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KADAR OF COCHIN

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U. R. EHRENFELS

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

1952

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TO THE MEMORY OF

MY PARENTS,

Christian and Emma

Ehrenfels.

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FOREWORD

By

PROFESSOR P. W. SCHMIDT

Professor *von* Ehrenfels has rendered great service by undertaking detailed field-researches among the Kadar, a food-gathering tribe of south-western India. There are not many people of this kind left in that area. The author mentions three, namely: the Malapantaram in Travancore, the Paliyar in the adjoining part of the Madurai District, and the Paniyar of the Wynaad in North Malabar. The culture of the last group is already in complete disintegration (p. 274; comp. also p. 2). This is not a great number of food-gathering tribes, if we consider the extent of the area. If the rest of peninsular India is here included by adding the Irular of the Tamilnad and the Chenchu of Telingana, this astounding paucity of food-gatherers in India appears the more striking, as they amount to not more than five small tribes for a vast area, peopled by a great variety of communities and types of civilizations.

The food-gathering stage of culture is thus poorly represented in India, if compared with her multicoloured totemistic, matri-lineal or mixed civilizations and the dominating patriarchal majority.

The situation is thus not favourable for attempts at systamatization of the food-gathering type of civilization in India. It is, however, further complicated by the fact that these five food-gathering tribes do not live in one area, but are scattered over regions, vastly differentiated from each other, and separated by great distances.

In this their environmental situation is markedly different from that in which we find the Pygmies of Asia and Africa. There, the smaller sub-groups are either living in close vicinity or are separated by short distances only—a situation much more favourable for attempts at systematization. There, a variety of similar and inter-related material objects, customs and ideas, common to neighbourly groups, permits interpretation to a much larger extent, as well as reconstruction in the depth of

time. This advantage is missing in the case of the Kadar. Every single step in the author's painstaking researches reminds one of this fact; researches of detail which deserve the more recognition on account of these difficulties.

This study was also not made easy by the simplicity which characterized Kadan culture from its beginnings. Evidence for such profound simplicity can be found not only in the absence, among Kadar, of bow and arrow (pp. 55, 57, 275), but also in the fact that men used as their tool and weapon the digging stick —the typical *woman's tool*—originally armed with stone, and more recently with iron points. The wooden spear, man's simplest weapon in primeval civilization, where it was just hardened in fire at one end, thus seems also to have been absent among the Kadar. The question arises here, how the men of the tribe have at all been able to fulfil their task of contributing their share of meat to the family's common diet? They did not trap animals either. Or could the digging stick, used by Kadan men, be interpreted as the survival of a simple spear which has at one time been in use?

The existence of rectangular houses, among Kadar, is theoretically "disappointing." No real house, that is a building with walls, distinct from the roof, can be found in the group of people who belong to the food-gathering stage of civilization. Among them we find huts (that is to say, buildings which consist of roofs only, sitting directly on the ground) according to investigations carried out by me, and mentioned in lectures at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, but not yet published in print. However, the author considers the windscreen as the probably original form of Kadan dwellings (pp. 36, 50). This tallies with another result of my investigations, namely, with the observation that, whilst bee-hive huts are typical dwellings of the African Pygmies, the windscreen is the characteristic dwelling among Asiatic Pygmies.

A "most outstandingly original and, at the same time typical, product of the Kadan bamboo industry is their ornamented comb" (p. 59). It leads the author to comparisons with Semang Pygmy combs and later also to comparisons with other aspects in the civilization of these Pygmies; especially their religion. Notwithstanding the numerous similarities that can be found in these two types of bamboo combs the Kadan comb yet

lacks magic or social functions (p. 63), it is, at least now, merely a piece of valued ornament.

In the fields of social researches, the author has rendered great service by painstakingly collecting numerous *Biographical Sketches* of different individuals (pp. 68-123). Here attitudes to relatives and neighbours and personal fates are vividly described. This is most valuable material, the rich contents of which even the author himself has not yet fully exhausted in chapter VI following: *Analysis of Family Life and Social Organization.* He has, however, apparently well grasped the real position of the Kadan family, when writing (on p. 133): "The general character of the family organization may thus be best termed as bilateral with a high degree of consideration for maternal relationship and yet with a generally prevailing trend to patrilocal residence of young couples. The economic and customary equality of the sexes, which we find documented throughout the biographical sketches in the previous chapter lends further colour to this picture of Kadan society as a basically bilateral organization, though modern trends tend to disintegrate this balanced equilibrium."

The author aptly characterizes also the position of the maternal uncle, when saying on p. 133, *seq.*: "He neither holds the official position to which he is entitled in a genuinely matrilineal organization, nor is he altogether out of the picture, as among full-fledged patrilineal societies where he would be less important, rather than more important than the paternal uncle."

It has been realized, since some time now, that not all activities of the maternal uncle are necessarily pointing to mother-right origin, but that they may also be expressive of the bilateral family situation, where not only paternal, but maternal relatives also are of importance, even though the former exercise greater influence owing to the predominance of patrilocal marriages.

In the question of monogamy the author sums up his observations on p. 139 when saying: "By far the majority of all marriages is, and no doubt always was, monogamous in the sense that every person had only one partner *at a time.*" This is a general feature of the food-gathering stage. When, however, he continues to specify: "though divorce and re-marriage of both partners appear to have always been frequent"—this

latter element cannot be added to the characteristic features of this type; especially not in the case of couples with children. Yet another observation of the author does come under this heading, when he says: "as long as a marriage is not 'divorced', extramarital relations are not frequent."

Monogamy also prevails in the only truly Kadan deity: a divine couple—*Malavay* (Hill-Man) and *Malankuratti* (Hill-Woman). Judging from their names, they might be interpreted as an ancestral couple, and this the more so, since they emerged naked from two caves in the tribal territory. But Malavay-Malankuratti, instead of begetting, and giving birth, to the first Kadan couple, they create them, who on their part are the natural ancestors of all subsequent Kadan generations. There is, however, also a goddess, *Atuvacherry Ammal,* piously loved by the Kadar, of whom they are not quite sure whether she was the daughter, or the creation, of the primordial divine couple. This couple of divine beings also created the rest of the Universe. One might be tempted to see in them the combination of an ancestral couple (emerging, as they do, from the bowels of the earth) and of a genuine creator deity. But there is no positive proof for the one-time existence of the latter. The author, at any rate, was right in not accepting the figure of *Karia Muppan* (pp. 166-67) as such, even though an old Kadan woman described him in this rôle, because further enquiry showed him as a recent historical person.

The Kadan divine couple thus shares the lack of colour and definiteness which is also a characteristic feature in other aspects of Kadan creed and culture and which renders comparison with other religions and civilizations particularly difficult. The author remarks at one place (p. 191): "In this the divine couple of the Kadar shows again the stress laid on the presence of the female aspect of the supreme being....." However, I cannot find such a stress. The fact that the divine couple created, or gave birth to, a goddess (besides having created the first human couple), does not give such a great stress—quite apart from the not as yet fully clarified origin of this goddess. It is methodologically not permissible to interconnect this little known and little characteristic divine couple Malavay-Malankuratti, with the well-known and highly characteristic divine couple Shiva-Shakti and to interpret the former as a sort of prototype for the latter.

Shiva-Shakti emerge from a fully developed mother-right civilization, against the background of which they are completely understandable. There is no "proto-type" for them on the food-gathering stage. Such a proto-type would be contradictory to the mentality of this stage.

It is not unmethodic, on the other hand, to compare the Kadan divine couple with those of the Semang Pygmies, because the latter hold a parallel position, as far as culture level and the depth in time goes. But comparisons are also made difficult here by the relative simplicity and sparse characterization of the Kadan divine couple, as compared to the wealth of varying divine couple versions, known among the Semang Pygmies. The author trusted here the unmethodological Ivor H. N. Evans far too much (pp. 289 *seq.*) and it is regrettable that he had P. Schebesta's work on the same topic not to his disposition, for Evans quoted only such material from Schebesta's work, as he was either trying to disprove, or else using as support for his own views. I also do not find that the author made use of my comparisons and conclusions regarding Semang religion, laid down in *Ursprung der Gottesidee* (Vol. III, pp. 202-257), especially also in the passages concerning the wife of the supreme being (pp. 213-218) and the supreme being itself (p. 229-244). There I arrive at the conclusion (p. 215) that in "Semang religion the supreme being did not, originally, know a wife," but that the concept of her was a later adaptation taken over from the religion of neighbouring plant-cultivators, the Senoi-(Sakai-) tribes" (p. 241).

It is again unmethodic to consider any connection between the divine couple of the Kadar and the supreme being of the Khasi because the latter are *firstly* a classical example of a mother-right people that has left the food-gathering stage behind since long and, *secondly*, because there is no divine couple as such to be found among them, but only an oscillation between the male and the female aspect of the supreme being. This oscillation is the result of the admission, in Khasi religion, of a maternal earth-goddess. This goddess represented plant-cultivation at a time when it was a new feature there and when, consequently, the sexless sky-god, surviving from the past gathering stage, began to be replaced by her. Here the author has tried unnecessarily and inadmissibly to interconnect his new researches among the Khasi with his previous ones among the Kadar.

The lack of colour in the Kadan divine couple finds a manifestation also in the lack of cult, prayers and sacrifices, offered to them by their devotees, and the little palpable connection between the divine couple on the one side, and human ethics or reward and punishment in this life, or the next, on the other.

To the description of a *primitial offering,* a question mark is added by the author (pp. 185, 295): "Before drinking arrack, Kadar, like the Cherumar (Pulayar) and Parayar in the plains will dip their finger in the liquid and sprinkle a few drops on the ground." Arrack – an alcoholic drink – does not belong to the gathering stage, but appears only among plant-cultivators. Similar ceremonies would rather fit into the picture of a food-gathering civilization. where they are found connected with honey generally, and the collection of the first honey-combs at the beginning of the hot season, in particular (p. 185).

It is interesting to read the author's account of all the pains which he took to avoid the dangers of pre-judgement (pp. 286 *seq.*). He confesses in this connection: "The powerful personality, and teachings. of Professor P. W. Schmidt no doubt dominated my outlook on these questions when we both were still in Austria—he as the Head of the *Viennese School* of Anthropology and I as student and member of the ethnological institute, Vienna University." I do not believe, however, that I spoke at that time about the Kadar and thus could have "powerfully" impressed upon the author any particular opinions regarding them. The author also stresses that he had been a rebel already at that time, that he held "unorthodox views," seen from the Viennese *Kulturkreise* point of view, and that he gave expression to them in his doctor's thesis then. By claiming to have had already at that time the idea of a "basically opposed concept of a female Creator Deity, largely submersed under patriarchal acculturation sheets, but still palpable among such people as Negritos of Malaya and perhaps the S. W. Indian Kadar" (p. 286), he admits, I fear, that he has harboured, what will be considered a very early *pre*-judgment, since he could not, at that time, have had acquired a judgment, based on field-researches among the Kadar of whom he himself says that he knew them "at that time only from the literature with its stress on the Kali worship." Besides there can be no question of "submersed acculturation sheets" in the gathering stage with its

bilateral form of marriage. These could only have come into play after the appearance of the truly patriarchal nomadic herdsman civilization. The supreme being of the primeval gathering stage is neither male nor female but it is psychoid and thus sexless, as has been frequently proved. It does not beget or give birth, but it creates.

The foreword, which the author has requested me to write, has already grown too long and I have to come to a close now.

By his critical study, based on detailed field researches among the Kadar in their own homes, the author has added, with this monograph, a substantial contribution to the science of social anthropology generally and to that of Indian anthropology in particular. Now the scientific world has at long last been given a reliable picture of the Kadar on which further investigations can be built up. We have thus at present to our disposition two thorough accounts on two important Indian tribes of the gathering stage: *The Chenchu*,—a monograph by Professor Chr. *von* Fürer-Haimendorf (London 1943), and now the present Kadan monograph by Professor U. R. *Freiherr von* Ehrenfels. It is of course a matter of no small satisfaction for me that both these results of practical field-work have been contributed by members of the Viennese School of Anthropology.

I feel, however, that it is now high time to provide similar monographs on the remaining Indian representatives of the food-gathering stage and it is with a view to this, as it were, scientifically "egoistic" motive that I am regretting the author's decision to begin new researches among the matrilineal and plant-cultivating Khasi of Assam, before he has added further merit to his present achievements, by writing the as yet missing monographs on the remaining other primitive tribes of the food-gathering stage in India.

In all questions of culture comparison between the civilization of the Kadar and that of other groups, it is imperative to realize that the former is no more of the pristine simplicity which belongs to the original food-gathering stage, but that it shows already signs of impoverishment in the fields of material civilization, economics and also religion. The lack of a genuinely original weapon for males is the most convincing proof for this process, so far as material civilization is concerned. Such

impoverishments result in a certain lack of points of comparison, which might tempt one to press comparisons. I should be inclined to perceive such forcing of comparisons in the author's hint (p. 296) that "the way in which obsessed men among the Kadar were beating their own legs with sticks, during the annual Kali puja of 1948" (p. 158) may be connected with the Semang Pygmies' atonement by drawing blood from their legs. But the author indicates that he does not lay much stress on this point, by introducing it with the words: "I was reminded of..."

The comparison of the Kadar with the Semang as such is, however, thoroughly legitimate. But even there it is necessary to keep in view the comparative paucity of Kadan culture, as contrasting to the richness of reports on the Semang. Still one more point of difference has to be stressed in this connection. The author shows convincingly that Kadar must, for a long period, have lived isolated in their forests and were thus protected from influence from the plains. The situation of the Semang, on the other hand, is characterized by a basically different picture. There we find a wedge of plant-cultivating mother-right people—the Sakai (Senoi), numbering some ten thousand individuals. They are intruding into the territory of the bilaterally organized and food-gathering Semang tribes, numbering only about two thousand or so. Other small Semang tribes inhabit marginal areas of another plant-cultivating mother-right group,—the Jakudn, numbering about twenty thousand individuals.[1] Such interlocking distribution caused no doubt intricate mixtures, such as, for instance, the hybrid tribe Sabubn. They are Semang. seen from the anthropological and ethnological point of view, but Sakai, from that of linguistic affinities,[2] whilst the Ple-Temiar and the Semei– two Sakai tribes – adopted Karei, the supreme being of the Semang Pygmies, though interpreting it as an evil spirit.[3]

None of these tribes shows a "female creator deity," largely submersed under patriarchal acculturation sheets, but their psychoid and sexless supreme being got frequently under the

[1] Schmidt: *Ursprung der Gottesidee*, vol. III. p. 152, Münster i.W. 1931, compare also *The Map, Ibid.*, at the end of vol. VI.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. III. p. 171.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 190, *seq.*, 196, *seq.*

influence of mother-right – not of father-right. The same is also true of the Kadar.

The comparison of Kadan religion with the religion of the Khasi and with the Shiva-Shakti complex, (both of which undoubtedly interconnected as being both rooted in mother-right) however appears to me inadmissible on methodological grounds and therefore as an unnecessary ballast which contains the germ of erroneous interpretation. But the author neither stresses this line of thought, nor does he fail to put it into sufficiently cautious wording to indicate that he sees not more than a hypothetical possibility in this link of affinity, or culture-contact, which he suggests.

Anthropos Institut,

Posieux – Froideville W. SCHMIDT.

(SWITZERLAND), *May 1952.*

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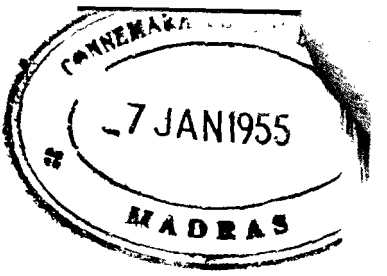

KADAR OF COCHIN

Preface and Acknowledgements

THE field researches on which this monograph is based were made possible by the interest of Sir George Boag in my plans, during my first visit to Cochin in autumn 1946, when he was the Divan of the Cochin State.

Actual field-work began in March 1947, more than six years after I had started to study and practise Tamil in connection with my plan to re-examine, through field-researches, the working-hypotheses, laid down in my theoretical work, *Mother-right in India*. Though I carried out field-researches among Kadar, as the first part of this programme single-handed and without the backing of any institution, I yet owe a great debt of gratitude to the late Maulana Muḥammed Ali of Lahore for whom I have been doing translations which, with his consent and encouragement, enabled me financially to undertake at the beginning of 1947, the anthropological field-work on which the present monograph is based. I had previously communicated my plans to the late Maulana Saheb, during the Xmas days of 1946 at Lahore, when I saw him last, fourteen years after he had invited me to come to India for the first time in my life.

Sri K. A. Damodara Menon, M.P., who was at that time the editor of *Mathrubhumi,* Kozhikode, and his wife, Srimathi Leela Damodara Menon, Member of the Malabar District Board, helped me through invaluable advice and assistance, in my work, ever since they took interest in its theoretical background and practical field results. Without the help and introduction from Sri T. Rakkunni Nayar, Deputy Collector, (Retd.), Sri Muliyil Keshavan and Sri T. K. Krishnan, D.S.P., (Retd.), all of Kozhikode, I would not have been able to start on the initial steps of my work, which found further guidance from Dr. Kunhalu of Ernakulam, on my first arrival there, in autumn 1946. However, even then my field researches would probably not have been completed either, had not Sri P. Gopala Menon, the son of the late Maharajah of Cochin, taken interest in its continuation after the partition of India had interrupted it temporarily in autumn 1947, after which I could continue the

work in the service of the Forest Department, Government of Cochin.

My thanks are also due to the local and Forest Department authorities of Cochin for providing me with facilities to use the timber transport tram line and Forest Bungalow or rest houses in the Kadan Territory, and with the valuable services of Sri Narayan Kutti Menon. His cheerful voluntary assistance as a Malayalam interpreter was of great help, especially as his Tamil too was considerably more fluent and colloquial than mine. Though his official position in the Forest Department gave him a backing in the eyes of our Kadan friends, I never felt that he misused his position in the way officials may frequently be tempted to do in aboriginal areas, which would of course, not have been without its repercussions on our common anthropological endeavours.

The visit to Kadan families outside Cochin, especially in Kollengode, which I had been attempting more than once, could not be made possible and the reconstruction scheme, which I worked out for the Kadar of Cochin, prior to the merger of this state with Travancore, was not carried out so far. I felt, however, that these two disappointments which I encountered in connection with this work were in no way caused by the attitude of the Protector of Depressed Classes, Cochin State, Mr. Vishwambharan, under whose jurisdiction also the Hill Tribes fell, and who gave me not only all assistance and encouragement that was at his command, but did his best to bring my reconstruction scheme to the notice of the authorities concerned.

