of them have leased out their land to *pandikkarans* or *nattukarans*.

In Kumaly settlement Veeramma has got two and half acres of land for cultivating cardamom in Chakkupallam. It is the property of her first husband. But she has given this land to a *Goudan* for *pattam*. Every year she gets about five hundred rupees as *pattam*.

Income

It is difficult to ascertain the actual income for those who are not engaged in any regular job. Only a few of them have the regular income as they are employed in government offices. The income of three households for a period of one month has been calculated as sample cases. This is appended in Table 9.

Case 1

Household No. I consists of husband wife and two children. They were primarily engaged in collecting and selling firewood. It was found that they were engaged in selling firewood for fourteen days. As it was the season for collection of honey they also went for collecting honey for ten days. They earned an income of two hundred and fiftyone rupees. In the case of Household Nos. II and III they got an income of two hundred and sixty four rupees and two hundred and sixtytwo rupees respectively.

Fishing

The Paliyans go for fishing during April-May, *i.e.*, after the first pre-monsoon rain. Fishes of small variety are caught from the Periyar river under the wild life sanctuary area. It was found that the Paliyans living in Chakkupallam and Anakara settlements came to the Pariyar river for fishing. When they go for fishing they go in group which consists of relatives. When the Paliyans of Anakara settlement went for fishing they stayed near the bank of the river for ten days and caught

Table 9. Showing daily income of three households

	Household No. I		Household No. II		Household No. III	
	Labour group Nature of work	Husband & Wife Income	Labour group Nature of work	Husband & Wife Income	Labour group Nature of work	Husband & Wife Income
16-4-78	collecting & selling of firewood	15	Rest	—	Rest	—
17-4-78	-do-	15	collecting & selling firewood	15	collecting & selling firewood	15
18-4-78	Rest	—	-do-	10	-do-	20
19-4-78	went to collect honey	12	went to collect honey	9	-do-	15
20-4-78	collecting & selling of firewood	10	collecting & selling of firewood	15	went to collect honey	12
21-4-78	went to collect honey	—	-do-	10	collecting & selling of firewood	10
22-4-78	collecting & selling of firewood	20	-do-	20	Rest	—
23-4-78	Rest	—	Rest	—	Rest	—
24-4-78	Collecting & selling of firewood	15	collecting & selling of firewood	15	collecting & selling of firewood	15
25-4-78	-do-	12	-do-	10	-do-	10
26-4-78	-do-	15	-do-	15	-do-	15
27-4-78	Rest	—	Rest	—	Rest	—

28-4-78	collecting & selling of firewood	15	collecting & selling of firewood	15	collecting & selling of firewood	15
29-4-78	-do-	15	-do-	15	-do-	15
30-4-78	Collecting & selling of firewood	15	collecting & selling of firewood	10	collecting & selling of firewood	20
1-5-78	-do-	12	-do-	15	-do-	10
2-5-78	went to collect honey	—	went to collect honey	—	went to collect honey	—
3-5-78	—	—	—	—	—	—
4-5-78	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-5-78	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-5-78	—	—	—	—	—	—
7-5-78	—	—	—	—	—	—
8-5-78	—	—	—	—	—	—
9-5-75	returned from honey collections	40	returned from honey collections	40	returned from honey collections	40
10-5-78	Rest	—	Rest	—	Rest	—
11-5-78	collected firewood selling	15	collected firewood selling	15	collecting & selling firewood	15
12-5-78	Collecting & selling firewood	15	collecting & selling firewood	15	collecting & selling firewood	15
13-5-78	Rest	—	-do-	10	-do-	10
14-5-78	Rest	—	Rest	—	Rest	—
15-5-78	collecting & selling firewood	15	collecting & selling of firewood	15	collecting & selling of firewood	20
		251		264		262

fish, dried it over the rock and carried it with them to their settlements. The Paliyan of Kumaly settlement, it was observed, go for fishing in the morning and return by evening. They cook the fish the same day.

The technique of fishing as well as the fishing implements is very simple. They do not use any fishing net. First they select the place where this kind of fish is available in plenty, four or five members stand in the water so as to form a ring and the *chela* (sari) is spread in the water. Small fishes enter in *chela* and they pull it out when it is full with fish.

Vattivaikuka is the second way of catching fish from the river. In this method a *vatti* (plate) is used for catching fish. Usually aluminium plate is used for this purpose. The mouth of the plate is covered by a cloth and a hole is made in the middle of the cloth. Some prey or rice is kept in the plate through the hole and the plate is kept in the water. The fish enter the plate through the central hole to eat the prey or rice and they cannot move out from the plate. In this way they catch small fish from the river. They classify the fish as *kanamkol muthimeen*, *ayikkura* and so on. They catch fish mainly for consumption. If they get large quantity of fish then they distribute it among the relatives or dry it and preserve it for the rainy season.

Girijan co-operative society

A Girijan Co-operative Society has been registered on 27th February, 1978. But it started functioning only in early 1979. Both Mannans and the Paliyans are the members of this society. Now there are one hundred and fiftyfive shareholders in the society of which sixtynine are Paliyans. The value of one share is ten rupees. One hundred rupees are given as loan against each share. One hundred and nineteen shares have been taken by the Paliyans. The total amount collected in this society is two thousand nine hundred and ten (2910) rupees.

The aim of this society is to develop agriculture among the Paliyans and Mannans. The agricultural loan is given to them

during this season. The society sanctioned loan of two hundred rupees to three Paliyan informants for cultivating beans. But they spent the amount for some domestic purposes. They did not utilise the money for cultivating beans. When the time came for cultivating beans they were trying to take loan from the people of the plain. Some of the Paliyans are in the habit of taking loan from other people.

The society is also making an effort to buy the honey and dammer collected by the Paliyans from the forest. The society is working as an agent of premade co-operative society for collecting minor forest produce. This society is buying honey at the rate of six rupees per kilogram and dammar at the rate of four rupees per kilogram. When the Paliyan go for honey collection some advance is given to them to buy the necessary provisions.

The society has seven members in the committee consisting of President, Secretary and five convenors. The President belongs to Ezhave community and the secretary belongs to Mala Arayan community. The convenors belong to the Paliyan and the Mannan communities.

Agricultural innovations among the Paliyans

The Paliyan who practise agriculture have started using modern fertilisers, hybrid variety of seeds, pesticides, etc. In order to improve agriculture among the tribals the Block Development Office and the Agricultural Department are supplying implements, improved variety of seeds, seedlings, etc. It has been mentioned earlier that in Kumaly settlement only a few households are having the cultivation of cash crops like cardamom, pepper, coffee, tea, etc. Three persons were supplied with sprayers to sprinkle the insecticide in the cardamom plants.

They do not have wet land in Kumaly settlement for cultivating paddy. So the use of plough is not in practise whereas in Chakkupallam settlement a few of them possess plough and oxen and they practise plough cultivation.

Domestic animals

All the Paliyan keep dogs. Each household possess at least one dog. The dogs look after their huts and belongings when they go to forest for collecting firewood or honey. In the past they had no other domestic animals other than dogs. They are also keeping fowls these days. The tribal development office distributed chicken birds and goats among the tribals in the year 1978. In Kumaly settlement four families received chicken birds from the tribal development office. Except these four families none of them have kept fowls. The eggs are either consumed by the Paliyan or sold to the local shop.

The Paliyan were not aware of rearing cattle and goats and they were not consuming milk or milk products in the past. In Kumaly settlement no household is keeping cow. In 1978 March five households were supplied with goats by the tribal development office. The Paliyan have very recently started rearing fowls and goats.

CHAPTER IV

Family and Kinship

The Paliyan constitute an endogamous group. There is no clan organisation among the Paliyan. Family is the most important unit in the Paliyan society. The size of the family is given below.

Table 10. *Showing the size of the family*

Size	No. of households	
	Kumaly settlement	Anakkara settlement
Small (2)	15	4
Medium (3 to 5)	41	17
Big (6 to 8)	6	10
Total	62	31

Maximum number of the families consist of three to five members. Fifteen households consist of only husband and wife. There are six big families which have six to eight members in Kumaly settlement and ten big families in Anakkara settlement. The constituent members of each households are given below, which will show the relationship between the members in a family.

Composition of households

<i>Composition</i>	<i>No. of households</i>	
	Kumaly	Anakkara
Husband, wife	15	—
Father, mother and unmarried children	36	22
Mother, son, son's wife, their children	3	—
Mother and unmarried children	3	—
Mother, son, widowed sister, widowed daughter	1	—

Mother, widowed daughter and children	—	2
Mother, married daughter, son- in-law and their children	—	1
widowed mother and son	—	1
Father, Mother, widowed daughter and her children	1	—
Father, Mother, children and father's brother	1	—
Brother, sister and Fathers sister	1	—
Single person	1	2
Husband, wife, wife's sister	—	1
Father and children	—	2
	<hr/>	
	62	31

In Kumaly settlement it is seen that fifteen families consist of only husband and wife thirtysix families consist of husband wife and their unmarried children. In Anakkara settlement out of thirtyone households twentytwo households represent the some composition. It appears that the majority of the families are of nuclear type. The average size of members of a family comes to 3.7.

The residence pattern among the Paliyan is predominantly patrilocal. Matrilocal families are also seen. Flexibility exists in regard to the rule of residence. Marriage leads to establishing a new family. A widow or divorced woman with children can remarry and forms compound family.

The Paliyan consider father as the head of the family. In the absence of father the mother acts as the head of the family.

Every household is a single economic unit. It has its own hut, hearth and essential domestic implements and tools. Most of the families have piece of land for cultivation. The domestic duties and economic actives are shared by the members of a family. The male and the female members participate in agricultural and other economic activities.

The parents show great affection to their children. The children are taken proper care by the father and the mother. The Paliyan women participate in all economic activities. She enjoys great freedom in the family as a bread earner. Cooking, serving food, rearing children, bringing water, cleaning homestead, washing utensils and clothes, etc., are mainly done by the women in the family.

The younger siblings are expected to respect their elder siblings. The elder one takes care of the younger ones when the parents go out for work. The girls will be more associated with the domestic duties. Both boys and girls participate in economic activities.

Interaction takes place between closely related families.

Kinship

The Paliyan family is based on bonds of kinship. Both maternal and paternal kins are recognised. There is no special preference for the maternal or paternal kins. Both maternal and paternal kins participate in the social and ritual activities.

Kinship terminology

For the description of the kinship terminology as far as five generations namely, two in the ascending order, two in the descending and one in the contemporary generations are covered.

Kinship terms used for various kin in different generations are as follows.

Ego's first ascending generation

Consanguineous kin

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| a. Appa (Ayya) | b. Amma (Aaatha) |
| Fa | Mo |
| Fa Br | MoSi |

The terminology is classificatory on character. The relative seniority are denoted by qualifying prefixes, viz., *Pariya* (elder) and *Chitta* or *Chinna* (Younger) to the terms *appa* and *amma*.

For other kins, the terms used are

A. *Consanguineous kin*

<i>Mama</i>	<i>Mami</i>
MoBr	FaSr
FaSrHu	MoBrWi

B. *Affinal kin*

<i>Mama</i>	<i>Mami</i>
WiFa	WiMo
Hufa	HuMo

Ego's second ascending generation

<i>Patta</i>	<i>Patti</i>
FaFa	FaMo
MoFa	MoMo

Ego's generation

The same kin terms are used for siblings and parallel cousins. Differentiation is made with regard to age. Separate terms are used for different sexes. Cross cousins and affines are referred to by the same terms. This is shown as given below.

Kin categories

A. *Consanguineous kin*

a.	Male	Elder	Younger
	Br	Anna	Thampi (Aniyan)
	FaBrSo	Anna	„
	MoSrSo	„	„
	MoBrSo	Macchan	Macchan
	FaSrSo	„	„
b.	<i>Female</i>		
	Sr	Akka	Thankachi
	FaBrDa	„	„
	MoSrDa	„	„
	MoBrDa	Madini	Madini
	FaSrDa	„	„

B. Affinal kins

a.	Male		
	SiHu	Macchan	Macchan
	WiBr	”	”
	HuBr	”	”
b.	Female		
	BrWi	Madini	Madini
	WiSi	”	”
	Hu Sr	Madini	Madini

Wife and husband are referred to by the terms *ponjati* and *purushan* respectively.

Ego's first descending generation

The kinship terms in the kin categories of this type are referred for the consanguineous and affinal kin as follows.

A. Consanguineous kin

a.	Male	
	So	Makan
	BrSo	”
	SrSo	”
b.	Female	
	Da	Makal
	BrDa	”
	SrDa	”

B. Affinal

a.	Male	
	DaHu	Marumakan
b.	Female	
	SoWi	Marumakal

Ego's second descending generation

Children of the sons and daughter are referred to by the terms *Peran* and *Pethi* respectively.

Male

SoSo peran

DaSo ”

Female

SoDa Pethi

DaDa ”

Father and mother are referred and addressed by the terms like *appa* and *amma*. Father's brother is given respect like one's father. Father's brother is referred as *chittappan* or *periyappan* according to his being younger or elder to his father. Similarly mother's younger sister is referred by the term *chittamma* or *chinnamma*, *periyamma* is used for mother's elder sister.

Mama in Paliyan kinship terminology refers to six kins, namely, mothers brother, father's sisters husband, husband's father, wife's father, husband's father's brother (elder or younger), wife's father's brother (elder or younger).

Similarly *mami* refer to six kins, namely, mothers brother wife, fathers sister, husband's mother, wife's mother husband's, mother's sister (younger or elder) wife's mother's sister (younger or elder).

Annan, *thampi* and *akka*, *thankaochi* are terms which include number of classificatory kins. The term *annan* is used to denote elder brother. The word *thampi* is used to denote younger brother. Similarly the word *akka* is used for elder sister and *thankacchi* is used for younger sister.

The term *macchan* refers to mother's brother's son, father's sister's son, wife's younger or elder brother and husband's younger or elder brother.

The term *madini* refers to mother's brother's daughter, husband's younger or elder sister and wife's younger or elder sister.

The term *makan* refers to son, brother's son and sister's son and *makal* refers to daughter, brother's daughter and sister's daughter.

Son's son, daughter's son are referred by the term *peran* and son's daughter and daughter's daughter are denoted by the term *pethi*.

Marumakan and *marumakal* are the terms for daughter's husband and son's wife respectively.

The daughters of *mama* (MoBr) and *mami* (FaSi) are cross cousins and are potential wife to a male ego. The sons of *mama* and *mami* are potential husband to a female ego. This feature characterises the prescriptive bilateral cross cousin marriage rule.

Attitudes and behaviours towards kin

People who are senior in age are respected and they are addressed by the respective kinship terms. The younger are addressed by their names.

The behaviour of the parents towards children is marked by affection and care. The behaviour of children towards parents is regulated by an attitude of love and deference. The children obey and respect the teachings of their parents.

The relationship between husband and wife is cordial. A woman owes respect to her husband and she is not expected to pronounce the name of her husband. A man can address his wife by her personal name.

The relationship between a mother-in-law and her daughter's husband is that of avoidance as it is in the case of father-in-law and daughter-in-law. The mother-in-law does not talk directly to her *marumakan* (son-in-law). She does not appear in his presence. In the same way the daughter-in-law avoids to appear in the presence of father-in-law. She owes respect to her father-in-law and mother-in-law.

The pattern of behaviour between a man and his sisters husband is characterised by cordiality. Similar behaviour pattern is observed between a woman and her husband's sister.

A woman shows respect to her husband's elder brother. The younger brother is treated like her brother.

The behaviour pattern of grand parents towards grand children is marked by great affection. The grand parents take care of the grand children when their parents go out for work.

Kinship terms

Term of reference	Relationship
Paatta	Father's father Mother's father
Paatti	Father's mother Mother's mother
Appa (Ayya)	Father
Amma (Aatha)	Mother
Periyappa (periayya)	Father's elder brother Mother's elder sister's husband
Chittappa (Chinnayya)	Father's younger brother Mother's younger sister's husband.
Periyamma	Mother's elder sister Father's elder brothe's wife
Chittamma (Chinnammaa)	Mother's younger sister Father's younger brother's wife
Mama	Mother's brother Father's sister's husband wife's father Husband's father Husband's father's younger or elder brother wife's father's younger or elder brother
Mami	Mother's brother's wife Father's sister Husband's mother Husband's mother's younger or elder sister Wife's mother's younger or elder sister

Annan	Elder brother Mother's sister's elder son Father's brother's elder son
Thanpi (Aniyan)	Younger brother Mother's sister's younger son Father's brother's younger son
Akka	Elder sister Mother's sister's elder daughter Father's brother's elder daughter
Thankacchi	Younger sister Mother's sister's younger daughter Father's brother's younger daughter
Macchan	Mother's brother's son Father's sister's son Wife's elder or younger brother Husband's elder or younger brother
Madini	Mother's brother's daughter Father's sister's daughter Husband's elder or younger sister Wife's elder or younger sister
Makan	Son Brother's son (Man speaking) Sisters's son (Woman speaking)
Makal	daughter Brother's daughter (Man speaking) Sister's daughter (Woman speaking)
Peran	Son's son daughter's son
Pethi	Son's daughter daughter's daughter
Purushan	Husband
Ponjati	Wife
Marumakan	Son's wife
Marumakal	daughter's husband

CHAPTER V

Life Cycle

Birth, maturity, marriage-reproduction and death are the four basic and universal crisis a human being undergoes in the whole of his or her life span. Here the crisis starts from child birth and passes to various stages which sanction an individual certain status in the community and which prescribe certain role to perform. The role as an individual first changes into multiple roles when enters into a family set up and then to a group. This chapter is devoted to understand the life cycle of an individual in the Paliyan community.

Pregnancy and child birth

There is no ceremony associated with the pregnancy of a woman. The Paliyan make separate hut called *vannapura* for delivery of women. Mother and the other elderly woman in the settlement act as midwives. Soon after the birth of the child the mother and the baby are given hot water bath. The mother is given hot rice mixed with *pulithanni* which is prepared out of tamarind water, garlic, pepper, cummin seed and so on. The mother and the baby leave the hut and enter the main hut on the seventh day.