The first laying-out of the initial chapters of the book, and especially the Kadan *microbiographies,* to use a term, coined by my friend Mr. Manjeri S. Isvaran, was done under the very active and experienced inspiration of Miss E. J. Merston at "Chinnamaya Sadanam", Sri Ramanashram P.O. at Tiruvannamalai, where I was given generous hospitality by Sri David MacIver during a period in summer 1947, which was critical for my work, and before it could be continued later in the service of Cochin State. My appointment in the Anthropology Department, University of Madras, in July 1949, gave me some library facilities and the opportunity to work out the results of my previous field studies which the University decided to publish in book form.

Mr. Manjeri S. Isvaran, the poet and novelist, Madras, offered his time and labour selflessly, advising in matters of publication and giving shape to the book, whilst his younger brother, Mr. M. S. Gopalakrishnan, as Research Student in my Department at the University of Madras, during the months I was preparing the book for publication, devoted much of his free time to proof-reading, completion of the index and other editorial tasks. Mme. Edith Canetti from Paris, helped us in checking the index, during her temporary stay at Madras. Professor Bhaskaran Nair of Travancore University and Smti Nandini Nambisan of the Palghat College very kindly helped me in identifying some zoological and botanical species respectively.

My thanks are also due to publishers who permitted verbal quotations with due footnote references from various of their publications, and to editors of newspapers and journals—especially *The Hindu,* Madras, and *Mathrubhumi,* Kozhikode, and *The Journal of the Madras University,* Madras, who permitted the reproduction of some photo-material, previously published with some of my shorter articles on the Kadar in their columns. As the reproduction of only a very limited number of my photographs was possible in this book, mostly those of my negatives were chosen for photo-plate reproduction, which refer to the *microbiographies* in Chapter V whilst most of the illustrations of more technical interest are here reproduced in the form of line-drawings, which have been prepared under my supervision, by the artist of Messrs. Associated Printers, Madras, the printers of the book, who co-operated patiently and cheerfully with the author, in spite of his, for non-anthropological books, often quite unusual requirements.

Two grants from the *Viking Fund, Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research* Inc., New York, enabled me to begin field-researches among the Khasi and Garo of Central Assam, in connection with a comparative study of matrilineal civilizations in India. The first four field trips, carried out with this help, between 1949 and 1952, were undertaken before the completion of this monograph and widened my horizon, especially with regard to the creation myth –, and divine couple – complexes.

The debt of gratitude to authors is being indicated in the usual way through footnotes, bibliography, and index-registers.

This book could, of course, not have come into existence without the goodwill and at times quite extraordinarily co-operative intelligence of those among the Kadar whom I have had the good luck of making my friends at a time when their original character and peculiar attitude to life had not yet been entirely changed by contacts with the thing which we call somewhat ironically—"civilization".

U.R.E.

UNIVERSITY BUILDING,
MADRAS, *March 17, 1952.*

CHAPTER 1.

AN EARLY PICTURE OF THE KADAR

THE tribal population in the hill-tracts of India was felt to be basically different from the bulk of the population in the plains, by the first scientists, who attempted description and systematization of ethnographic material. This was probably the main reason why an important difference *within* the more than twenty-five million[1] of India's aboriginal population has been little taken notice of, during the first phase of Indian ethnography, round the beginning of the twentieth century. It is the difference between the food-gathering collectors of forest products (or seminomadic hunters), and the food-producing (shifting) cultivators or pastoralists among the hill tribes.

Extremely small in numbers of individuals, and even few as tribal units, the first group—that of the food-gatherers —was held to be just a little more primitive than the rest of the hill tribes, but their basically different economy, and culture-type generally, was scarcely realised by the authors of the *Castes and Tribes* series and the Census of India *Reports* until the third decade of this century. It was due to these circumstances that the food-gatherers in India found little scientific and administrative attention as an economically, sociologically and generally cultural unique entity, until intensive ethnographic research in other parts of South Asia showed the importance of just these food-gatherers. The brothers Sarasin and C. G. Seligman's great Vedda work, the research of A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and E. H. Man among Andaman Islanders, P. Schebesta's and others' field works and Ivor H. N. Evan's comprehensive synthesis of Negrito

[1] Elwin, (1943), p. 2.

ethnography in Malaya, as also M. Vanoverbergh's research work among the pygmoid groups in the Philippines (Luzon); —all antedated detailed studies of either food-gatherers in India themselves, or of the traces which their civilization may have left among some of the other Indian Aborigines who have since long taken to agriculture in the acculturation process.

The last-mentioned task was undertaken by Professor Koppers, during the years 1938/39, which he devoted to researches among the Bhil of Central India,[2] when I had the opportunity to see him at work among the Rambhapur Bhil as his guest and on my way to Hyderabad. There I began field-work among the Chenchu,[3]—the northernmost truly food-gathering peoples in South India. My field work there could not be completed during the war, but was then carried out by Dr. C. Fürer von Haimendorf[4]; luckily before large parts of the tribe have been deported to the plains, by police actions during 1950/51.

Among the few surviving food-gatherers of South India proper there were in Travancore the Mala Pantaram[5] and in North Malabar the Paniyar. The former, however, were so small in number[6] and the latter already so acculturated, as a new class of agricultural labourers in an almost slave-like position, that the Kadar of Cochin appeared as the best representative group of integrated South Indian food-gatherers in 1947/48, whilst now also their disappearance as an ethnic entity is threatened. As such representative food-gatherers I mentioned them already in my first work on South Indian anthropological problems,[7] where I sketched an early

[2] Koppers, (1948).

[3] Ehrenfels-II, (1942), pp. 104/I, 99/II, 108/II, 112/II, and photo. facing p. 112, Vol. II.

[4] Fürer-Haimendorf, (1943).

[5] Krishna Iyer, (1937), pp. 96-116/I.

[6] Estimated as between 51 and 187. *Ibid.* p. 96.

[7] Ehrenfels-II, (1941), pp. 44, *seq.*

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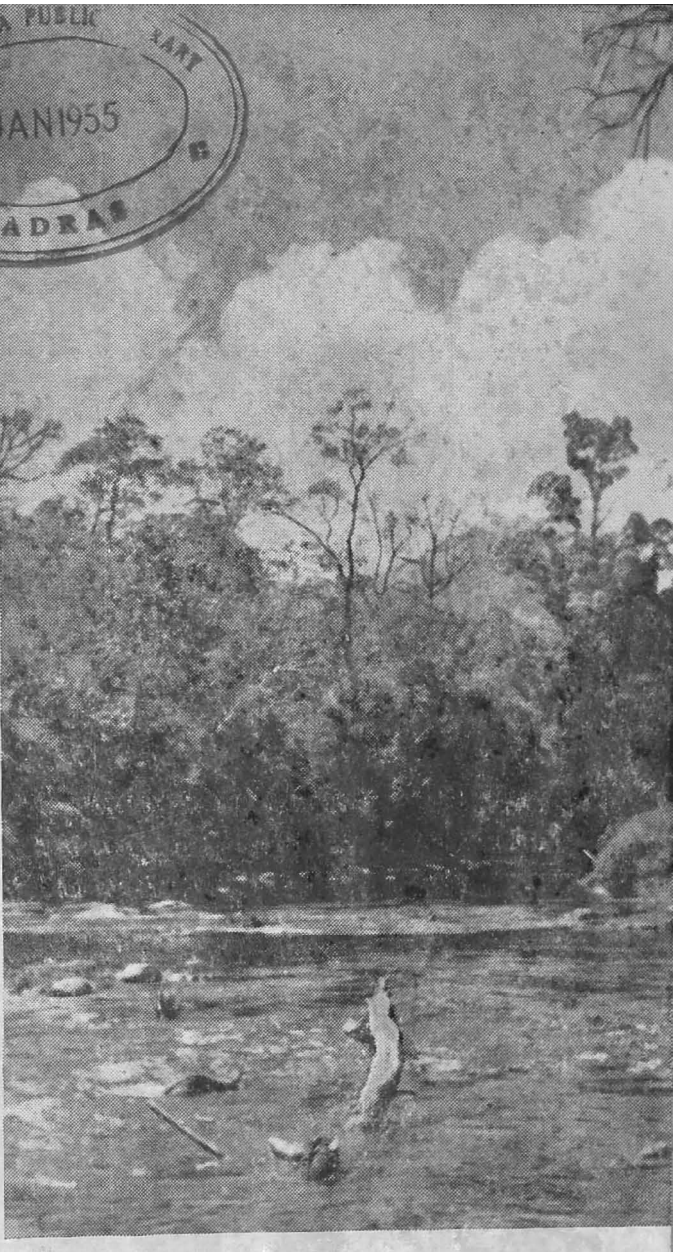


Pl. I.

CHALAKUDY RIVER

near Parambikulam with the Karimalai Hill—the K
sacred mountain—in the background.

picture of Kadan[8] life, as a paradigma. I considered them as a survival from the oldest known Indian culture. This early picture, though written after my first visit to India, in 1932/33, was yet not based on my own observations but merely on the data, contained in Thurston's[9] and Iyer's[10] *Castes and Tribes* compilations.

The present monograph, on the other hand, is the result of field-researches which I carried out during five field trips, between the beginning of March 1947 and the end of April 1948, around the Forest Bungalow of Parambikulam as my base. I visited the surrounding areas where Kadar lived and spent also some days and nights in the villages of Malai Malasar and Muduvar:—shifting cultivators in the direct neighbourhood of the Kadar. Though in no geographically palpable way separated, or following any real caste distinctions between each other,—these tribes have yet no social relations, beyond occasional visits or cc : *cooly work*, which are both caused by dispositions of e Forest Department. I could not find any traces of inter-tribal trade, —or other relations (including anything like intertribal "war"), beyond the common contact with plainspeople or Government officials. The idea of inter-tribal marriage— quite contrary to what I found, for instance, among the otherwise far more exclusive and integrated Khasi of Assam— appeared quite inconceivable to a rather independent-minded Kadan.[11] There are, so far as I could see, also no institutionalized common ceremonies observed, beyond the exchange

[8] The word *Kadar* is the plural form of *Kadan*—a forest dweller, derived from: *kadu*, Tamil: *forest*. The designation *Kadan* (and its plural form: *Kadar*) is, however, used for our tribe by plainspeople only and *not* for other forest-dwelling groups who are known by different other names. The designation *Kadar* or *Kadan-mar* is used by outsiders; not originally, by the Kadar themselves (more details pp. 124, chap. V and especially pp. 260, 265, chap. XI, sub: *Matale* and *Matana*).

[9] Thurston, (1909), pp. 6-29/III.

[10] Iyer, (1909), pp. 1-27/I.

[11] Vazhavan (chap. V., pp. 119, *seq.*) comp. Ehrenfels-II, (1951/A), p. 5—re. inter-tribal marriage among Khasi of Assam.

of *betel*,[11-a] as formal presents, on the occasion of visits to one of the neighbouring villages; mostly in connection with touring officials. The originally planned inclusion of a chapter on the neighbours of the Kadar was therefore abandoned as being beyond the scope of this monograph.

In the execution of the present work, I was inspired by the approach to anthropological problems in the Indian area, which the late Sarat Chandra Roy initiated and Dr. Verrier Elwin developed. Professor D. N. Majumdar of Lucknow used Ruth Benedict's concept of culture-patterns[12] fruitfully. This idea is ultimately based on the *Gestalt*-concept in my father's structural psychology,[13] which I tried to apply. Naturally I am here indebted to the original source of the idea—apart from its successful adaptations to anthropology which reached me *via* America and Lucknow.

The present monograph has rectified errors, contained in my afore-mentioned *earlier picture* of the Kadan-tribe, which was a mere condensation and reconstruction of other sources and has, of course, also added hitherto untouched material. The main thesis of the earlier brief summary, however, is still standing. Kadan life even of 1947/48,—half a century after the opening of the small timber-transport tram-line into the Kadan territory—was still a tangible survival of an early, food-gathering civilization in India. The Kadan tribe, a numerically insignificant group, is thus yet of special interest to the student of Indian Anthropology. This is especially true since Dr. B. S. Guha's survey revealed that the Negrito racial element is represented in India[14] and most clearly so in this tribe "whilst the Proto-Australoid type is the most

[11-a] and occasionally tobacco.

[12] Majumdar, (1937), p. II, and Benedict, (1935), p. 36, *seq.*

[13] Ehrenfels-I. (1890). Compare also *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (14th edit.), paragraphs: *Ehrenfels, Christian Frh. v.* (Vol. VIII, p. 110/c), *Consciousness* (Vol. VI, p. 348/d) and especially: *Gestalt* (Vol. X, p. 316/d).

[14] Guha, (1928), pp. 121, *seq.*; (1929), p. 123, *seq.*; (1931).

dominant element" not only among the Kadar but also "in the tribal population of southern and central India as well as among semi-Hinduized tribes further north."[15]

Professor Hutton also began his discussion of *Caste in India* with this same ethnic group and stressed its importance to anthropology: "Perhaps the most primitive of the South Indian forest tribes is that of the Kadar of Cochin State, a tribe which shows more traces of a Negrito ancestry than any other, though that is not a great deal, the proto-Australoid element predominating".[16]

The Kadar have, however, in this connection been considered from the point of view of physical, rather than from that of cultural anthropology.

The present monograph, on the other hand, deals with the cultural aspect of Kadan life only.

As an introduction, my brief *Earlier Picture* is here being reprinted at the beginning of this study; not only because it summarizes the main points of the former literature on the tribe, but also because it acquaints the reader with the preconceived ideas—that is: *pre-judices* with which I began field work in 1947. Though I was certainly eager to rid myself, as much as I possibly could, from all these concepts and to do my field work with the minimum of prejudice (in the literal as well as in the colloquial sense of the word), it has yet to be stated here that in my opinion there is no absolutely un-prejudiced anthropological field work possible. This would imply that the anthropologist should have less notion of techniques, in the realm of material civilization; or of social arrangements, in that of sociology; or of ideologies, in the religious sphere,—than the objects of his studies have

[15] Guha, (1944), p. 11. By permission Oxford University Press, Bombay.

[16] Hutton, (1946), p. 7. By permission of the author and Cambridge University Press.

themselves. Indeed the reverse is the case, where the anthropologist has had some theoretical education in anthropology and practical experience among people, other than his immediate object.

The following *Earlier Picture* has not made use of Sankara Menon's lively and human account of the Kadar,[17] contained in the *Census of Cochin* for the year 1930,[18] which was not available to me, at the time of writing my book *Mother-right in India* from which the following paras are reprinted[19] :—

"This tribe, numbering about 1,300,[20] is ethnologically one of the most typical and relatively pure jungle-tribes of the country, though racially differing from the other, more Weddide peoples, by its markedly Negritoid type. They chiefly inhabit the Nelliampathi and Kadacheri mountains in Cochin and the Anamalai hills in the Coimbatore district.[21]

The first impression of a negroid, but at the same time pygmiform racial type is accentuated not only by their woolly hair, but also their size. The men are seldom as tall as 158 cm. and women not even 150 cm. The skull index is 72.9, nasal index 98, the complexion very dark.[22]

The language of the Kadar is a corrupt form of Tamil, mixed with Malayalam elements, probably indicating a former language of their own, which has unfortunately not been preserved.[23]

[17] Compare: Footnote 8 on p. 3.

[18] Sankara Menon, (1931), pp. 284-299.

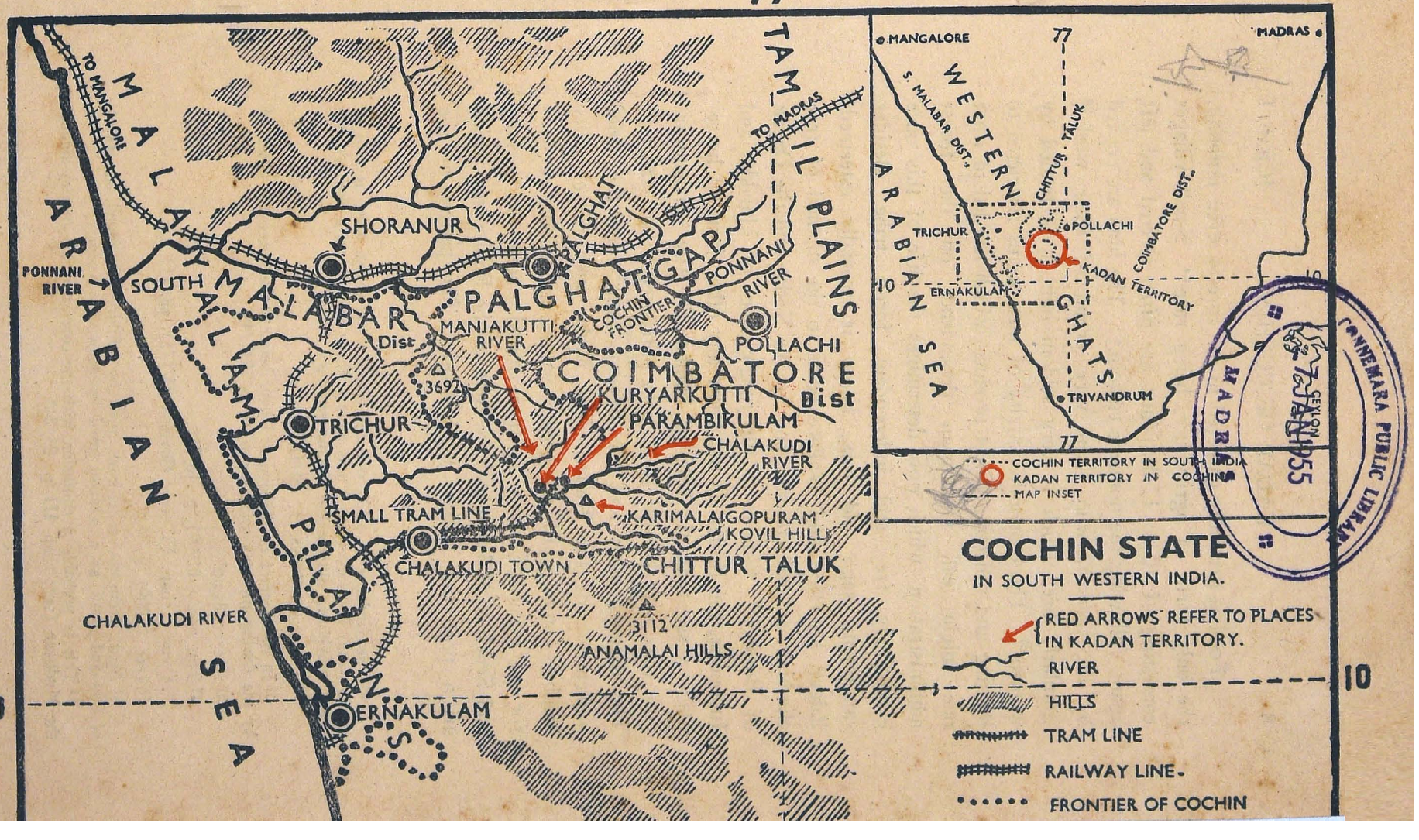
[19] Ehrenfels-II, (1941), pp. 44-47. By permission of Oxford University Press.

[20] The numerical strength of the tribe is no doubt decreasing, even if we may entertain doubts as to the correctness of the *Census of India*, as far as this little accessible food-gathering tribe is concerned. The Census figures are: 447 in 1911; 274 (?) in 1921; 267 (?) in 1931 (*Census of India*, 1931, Vol. XXI, p. 287) and 565 (? ?), 306 males, 259 females in 1941 (*Census of India*, 1941, Vol. XIX, p. 95).

[21] Iyer, (1909), p. 1/I; Thurston – (1909), p. 6/III.

[22] Thurston, (1909), p. 29/III.

[23] Comp. chap. XI, pp. 257 to 259 of the present monograph.



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Food is generally gathered in the forests, even *jhuming*, the only form of agriculture, being rare.[24] Small villages consisting of 10 to 12 leaf-huts are often erected and left again, following the nomadic custom.[25] The huts are erected by the *women*, who seem very proud of their work.[26] Similarly fire, which is very seldom lighted, is tended by women.[27] The economic activity of men seems restricted to hunting and collecting forest produce, which has led to what one might call proletarian dependence on the forest administration, which now determines the life of this once exceedingly free and independent forest tribe. Besides cardamom, sago and wax, honey is specially esteemed. Edgar Thurston and Wallace point to the method of tree climbing, as characteristic, both of the Kadar and the Dayak of Borneo.[28] Similar to the jungle-tribes of Malakka and Indonesia, the Kadar do not know any other form of home-made vessel than the bole of bamboo.[29] Any earthenware pots they may possess have been purchased from traders.[30] The digging stick and the ~~bamboo-bow~~ jungle knife,[31] are the chief implements of the Kadar. The Kadar men carve pretty bamboo combs which are greatly valued as wedding presents for the women,[32] similar to those found among the Semang and Senoi of Malakka and the Aëta of the Philippines, which are a protection against black magic. The pattern of the

[24] The Kadar of Cochin did not take to cultivation even as late as in the years 1947/48, when I was among them; apart from a few acculturated individuals outside the Cochin territory.

[25] Thurston, (1909), p. 29/III *seq.*

[26] In this respect no division of labour between the sexes was observed by me during my stay with the tribe in 1947/48.

[27] Not confirmed.

[28] Thurston – (1909), p. 15/III.

[29] Comp. : chap. IV, *sub*: Govinda (VI/5), pp. 113, *seq.*

[30] Iyer, (1909), p. 4/I.

[31] Apart from the pellet-bow, used by children, I found no traces of bow-and-arrow as a weapon, used by grown-up Kadar.

[32] This is probably a confusion with the corresponding custom among the Muduvar (see: chap. III, p. 23/24).

bamboo combs in these places, so distant from each other, are also said to have a great resemblance.[33]

The piercing of ear and nose, as well as the filing of teeth, is also customary. The Kadar wore practically no garments, until the end of the nineteenth century, thus enduring the dangers of tropical climate much better than they now can. The introduction of clothes unfortunately contributes, as so often in other parts of the world, greatly to the decrease, if not final annihilation, of this innocent and peaceful forest tribe.

The dog is the only domestic animal accompanying the Kadan on the lonely paths of his jungles.

Kadan sociology betrays the marks of different and opposing foreign influences. Sons, as well as nephews, can inherit.[34] During menstruation and childbirth, seclusion in a hut, specially built for the purpose, is strictly observed.[35]

Marriage of boys with paternal relatives is banned, and the Indian *menarikam*-system, *i.e.*, marriage of a boy to his maternal uncle's daughter, is preferred.[36] Serving marriage,[37] combined with patrilocality, points to patriarchal influence on customs originally matriarchal, which is emphasized to a certain extent by the custom of easily repeated divorces, otherwise not usual in Indian life.[38] The maternal uncle is predominant as the chief of a small group, the father as the head of a family; a constellation which might be interpreted as the result of later matriarchal influence in an originally

[33] Thurston – (1909), 27/III.

[34] Iyer, (1909), p. 10/I.

[35] Iyer, (1909), p. 5/I.

[36] Iyer, (1909), pp. 4 and 5/I. These statements have been found erroneous, as will be explained in detail in chap. V, pp. 77, 80, 81, 89, 92, 111, 113.

[37] Thurston – (1909), 18/III. This statement too has been found erroneous. The loose association of a boy with the family of a girl, he is in love with, can hardly be termed Serving Marriage. (Comp. chap. V., esp. *sub* Pönnala IV/3), p. 95).

[38] Gait, (1901), p. 245/I.

patriarchal society, in opposition to the aforementioned hypothesis. The prohibition of remarriage for a widow[39] seems merely the outcome of some indirectly exercised Hindu-Brahmin influence.[40] The bridegroom, on the other hand, presents not only parents, sisters and brothers, but also the maternal uncle of his bride with wedding gifts.[41]

Among the invisible gods, stone images and avenging deities who cause a thief stomachache, are being worshipped.[42] These conceptions, as well as the dolmens and kistavens described by Anantha Krishna Iyer,[43] the religious importance of Monday[44] and especially the worship of the Hindu goddess Kali,[45] point to foreign influence in the Kadan religion. Yet it is possible that an old pre-Aryan and pre-Hindu deity has preserved her existence, among the Kadar, in the disguise of the goddess Kali. It is the natural result of the essential character of Hinduism (a social entity, so emphatically determined by religion) that its chief influence exercised on non-Hindu jungle-tribes, should be of a religious nature. The blood-sacrifice of decapitation, as practised by the Irular and other jungle-tribes....also appears to me to be foreign to these peoples: something which was acquired in the course of superficial Hinduization.[46]

The existence of some matriarchal elements in the whole structure of Kadan life may also be rightly considered characteristic of a great number of other jungle-tribes in southern India. The lack of direct succession in the female line is

[39] Iyer, (1909), p. 9/I.

[40] No confirmation of this prohibition could, however, be traced by me during 1947/48.

[41] Iyer, (1909), p. 6/I.

[42] Thurston, (1909), p. 21/III. No traces of such a belief was found in 1947/48 by me.

[43] Iyer, (1909), p. 2/I.

[44] Thurston, (1909), p. 24/III; – not confirmed by me.

[45] Iyer, (1909), p. II/I. (Comp. pp. 179, 185. chap. VII).

[46] Thurston, (1909), pp. 376/II, 435/IV and Nanjundayya, (1928/35), pp. 304, 393/III.

perhaps only due to the poverty in private property of Kadan ergology and also to the lack of any social organization, other than small, nomadic village units. In this connection pointed Heine-Geldern[47] to the strange relationship, even fraternal intimacy, often prevailing between Hindu Rajas, and primitive jungle-tribes.[48] Thus certain Vedda clans have become satellites, life guard officers, sons-in-law and finally ancestors of influential aristocratic families at the courts of Singhalese kings in Ceylon, without even breaking off the intimate relations with their Vedda cousins, outside in the jungles.[49] Similar relations seem to have existed between the Bhils of Central India and the Rajput newcomers. To this day the Oguna Bhil fixes the royal mark on the forehead of the Rajput chief and holds his arm, when he leads him – the newly invested chief – to the throne.[50] The awkward, twofold cultural position, so characteristic in the Gond of Central India who are related to jungle-life as well as to their short but splendid history as a ruling race, can perhaps also be regarded as typical in this respect .[51] Similarly the cultural customs of the south-western jungle-tribes in India, as sketched here in the example of the Kadar, should neither be looked upon as an undisturbed picture of the oldest and most primitive civilization on the Indian soil, nor as a mere product of the mani-

[47] In a course of lectures on *Völker und Kulturen* at the University of Vienna, winter term 1935/36; especially in the lecture, held on January 10th, 1936.

[48] Iyer, (1909), p. 21/I. : "The Kadars are supposed to be the vassals of the ruler of the State. To him they are attached by the strongest ties of personal affection and regard. Whenever His Highness the Raja tours in the forest they follow him, carry *samans* and in fact do everything for him. His Highness in return is much attached to them, gives them clothes, ornaments, combs and looking glasses. Above all he treats them with great affection, using always kind words to them....." By permission of Higginbothams, Madras.

[49] Eickstedt, (1929), pp. 51, 73 *seq.*

[50] Russel, (1916), p. 280/II.

[51] This double relationship has meanwhile been described and analysed by: Elwin – (1944) and (1947).

fold primitive, progressive and highly civilized influences brought to bear upon them in the course of the Ages".[52]

It should be stressed, here, that the reports on which the above sketchy picture of Kadan Life has been based, were composed in the first decade of the twentieth century: just when the period of transition from the independent, carefree life of the aboriginals to proletarization and finally to the inclusion into the officially designed group of "Depressed Classes" set in.[53] Some half a century earlier still, until about the middle of the nineteenth century A.D., the Kadar must have been one of the most original among all the aboriginal tribes in India. The traces of this primeval originality and of genuine, human happiness, that goes with it, are at the present time fewer in number and less clearly visible than they must have been even as late as during the first decade of this century, when ethnographic research was started among the Kadar. Yet it is hoped that the newer methods of investigation and research, on which the following report is based, will have succeeded in bringing forth a number of such truly aboriginal features as escaped the notice of earlier observers, and also in adding some data on recent acculturation trends.

[52] The foregoing pp. 6 up to here are quoted, by permission of Oxford University Press, from: Ehrenfels-II, (1941), pp. 44-47, with substitution of the correct spelling of the words *Kadan* or *Kadar* (FN. 8, *supra*), instead of the wrong spelling as used there. Some footnotes, referring to the present monograph, have also been inserted.

[53] Sankara Menon, (1931), p. 286, quoted by permission of the Census-Commissioner.

CHAPTER II

GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT

UNLIKE most other aborigines in the south-western Ghats, the Kadar are both: few in number and confined to a small territory. They roam in the hilly tracts of the Eastern Division of Chittur Taluq in Cochin State and the forests immediately adjacent on its western borders, where the South Malabar and Coimbatore Districts meet the border of Cochin.[1] The Kadar's paucity in number and limitation to such a restricted area, as compared with their aboriginal neighbours, are not easy to explain, but both these facts determined not only their past history but are, in the present period of transition, likely to shape their immediate future also.

The territory to which the Kadar seem so rigidly attached, does not appear to be differentiated from the surrounding forests in any essential manner. It is (or was until quite recently) genuine primeval, tropical forest as it can be found also elsewhere in the interior of the southern parts of the Western Ghats. The Kadan territory proper lies just on the edge of their eastern slopes and at an elevation of roughly 2,000 ft. above sea-level. These forests are very rich in timber and in what is officially, if somewhat stepmotherly, termed: "Minor Forest Produce". At the beginning of this century, the forest administration of Cochin opened a small-gauge tram line for timber transport, which was gradually extended until, some forty years ago, it had reached the heart of the Kadan country at the feet of the Karimalai Hill where the forest station Kuryarkutty has been erected. In addition, the Forest Department now auctions the exploitation of Minor Forest Produce against a high bi-annual rent to a

[1] About half way between Chalakudy and Pollachi, the former in Cochin, the latter in Coimbatore District. (See the Map on p. 7).

forest produce-contractor. These two facts have changed the entire pattern of Kadan life and economy. The labourers (*coolies*), employees and minor officials of the tram line have changed the entire outlook on life of the Kadar and have influenced very considerably their social habits and customs. The contractor knows how to create new needs among them in order to induce them to collect more and more of the valuable forest products.

The Kadar have, to a certain extent, adjusted themselves to the newly created situation by settling down, more or less, to a three-quarter aboriginal type of life. But history seems to repeat itself, even with the Kadar. Their territory has now been found suitable for the construction of a huge reservoir for the irrigation and electrification of the plains and cities of Cochin. We have thus good cause to fear that the great amount of *coolie* labour, employees, contractors of all sorts, minor officials and their servants, coming in this way up to the hills of the Kadan country, will bring about the latter's disintegration as a tribal unit, if not their utter annihilation. But even should, for an unforeseen reason, they be spared this fate, a large-scale migration will be forced upon them, by the submergence, under water, of a part of their traditional hunting-grounds. This latter factor, however, is less likely to affect the life of the tribe which is essentially migratory in character.

The herbal richness of their territory made the Kadar's life free from want in olden days but now has brought about intensive contact with the modern machine-civilization, its many wants and its mortal dangers. The fauna of the region, equally rich, gives it also a touch of danger though of a more individual and less general nature. Elephant, tiger, bison and bear are numerous and, consequently, few non-Kadar dare walk alone through the dense forest. But the Kadar do, betraying thus an age-old acquaintance with this specific territory to which they belong and are adjusted.

The region is highly malarious and, on this score dreaded by the plainspeople. The Kadar, so long as they live in their own area, suffered comparatively little from this disease, but as soon as a Kadan visits the plains, he almost invariably falls a prey to a heavy and enduring attack, from which he would gradually recover on return to his hills, whilst the opposite happens frequently with plainspeople, visiting the hills.

The individual and national (or tribal) character of the Kadar appears to have been at least partly shaped by environmental impressions. The southern part of the Western Ghats is a hill tract of extraordinary beauty and tropical abundance. Steep cliffs are the ever-present background to the scenery of giant trees and bamboo thickets, by the side of idyllic rivulets or small streams, most of which will carry water all the year round. The rainy season of the south-west monsoon from the last days of May, or the beginning of June, up to August and even September is generally heavy, rendering life in the jungle precarious for humans. Even the drier parts of the forest are then transformed into one thick tangle of dark green, almost impassable without the help of a strong jungle-knife, which also serves to scrape off the blood-sucking leeches thriving in the moist shade and eagerly awaiting prey upon which to pounce. The second monsoon, from the north-east, usually brings rains again to the Western Ghats, though often to a lesser extent. From the end of November, or beginning of December, until the following May, the weather will be more or less dry, though occasional showers and rain-storms keep even the low lying and drier parts of the jungle green. Although the temperature may rise to 100 degrees F. during the day, there is always the refreshing shade of dark groves, and the presence of so many big trees makes the nights amazingly cool.

At night the primeval forest seems transformed into some mysteriously illumined fairy-garden with silent fireworks, for myriads of fire-flies outline each and every tree.

They light and extinguish their organic lanterns in a simultaneously-kept rhythm which differs from grove to grove, so that every minute one part of the jungle would be spotted with bright sparkles of light, while another would lie in deep darkness like contrapunctual music – an ever-shifting chiaroscuro.

The tropical forest is full of life. And life has numerous voices also in the jungles: from the sweet call of the tiniest fly-catcher to trumpeting elephants, enjoying their evening-bath; from the squeaking of night-birds and bats or the shrieking of a frightened deer to the deep growl of a tiger. If even an outsider cannot help noticing the abundance of life and its various manifestations in the primeval forest, – to the Kadan it is one continuous narrative of comprehensible and clearly differentiated articulations. A Kadan not only hears and sees, but he actually also smells the animals of the jungle. Likewise he seems to have developed to perfection the queer sense, which many a less aboriginal visitor to the jungles also sometimes experiences: namely when turning round under the impression to be watched by someone – he finds one of the more powerful jungle-animals steadily fixing its eyes on him. The tropical forest is alive, and it teaches that life is one great enigma.

The particular area in the southern parts of the Western Ghats, with which we are concerned here, (see the map on p. 7), used not to be easily accessible from the east, *i.e.*, the Tamil country. Now motor transport plies between Pollachi in the Coimbatore District (which is in the Tamil country east of the Western Ghats) and the eastern slopes of the Ghats (on the Cochin side of the hills) mainly to carry down timber. But even these roads do not penetrate into those Cochin forests which lie along the Chalakudy River, and to the Karimalai Hill,— the sacred mountain of the Kadar on its banks. This river flows into the Arabian Sea and thus connects the hills of the

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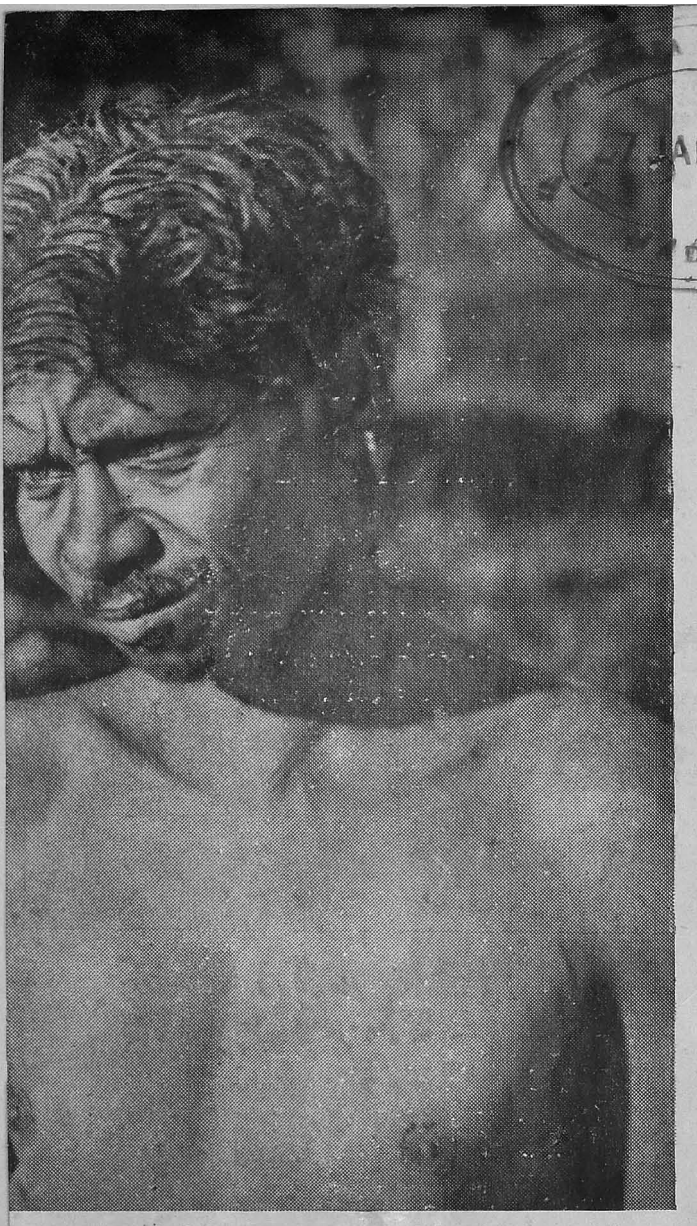

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TAMBI,
one of the chief informants (I/1).