Thotti Sastram

Thottisastram is performed on the eighth day of the birth of the child. On that day the baby is put in the thotti (cradle) for the first time. *Thotti* is made of cloth and rope. New cloth is bought for this purpose. The relatives are invited during this occasion and a feast is given to the relations. It was the general practice in the past that the men did not accept the food cooked by the women on the *thottisastram* day. On that day the men cooked food for themselves.

Name giving ceremony is not celebrated among the Paliyan.

Name is given when the child is one or two months old and sometimes after a year.

Mudiyeduppu

Cutting hair of the child for the first time is known as *mudiyeduppu*. Generally it is done when the child completes one year. The presence of *mama* (MoBr) is required on this occasion. The hair of the baby has to be cut first by the *mama*. The maternal uncle is given one to two rupees as *dakshina* and those who can afford to give *veshti* (dhoti) they give *veshti* too. The *mama* and *mami* take food from the child's house on that day. Those who can afford to give feast to the relations do so on such occasions.

There is no ceremony associated with the maturity of a boy.

Puberty ceremony

The Paliyan celebrate the attainment of puberty of their girls. The Paliyan term for puberty ceremony is *chadangu*.

When a girl attains puberty, she is secluded in a separate hut called *vannappura*. The information is sent to the *soundakkars* (relatives), *Mami* (MoBrWi) comes to see her with neck chains of cheap metals and glass bangles on the same day.

The pollution lasts for fifteen days. During this period she should not see the face of any male members. Male members are not allowed to go near the *vannappura*. Whenever she comes out of the *vannappura* she should cover her face by means of a cloth. Food for the girl is provided in the *vannappura*. Food is cooked by her mother or other female members. During night female members like *madini* (MoBrDa or FaSrDa) or akka (elder sister) is allowed to sleep with her. *Vannappura* is destroyed on the day of the purificatory bath. Generally purificatory bath is given on the sixteenth day. Those who cannot afford to meet the expenses for the ceremony on the sixteenth day postpone it for one month or more than that. On the *chadangu* day the girl is taken for bath to the nearby stream by her mother and other relations such as *mami* (MoBrWi), *madini* (MoBrDa, FaSrDa or BrWi). Seven

paathies (channels) are made on the bank of the stream. She takes a round in each *paathi* and dips into the stream. After the dip her *madini* gives her water mixed with a kind of leaf called *mudanthiyila* or *aralisila*. She drinks it. Thus she takes seven dips into the stream. After the seventh dip same water is sprinkled on her by her *madini* in order to get her clean from any pollution. She is dressed up with new clothes. In the past *mama* (MoBr) used to bring new clothes for the girl. At present father buys new clothes for the girl. The girl returns to the hut carrying a *kudam* (pot of brass or aluminium) filled with water on her head. She prepares ponkal (rice) in that pot which is given to everybody who assemble there at that time. When the rice is boiled it is seen whether it spills uniformly around the pot. If it is not, it is regarded that she has confronted with some male members during the pollution period.

The ceremony follows with a feast. It is generally arranged in the evening so that all the members in the settlement may be available. In the past they used to sing and dance on such occasions. They are forgetting their traditional songs and dances these days. At present they are fond of film songs. They hire loud speaker and gramophone records on these occasions spending a good amount of money.

A plate containing betel leaves arecanut is kept in front of the girl. Relatives who come for the ceremony put one or two rupees in that plate.

The menu of the feast includes rice and vegetable curries. They incur expenses to the tune of two hundred to five hundred rupees for performing puberty ceremony. They do not mind to take loan from others in order to celebrate the puberty ceremony of their girl.

When Vellayamma attained puberty, the ceremony was performed after a month because of the non-availability of funds. So she was secluded in the hut for one month. Her father took loan from a *Goundan* who is cultivating their cardamom land, in order to perform the puberty ceremony. He printed

invitation cards and he distributed it among his relatives, friends, and officials. He hired gramophone records and loud speaker from Kumaly market for fifty rupees. He also hired chairs, glasses, etc., from Kumaly market. He spent five hundred rupees on this occasion.

Marriage

Age for marriage for a Paliyan girl is eighteen years and that of a Paliyan boy is twenty two years.

The Paliyan express that a Paliyan should not marry one's blood relatives. On a query as to whom they should marry and whom they should not it is told that a Paliyan marries according to the *mura*, *i.e.*, they can marry their cross cousins and the cross cousins are their potential mates. They say that they cannot marry or have sex relations with relatives like parents, sibs, grant parents, sib's children, wife's mother or husbands father, etc. Marriages among cross cousins are approved. Parallel cousins are treated in the same level as one's own brothers or sisters. Monogamy is generally practised. There are two cases of polygyny also.

Table 11. *Showing marital status*

Age-group	Unmarried		Married		Widower/ widow		Divorced/ separated	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
16-20	11	4	—	5	—	—	—	—
21-25	6	—	10	15	—	—	—	—
26-30	1	—	12	12	1	—	—	—
31-35	—	—	6	7	—	1	—	—
36-40	—	—	10	9	—	2	—	—
41-45	—	—	6	3	—	1	—	—
46-50	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	1
51-55	—	—	3	3	—	2	—	1
56-60	—	—	7	1	1	3	—	—
61-above	—	—	1	—	—	3	—	—

Types of marriage

In the past marriage by elopement was practised by the Paliyan. Marriage took place when a boy and a girl met together and fall in love with each other.

At present two types of marriages are found among them. They are called *Chernnathu* and *Kalyanam*. *Chernathu*. In the case of *Chernnathu* no elaborate rite is observed. In this system a boy and a girl fall in love with each other and they start living together after informing their parents. There are number of cases of this type of marriage. The women who have undergone this type of marriages do not have *tali* (gold piece having cup shape with a yellow thread hung from neck). They tie only a thread without *tali*. They told me that they could not afford to buy *tali* because of their poor economic conditions.

Kalyanam

The negotiated marriage is known as *Kalyanam*. The negotiation is carried out between the parents of the bride groom and the bride. The initiation has to come first from bride groom's side. The boy and the girl are given a chance to see each other. If the boy and the girl like each other the day for the marriage is fixed by the parents of the bridegroom and the bride. The date of marriage is intimated to the relatives either through some persons or through mangala patrika (invitation cards). Printing invitation card is a recent phenomena.

In the past marriages were performed mostly in bride groom's residence. At present it is performed in bride's residence too. There is no rule regarding the selection of venue for the marriage. It depends upon the economic position of the bridegroom's and bride's party. In Kumaly and Chakkupallam settlement most of the marriages were performed at bridegroom's residence. I observed a marriage which took place at bride's residence. No dowry is given at the time of marriage. These days, those who are economically well off give their girl's some gold ornaments, clothes and utensils.

In some cases the bride received some ornaments from the bridegroom because the bridegroom belonged to economically well off family.

A pandal is erected in the courtyard for the marriage rites. It is decorated with flowers and plantain trees. A *thirikallu* (grinding mills) is placed in the middle of the pandal. If the wedding is performed in bridegroom's residence the brides party go there on the wedding day. The bridegroom's party buy dresses for the bride which consists of *chela* (silk sari), *chatta* (blouse), petticoat and brassier. *Tali* is also bought by the bridegroom. The brides party buy dresses for the bridegroom which consists of *veshti* (dhoti), shirt and *melmundu*.

The bridegroom's and brides parties include the members of both matri and patri kins. A group of women and men help the bride and bridegroom to wear their wedding dresses respectively.

The bride is taken to the pandal by *madini* (mo's br's Da or Fa's Sr's Da) and she is asked to stand on the upper half of the *thirikallu* and the bridegroom is asked to stand on the lower half of the stone. The feet of the bridegroom is washed with *haldi water* (water mixed with turmeric powder) by his milling *madini*. First the bride and bridegroom exchange flower garlands for three times. Then *tali* is tied by the bridegroom round the neck of the bride. Next the bride and the bridegroom are led to the hut and they are made to sit on a mat. Rice balls are given to them. The bride and the bridegroom exchange their rice balls thrice.

The wedding is followed by a feast. The expenses of feast are shared by both the parties. The menu of the feast consists of rice and one or two vegetable curries.

In some cases the bridegroom's party incurred more expenses than the bride's party. The bride was given gold ornaments like *kammal* (ear studs), *mala* (neckchains) and *vala* (bangles). In Chakkupallam Murakan was married to Ponthay his father's sister's daughter. The marriage took place in bridegroom's residence. Since Alakumuthu was economically very well off

he presented to her gold ornaments like ear studs, neckchains, bangles and ring. The bride's people spent some money for clothes.

Similarly in Kumaly settlement Chelladwara was married to Mani about six years back. Dwaraswamy and Mani happen to be cross cousins. Mani is Chelladwara's father's sister's daughter. The marriage is took place at bridegroom's residence. Mani's father died when she was six years old. Mani's mother was not in a position to meet marriage expenses. These were met by bridegroom's family. *Tali* was tied round the neck of Mani by Challadwara. Gramophone records, etc., were hired from Cumbam in Tamilnadu. Veeramma, Chelladwara's mother told me that about one thousand rupees were spent for his marriage.