Kadar naturally with the plains of Cochin. In pre-motorcar days there seems to have been but little traffic between the arid plains of the eastern Tamil country and the steep slopes of the Western Ghats. The armies of invasion which entered Kerala from the east did not touch this region for they either used the Palghat Gap or came through Wynad from Mysore: both north of Cochin. The dread of fever, wild animals and – black magic seem to have protected the peace of aboriginal life in these mountains, until about half a century ago.

There was, as we hinted above, some sort of connection, especially with the small town of Chalakudy, in the west, and the western plains of Cochin generally. Now Chalakudy has become a station on the railway line, running from Shoranur in the north *via* Trichur to Ernakulam in the south, in a north-south direction, about half-way between the Ghats and the sea-shore, through the plains. It is here that the Chalakudy River descends to the plains in its east-west course, coming down from the Kadan country around the double-pronged Karimalai Hill (see the map, p. 7). In this region, the forest stations Kavalay, Kuryarkutty and Parambikulam were erected some 20 to 40 miles east of Chalakudy town, during the first and second decade of the nineteenth century. Even before that, trapped elephants, "wild honey", cardamom and other jungle products were occasionally brought down to the court of the Maharaja of Cochin, at Tripura near Ernakulam, which the Kadar, along with others among their aboriginal neighbours, seem to have acknowledged as the centre of the world, then known to them. Meanwhile the horizon has become larger, even to the Kadar, and now extends up to Coimbatore and the forest administration of the Nilgiris; even right down to Madras in a dim sort of hearsay way. But the attachment to Cochin and her famous temple-city of Trichur has not faded but has, rather, been intensified by the developments of the last half-century.

CHAPTER III

MATERIAL CIVILIZATION

House, Daily Routine, Tools and Tribal Economy

The Kadan House

HOUSES of a Kadan village are always situated in a cluster of any number from three to a dozen or so, leaf-shelter or wind-screen huts for a single family being in temporary use only. The one exception to this rule which I met was that of a lonely old Kadan, named Vazhavan,[1] who inhabited a cave in the hills on the Cochin-Coimbatore border. Unless the villages are attached to a modern timber-station of the forest administration, they are usually situated on a hillock near a stream or a natural spring. The houses are frequently but not always built in a ring and surround an open village-space. In the case of a "large village" the houses may be arranged in a double ring, but these rings are not regular enough to have anything like a circular road running between the two rows of houses. Buildings are neither kept strictly in line, nor oriented to any particular direction of the compass. The open space in the centre of the village is made more or less level and is usually kept free from vegetation, thus allowing an easy purview of the surrounding slopes of the jungle. One or two menstruation-huts and – where cows have been introduced – a cowshed, will be situated 10 to 15 paces away from the orbit of the ordinary dwelling-houses, but it would be misleading to say that they are 'outside the village', which has, of course, no definite boundary line.

Each house in itself is a roughly rectangular structure of about 3 to 5 paces, built on a mud-platform, raised a hand's

[1] Chap. V, pp. 119 to 123.

breadth or more above the surrounding ground. The platform is beaten level whilst wet and kept so by occasional repairs, especially after heavy rains. Where cows are kept, cow-dung will nowadays be mixed with the mud, in the way practised in the plains, but this is, of course, an innovation in Kadan construction since cows were formerly not kept, or even known, by the Kadar. The ground usually looks neat and clean.[2]

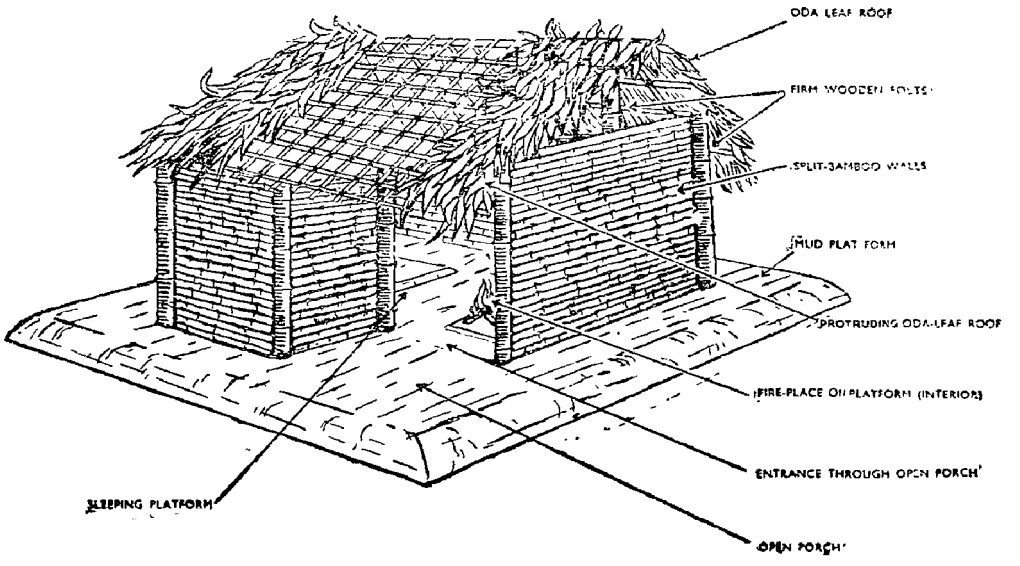

FIG. 2.
KADAN HOUSE
(Model of House II of Parambikulam)

Four wooden poles of about 4½ to 5½ feet will be firmly planted in the four corners of the platform to support the walls of split bamboos and the main wooden or bamboo rafters of the roof. Between the four corner-poles, there are usually three to ten thinner poles, meant to support the walls.

The roof is usually double-sided with a ridge-pole some 5 to 6½ feet above the ground, but may sometimes be only a single, slanting plane the highest part of which will then

[2] Diagram on p. 19 (Fig. 2).

be somewhat lower than it is the case with gabled roofs. The roof is covered with *oda*-leaves which keep the house amazingly cool in daytime and, if regularly repaired, protect it against rain. Repairs, however, are very often neglected and then rain leaks through freely. The roof is made to protrude, so as to form a small verandah in front of at least one of the usually two entrances. Often instead of the house covering the whole of the platform, the walls are receded at one corner to form a small porch under the same roof. One of the entrances of the house would then be through this porch. (Fig. 2, p. 19).

Partition-walls are rarely set up between sleeping room and living kitchen, unless two distinct families inhabit one house and will then use each one room only. Such partition-walls of split bamboo are usually supported by weak poles and, since the partition-walls are somewhat lower than even the short average Kadan is, and since roofs are high enough to permit a Kadan to stand upright in the middle part of the house, every inmate can and does look over the partition-wall without compunction, and conversation goes on, all the time, from one part of the house to the other, without any necessity of raising the voice.

Although the whole space, covered by the house itself, is built on a raised platform, there are again two small platforms, built up on this main platform, inside the house to act as sleeping, – and fire-place, respectively. The fire-place proper is an oval-shaped hole, cut out from the platform, round which 3 or 4 stones will be placed to support the cooking vessel. These fire-places are usually situated in a corner near the entrance of the room, whilst the sleeping place runs along the opposite wall. There are, as we have said, usually two entrances to a house especially when it is inhabited by two distinct families. The room, or rooms, are windowless but not too dark since light permeates the split-bamboo-walls, as well as the open space between the protruding roof and the

upper end of the walls. There is, of course, no furniture unless we can call furniture some wooden boards to sit on. But even these are by no means common, though the ground gets uncomfortably wet during the rains. Bamboos are usually suspended horizontally between the rafters of the roof, so as to allow clothes, bast-strings and vessels, filled with water or honey, to be hung up.

In the Kadan house, as far as I saw it, there is no ornamentation of any kind.

We have seen in the first chapter that early reports speak of the Kadan house as being constructed by the women,[3] not the men. I could neither find such distinction now, nor any living memory of its former existence which, however, does not prove too much, as we shall see later. Both sexes now co-operate in the construction of houses.

I have never seen any *kolam* (chalk-designs) either in front of the entrance, or on the ground inside a Kadan house; a traditional ornamentation which adorns so beautifully the houses of most non-aboriginal communities in South India.

Individual ownership of a house cannot be said to exist, although the oldest and most important male member of a family may speak of the house as "his", but it will neither be inherited by one nominated individual, nor do the present inhabitants lose the right of living in it, if the person considered as the "owner" of the house died; what they probably would, if there were such a thing as individual ownership of houses among Kadar. If, after the death of its most important member, a family unit continues to exist, the house will also continue to be inhabited by that family. If, on the death of one member, the rest of the family splits up: a widow perhaps returning to her parents, along with her children and old relatives, joining the latter's children elsewhere,—then the house will be deserted. If there is a chance

[3] Foot Note 26 on p. 8.

of the family members returning later, the deserted houses will be left untouched though, if not repaired, it will quickly fall to pieces. But if deserted for good, its building material, being of very little value in the rich jungle, will be used by anyone who might need it.

That his house is of comparatively little importance as property to a Kadan, is perhaps due to the fact of his being partially, at least, nomadic, going off for months together to the jungle, or to relatives in a distant village during which time his house may or may not fall to pieces.

But whether in a village or on an expedition in the jungle,—a Kadan's daily routine is much the same.

Daily Routine and Material Civilization

Unlike his low-country compatriot, the Kadan is not, as a rule, an early riser. Only when the sun's rays touch his bamboo hut, or temporary shelter in the jungle, will he get up and re-kindle the fire from the ashes kept smouldering all night ready for instant fanning to blaze to drive away, as is often necessary, elephants or any marauding animals. A new fire will be almost equally quickly lit with a flint, piece of iron and bit of tinder. This, at least, is the method in general use where the machine-made matches, a scarcely more efficient and certainly more costly substitute, have not yet been introduced from the plains.

We saw in the first chapter[4] that in former days women were said to have kept the fires, but I could not find that this is their prerogative now. The men carry their flint, steel and bits of tinder to light not only useful fires, but also the *beedies* or "Indian cigarettes" which have been introduced into Kadan life by the forest produce contractors. How proud a Kadan now is to be able, like the much admired plainsman,

[4] Foot Note 27 on p. 8.

to light his *beedie* and still with a match for both of which luxuries he has been made to pay a high price by the contractors! Women are usually excluded from this rare privilege and even the lighting of ordinary fires which might once have been their prerogative has now become more or less man's work, he being the owner of the precious match-box. The influence of modern machine civilization tends in this case to deprive women of their former position of equality, if not superiority.

Before iron and steel were easily available, fire was, and occasionally still is, being produced by friction of a sharp piece of split bamboo, sawing into the lengthy slit of a dry and hollow piece of bamboo, where it is rapidly being moved up and down, until tinder or simply bamboo dust, catch fire.[5]

The fires having been re-kindled in the morning, some water in which food has been boiled on the previous day, and a few roots may be warmed up. Nowadays tea and rice are of course favoured but are by no means regularly available.

The morning toilet is rather scanty. Gradually one child after the other will come forward to occupy the mother's attention – lice are searched for in mutual co-operation and woolly hair are trigged with bamboo combs.

These combs, cut from thin pieces of the Kadar's most favoured raw-material, the bamboo, are beautifully ornamented in geometric patterns.[6] There are two main types: the *chipu*, or nine-pronged, and the *chägar*, the three –, or more commonly five-pronged, the latter being bigger and usually more elaborately ornamented on the projecting top-part.[6] The five-pronged seems to be more commonly used. Both types are stuck in the hair sidewise and emerge slantingly from the back part of the crown. (Fig. 3). The use of

[5] Fig. 12 on p. 54.
[6] Fig. 3, 5 and 14 on pp. 24, 25 and 59 respectively.

combs as marriage presents[7] has not been traced by me, among the Kadar, whilst this is definitely so among the Muduvar, a neighbouring tribe.

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FIG. 3.
KADAN COMB,
and how it is worn in loose hair.

Along with scratching and combing, a playful idling will last until about 7-30 or 8-00 a.m. when the family will set out on collecting expeditions in the forest.

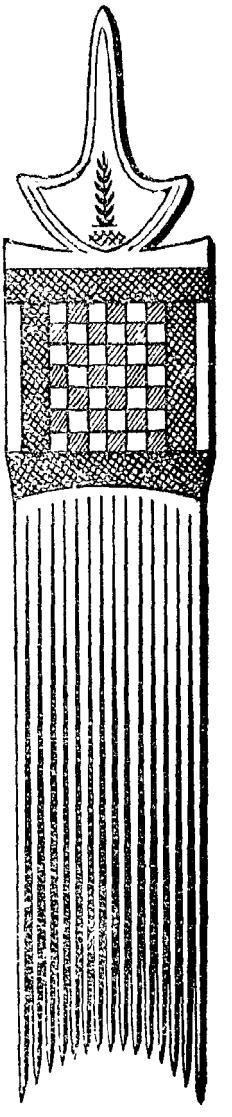

FIG. 4.
A MUDUVAN COMB.

Food-collecting and Food-preparation

In olden days, collecting jungle products and also hunting were the only means to procure the necessities of life for the Kadar, and this is still their main source of income. The vast majority of Kadar still lives by collecting

[7] as reported by Thurston, (1909), p. 27/III.

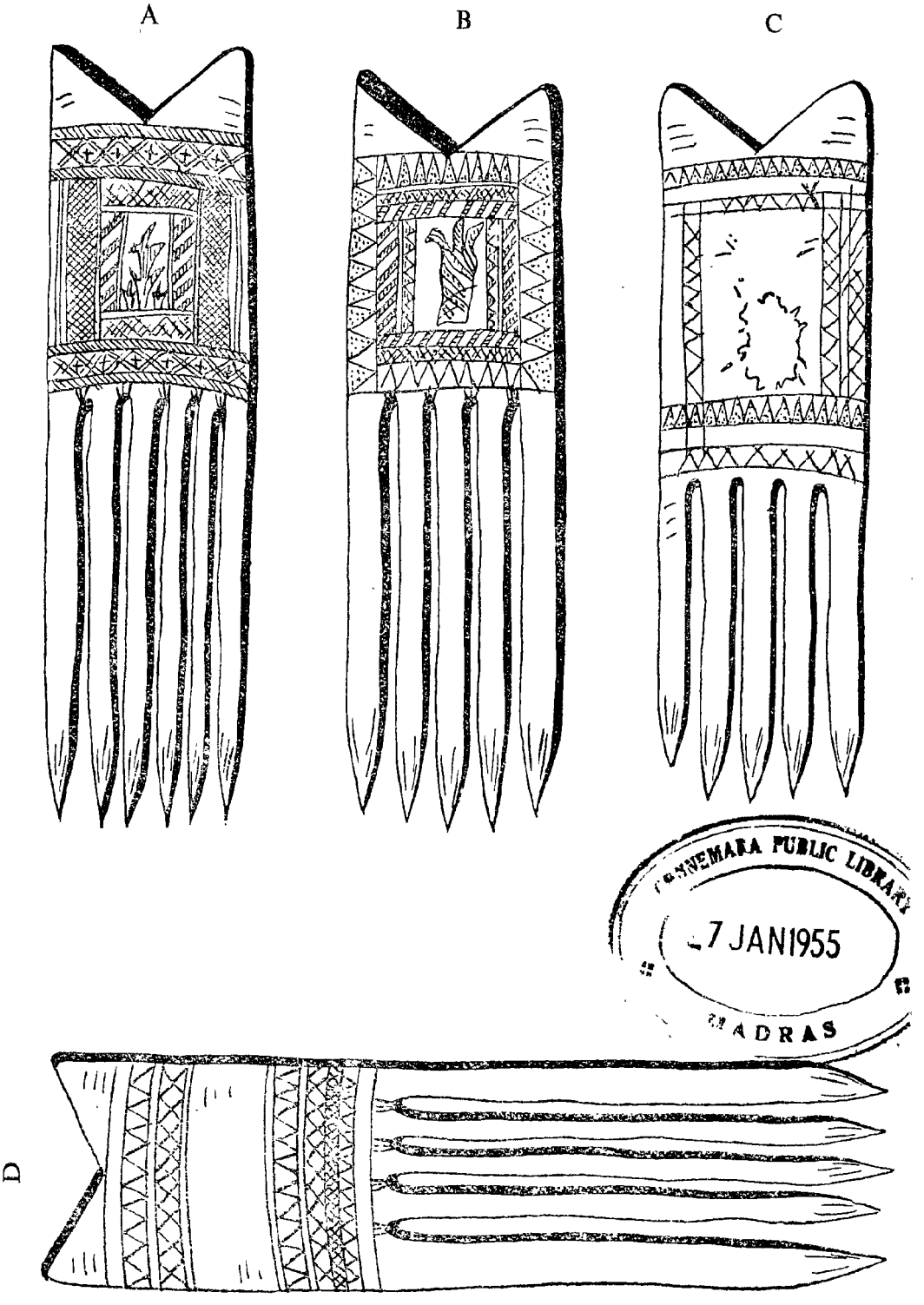

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FIG. 5.
FOUR KADAN COMBS.

forest products which, however, are being rarely kept for their own exclusive use now, part at least of the collected material being exchanged against rice, chillies, opium, arrack, cloth and ready-made clothes at the contractor's shop. Formerly the staple food consisted of jungle-roots and even now at certain times, when, owing to lack of income or for other reasons, rice is not available, the daily food will again be collected in the jungle. Modern Kadar complain at such occasions of hunger. They have become accustomed to filling the stomachs with rice, as plainspeople do. But the actual nutrition of the people does not appear to suffer during such epochs without rice, for roots are indeed richer in nutritious value and vitamins and even tastier than rice. Opium and arrack were unknown in the pre-contractor days and clothes were manufactured from bark, fibres and leaves, instead of bought at high prices from the contractor as it is the case now.

As soon as enough food is accumulated, on a food-collection expedition to the forest to last for a day, a fire is lit in the jungle and a few roots roasted to appease hunger. The rest of the spoil is then taken home, to the huts which, however, are not much more of a home to the real Kadan of the old type than the place round the fire lit in the forest. Together with the roots, any animal caught, or other products and a few logs of firewood will be brought home.

The method of digging out roots is based on the digging stick, as the principal tool.[8] The Kadan digging stick is about six to seven feet in length and approximately three inches in width. Nowadays the digging stick is usually fitted with a trapezoid piece of iron of which the smaller end is stuck into the stick and fixed with an iron ring, whilst the broader end is sharpened to serve as the working edge. The iron-fitted digging stick is called a *para kole*, the plain one:

[8] Fig. 6, p. 27.

kooran kolc. The remembrance of the days is still vivid when stone edges, instead of iron were fitted to the digging stick, whilst legendary remembrance goes still further back, in Kadan history, to a time when life was "so easy that nobody stood in need of the burdensome tool"[9] which Kadar, men and women, now carry on their shoulders to the jungle.

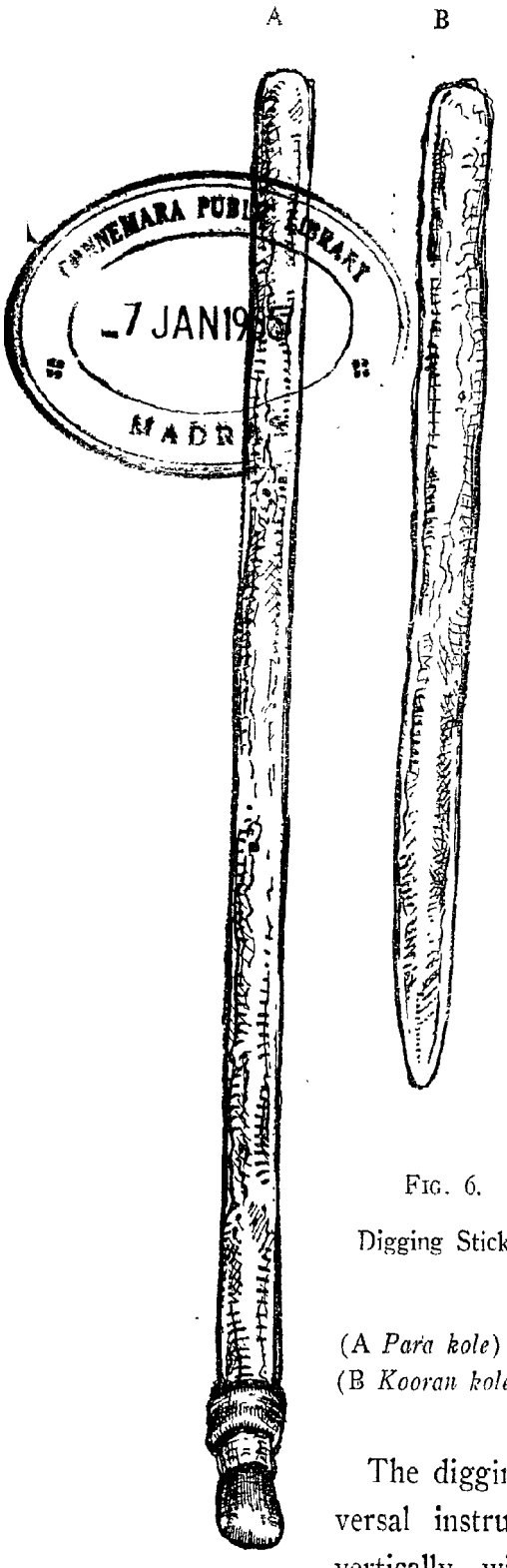

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FIG. 6.
Digging Sticks.
(A *Para kole*)
(B *Kooran kole*)

To find this particular memory of olden days is not without significance, showing, as it does, how direct or symbolic memories do go far back also among the Kadar. Yet there were certain implements alleged to have been in common use among the Kadar, according to previous observers, of which I could not get a sample; not even a description, or a mere reference. I mean bow and arrow, which seem to be completely out of use among grown-up Kadar, whilst boys shoot birds with pebbles from pellet-bows.[10] It is, however, not altogether impossible that the prohibition to hunt, introduced by the forest departments, left such fear in the minds of the Kadar that they dare not speak of a bow and arrow at all.

The digging stick is – or was – used as an universal instrument. For digging roots it is held vertically with both hands and brought down

[9] Chap. VII, sub: Tribal Traditions. [10] Chap. IV, p. 56.

heavily on the spot where edible roots are indicated by leaves or certain creepers. The digger himself, or herself, usually kneels down, instead of thrusting the stick with the greater force of the standing position. Kneeling, however, has the advantage that hands and fingers may be used off and on, so that fewer of the roots will be spoiled by the edge of the digging stick. Holes are usually dug as deep as one reaches down with a bent elbow. Sometimes one single hole yields a number of roots, sometimes almost none at all. The ground, dug out, is left as it is and the hole will gradually be filled in during the next monsoon rains.

The mostly collected edibles are (partly accord. Iyer, (1909), p. 22, partly accord. Smt. Nandini Nambisan) :

Kanikizhangu, a whitish root, (*not identified*).

Narukizhangu, a small, black root, (*Atalantia monophylla*).

Thalikizhangu, a whitish, small root, (*Corypha umbraculiphera*).

Channanakizhangu, a large reddish root, up to 2 feet long (*Pterocarpus sautalinus*).

Vettila kizhangu, a small, black root, the size and form of fingers (*Piper betel*), (*not identified*).

Chale kizhangu, a root not unlike Channanakizhangu (supra), (*not identified*).

Nootakizhangu, a root, somewhat similar to potatoes, (*Dioscoria tonneutosa,* or *pentaphylla?*).

Kuva Nuru (Arrow root) is powdered and then boiled and eaten (*Curcumma anguetifolia*).

All these edible roots go also under the generic term of *têtam* (pronounce ; *tätam,* or *têtam;* – a genuinely Kadan

word, not used by either Tamil or Malayalam speaking plainspeople.[11] *Têtam* are either boiled or roasted on fire, heated stones and smouldering ashes. For boiling, earthenware vessels manufactured in the plains, or aluminium and other saucepans are being used nowadays. At the occasion of honey-collecting,—and other jungle – expeditions, the old method of boiling can still be seen. A piece of bamboo, containing 2 to 3 joints with strong partition-fibres is cut and dug into the ground with the lower part only, whilst the uppermost chamber, containing the food to be boiled, projects above the ground. It is then covered by a thin layer of mud round which a strong fire is heaped and kept burning until the food will be boiled in the bamboo. In the case that the first partition wall of the uppermost chamber breaks, there is still a second or third one to keep the food from falling through.

Roasted roots are often mixed with similarly prepared fish, crabs or meat and, nowadays, sometimes fried in gingili oil and chillies.

Most of these roots (*têtam*) make a savoury meal which I preferred to the rather tasteless variety of *rice and curry*, obtainable in the forests, which is nothing like the delicious South Indian fare. The roots are both, tastier and more nourishing,[12] than rice diet without the essential vegetable – and other additions. Yet the Kadan of to-day will much prefer, rather than go for a few hours to the jungle to dig out a better and certainly cheaper meal, to run for miles and hang around a contractor's shop or a weekly market to obtain, at black market prices, his rations in dull boiled rice which is poor in taste as well as in vitamins.

I came to doubt whether the Kadar's tongue actually relishes his rice and chillies more than the natural diet. It sometimes seemed to me that the prestige value, rather, than

[11] Chap. XI, pp. 262, 267.
[12] Sankara Menon, (1931), p. 284.

the actual taste of rice makes it as popular among the Kadar as it is among other South Indians. Each and every plainsman laughs either in utter disgust or condescending pity at the mere sight of the "jungle roots", the traditional food of the Kadar. So they get self-conscious and loathe to eat *têtam;* social ambition, I suspect, far more than palatal preference, being the real motive for this change in diet. The contractor who, of course, supplies rice at high prices naturally encourages the view that rice should be taken in exchange for forest products. There is, moreover, a still further reason for the present dislike of collecting food from the jungle, namely, that whilst kneeling down and digging, the costly cotton-clothes, now worn by the Kadar, become saturated with mud, which it is difficult to remove even with soap. The use of soap has, consequently, become more popular for washing clothes than for personal hygiene. It is true that Kadar, men and women, will still take a good opportunity for a thorough bath, plunging into any stream they may come across during the heat of the day, though even this is done less frequently than before, because removing clothes is sometimes felt to be embarrassing at least in the presence of non-Kadar. The care taken to wash their clothes is often at the cost of the Kadar's own body. I saw a Kadan wash his *mundu,* European shirt and singlet (!) with a brand-new cake of perfumed toilet-soap for which he had to pay As. 6 already in 1947, in the contractor's shop, whilst the cheaper barsoap, not being recommended by the contractor, is scarcely used, even for washing clothes.

The hankering after rice, instead of collecting the daily food in the forest, brings yet another factor into the social structure of present Kadan life. Formerly women used to be 'bread-winners' just as much as were men. Women were probably even more regular in procuring the daily fare of jungle-roots, than men, for the latter often went off on hunting, – or honey-collecting expeditions. But now the

purchase of rice in far-away shops and canteens is entirely a man's job, women being too self-conscious to appear before non-aboriginal crowds where people would either stare at, if not actually molest them. So the men have become the more or less exclusive bread – or better, rice-winners in the family. Modern Kadan women of to-day consequently idle away their time not infrequently, in mere chatter, squatting in front of their houses, doing nothing and becoming lazy, weak and even moody; all things, unknown to their grandmothers, or even their sisters of to-day among the less "civilized" Kadan groups that still roam the jungle and subsist mainly on what they are procuring themselves instead of relying upon the contractor's.

The picture of the daily routine in olden times which I am trying to reconstruct here has constantly to be interrupted by the description of newly introduced customs, as well as by the explanation of the latter's root-causes. This procedure certainly disturbs the flow of the narrative. Yet, in attempting to give a picture of what may once have been a purely Kadan routine, I do not think that I should exclude from it what I consider to be mere additions of recent origin, because I may be wrong, in such assumptions as I may possibly be also in this case of the idling women, though it was Kadar themselves who drew my attention to the change of their women. I would therefore wish to enable the reader to check up my observations with my conclusions. What I consider to have been the daily routine of the original "uncivilized" Kadar is, after all, partly a matter of observation and partly of conjecture now. Moreover it is to be borne in mind that even this old routine was never rigidly adhered to; there were always variations in a Kadan's daily life and economic transactions.

Honeycomb collecting expeditions are an example of a genuinely Kadan variation in his daily routine.

Honey Collecting

Honey expeditions require much preparation and foresight. Honeycombs on high trees or rocks are being known and observed, until the time for collection comes, mostly during the dry season between March and May. Usually the actual collection of honey is being carried out during a dark night, especially if there are first night showers previous to the approaching monsoon. They help the honey-hunters as rain makes the bees drowsy. If the place is far away from the home of the collectors, a whole group of men, women and children often spend a night or two in a temporarily erected leaf-shelter near the tree or rock on which the honeycomb is to be captured. Several days, or even weeks before the operation of honey collecting begins, wooden pegs are driven into the massive stem of the tree on which a honeycomb has been spotted. This is done with the help of the heavy jungle-knife bought from markets in the plains. Bamboo poles are then tied with fibre to these pegs so that climbing up and down on the big stems becomes possible, even though the main branches of the trees, most favoured by wild bees, may be 60 to 100 feet above the ground. (See fig. 7 on p. 33.) Though it is by no means easy, and certainly far from comfortable, to climb on these single bamboo poles, fastened to the wooden pegs, on the branchless high stems – there is yet a certain security against falling down in the fact that each bamboo pole is fastened to a number of wooden nails, or pegs. Yet bad hurts, fractures of limbs and even deaths do occur at the occasion of tree, – or rock-climbing for honey. I saw a man, badly hurt after such a fall, being carried in a piece of cloth, tied to a single bamboo pole which was carried over the shoulders by two of his companions. They were making for Pollachi in the plains, but expressed doubts as to whether the hospital would admit the patient, their particular group being claimed for enforced labour by the Forest Administration, outside Cochin.

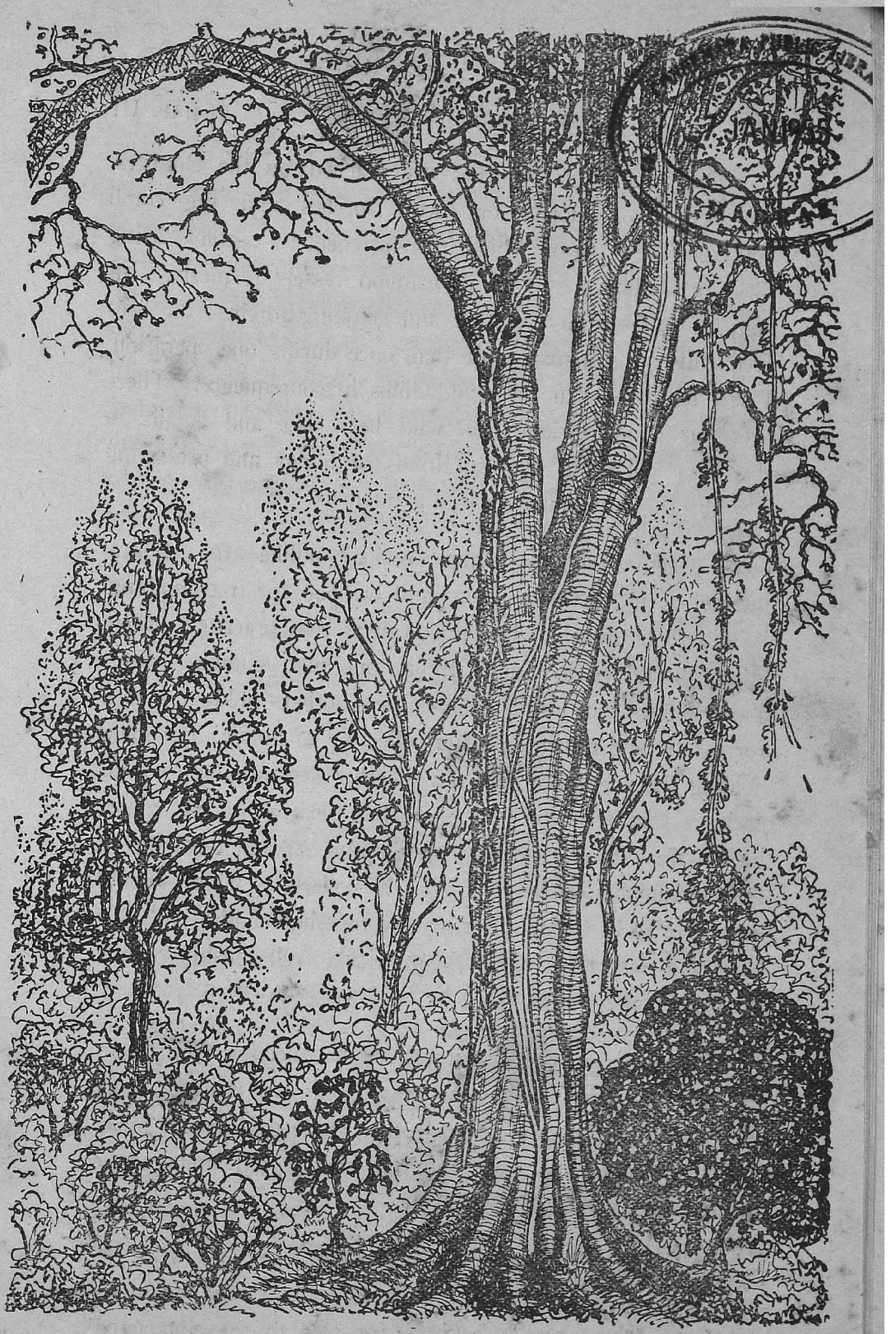


FIG. 7.
HONEY COLLECTING
from a tall tree in the Kadan way.

Once the high branches are reached by the climbers, the bees are smoked out with torches and the comb cut from the stem on which it is fastened, its contents being filled in tin-boxes now or in bamboo vessels formerly. Inspite of night, rainy weather and smoking torches, the bees frequently sting a man more than once during one operation. I saw badly swollen faces and limbs in consequence. There are two main varieties of wild bees, big and small, in this area, collecting different kinds of honey and protecting it with stings of equally varying intensity.

Collecting honey from rocks, unlike the typical method of using wooden pegs and bamboo for tree-climbing, is said to be done in the same way as that practised among other aborigines in South India, one man climbing down a precipitous rock, whilst one or more others holding a rope for safety, and returning, after collecting of honey. The man, holding the rope on which the collector descends, and climbs back, is said frequently to be a close relative of the collector's wife. The reason given for this arrangement being that, should he let the rope slip. the collector's widow would then have to be looked after, by the rope-holder himself. No hard and fast rules as to the particular relationship of the two men concerned is, however, said to be observed.

I had no occasion to witness honey-collecting from rocks myself, a Kadan family sometimes spending a week or more at the summit of precipitous rocks, waiting in camp for a sufficiently cool and rainy night which would prepare the ground for the attack on the bees.

All collected honey, whether from trees or rocks, is, and also appears always to have been, stored formerly for the Kadar's own use; now for sale to the contractor. This deserves, perhaps, to be stressed since storage of foodstuffs otherwise, or the laying by of provisions, other than that of honey, is simply inconceivable an idea to the Kadan's

mind. If there is food, – it will be eaten, until nothing is left. Sometimes quite astounding quantities of rice will thus be disposed of within a day or a day-and-a-half. I saw two *paras* (about 20 lb.) of rice, worth at the official rate of the contractor, Rs. 7-1-4 in the years 1947-48, but rarely available to the Kadar at that rate, consumed during one night and the following morning, by a group of 13 grown-up family-members, including four very old persons who could eat but little. I was told that this was rather a meagre feast. Saving or economizing are incomprehensible ideas to the Kadar, who have lived by collecting jungle products, which are always available whenever they cared to gather them in.

A more frequent distraction from the daily routine is the enjoyment of marital relations which takes place in the forest only and is entirely reserved for the light hours of the day.[13]

Fishing

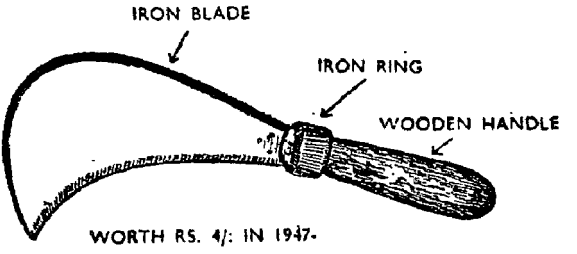
Other deviations are fishing expeditions in which groups of 10 to 20 persons of both sexes and all ages participate. Small dykes are erected, partly with bamboo, the universal raw-material of the Kadar, partly also with mud and leafy branches. The water thus accumulating is said sometimes to be poisoned with the powdered bark of a tree which I was unable to identify. At the fishing expeditions which I witnessed, fish were killed by beating with bamboo or with the jungle-knife which almost every Kadan owns nowadays, although they are bought from the plains.[14] Children are also clever in catching fish with their hands, especially in the enlarged ponds, surrounded by artificial dams.

Sometimes a group of Kadan dogs would spot a deer and hunt it down to a bend in a river where it cannot escape

[13] Comp. Chap. IX, p. 202.

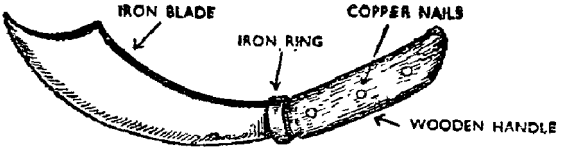
[14] Fig. 8, on p. 36.

but by swimming. It is in this slow movement that it falls a victim to the Kadan hunter, nowadays only armed with the ever present jungle knife (Fig. 8.) from the plains, or perhaps a heavy, iron-armed digging stick.