There are also cases of marriage between the Paliyan and other caste communities. There are ten cases of such unions. In all the eight cases the Paliyan women were taken as wife by men of other communities such as Goundan, Christian, Muslim and Thandan. In two cases the Paliyan men had taken girls from Mannans, a neighbouring tribal community.

The men of different communities such as Muslim, Goundan, Christian used to visit the settlement to take the land of the Paliyan on *pattam* for cultivating beans, tapioca, etc. Thus the Paliyan women came into close contact with these men. They fell in love with these men. They started living with them. In the initial stages they faced some objections from the parents. Now this type of marriage is tolerated.

Widow remarriage is widely practised. If the widow is not having any issue she does not inherit husband's property. She goes and stay in her natal home.

Saroja aged thirtyfive years became widow five years back. She started living with her mother and sister after her husband's death. As she had no issue she did not receive her husband's landed property. Her husband's brother was cultivating that land.

Death Ceremony

The term for burial ceremony is *ilavu*. When a death occurs the information is sent to all *sondakkars* (relatives). The *sondakkars* residing in other settlements come to attend *ilavu*.

The Paliyan bury the dead. The burial ground of the Paliyan is away from the respective households. They call burial ground as *Savakkotai*.

When a person dies, the dead body is placed on a mat and is annointed with *bhasmam* (ash of cowdung). It is covered with a white cloth. Incense sticks are burnt. A coin of twentyfive paise is kept in the centre of the forehead of the dead body which is given to the person who dug pit for putting the dead body when all the relatives arrive, the body is taken to the burial ground. Bath is given to the dead body. Seven *kudams* (pots) of water is required for bath. The water is carried by seven female members. If the deceased is a male then the bath is given by male members. If the deceased is a female then the bath is given by female members by applying oil and soap to the body. After the bath is over the body is annointed with *bhasmam* and the body is covered with *kodi* (new cloth). It is customary that the *sondakkars* should bring *kodi* to put over the body. All the relatives put *kodi* (vesthi) over the body and the body is kept in the pit and the pit is filled with soil. The elder son carries a pot filled with water on his head and moves three times round the pit and on the third round the pot is thrown on the ground towards the direction of feet of the dead dody. When they bury the dead body they bury some betel leaves, betel nut or beedi and the implements like *vaakkathi*, stick, etc., along with the dead body. It is their belief that if these are not buried along with the dead body the deceased will come for their belongings and do harm to them. To avoid this the personal belongings of the dead are buried along with the dead body.

Food is not to be cooked in the house where the death occurs. *Kanji* is prepared in the relatives house and supplied

to the members of the family. Food is cooked in the house on the second day after the burial ceremony.

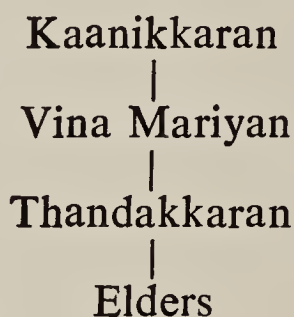
Kanji is offered to the dead for three days. It is kept in a small vessel in the centre of the hut. Clothes which belonged to the deceased are also kept by the side of *Kanji*. They believe that the dead person comes and eats *Kanji*. They repeat this for three days. On the third day the deceased's elder son goes to the burial ground with milk and cowdung. He smears cowdung over the grave and milk is also sprinkled over it, which is called "*moonnam kuzhimezhukal*". The ceremony ends with this.

CHAPTER VI

Social Control

The Paliyans had political institution consisting of *Kaanikkaran* as the head, *Vina Mariyan* and *Thandakkaran* as assistants. *Kaanikkaran*, the headman of the village was also known as *Veetukani*. The *Veetukani* was in charge of the regulations of social affairs. Side by side, the forest officials followed a practice of choosing a separate village head to look after specific duties connected with forestry and this village head was called as *Naatukani*.

Law and order was maintained among the Paliyan through the following offices.



Generally the village, headmanship is hereditary. The Paliyan have chosen the headman '*Thakappanvazhi*' meaning patrilineal. The eldest son inherits the right of *Kaanikkaran*. In the absence of a son the right is passed on to the brother or brother's son.

As the village head, the *Kaanikkaran* commanded respect from all the members of his group. His presence and opinion was highly valued in all the social and ritual matters of the village. The disputes and quarrels in the village were brought to the notice of the *Kaanikkaran* who settled them with the assistance of *Vina Mariyan* and *Thandakkaran*.

The *Kaanikkaran* enjoyed the privilege of getting his hut thatched and land cultivated free of cost by the villagers who considered it as their obligation to the village chief. *Kaanikkarathy* the wife of *Kaanikkaran* was also looked upon with respect.

The positions of *Vina Mariyan* and *Thandakkaran* were also hereditary as *Kaanikkaran*. The *Vina Mariyan* was responsible to find the offenders and bring them to the *Kaanikkaran* for enquiry and settlement of the case. The *Thandakkaran* was empowered with the duties of punishing the accused as per the verbal judgement of the *Kaanikkaran*. He also took care of organising labour for cultivating the land and for plantation work.

Adultery, marriage with outsiders, marriage within blood relations and extramarital sex relationships were viewed as high offences for which severe punishments were imposed. The punishments were of two major types :

1. The offender was beaten up after he was tied up to a *mullumara* or *murikkumara* (a kind of tree with thorns all over the trunk).
2. The offender was made to stand in hot sun bending his body and carrying a heavy grain grinding stone on his back.

A case is being recorded here in connection with the punishment meted out about twenty five years back in Chakkupallam settlement.

Vellayamma was married to Kadayyan. She had developed extra marital relationship with Kanthaswamy who lived in Kumaly settlement which was undetected till she disappeared from her husband's house. Her husband's party made complaints to the *Kannikkaran* who asked *Vina Mariyan* to find out Vellayamma. Accordingly Peeran, the *Vina Mariyan* was deputed to enquire her whereabouts and he succeeded in bringing Vellayamma before the *Kannikkaran*. Vellayamma was ordered to be beaten up after being tied to a mullumaram. Karappanan, the *Thandakkaran* was put in charge of punishing Vellayamma. Incidentally Vellayamma happened to be the eldest daughter of Karappanan, the *Thandakkaran*. For Karappanan it was a hard choice between duty and affection to his daughter. Karappanan regarded the former as more important and lashed her with a cane.

There was a practice of releasing the offender on bail on

payment of fine of rupees five to ten. No case of this type could be recorded during the field work.

The Paliyan are undergoing a number of changes so far as the traditional political institution is concerned. The traditional political institution is no more functioning at present. In the words of Vellayan, the former *Kannikkaran*. "Indakkalathil Kannikkaranum illai, Periyavarum illai, Kaalam maripochchi. Indakkalathile pullakal onnum Kelkadu, Avarkkuthonniya porappadu ellam, Cheyyuvathu". The time has changed. At present there is no recognition for the *Kaanikkaran* or for the elders. The young man have taken over the village affairs as they like". So the importance of the village headman is on the decline and new leadership is emerging out.

Monoharan who is aged forty four years and studied upto fifth standard in Tamil medium is acting as a leader of the Paliyan living in Kumaly. He is having contact with many officials and members of other advanced communities. Whenever the forest officials and the officials of the tribal development office visit the settlement they first meet the leader and discuss the matters with him. He is mainly dealing with the development activities of the Paliyan. His presence is not essential for the social functions and ritual activities.

Whenever quarrels any disputes occur among the members he tries to settle the matter. But he will not be successful in settling the matters. The present day leadership has not been able to maintain the group integrity of the Paliyan. The leader is no more an indisputable head of the group. Now the Paliyan approach the external formal institutions to settle disputes and quarrels.

A case was recorded in this respect. A dispute regarding the division of land occurred five years back. Veerama, a widow who had three daughters. She owned three acres of cardamom land and the land was divided among her two daughters. The second daughter did not get any share. Chaudamma, the second daughter occupied a portion of the land given to her sister and started cultivating. Veeramma,

the mother gave complaints to Vandanmedu police station. The police interfered and settled the matter.

Analysis

This case clearly reveals the emerging trend in solving their disputes through the local and modern institution like the police station which maintains law and order situation in the area and suggests their awareness of ownership and rights over the land. When Veeramma distributed land which was under her possession to her two daughter, she neglected her second daughter, Chaudamma. Thus it became a wrong on her part, as the three daughters have equal right over their mothers possessions. The second daughter did not go to their traditional village head to settle the dispute or she did not even seek the help of police station to redress her grievance. She just came and occupied a portion of the land allotted to her sisters by their mother. She knew that she too has equal right over the land like her other sisters. Veeramma should have distributed the land to all of her daughters equally. But she did not do it for certain reasons which are unknown. When Chaudamma occupied the land and started cultivation the mother became indigredated. Veeramma did not go to the *Kannikkaran* with her claim as she was aware that she was wrong and would be punished. She had no faith in the traditional chiefs and their verdict. Because she thought the land belonged to her and she is the supreme authority to decide what to do with the land and to whom it should be given. There was no two opinion on this. That is why she had neglected the second daughter. But at the end she was left with no other alternative but to approach the police for help. The police settled the dispute in favour of the second daughter. Perhaps Veeramma must have felt happy as she did not have to give any fine as the plaint was solved through non-traditional means.