MADAVAL (Jungle Knife)
FIG. 8.

In all such cases fish or meat, thus acquired, will be roasted on heated stones and, occasionally, stewed or boiled, nowadays in vessels which have been purchased from the plains, or even manufactured by Kadan tinkers.[15] Provisions are not laid by, even if there be large quantities of fish or meat which are usually consumed within the following night and day.



KATARI (Hunting Knife)
FIG. 9.

Without such, by no means daily, interruptions of the routine, the collectors would have accumulated sufficient tubers, roots, occasional fruits, leaves or small game, including occasionally a tortoise or toad, to return to either the quasi permanent village of bamboo huts, or to a leaf-shelter camp in the forest, as the case may be. Firewood is then carried along with the edible spoil of the day and the fires

[15] Chap. V, p. 114/15.

lit in cheerful co-operation of all family-members. Roots may be powdered and washed and sometimes a bath taken if a river is near.

The late afternoon and early night of an ordinary day are spent in preparing and eating food round the fires which surround the Kadar's sleeping place, – whether permanent in their village, or temporary in the midst of the primeval forest. This is the hour of leisurely chatting, – often extended until midnight, and not rarely flaring up again, even later in the night when a dog has barked at the passing by of a tiger or an elephant. The verbose treatment of the most commonplace truisms of a Kadan's life, to be heard at such occasions, almost equals that to which one is accustomed on a long Indian train journey, when co-travellers will discuss in different degrees of excitement, the weather, the bad state of the compartment they are travelling in, and the latest political news. And if life is said to be but one great journey, to the Kadar it certainly is. The theme of their conversation is. of course, somewhat different from that of our companions in the train. It circles round beehives, ginger roots and deer, met with during the day, the low prices which the contractor offers for forest products and the pending "cases" of divorce, or of the usually occurring re-unions after divorce.[16]

All this is spiced with humorously good-natured comment, a lot of chuckling but rarely coarse laughter or quarrelling. But even if it does come to long drawn out, almost Homeric accusations, say of a wife against her husband for not having provided her with the paraphernalia of Western Civilization, or of a young cousin against an older one for having used the former's money for the purchase of arrack, of which the entire family has partaken, – even then it comes almost never to blows. However

[16] Chap. IX, p. 206.

much I put indirect and, finally even, direct questions which might lead to some story of murder, or only violent acts of revenge, I never heard of such a case. The reply was always: "Yes, we know that such a thing happens in Chalakudy or in Pollachi" – the two nearest and, among Kadar, most commonly known places, representative of city-life and of the plains – "but among us it does not occur".

The statements of forest– and police-officers, which I came across in this connection, go all to confirm the utter absence of crime, – and that even now, after more than 40 years of contact with civilization! Swindling and cheating is said to have been ".....unknown.....to the gentle and peace-loving Kadar...." of yore. But "their low country compatriots made them adepts in lying and cheating. Originally it was difficult to get the truth from a Kadan, not because he liked to prevaricate or hide. But because he was naturally shy and not in the least inclined to displease or offend, his answers depended on the way in which the questions were put to him...."[17] But now, wilful cheating is known and practised, though in a rather modest way, as compared to that of the 'civilized' teachers of the art, who frequent the forests, – so dangerously rich in valuable 'Minor Forest Produce'. But whatever the results of such small cheating and swindling may be it will not be used by the individual for his own personal benefit only, but will at once be bartered away for some rare commodity and – like any other individually acquired forest products – distributed among all the Kadar present; whether relatives or not. This rapidity of transaction and tribal communion are characteristic features in all economic operations of the Kadar, and should be borne in mind when one wonders why it is that the Kadar will not learn two things: (a) agriculture, and (b) any sort of saving, be it in provisions of cash or kind.

[17] Sankara Menon, (1931), p. 268, quoted by permission of the Census-Commissioner.

KADAN ECONOMICS

Obviously there could not have existed anything in the way of book-keeping, even in its most rudimentary form, among the Kadar of yore. Even now, when monetary transactions have become a matter of course, no Kadan will be able to account precisely for his income and expenses during any fixed period.

Yet – I tried to reconstruct an approximate picture of what may be taken as a year's finance of a rather prosperous ordinary Kadan family (husband and wife with two or three children).

The prices refer to the years of 1947/48 – a period of instability in the purchasing value of the rupee and consequently the estimations are liable to be still less accurate as they would have been otherwise. The purchasing value of the rupee may roughly be taken to have been at that time about one fourth of what it was in July 1939, although the Kadar got from the contractor nothing like four times the price of the collected products; but, very often had to pay much more than four times the price of 1939 for the goods which they require or, rather, are made to believe they do require. Since the time of writing this, the purchasing power of the rupee has again dropped and the following references, of "present" conditions, etc., have therefore to be taken as referring exclusively to the period of 1947-48.

It is assumed that a middle-aged couple with two or three children will nowadays earn a little over Rs. 400 *per annum*, in exchange for the 'Minor Forest Produce' which they sell to the contractor. He holds a monopoly and therefore can either dictate prices, or if interfered with by the authorities, demands direct exchange of forest products against his goods and refuse to accept money. It goes without saying that this barter will not be to the disadvantage of

the contractor. The following is an estimate of the main items of expenses of an average Kadan family in a period, approximatively covering one year.

YEARLY EXPENSES

(1) For rice:
(in addition to self-collected forest-food) Rs. 200

(2) For clothes:

(a) 3 dhoties for the husband .. Rs. 12

(b) 2 European shirts for the husband .. .. Rs. 10

(c) 2 *poduvai* (saries) for the wife .. .. .. Rs. 30

(d) 2 European blouses for the wife .. .. .. Rs. 8

(e) Several Fancy Scarves for husband and children .. Rs. 10

Total for clothes .. Rs. 70

(3) For salt, chillies, tobacco and *betel* leaves .. .. .. Rs. 30

(In exchange for these items higher values are often demanded by the contractor and given by the Kadar.)

(4) For cocoanut—and gingelly-oil .. .. Rs. 25

(5) For tea and *jaggery* (raw sugar) .. Rs. 80

(6) For "jewellery" .. .. .. Rs. 20

(So-called 'jewellery', newly introduced in the hills, consists of rings, bangles and ringlets of the cheapest available tin alloys and alluminium, produced at workshops in the plains and sold at the fantastic rate of As. 4 to As. 8 per price. These rings and bangles are neither shining nor ornamented and aesthetically inferior to copper or bronze.'

Sometimes pretty looking chains of red, dark blue or white beads are purchased at the rate of Rs. 2 or Rs. 2-8-0 per string, though they cannot cost the trader more than a couple of annas).

(7) For Arrack and opium .. .. Rs. 15

Expenses sum .. Rs. 440

The expenses are here enumerated in the order of the semi-official importance accorded to them by forest officials and contractors. Items (4), (5), (6) will in actual practice be often reduced to almost nil during a year's period, whilst on item (3), especially for tobacco and betel leaves, and still more on item (7), at the rate of Rs. 5 per bottle of arrack and on opium,—perhaps one fourth to a third of the total cash income of the family will be spent. Furthermore there is no margin for casual expenses, such as death, – marriage, – and puberty-ceremonies, for payment of vows to Hindu shrines and Christian mission-churches in the plains, for fees to quack doctors or for trips of male members to the plains,

In addition to these purchased commodities, theoretically all Kadar get annual 'free gifts' or 'presents' from the Government of Cochin and from the Government-appointed contractors. The latter give 2 or 3 bottles of arrack, valued at Rs. 10, and the Government used to distribute through their forest staff, in the presence of the Dewan, commodities worth some Rs. 2,000 to the tribe. The annual visit of the Dewan, or sometimes H. H. the Maharaja used to mark a great event in Kadan life, when "all members" or at least most of them assembled at a forest bungalow, to accept the royal gifts.[18] These consisted of one sari (*chela poduvai*) to each adult woman and one dhoti (*jaganathan*) to each man. In addition each one bottle of arrack, 12 oz. of gingelly, – or cocoanut-oil, tobacco and rice were given to each family and 4 betelnuts and leaves to each grown up Kadan present at the occasion.

The use of factory-soap, though not officially encouraged, as that of arrack, clothes, betel, – and tobacco-chewing, is growing more popular although natural soaps, collected in the forest, are available. We have seen that the lack of instruction as to which soap should be used for which purposes, causes unnecessary expenses to the Kadar who are naturally without experience in these matters.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

(a) *The Dog*

The question of domesticated animals, which plays such a complex rôle in the economy of many aborigines of India, is of rather simple nature in the case of the Kadar.

Kadar keep their dogs, – faithful companions in each and every excursion into the forest proper – each man, or at least each family-group, possessing at least one, sometimes

[18] Since my stay with the Kadar, Cochin- and Travancore States have been fused into one Union and the post of Dewan abolished.

two of these animals. Even nowadays, when rifles are being efficiently used by those Kadar who are in the service of the Forest Department, a Kadan will rarely go to the forest without his dog. The breed of the dogs, kept by the Kadar, does not seem to be zoologically different from the small, yellow-reddish *Pariah-dog* usually met with in the villages of the plains, though their appearance and behaviour do somewhat differ. But this, I think, is due rather to the difference in food and treatment, accorded to the dogs by their masters, to the different environment and lesser numbers of Kadan dogs than to any zoologically definable differences between them and the numerous half-starved village dogs in the plains. The Kadan's dog is usually much better fed, compared with the ordinary plains-dog, just as the Kadan himself is, if compared with his low country compatriot. Kadan dogs appear also to be cleaner and are at any rate better looked after than their all too numerous counterparts in the plains.

A Kadan dog has a dangerous job and is a brave animal, in spite of its small size. It has to be trained and fed and therefore is kept from multiplying indefinitely. Thus the behaviour of the Kadan dog differs from that of the plains. The Kadan dog does not, usually, indulge in the hysterical yapping, howling and barking of the pet dogs of the rich, nor does it fill the night with discordant noise if the neighbour comes home an hour later than usual, as the village-dogs of the poor in the plains are so particularly fond of doing. If the Kadan-dog barks it usually indicates either real danger or, at least, that something is wrong and the Kadar will consequently pay attention to the barking dogs what is not, generally, the case in the plains. To achieve all this, Kadar have to be strict with their dogs. They do not allow them to bark, or sniff, at each and every visitor, and if the dog does not behave, it will be tied to the hut or moderately punished. Dogs are, on the other hand, regularly fed with the Kadar's own food. This almost systematic treatment of

the animals is the more noteworthy as the Kadar do not seem to have kept any other domestic animals before they came in close contact with the plainspeople.

(b) *Fowl*

Chickens are now quite frequently kept, but they are rarely used for the Kadar's own "table", nor do they seem to have originally been part of Kadan religious ceremonies; both indicating recent introduction of fowl-keeping into Kadan economy. There is, however, still another reason for this assumption, namely that the Malai Malasar and the Muduvar, both aboriginal neighbours of the Kadar, though apparently more careful with, and even fond of, their chicken than are the Kadar, yet keep them only to sell eggs or chickens to contractors or other visitors from the plains. Fowl are not kept as mere pets either. If among their neighbours fowl-keeping appears to be a recent adaptation to the newly established contact with contractors and other peoples from the plains, it is likely to be so also in the case of the Kadar.

(c) *Cattle and goats*

Quite a recent innovation is cattle, – or goat-keeping to which a few Kadar have taken now. Small cows and bulls from the plains thrive in the hills where they always find fresh fodder; though they are of course liable to be carried away, occasionally, by tigers. Sometimes cows are being purchased from Pollachi, in the Coimbatore District, that is from the Tamil country. The milk is mainly sold to contractors or minor officials, not kept for home-consumption, and the cash income thus acquired is used for the purchase once more of arrack, opium and clothes.

ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

Concluding, it may be said that the Kadar, even to-day, are economically better off than most of their agricultural

countrymen in the plains, in spite of the great profits which are constantly being made out of their labour in collecting forest products. The main causes for this relatively bright picture of Kadan economics, as compared with peasants in the plains, are given below in the order suggesting their importance to the problem:

(1) the abundance of wealth in the forest,

(2) absence of over-population,

(3) ability to use many an item of natural wealth from the forest, without monetary transaction,

(4) lesser expenditures on ceremonies, religious vows and priestcraft,

(5) muscular strength, general health and power of resistance in both Kadan men and women,

(6) co-operation of women in everyday work with the men of the tribe for the well-being of family and community.

The moderately bright picture of Kadan economics would have been consistently brighter, had the contact with the plains, through the Forest Department, not been established. However, even this "bright" picture should not make us over-optimistic as to the future of the Kadar. We have to realize that all the above-mentioned six sources of their relative well-being are fast disappearing and will soon be a thing of the past, unless far-sighted planning alters the present course of events. We have therefore to keep in mind the following counterpart to the above list:

(1) The wealth of the forest decays from year to year by overstraining its resources and is likely to disappear, unless efficiently protected against deforestation, etc.

(2) Overpopulation will soon appear in the forests where more and more areas are being opened up for the immigration of plainspeople, cutting down the forest and installing

irrigation, electrification, – and colonization-schemes in the hills.

(3) The ability of the Kadar to use their natural resources, and also,

(4) The Kadar's comparative freedom from expenditures on religious ceremonies etc., are both being steadily weakened under the influence of "civilization", as it is presented to them; namely by interested contractors, coolies, servants of Government officials and others, coming from the plains, with the motive to earn money. All these representatives of "civilization" spread its most superficially outward aspects, such as ceremonies and "showing off" on the *potlach* pattern, among the hill-people whom they consider as "unfortunate", "poor", "primitive", "backward" and "degraded".

(5) The average Kadan's health, and,

(6) The former habit of a harmonious co-operation between the sexes in the economic process also tend to disappear, under the influence of this same caricature of civilization which is both misunderstood and misapplied in the green forests of the hills.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF KADAN MATERIAL CIVILIZATION

(a) *Food gathering*

THE economic process of the Kadar still is basically pre-agricultural food collection, even now. What little in the way of domestic animals is being kept, by the Kadar of to-day, is – apart from the dog – no doubt of quite recent introduction. I have not found agriculture of any kind, including shifting cultivation, practised, even among the acculturated groups of Cochin Kadar who have settled down, more or less permanently, round forest, – and timber-stations.

The Kadar were "food-gatherers" in the strict sense of the word until the beginning of the twentieth century when they have been induced to exchange foreign imported food (*i.e.* rice) against the products of their collecting activities.

Hence it is little surprising that the Kadar are lacking in foresight, or traditions providing for provisions, beyond the immediate requirements of the day.

Before the establishment of Government-concessioned "Minor Forest Produce Contractors", the exchange of Kadan-collected forest products against goods from the plains seems to have been confined to iron jungle knives, occasionally some pottery and perhaps salt which were bartered, especially against honey, by some particularly enterprising elderly Kadan men. To them, the descent into the foothills or still more the plains proper, for these transactions, meant quite a bold undertaking.[1]

[1] Chap. VII, p. 167. (Karia Muppan).

The establishment of barter centres in the hills, namely the stations of the Minor Forest Produce Contractor's agents, since the beginning of the twentieth century, resulted in the change from direct and exclusive food-gathering to collecting forest products partly for exchange. Among the exchanged goods rice takes an important place and has since substituted the original diet to a large extent; especially among those groups of Kadar who are living near the forests bungalows and agents-stations. These groups subsist during parts of the year, at least, mainly on this imported food, instead of directly consuming collected forest-material. Yet collecting forest products is also their means of subsistence; neither "food-production" through agriculture, nor cattle breeding or dairy-farming of any, but quite sporadic nature, by a few individuals being known.

The introduction of barter and the present trade-system through the contractor's stations considerably reduced the Kadar's originally half-nomadic habits to what may at first sight appear as almost sedentary life.[2]

The necessity to be near the agent's stations, for delivering the collected goods, as well as for obtaining rice rations and other goods from the plains which are now considered to be "necessities," induces a number of loose Kadan family-groups to live for parts, at least, of the year at the same place. During the seasons of collecting umbrella-sticks, cardamom and honey, which fetch attractive prices, the collection of edible roots is often neglected among such semi-sedentary groups and food then consists largely in rice, – at least during these seasons.

The work of collecting products in the forest, as well as the goods, or money, earned in that way, are shared by all the members of a family, although each such family consists

[2] Chap. V, p. 80, 81.

in a more or less floating population of "members" whose attachment to the group does not always correspond to proximity which could be expressed in kinship-terms.[3]

Individual ownership in commonly collected goods is scarcely acknowledged. But forest-products which have been collected singly, by one person only, entitles him, or her, generally to ownership of the goods, or money, exchanged for such forest products. In practice, however, such exchanged goods, or money, will again mostly be used by the whole family-group, as a free gift from the owner. But transgressions of such ownership-rights are frequent, and never considered as anything like theft but give at the utmost rise to long drawn-out disputes of not very serious character.[4]

The only traditional economic procedures which are executed systematically and with a view to future results were collecting honey and training of dogs, to which at present also the accumulation of umbrella-sticks and the keeping of fowl or occasionally a few cattle and goats may be added.