In earlier days the land was in possession of the village head and cultivation was carried jointly by all under the super-

vision of the chieftain. The chieftain used to distribute to all a small patch of land when the land was made ready for cultivation. This system was disturbed after the enactment of land reforms act and other bills prohibiting the shifting cultivation which was the traditional mode of cultivation of the Paliyan. They too had to take up modern cultivation even though they were not in a position to meet the vast exenses for fertilizers and modern seeds. The new system of cultivation has forced them to adopt individual ownership of small patches of land and this has in turn affected the traditional political organization weekened the chieftain ship of Paliyan. The chieftain who was once the sole authority in all activities of the Paliyan has reduced to a common man with no position and power. This has ultimately forced the members to seek the help of modern institutions to settle their disputes.

CHAPTER VII

Religious beliefs and practices

Majority of the Paliyan owe their allegiance to Hinduism. About 22% of the Paliyan have been converted into Christianity. The Hindu Paliyan refer to the converted Paliyan as *vedathilcherunavar*.

The Paliyan believe in the worship of *Vanadevatha*, *Mariamamma*, *Karappuswamy* and *Kaaliyamamma*. The older Paliyan who inhabited in the thick forest and depended mostly on forest produce for their subsistence worshipped the forest goddess, *Vanadevata*. They sought protection from wild animals and prayed for more yield from the forest like honey, fruits and tubers. The Paliyan worship the forest goddess when they go for honey collection. They offer betel leaves, coconut, plantain, sandal sticks. Honey is offered to *Vanadevata* immediately after its collection. Fresh honey is squeezed from the beehives into seven separate *couva* leaves (leaves of arrow root). It is offered to seven goddesses of the forest.

The *vanadevata* is also worshipped when they cultivate their land and also after the harvest. *Sarkarapongal* or *paalpongal* is made and offered to *Vanadevata*, *sarkarapongal* is prepared with raw rice and jagiri and *paalpongal* is prepared with milk, raw rice and sugar. They believe that the *Vanadevate* will protect their standing crops from the wild animals.

With the change in their ecology and with the starting of new economic activities there has been changes in their traditional beliefs and practices. The importance associated with the worship of *vanadevata* is deminishing. The Hindu Gods like *Ganapathi*, *Murukan*, *Iyyappan*. They have started visiting the temples of *Murukan*, *Ganapathi*, *Iyyappan*.

There is no place of worship in Kumaly settlement. There is a temple of *Ganesh* (*Ganapathi*) at Kumaly and a *Kaaliyamman Kovil* (temple) on the way to Thekkady. The Paliyan living

in Kumaly visit these temples during the days of festival. There are shrines for *Maariamamma* and *Karappuswamy* in Chakkupallam and Puliyan Mala settlements. The Paliyan in Kumaly visit these shrines during the festival and contribute for the festival.

Maariamamma

Maariamamma is the most popular diety among the Paliyan. She is regarded as the goddess who is responsible for chicken pox and small pox. Every year in the month of May most of the Paliyan visit the Maariamamma temple at Veerapandi in Cumbam taluk in Madura district in Tamilnadu. A festival called *veerapandi tiruvila* is celebrated in the month of May. People of different communities from different places visit the temple during this period.

With regard to the origin of the Maariamamma temple the Paliyan said that the temple was founded by their great grand father. Vellayad and Veeramma narrated the story as follows ; Once their great great father went to Veerapandi to buy betel leaves and betel nuts. He went through the thick forest. On the way he met an old woman sitting under a tree. The old woman asked him where he was going and what for he was going ? He told her that he was going to buy some betel leaves and betel nuts. Having told the same he started his journey. The woman stopped him asking how much betel leaves and betel nuts he required. She told him she would give him the same. So she asked him to stop the journey. But the man was wondering how she could give him the things he wanted. But to his surprise a plate with full of betel leaves and betel nuts appeared before him within no time. The man collected the things from the plate and he took rest for some-time under a tree. While he was taking rest the woman approached him saying that something was crawling on her head asked him to see what it was. The man complied with her request and looked on her head. At the very first sight the man felt astonished seeing so many eyes on her head. So he could not look further. The woman enquired the reason

for it. He told her about the thing which he saw on her head. The woman told him that she is *Maariamamma* and they are seven sisters and they did not have any abode to sit in and she asked him to build a temple for them. Hearing this the man said, "I am penniless, how can I build a temple for you ?. Then the woman advised him to beg money from the people and she would be with him for his support. The man went for begging. Wherever he went he got money without any difficulty. By begging from house to house he earned a lot of money and he spent the money in constructing a temple for *Maariamamma*. Thus the Paliyan believe that the *Maariamamma* temple was constructed by their ancestors.

The Paliyan visit the *Maariamamma* temple at Veerapandi in the month of *medam* (April-May) to attend the *Veerapandi tiruvila*. Whenever they are in trouble with the illness like measles, chicken pox, small pox, etc., they pray to *Maariamamma* for the early recovery from the illness and make now to offer something to *Maariamamma*. During the time of festival they visit the temple to fullfil their vows.

Janaki told me that when her son was suffering from fever and abscis on his buttock she made a vow that she would take her son to the *Maariamamma* temple at Veerapandi and do some puja for the Marriamma if her son recovered soon from the illness. Soon her son recovered from the illness and the next year at the time of festival she took her son to the temple and offering of flower garland, coconut, banana, sandal sticks, camphor, etc., were made to the *maariamamma*.

Karappuswamy

Karuppuswamy is the tutelary god of Paliyan. He is worshipped for prosperity. Some are of the opinion that *Karappuswamy* is the brother of *Marriamma*. Every good deed starts from the worship of *Karappuswamy*.

In Chakkupallam settlement there is a shrine for *Marriamma* and *Karappuswamy*. There the *Mariamamma* festival is celebrated for three days in *chittiramasam* (April-May). Karu-

ppuswamy is worshipped in the first day/some *padi* rice and ten rupees are collected from each household for meeting the expenses for the puja offerings. This consists of coconut, banana, *pongal*. A black sheep is also sacrificed on that day. The rice mixed with the blood of the sheep is thrown up and they believe that the rice would not come down. The meat is cooked in the forest and rice and meat are served for everybody. There is a separate pujari performing puja for *Karappuswamy*, *Thandakkaran* Karappanan was conducting puja for Karappuswamy.

Marriamma is also worshipped in the month of *chittira* (April-May). The men go to the forest in the previous day of the festival so as to be free from the contact of their women. The women after having bath cook rice and go to the forest with the cooked rice on the puja day. The offerings include tender coconut, turmeric, either *paalpongal* or *sarkara pongal*. Rice *pongal* is prepared and offered to *Marriamma* first. The rice for the the *pongal* is to be prepared by girls who have not attained puberty. A white fowl is also sacrificed on that day.

The Paliyan have a pujari to perform the puja for *Karappuswamy* and *Maariamamma*. The pujari is a hereditary position among them.

The Paliyan observe the festivals like *Deepali*, *Pongal*. During festival days they do not go for any work. They take bath on the festival days and wear new clothes and cook rice and more than two items of vegetable curries. On festival days they go for seeing films.

CHAPTER VIII

Status of Women among The Paliyan

An attempt has been made in this chapter to examine the status of women among the Paliyan. The family is the basic unit in the social structure of the Paliyan, women appear to be the pivot of the family life. A study on her status in the society, therefore, bears significance in the study of the life of the Paliyan.

Women and economic activities

The Paliyan women play an equal role as a bread earner like her male counterpart. She is a companion to her husband in almost all the economic pursuits. The major occupations of the Paliyan are the collection of firewood, honey and engagement as plantation labourers. In all these the Paliyan women engage themselves to earn the livelihood for the family. The absence of full responsibility on the part of Paliyan man to look after the needs of the family has compelled the women to play this responsibility role. She collects firewood from the forest and it is sold in the shops. She enjoys the freedom of utilising this money for the maintenance of the family. It is important to note that the money earned by male members is also entrusted to the house wife who acts as the custodian. She is considered trustworthy in the sense that the money is never misutilised. She is also bound to give money to her husband whenever demanded even if it is for his personal use like gambling, drinks, etc. She has no right to question her husband about misuse of money.

With the development of cardamom plantations a large number of Paliyan women are engaged in the cardamom plantations as labourers. During the period from June to February there is enough work in the estates. During the rest of the year the women go for coolie work and earn daily wages.

The Paliyan women also participate in agricultural activities.

They actively take part in all agricultural works except ploughing.

The Thekkady river offers abundant scope during April and May for fishing. During this season the women go for fishing.

The household requirements are generally taken care by the Paliyan women. She buys the provision and other articles needed for the family.

There are many cases where the entire responsibility of earning and maintaining a family rest with the house wife. The husband sits idle playing cards and drinking arrack. He neither goes for collection of firewood or honey or works as labourers. Failure to provide the husband with money as demanded results sometimes in bitter quarels. The wife is even subjected to physical torture.

Position of women in the family

The Paliyan women perform various roles in the family. The Paliyan mother is respected by the members of the family. Though the Paliyan consider father as the head of the family the mother also enjoys an equal position. She is consulted for all domestic affairs.

The married women enjoy greater freedom than the unmarried women. The married woman is not looked down as a dependent on the husband. She has all the freedom in participating all economic activities.

The birth of the male and the female child is welcomed by the Paliyan. The Paliyan do not consider the birth of a female child as a curse. The sons and the daughters are brought up without discrimination. They society has imposed certain restrictions on the free movement of the girls who have attained puberty. They are not expected to freely mix with the unmarried men.

The wife and husband have equal rights to seek for a divorce. The widow and the divorce woman can remarry.

The widow is referred as *mundacchi*. There is no such term for the widower. The participation of *mundacchi* (widow) is not favoured and desired in suspicious occasions like marriage, etc. But in the marriage of Mahadevi with Karappanan celebrated on 1st June, 1978 (during my stay) I observed that Saroja, a widow, attended the function whose presence did not seem to be disliked by anyone in the gathering.

On the death of the husband the Paliyan wife breaks her bangles and remove the *mangala sutra* ear studs, etc. But after the lapse of one year, she is freed from the restrictions of wearing ornaments and she is allowed to remarry. Normally the *mundacchi* does not inherit any right of the property of the deceased husband. But their children irrespective of sex, enjoy the right of inheritance.

The concept of property has developed among them after they started settling down in one place. The contact with the people of advanced communities has also influenced their ideas in this respect. Now they have settled down in the reserve forest areas and most of the families have acquired some amount of land in the reserve forest areas. They claim ownership over the land. The land is divided among the male and the female issues.

The Paliyan women enjoy equal freedom of occupation. She has been placed under certain disabilities on account of the impurity associated with attainment of puberty, menstruation and child birth. When a girl attains puberty she is secluded in a separate hut called *vannappura* built away from the main hut. The pollution lasts till the puberty ceremony is celebrated. It is celebrated to declare a certain status for the girl in the society.

The menstruating women are prohibited from cooking. The pollution lasts for seven days. During this period she should not touch the hearth and vessels. It was noticed that when a woman gets menstruation the man cooks food for his family. The woman is allowed to cook food on the eighth day after the purificatory bath. In the past the menstruating

women were prohibited from doing any work and also were prohibited from going to forest. They were not allowed to enter the agricultural field. But now the menstruating women are reported to have gone for collection in the forest or for other labour work.

Impurity is also associated with child birth. The pollution lasts for seven days. Separate hut is built for child birth. *Thottisastram* is celebrated on the eighth day of the birth of a child. On that day the men will not take the food cooked by the women from that house.

The women are considered impure and cannot thus head a religious institution. She is free to worship their gods and go to the temple when she is free from the pollution.

So the impurity related with child birth and menstruation make the women naturally inferior to men. It was told that the elderly women who have reached the menopause stage are free to participate in religious festival with the pujari.

It has been described earlier that the Paliyan had political institution with *Kaanikkaran* as the head and *Vina Mariyan* and *Thandakkaran* as his assistant. It was learnt that the women were not appointed for any of these positions and thus they had no important role to play in the political institution. But the wife of *Kaanikkaran* deserved more respects from the other Paliyan women.

With regard to selection of the mate the Paliyan women are given chance to see the boy. The boy is selected only after the girl's consent. No bride price or dowry system existed among the Paliyan. Now the expenditure for marriage is met by the bride's and bridegroom's parties. The women after marriage go to bride grooms residence.

The traditional norms of the Paliyan community reveals that the women are not superior to men. As a bread earner the Paliyan women occupy equal status with men.

CHAPTER IX

Development Programmes and the Paliyan

An attempt has been made in this chapter to critically evaluate the various development programmes launched by the Government for the welfare of the scheduled tribes. In the beginning the Harijan Welfare Department was entrusted with the welfare activities of the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes. But with the formation of the tribal development office, this office was concerned with the welfare activities of the scheduled tribes. It is reported that no other private agency is involved in the development of scheduled tribes here.

Data on development programmes were collected from the tribal development office, Block development office and from the Paliyan themselves. It has been said earlier that a group of the Paliyan have embraced Christianity and they live at Anakkara settlement. There are thirtyone households of converted Paliyans in Anakkara settlement. The Indian Missionary society is entrusted with the welfare work for these Paliyans. The converted Paliyans do not receive any governmental concessions. I shall discuss later about what the Indian Missionary society has done for the betterment of the Christianised paliyans.

The tribal Development Office is implementing the development programmes for the scheduled tribes. The officials give more attention to the Paliyan living in Kumaly settlement, as they are regarded as more backward. They live in very poor huts. This settlement being easily accessible. The officials visit this settlement very often. The Paliyan living in Chakkupallam settlement, remark that the officials believe that the Paliyan of Chakkupallam settlement are economically more advanced. Therefore, the officials pay less attention to them. In Chakkupallam settlement a few of them are economically very well of and they own some cardamom plantations.

The paliyan are aware that the government is extending

help in giving education to their children. The youngsters seem to be aware of some of the development programmes implemented by the government.

Educational institutions

The Kumaly settlement has such educational institutions as government residential basic school, nursery school, tribal lower primary school and craft and training centre for the tribals. As these institutions are located in the tribal settlement there is no difficulty in taking education up to lower primary level. For high school education they have to join the school at Kumaly which is only one and half kilometer away from the settlement.

Tribal lower primary school

Tribal lower primary school was established in 1951. Both Mannans and Paliyans send their children to this school. Besides tribal children, the children belonging to other castes also study in this school. In the beginning of 1978-1979 session the strength of the tribal students was seventy six. But in the middle of the session that strength decreased to fifty eight. Incentive grant at the rate of Rs. 10/- per month per student is given to the parents.

Government residential basic school

Government residential basic school was introduced in this settlement in early sixties. In the beginning there was no building for the school and the classes were conducted under the shade of a tree. Now there is a separate building for the school which was constructed about eight years back by the Harijan Welfare Department. It has got the accommodation for thirty students. As there is a lower primary school adjacent to this school the government residential basic school of which eighteen students belonged to Mannans and five students belonged to Paliyans. The students are supplied with free food, books, two pairs of dresses, a steel trunk, mats, etc.

The staff consists of a warden, a cook and a servant who belong to other community such as Nair, Christian and Mala Arayan, a tribal community.

The duty of the warden is to assist them in their studies and also to take care of their food, health, etc.

Tribal nursery school

There is no separate building for the nursery school. This is now functioning in a house belonging to a Mannan. The children at the age group of 3 to 5 years are admitted in the nursery school. The total strength of the students in nursery school is thirty. Both Mannans and Paliyans send their children to this school. Each student is supplied with food in the afternoon which is worth forty paise. Two pairs of dresses are given in a year.

The staff consists of a teacher and an *aaya* who belong to Nair and Izhava community respectively.

The nursery teacher and *aaya* make efforts in collecting students. Every morning the teacher or *aaya* go to the huts to bring the children. When I first visited the nursery school there were only six students. When I enquired about the reason for their absence the teacher told me that she could not go to their huts to bring the children. The parents are not interested in sending their children regularly. The parents remain with their economic pursuits.

Craft and training centre

Craft and training centre has been functioning in Kumaly settlement since 1961. Here the tribal students are given training in cane work, plastic wire work, etc. Each student gets sixty rupees a month as stipend. During 1978-1979 all the students were from the Mannan tribal group. No Paliyan was attending this craft and training centre. So far only two Paliyan boys had training in cane work. Now one boy is employed as watchman at the office of the wild life preservation officer.

In Chakkupallam settlement there is a tribal lower primary school. The Paliyan in Chakkupallam settlement told me about their necessity of nursery school in their settlement.

Housing scheme

In early sixties about nine houses were sanctioned in Kumaly settlement and four houses in Chakkupallam settlement by the Harijan Welfare Department. Of these nine houses in Kumaly settlement only four houses were completed. In those days the total estimate of a house was Rs. 1500/- and the money was given to them in three instalments. Only four persons were able to complete their houses. The rest of them remained incomplete. On enquiry it was reported that the money given for building a house was spent for some domestic purposes. So they could not complete their houses. In Kumaly settlement, except the four government built houses most of the houses appear to be wretched.

In 1975 under the tribal integration programme it was proposed to construct homogeneous housing colony in the tribal pockets. In 1977 fifty houses were granted for the Paliyan in Kumaly settlement. When I was conducting field work the construction of these houses was in progress. The total estimate of this programme in this region was Rs. 1,25,000/-, *i.e.*, Rs. 2500/- per house. The specification of the government house is one small verandah kitchen and a room. The wall is made of baked brick and the roof is thatched with tiles.

The Paliyan like these houses. They were really waiting for its completion. Some of them expressed that they were unable to build such houses. So, according to them government was really helping them in this way.

Special schemes for scheduled tribes since 1976-77

The Block development office is executing the programmes for the agricultural development among the tribes. A training camp was conducted in 1977 in tribal lower primary school at Kumaly. Both Mannans and Paliyans attended the camp.

The purpose of the training camp was to teach the tribals about the improved method of agriculture, horticulture animal husbandary, environment, sanitation, cooking, etc.

Supply of plants to the tribes

To improve the method of agriculture among the tribes plants are supplied from the block development office. Hybrid pepper vines, banana suckers (robusta), coconut seedlings, T & D seedlings, green peas, beans seeds, vegetable seeds, etc., were supplied during 1977 and 1978.