(b) *The Kadan House*

The original Kadan habit to set up temporary camps of wind-screens (Fig. 10.) or leaf-shelters persists; especially, whenever any promising area is being combed out for a particularly attractive forest product, especially honey. This was no doubt the original form of Kadan habitation to which occasional adaptations of rock-shelters were added.[5]

The present rectangular and gabled house of split bamboo walls and *oda*-leaf roofs seems to be an acculturation result, though it is not sure to have been introduced only after the arrival of Minor Forest Produce Contractors and personnel of the Forest Department. It is possible that split

[3] Chap. V, p. 106-107.
[4] Chap. V, p. 103.
[5] Chap. V, p. 122.

bamboo houses have already previously been erected by some Kadar who came in contact with low country agriculturists,

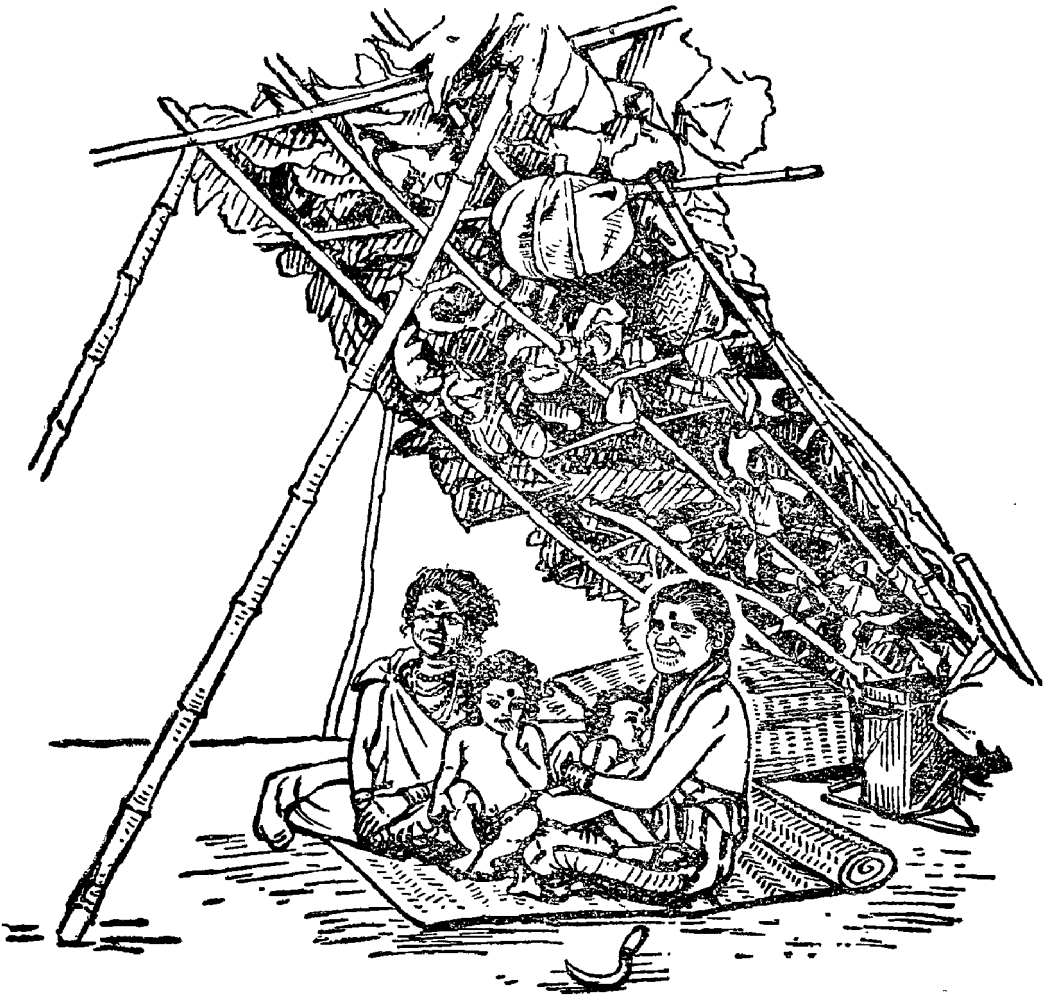


FIG. 10.

KADAN WIND SCREEN

(The legs, normally stretched, among Kadar, were quickly crossed, before this photo could be taken).

or at least with the now semi-aboriginal Malaiar of the foot-hills around, and east of Chalakudi,[6] among whom acculturation has set in, some hundred to hundred and fifty years, earlier than among the Kadar themselves.

[6] *See* map. on p. 7.

The tradition of the Kadar is silent on this subject. Their eminently un-historic mentality can hardly be expected to record the first erection of a rectangular low country house in the Kadan territory proper. Kadar of to-day do not feel that the rectangular split bamboo houses, which they are building, and the small almost "permanently" set up villages formed by these houses, should have been introduced into the tribe's life, from outside. Nor do they profess to know for certain that such rectangular split bamboo houses have been used by their ancestors since "times immemorial".

This indecision, regarding the "origin of things" among the Kadar, should not surprise anyone who, like myself, tried in vain to find one single visitor of Indian cinema-shows, depicting mythological themes, who would on his own accord pass any comment on a pre-Buddhist Indian warrior with the leather-boots and sabre of a French cavalry officer and the *achkan* of a modern North Indian, or who would take exception to the anachronism of an ancient Indian princess in European blouses and high-heeled fancy-sandals.

Earlier ethnographic literature is likewise silent on the question of the origin of the present Kadan house.

Taken in its general context and considering the necessity of more frequent changes of residence, before the barter of forest products against rice has been introduced, the comparatively recent introduction of the rectangular split bamboo house can hardly be doubted, even though it might have made its first appearance before the advent of contractors and forest officials among the Kadar.

(c) *Iron Tools*

The question of iron tools and, with it, of all that can much easier be fashioned from bamboo raw material with the help of iron knives, than without them, is an altogether different problem. Iron armour for digging sticks, flint and steel for producing fire and, especially, iron jungle knives

are an essential part not only of present day Kadan life, but were so, no doubt also long before the advent of contractor and forest official. Apart from an early introduction of iron, after the use of stone, to which we will find reference made in a Kadan tribal legend,[7] there is also historical memory of exchange of this kind among the plainspeople and last, but by no means least, the inner evidence of settled Kadan techniques in fashioning typical Kadan bamboo vessels;

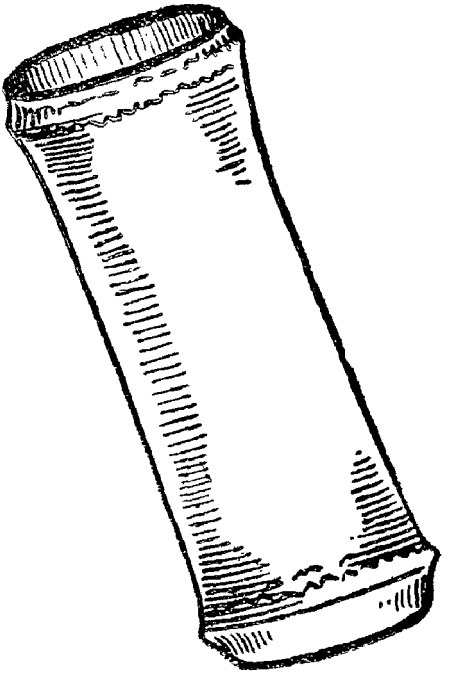


FIG. 11.
Bamboo Vessel
(Produced By Kadar Themselves)

(Fig. 11.) tools, and especially Kadan combs with the help of iron knives.

Iron, especially knives, thus appear to have been known to the Kadar of the last century, – perhaps even centuries–, though probably not as the almost indispensable thing which it has now come to be among most, though not all Kadar. I met one elderly Kadan, Va*zh*avan,[8] who lived for a long time

[7] Chap. VII, p. 175.
[8] Chap. V, p. 119, *seq.*

without any iron tool, having lost his one precious jungle-knife (Fig. 8 on p. 36) and not being able to purchase a new one for about Rs. 7. Yet, even without the help of an iron knife, he maintained a comparatively well furnished home and one dog. He collected honey and cardamom which he bartered occasionally against small quantities of salt, sugar, rice, tea and chillies and wore the unavoidable dirty cotton cloth, which even this strong-willed and independent-minded hermit was made to consider more respectable, at least when visiting others, than the cleaner, cheaper and more hygienic bark clothing of old Kadan tradition. He also made fire, every evening, though with the help of flint and steel. But Kadar do produce fire, even now, without using any iron, as will be described presently.

Kadar have now learned to heat, hammer and reshape iron tools or, at least in one case, to tinker vessels.[9] But Kadar neither manufacture tools themselves, nor have they any notion of smelting iron from ore.

Though it is therefore true to say that the Kadar live in an iron-age as consumers of iron goods and probably did so, some generations before the advent of contractor and forest officialdom, – it would yet be misleading to say that they take an active part in the production of iron goods beyond quite isolated cases, or even that they are entirely dependent on the possession of iron tools, especially knives, for the manufacture of essential bamboo instruments, which they use.

Stone-implements are not used now, though legendary memory records the use of stone-tipped digging sticks in by-gone days.[10]

(d) *Fire-making*

Flint, a small bit of steel and some dry tinder are the usual ingredients for fire-making among present-day Kadar,

[9] Chap. V, p. 114/15.
[10] Chap. VII, p. 175/76.

unless they actually use match-boxes which I found in their expert hands infinitely more useful than in mine, for whatever the merits or otherwise of matches, manufactured in the hot plains, – in the moist atmosphere of the Western Ghats they are definitely difficult to handle.

It is, however, also true to say the same of the *Fire saw,* – the genuine Kadan device for producing fire, which is still occasionally used by modern Kadar if neither of the two former fire-producing devices is at hand. The Kadan fire saw consists of a vaulted half-bamboo into which a small slit has been cut horizontally, along which a sharp-edged piece of dry wood is being moved rapidly in sawing-fashion. The tinder under the half-inclined piece of bamboo begins to smoulder soon after the first glowing sparks fall through the slit from the rapidly moved dry-wood "saw" and fire is then quickly produced by gently blowing on the smouldering tinder. (Fig. 12).

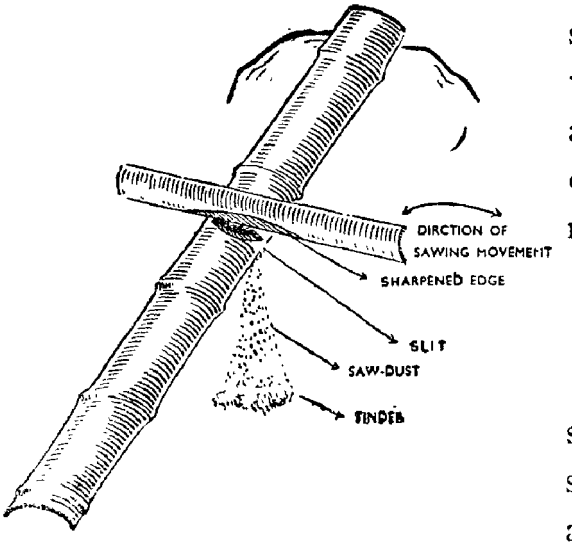


FIG. 12.
KADAN FIRE SAW.

This method of fire-sawing, no doubt, was the universally practised and only device of producing fire among Kadar, not long ago.

(e) *Digging Stick*

Two kinds of digging sticks are, as we have seen,[12] in common use among Kadar: the iron armed *kooram kole,* and the plain one: *para kole.* The length of the digging stick roughly corresponds to that of the owner, but frequently is longer, or shorter, especially if used by another

[12] Chap. III, p. 26, 27.

member of the family group. The iron edge of roughly trapezoid form is fitted into the lower end of the digging stick and held in place there with an iron ring. Size, shape and use of digging sticks – occasionally also as weapons to fight even such formidable an enemy, as the tiger – thus appear the same as elsewhere among aborigines, especially of South India. The limited space to our disposition, for the characterization of Kadan material civilization, does not, therefore, justify a detailed description of this typical and universally used basic tool of food-gatherers here. Attention should, however, be drawn to the legendary narrative, referred to above, in which the memory of a time is being preserved, when the ancestors of the present Kadar used no digging sticks at all, and then of another epoch, when they used, first un-armed, and later stone-tipped, digging sticks, until finally iron-clad diggers came into use.[13]

(f) *The Bow and Blowpipe*

Bow and arrow were generally believed to have been used by the Kadar and hearsay accounts among present day plainspeople in and around Chalakudi indeed support this statement.[14] I have, however, not come across one single bow in the hands of a grown-up Kadan, nor did I meet any Kadan who remembered its use in by-gone days. The double-stringed pellet bow, (Fig. 13) used by children or half-grown lads for shooting pebbles at small birds, may be a survival of the bow and arrow, said to have formerly been in use as a real weapon, but it is not viewed as such by the present day Kadar themselves. Asked about the bow and arrow, they invariably said never to have seen or heard of anything like that. It

[13] described in chap. VII, p. 175 *seq.*

[14] though it is quite possible that here one tribe is being mistaken for another as it happened in Malabar (Comp. Aiyappan: (1937), pp. 6, 8), where the case of the Ulladar is mentioned who used bow and arrow, comp. Mateer: (1883), p. 80, quoted by Aiyappan, (1937), p. 8).

never occurred to them to mention the toy-bows, in this connection, which were used by their own sons and nephews in our very presence and whilst we were discussing the subject.

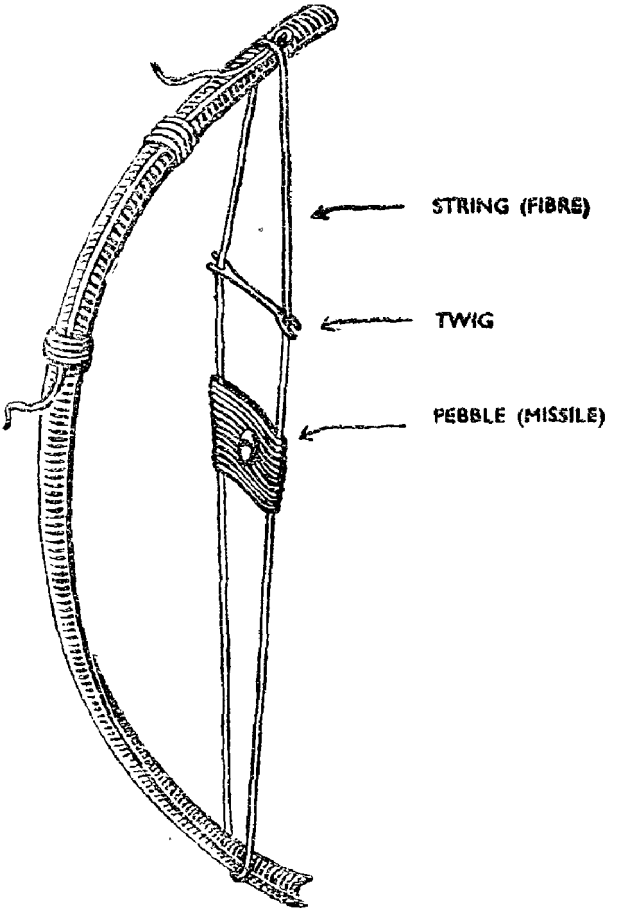


FIG. 13.
Double-stringed
PELLET BOW,
used by children (Comp.: pl. IV, facing p. 23).

A possible explanation for secrecy about the bow as a weapon for grown-ups might have been fear of Forest Officers who penalize the possession of arms by aborigines as a part of the official forest, – and big-game – protection policy elsewhere in India. This reason, however, for denying the possession of bow and arrow, or even the memory of it, is unlikely to hold good, in the case of the Cochin Kadar, for not only is the Forest Department of Cochin rather lenient

towards the Kadar generally who enable the Minor Forest Produce Contractor to make such good business, but the Department actually utilises the Kadar's help in trapping elephants[15] and assisting big-game hunters.[16] Those Kadar who were employed in the services of the Forest Department had as little compunction in using their fire arms against big game, even though I was present, as other Kadar showed any hesitation in killing deer with their jungle knives and digging sticks. It may finally be mentioned in this connection that elderly Kadar never tried to deny in my presence the former use of bark, – fibre, – and leaf-clothing although the amount of contempt and ridicule, shown at the mere mention of these garments, by all the "civilized" plainspeople whom I met in the hills, made the Kadar undoubtedly more self-conscious of this part of their culture-historic past, than of bow and arrow.

Though I succeeded in getting direct accounts of the so far not recorded *Kadan Creation Myth*,[17] I did not come across one single statement about the use of the bow and arrow, or even the bow and other missiles, by grown-up Kadar, even in the remotest past. It seems improbable that intentional secretiveness should be the reason for this denial of bow and arrow.

The same is true of the blowpipe, of which I found no traces.

The toy bow is made of bamboo in varying length, from 1½ to 3 feet adapted to the arm length of the producer. Two fibre-strings are fastened at one end, as shown in line-drawing Fig. 13, p. 56, with the end of the fibre tied round, whilst the other end of the bow is held in a loop of the string. The two strings hold a pad about one to two inches long, on which the pebble missile would be placed,

[15] Chap. V, p. 110 sub: Murugan.
[16] Chap. VII, p. 180.
[17] Ehrenfels-II. (1950/A), p. 167 *seq.*

whilst a twig of about the same length is inserted between the two strings so as to hold them apart, as shown in Fig. 13, p. 56. Boys playing with these bows carry five to ten handful of pebbles in a cloth-fold, hung over their shoulder and chest and shoot against inanimate targets and the numerous forest birds of which, however, they failed – much to my satisfaction – to hit any one in my presence, even though I spent hours with them at more than one occasion. It is, however, not quite so easy to shoot a pebble from the bow without hitting its inner side and thus getting the pebble thrown back in one's face, which is why I soon gave up the ambition to compete with my younger Kadan friends in hitting some branch, tree-hole or other inanimate target, with the toy bow missiles.

If it is still true to say that the Kadar, like other food-gatherers in tropical rain-forests, live in a "bamboo civilization", this must have been even more so, before pottery-ware came to be commonly introduced from the plains. Short bamboo vessels of about 4 to 10 inches were, and still are, used as containers for liquids, whilst longer ones, a foot or more, are mainly used for preserving honey which in that case will be closed with an upper lid of bee wax. I saw such long bamboo vessels used for transporting water, to which purpose the Wár-Khasi in the more tropical foothills of central Assam put these long bamboo vessels so dexterously.

(g) *Bamboo Vessels*

Ever since the introduction of iron jungle knives into Kadar economy, the production of handy and clean bamboo-vessels[18] has been an easy thing which, with the help of stone, – or hard-bamboo knives, might previously have been considerably more difficult. The introduction of costly imported pottery which is breakable, or of metal pots, which are not easily kept clean, can partly been explained as the result of

[18] Comp. Fig. 11, on p. 52.

changed diet that requires boiling, especially the now frequently used rice and tea,—unless here too the prestige value may play the important rôle which we suspected that it did in the case of rice, when replacing edible roots. This, I felt, was at any rate the case with regard to small pots, manufactured by one Kadan who has learned tinkering in the plains,[19] thus providing a cheap, if not very practical substitute for the old-fashioned bamboo vessels.