Supply of plant protection equipments

Sprayers are supplied from the Block Development Office. In Kumaly settlement three Paliyans were supplied with this equipment.

Soil conservation scheme

In order to prevent soil erosion it was proposed to make contour bunds with stone in tribal lands. In 1978 five families were provided with this facility. About Rs. 4000/- were spent for this programme in 1978. In 1979 also five families were helped in making contour bunds and Rs. 5000/- were spent for this purpose. It is also reported that the soil conservation office is planning to make contour bunds for all the tribal families of the Paliyan and the Mannan in Kumaly tribal settlement.

Supply of agricultural implements

Agricultural implements such as *manvetti* (spade) and *vaakathi* (Iron bill hook) are supplied from agriculture office. Two pairs of spade and two pairs of Iron bill hooks were given for one family. In Kumaly settlement twenty persons got these implements.

Supply of chicken birds and goats

Chicken birds and goats were supplied among the tribals by the Tribal Development Office in March 1978. One goat was supplied for one household. In the case of Chicken birds ten

chicken birds along with fifty rupees were supplied for one household. In Kumaly settlement five households received goats and five families received chicken birds.

The Paliyan who have embraced Christianity are not given any of the governmental concessions mentioned above. The Indian Missionary Society is the only agency which takes care of the development activities of this group. In spite of the missionary works no progress has been made in their economic life.

So far, the Indian Missionary Society have not implemented any scheme for their economic development. The Indian Missionary society has established a church and a lower primary school in Anakkara settlement. The society impart free education to the converted Paliyan. Tamil is the medium of instruction in the school. Only one boy has come upto the standard of second year B. Com.

Twenty houses were built by the Indian Missionary society for the converted Paliyan in Anakkara settlement. During Christmas one pair of clothes are supplied among the widows and the children.

The majority of the converted Paliyan are employed as labourers in cardamom plantations. They get seven rupees as daily wage. Most of them possess a small patch of land, *i.e.*, half acre to one and a half acre. They do not cultivate their land. The land is leased out either for *pattam* or *otti*.

In the words of the present *Tirumeni* (priest) of the church the Paliyan are having the earning capacity but they do not have the saving capacity whatever they earn is spent in tea shops, arrack shops or they spend it in cinema. The predecessor of the present *Tirumeni* encouraged them in drinking and merry making. He did not implement any scheme for their economic development.

The present *Tirumeni* is interested in the economic development of the Paliyan in Anakkara settlement. He introduced the saving scheme among them. About thirtythree Paliyans have opened savings account in the Post Office.

Given below is the schemes which was just proposed by the present priest for the Paliyan in Anakkara settlement during my stay there. Of course, I had no occasion to observe its implementation.

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>No. of persons</i>	<i>total amount</i>
Beehives	400	6	2400
Goat rearing	300	20	6000
Peper cultivation	900	10	9000
Sewing machine	700	3	2100
Provision stores	1000	1	1000
Pan shop	200	1	200
			20700

So far, I have given the lists of various programmes implemented by the government for the educational and economic development of the scheduled tribes in Kerala. It would be worthwhile to examine the impact of these programmes on the Paliyan.

The Paliyan are motivated by the incentive grant, supply of free food, clothes, etc., in the educational institutions. But at the same time they have not been able to make the maximum benefit from the same. Though the educational institutions have been functioning here for the last twenty five years educationally the Paliyan have not developed much. It was noticed that most of the boys and girls of school going age are not going to school. Some of them joined the school and discontinued it after one or two years. On enquiry it was reported that when the parents leave for work they remain home to take care of the young ones. In the words of the head master of the lower primary school the parents are interested in receiving the incentive grant, but they are not taking proper attention about the attendance of their children in school. The incentive grant is given on the basis of the attendance of the student. If the student did not attend school regularly the full amount of the incentive grant cannot be

given. In such case the parents find fault with the headmaster if the full amount is not given.

The teachers of the lower primary school also reported to me that the tribal students are generally very weak in their studies. There is nobody at home to encourage them or to help them in their studies. Most of the children become capable of writing the Malayalam letters without any mistake when they reach IVth standard only.

In Kumaly settlement Rajan aged nineteen years old is the only person who has reached upto S.S.L.C. He failed in the examination thrice. Now he is trying for a white collar job.

With regard to the other schemes the Paliyan are not utilising it properly. It has been already mentioned that about five persons received goats and five persons were given chicken birds from the Tribal Development Office during March, 1978. During my second spell of field work in March, 1979, it was found that only two persons have retained goats and three persons have retained a few chicken birds. In one case the goat was dead and in other two cases the goats were sold out. In the case of chicken birds some of them died due to the lack of proper care and some of them were sold out. They have developed a tendency of selling things to meet their immediate requirements. These happen due to their poor economic condition.

Most of the Paliyan are still not interested in agriculture. Most of them are holding a small amount of land which do not derive sufficient income for their subsistence. The modern cultivation requires funds for buying seeds fertilisers, etc., which they lack. Besides, the standing crops of the area are destroyed by the animals like wild pigs, deer, etc. So they mostly depend on collection of firewood or forest produce or on labour work in plantation for their livelihood.

Now let me come to the suggestive part. The land of the Paliyan in the reserve forest areas should be divided equally among the Paliyans. So that there should be uniformity in the land holding. The Paliyan should be given proper training.

in using improved variety of seeds, fertilisers, etc. The standing crops should be protected from wild pigs, deer for that a trench should be dug around their settlement. The land of the Paliyan should be protected from money lenders and the plainmen. Interest free loan should be given for cultivating pepper and cardamom on their land.

CHAPTER X

Summing up

The Paliyan who have settled down in Kerala had migrated from Cudalloor of Madura district in Tamilnadu. They speak Tamil language. The Paliyan are distributed in Peermede and Udumban Chola taluks of Idukki district in Kerala. About 22% of the total population of the Paliyan have been converted to Christianity and they have adopted Christian customs in performing marriage, naming, etc.

Thurston (1909) described the Paliyan as nomadic and food gathering tribe. Iyer (1939) recorded the Paliyan as shifting cultivators. Gardner conducted field work among the Paliyan of Ramnadu and Madura districts of Tamilnadu during 1962-1964 and he described them as hunter and food gatherers. The Paliyan covered under present study have changed over now from food gathering economy to various other levels. These includes agriculture, wage labour in cardamom plantations, collecting and selling of firewood, etc. Collection of honey is also being continued by some of them. The traditional life of the Paliyan is now undergoing a number of changes. They have been exposed to market and cash economy on the one hand and on the other they are in close contact with some advanced communities.

The reservation of the forest area and the declaration of Thekkady Range as protected wild life sanctuary have reduced the scope for their gathering food. The area has grown to be a tourist centre because of the wild life sanctuary. The transport facilities have been increased. Many government offices like Post Office, Police Station, transport bus station, etc., have come up in this area. There has been influx of the immigrants from different parts of Kerala State. They acquired land from the forest and introduced the cultivation of cash crops like pepper, cardamom, etc. Most of the forest areas have been

converted to cardamom plantations. All these factors have created some impact on the paliyan life.

The Paliyan settled down in one place after the reservation of the forest areas. With the emergence of settled life they became conscious of the idea of property. The individual ownership of land has come into existence. Each household occupied some land in the reserve forest and claimed ownership of land. As the individual ownership did not exist in the past there was no rule with regard to the division of land. Now they say that they divide the land among the male and the female members. The law of inheritance suggests the equal division of property among the male and the female member. They might have adopted these rules due to culture contact.

In the past they had their own political institution with *Kaanikkaran* as headman, *vina Mariyan* and *Thandakkaran* as his assistants. This headman and his assistants looked after the conduct of the boys and girls. They were also expected to maintain law and order in the society. The individual ownership of land and the new economic activities have weakened the authority of the traditional headman and he has become powerless.

The life cycle rituals of the Paliyan in the past included puberty ceremony, marriage and death rites. Now they have included brief ceremonies like *thottisastram* and *mudiyeduppu* in their life cycle rituals. They have adopted it from the people from the plain. The marriage was very simple in the past. This was performed by exchanging salt and betel leaves and sometimes this was a simple unceremonious union. Now they have adopted elaborate rites in performing the marriage which have some similarities with that of the Tamil people of the plain. They follow the custom of tying *tali*, (marriage badge), exchanging flower garlands between the bride and the bridegroom, washing the feet of the bride and the bridegroom with *manjal thanni* (water mixed with turmeric powder). Those who are economically well off celebrate marriage and puberty ceremony in grand manner. They hire loud speaker and play

records in these functions. They spend more for feast and purchase of clothes.

Names of cinema actors and actress are being used for their children. Old names like Vellayan, Karappanan, Vellathayi, etc., are not being liked by them.

The shift in their economic life has already been mentioned. Most of the Paliyan living in Kumaly eke out their livelihood by collecting firewood from the forest and selling it in the market. Some of them go for honey collection. They have not shown interest in agriculture. They do not have much land also. The pattayam (right of ownship) over their land has not yet been given to them.

In Chakkupallam and Anakara settlement most of the Paliyan work as labourers in cardamom plantation. They have got pattayam over their land. But most of them have leased out their land on *pattam* or *otti* for the lack of funds for meeting the expenses for cultivation. They were used to shifting cultivation in the past. The modern mode of cultivation requires money for buying seeds, fertilisers, etc.

Only a few Paliyan have comparatively larger land holdings and they have retained the same. They do self cultivation on their land. They grow cash crops like pepper, cardamom, tapioca, ginger, etc. They have become economically well off due to their efficient performance in cultivation. They have constructed multeroomed pucca houses. One person in Chakkupallam settlement and one in Paliyan mala settlement own jeeps. The women of these families do not go for plantation work.

There have been a marked change in respect of their possession of material goods. They have developed an urge for acquiring things like ornaments, good clothes, vessels, etc. The food habit of the Paliyan has been changed. Rice has become their staple diet. In Gardner's account it is mentioned that the Paliyan would not drink any intoxicants. The present study reveals that most of the Paliyan men are addicted to arrack and liquor. Most of the households now possess steel,

aluminium and brass vessels, furniture, transistor, radios, good clothes, etc. The new economic pursuits have pushed some of them to become entrepreneurs.

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PLATE I

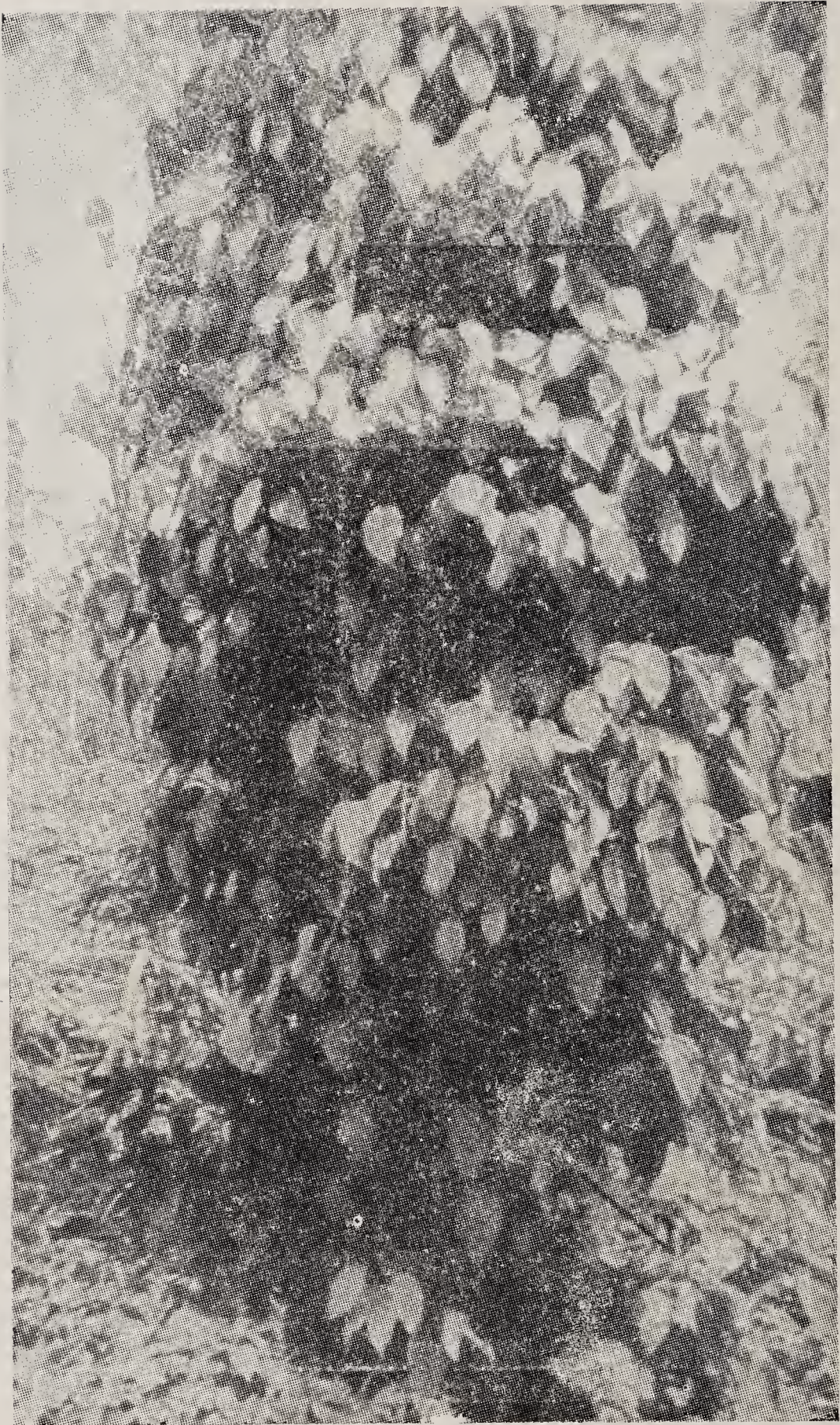


A typical hut



Paliyans at agricultural work

PLATE II



Pepper cultivation in Progress

PLATE III



A group of women

PLATE IV



A paliyan forest guard

PLATE V

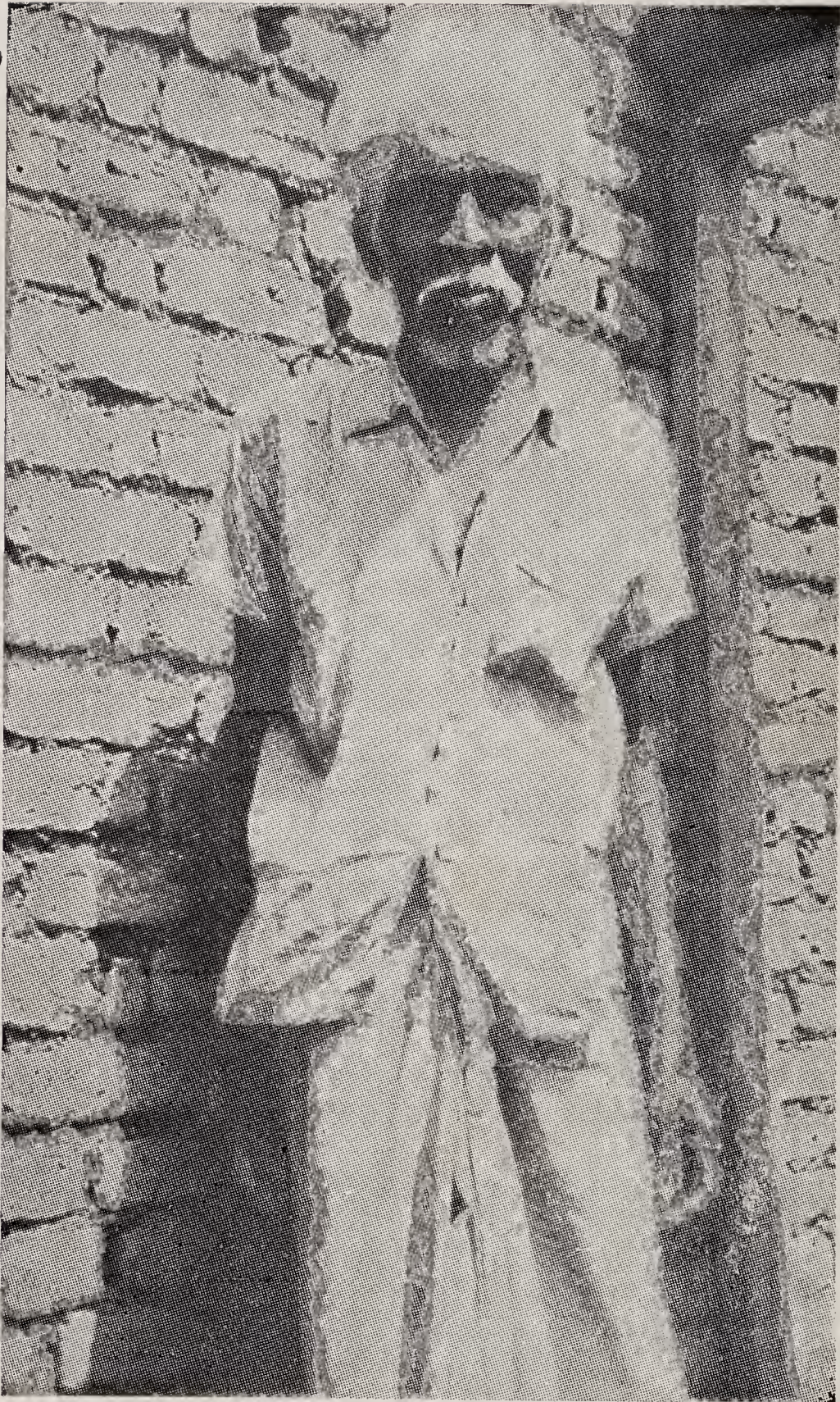


Heap of collected firewood bundles



Women engaged in mat making

PLATE VI



Vellayan — the Kaanikkaran

PLATE VII



Chandamm—the most important informant

PLATE VIII



Carrying a baby on the back

PLATE IX



Women with a new born baby