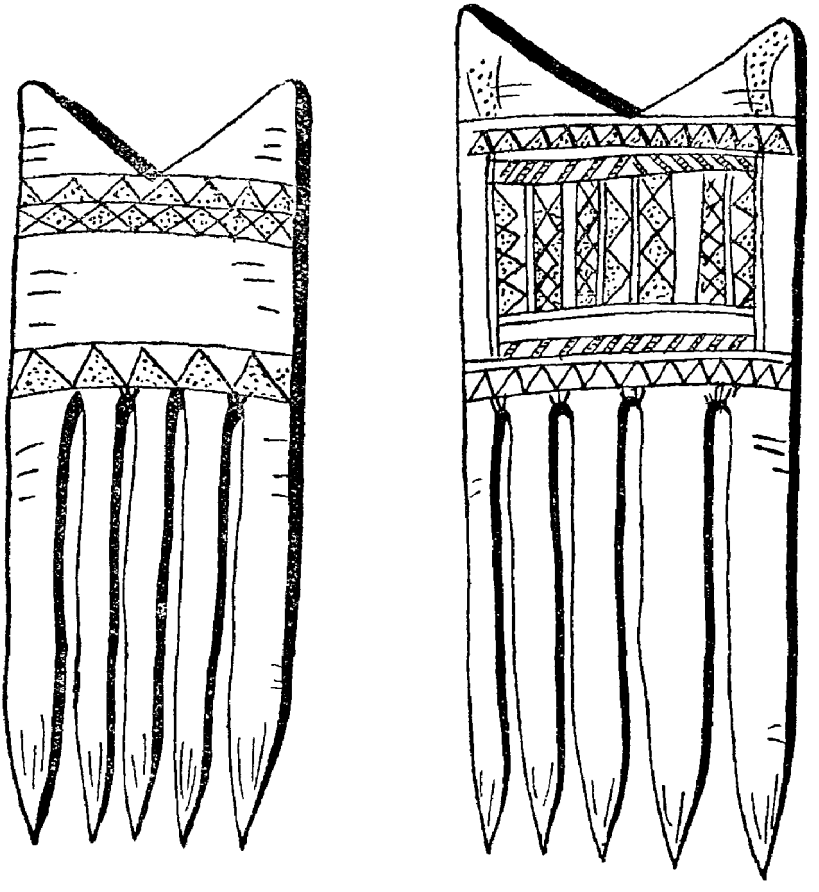


FIG. 14.
TWO KADAN COMBS.

(h) *Bamboo Combs*

The most outstandingly original and, at the same time, typical, product of the Kadan bamboo industry is the ornamented comb.

[19] Chap. V. *sub*: Govinda (VI/5), p. 114.

We have seen[20] that two types of combs are to be distinguished: the *chipu* of about 4 × 1 inches, commonly with five or more, up to nine teeth, and the bigger *chägar*, generally with fewer and larger teeth only, upto 8 x 1½ inches long. Both kinds of combs are, on the part protruding above the teeth, adorned with bands of ornaments, consisting in short lineal cuts, which form a sort of geometrical trellis pattern,[21] of which samples are reproduced in fig. No. 5 & 14 on p. 25 & 59. There are always some bands running parallel on the upper edge of the protruding part and at right angle to the teeth of the comb. Sometimes a rectangular pattern is inserted into the centre of the protruding part, between the upper and lower band-patterns. In some cases these rectangular patterns represent objects, such as stylised plants (Fig. 5/A, B, on p. 25).

Thurston drew already attention to the similarities of these Kadan combs, and their ornamental designs, with the combs of the "Negritos of Malacca",[22] thereby discussing Professor Preuss's[23] interpretation of them as magic writings.

I thought myself for some time, during my field-researches, that a possibly forgotten meaning of symbolic character may be enshrined in these ornamented line-bands. Their rhythmic beauty and the recurrence of stylistic and numerological elements in these patterns is no doubt suggestive of such an interpretation. At times I thought that the numbers 13, 11, 9 and 7 recur more often, in the patterns than other numbers. But close examination of more material and especially the seemingly haphazard way in which one, or even half a stylistic pattern-element is sometimes being added to a band of "trellis ornaments", increased my mounting doubts in the assumption that we are faced here with any

[20] Chap. III, p. 23-25.
[21] Ehrenfels, II: (1948), p. 10 *seq.*, (1949/A), pp. 103-109.
[22] Thurston, (1909), pp. 27, 29/III.
[23] Preuss, (1899), quoted by Thurston, *op. cit.*, 27/III.

hieroglyphic or magic signs, rather than merely aesthetic ornaments although it is no doubt feasible that the present comb-ornaments are survivals of magic, or even hieroglyphic meaning which has been forgotten.[24]

I did not come across any prohibition regarding the wearing of combs among Kadar, such as Evans mentions for Negrito women who "must not wear a comb at the birth of a child and during the seven subsequent days to protect it against epilepsy...not...during a thunderstorm, because this excites the wrath of Karei, and for seven days after a death occurs".[25] I did not hit upon any stories, relating a legendary origin of combs, such as Evans describes of the Negritos,[26] nor did I find that a Kadan man "should always make a comb and present it to his intended wife just before marriage or at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony" as Thurston tells us,[27] – probably mistaking tales on such habits for a Kadan custom, which I actually found in existence among the Muduvar, a matrilineal tribe of shifting cultivators, living in close neighbourhood and on friendly terms with the Kadar. Their combs are smaller, of another shape and ornamental pattern (Fig. 4 on p. 24), as those of the Kadar.

A significant difference between the use of Kadan comb-patterns and that of the Negritos of Malaya is that among the former these patterns are, so far as I could see, exclusively used for ornamenting combs, whilst the Negritos adorn also blowpipes with similar designs and say that if they "did not decorate the blowpipes game would only be struck and not killed".[28]

[24] Such a possibility would appear the more probable, since Zahan (1950) tells of such an early "alphabet" among people, generally classed "illiterate" though belonging to a culture-type, infinitely more specialised than that of the Kadar.

[25] Evans, (1937), p. 134 and 264, where he also quotes Schebesta (1927), pp. 235-236. By permission of Cambridge University Press.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 141, Foot note 6 and p. 149.

[27] Thurston, (1909), p. 28/III.

[28] Evans, (1937), p. 133. Quoted by permission of Cambridge University Press.

Kadar, so far I was able to ascertain, do not give either names or meaning to the band-patterns, whilst there are many of them described by Evans and others whom he quotes.[29]

The suggestion of similarity between the combs of the Negritos of Malaya and those of the Philippine Negritos, however, which he mentions there,[30] would appear to extend also to the Kadar of Cochin, so far as the passage shows which Evans quotes after Schebasta from a paper Read's.[31] The description of how the combs are manufactured there could be almost verbally applied to the Kadar of Cochin.

"A section of bamboo or mountain cane, varying in length from 5 to 10 inches, is split in thirds or quarters and one of these pieces forms the body of the comb. Teeth are cut at one end and the back is ornamented according to the taste of the maker by rude carving. This carving consists simply of a series of lines or cuts, following some regular design, into which dirt is rubbed to make it black."[32]

Evans also finds similarities of patterns, namely "rows of small plain diamonds (lozenges), such as are called padi grains by our (*i.e.* the Malaya) Negritos, and a similar pattern in which each diamond has a dot in the centre – 'cucumber seeds' according to our (*i.e.* Malaya) Negritos",[33] whilst the Kadar of Cochin prefer triangular band-patterns with also one or more dots, (fig. 14 on p. 59) but know the diamond pattern too as our fig. 5/D on p. 25 illustrates.

A comparison of these figures with Evans' photographs of Malay bamboo combs[34] will also show the general resemblance of the make and the patterns. The Kadan combs,

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 133, 134, 135, 136 (quoting Schebasta's reports (1928), which are not accessible to me now).

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 136, 137.

[31] quoting: Read, (1904).

[32] Read, (1904), after Evans, (1937), p. 137 who quotes Schebasta (1928).

[33] Evans, (1937), p. 137.

[34] *Ibid.*, facing p. 80.

however, differ in this from the Negrito combs, that the upper ornamented part of the comb is always cerbed with a triangular insertion (see fig. No. 3, 5, 14 on pp. 24, 25, 59) and also that rectangular or square ornaments are occasionally inserted between the upper band-patterns running along the upper edge of the protruding part and the lower one, above the upper end of the teeth. (See fig. No. 5, A-C, on p. 25). The triangular kerb may remotely recall the combs produced by Negritos "of parts of Kedah" which have "two little horns, somewhat incurved, above, one on either side",[35] though the Kadan comb has nothing of the "broader and narrower proportions" which are characteristic of this Kadan comb but, on the other hand, appears to be even more slender and longer than the average Negrito comb.

The square insertions in the Kadan comb patterns show stylised figures of flowers and other objects. I sometimes felt that they appear on the new and lesser worn combs more frequently than on older ones and may perhaps be an acculturation product, suggested to modern Kadan comb cutters, by printed pictures and photographs. There were, however, also such objects depicted, already at the beginning of this century, as Thurston's report of a Kadan comb "with a very good imitation of the face of a clock scratched on it"[36] proves.

Summarizing, it may be said that the technical and artistic elements of the Kadan bamboo combs are strikingly reminiscent of at least the major type of Malayan (and Philippine) Negrito combs, though the wedge-shaped incision on the upper end and the square ornamental pattern-insertions in the band-patterned part of the comb are peculiar to the Kadar of Cochin.

Magic or socio-religious conceptions, *taboos*, or other regulations do not seem – at least now – to be attached to the bamboo comb, by the Kadar, as they are by the Negritos of Malaya.

[35] Evans, (1937), p. 77.
[36] Thurston, (1909), p. 28/III.

CHAPTER V

FAMILY AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A Kadan Sample Village

The Kadan "Local Group".

WE have already had occasion to refer several times to the casual and migratory character in the life-programme of the average Kadan. There is good reason to believe that this was still more pronouncedly so in former days; just as the present innate inability to save or stock provisions, by which we have seen the Kadar to be characterized, is no doubt the outcome of the food-gathering system, so also has the Kadar's liking for wandering and change of habitation its roots in the formerly existing necessity for migration, though within a small given circle. This predilection makes any account of a "family" in a house, – or even a village – unit appear as rather illusionary an attempt. Yet, in order to acquire a more factual picture of the relations and movements within a given group – the "local group" of the Kadar – it will be useful to sketch a picture of a Kadan hamlet and of individual biographies of some more prominent among its inhabitants.

Sample "village" : Parambikulam

(A register of inhabitants, and abbreviations used therein and explanation how to use them.)

With a view to facilitate the insight into the mutual relations between the persons described, or merely mentioned, a short register of all "quasi-permanent" residents in the chosen sample "village": Parambikulam is given on figures 16 & 17 facing pp. 65 & 66. The persons, living in each one house, are grouped together under the heading of the name by which this particular house is known to the Kadar them-

selves. A Roman cipher is added to each of these house-names, corresponding with the same house's cipher on the plan (below) helping to locate it, and also to differentiate between different houses, which, by the Kadar, are known under the same name.

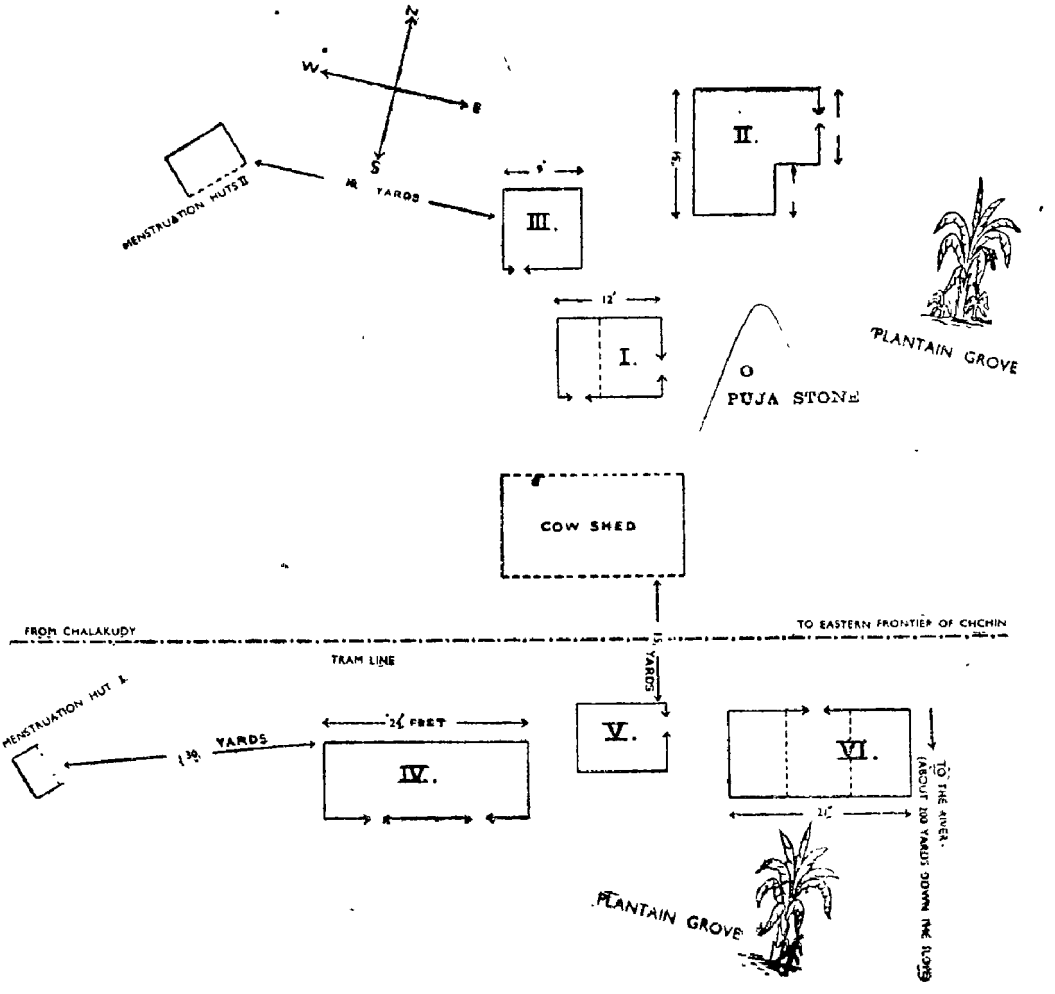


FIG. 15.
Plan of the Sample "Village" PARAMBIKULAM.
(Roman ciphers indicate the house and coincide with House Numbers, used in the text and the *Relationship Chart* Figs. 16 and 17, facing p. 65.

To the name of each individual two ciphers are added: firstly, the above-mentioned Roman cipher, indicating the house in which the individual usually lives; and secondly, an Arabic cipher, indicating the individual (whose name may

not be sufficient for identification), and also the place within this particular house, occupied by the individual concerned. As there do not exist any clear-cut ideas about "head of the family", ownership of the house by particular individuals, etc., I tried to follow as closely, as possible, the sequence of enumeration, as it was given by my Kadan friends themselves, listing the most important family members as No. 1, the next as No. 2 and so on. Yet it must be said that during this enumeration the Kadar were at least unconsciously influenced by the thought of who might be the most important person in the eyes of me, the non-Kadan, and that therefore not too much importance should be attached to the sequence in which the single inhabitants of a house are being enumerated. The Arabic cipher will further help to locate the individual in the Relationship Chart, facing the pages 65 and 66 respectively.[1]

Sex and approximate age of the person concerned, follow as next items in symbols.

Direct family relationship between inmates of the same house is shortly indicated, in the relationship chart, using abbreviations and the same identification ciphers for each person, mentioned also by proper names on the page, facing the plan of the village Parambikulam. Death, birth or leaving

[1] If, for instance, the reader comes across a person, called Karappi (I/3), in the following biographical sketches, or elsewhere in this book, and wishes to locate the position of that person in Parambikulam, the Roman cipher (I) will first have to be looked up in the plan on p. 65, as well as in the register facing it. This Roman cipher, it will there be found, stands for the house (Kochukura/A) in which the person lives. Then the reader will refer to the Arabic cipher (3) which refers to the position of the person within this house, in the register, facing the plan of Parambikulam village. There it will then be found that the ciphers I/3 indicate Karappi, who is a woman (♀), about 30 years old and a sister of Velakkal (I/2). In order to find out what Velakkal's relationship with other inmates of House I is, it will again be necessary to refer to the register and the plan of Parambikulam, to locate her in the same house, as the person, enumerated on the second place in the same House No. I, and that she is the wife of Tambi (I/1) again in the same House I. Thus it will not be necessary for the reader to memorize the complex relations between the various individuals, and yet it will be possible to locate them with the help of these reference ciphers in the register and on the plan facing it, whenever such location is desired for the insight into the relationships between the persons mentioned in the following text.

the settlement "for good" is indicated with month and year in Roman–, and Arabic ciphers, if within the period 1947-48.

Since relationship is very complex the two ciphers, indicating house, and position in the house, of each individual, is always added in brackets, whenever an individual is mentioned in the following biographies so that the reader can always refer to the Relationship Chart, (facing pp. 65 and 66), whenever in doubt about the identity of any particular individual mentioned, or about his or her position within the village or within the house, he or she lives in. No such double ciphers in brackets are being added to names of persons who are *not* considered to be "permanent residents" of Parambikulam. We shall see later that the qualification of a person as "permanent resident" is rather arbitrary, as the very idea of any permanency in a person's life habits is alien to the true Kadan, even of to-day. Red and black lines point to matrilineal and patrilineal connections respectively.

For the purpose of this description the Kadan village of Parambikulam has been chosen, mainly because there are various different Kadan types represented among its inhabitants.

The position in right angles to each other, of the six bamboo-houses (instead of in a circle, round an open space), as well as the existence of a cow-shed there, however, must not be taken as typical of a genuine Kadan village. Both, the rectangular, instead of circular plan of the hamlet, as also the acquisition of cows and bulls by household No. 1 is no doubt the result of culture-contact, in which the employees of forest,– and tramline,– administration or coolies, brought with them, played the main rôle. The stone, set up for a religious ceremony, which figures on the west of house I, in the village-map, was similarly introduced by a Parayan cooly recently, as described in the biographical sketch of Velakkal (I/2) on p. 77.

Yet, in spite of these modernisms in the distributional and architectural aspect of the hamlet of Parambikulam, its inhabitants give a fairly typical cross-section of present-day Kadan life, including also some of their individual histories.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

HOUSEHOLD NO. I. (KOCHUKURA, A.)

TAMBI (I/1)[2]

(v. Plate No. III, VII/a facing pp. 17, 81.)

would, in outward appearance, have passed unnoticed as an ordinary Tamil speaking plainsperson, though of the short type. He was a muscular, strongly-built man, typically well-proportioned, as most Kadar are in spite of their smallness. It is these harmonious proportions which prevent them from looking in any way dwarfish, though his arms may have been somewhat longer, in porportion to the trunk, than it is generally the case in the non-Kadar plains to the east of the Western Ghats. The not too biggish head was kept alertly turning by a flexible and not too short neck. The lower part of his face was small, almost underdeveloped and pointed by a narrow perhaps slightly infantile chin; his nose was broad and flat but not heavy. These two features, typical of Kadan physiognomy, went with a thinnish grey moustache and a thinnish beard on the chin, which latter, however, is periodically shaven in the case of Tambi. There were no body-hair on chest or back. The mouth was perhaps slightly larger but the lips scarcely fuller than among neighbouring plainspeople. Tambi's incisor teeth, like those of most Kadar, after reaching puberty, except among the latest generation, were chipped into the shape of pointed cones. Tambi, of course, has gone

[2] The Roman cipher in brackets refers to the house, the Arabic one, to the individual, listed in the Relationship-chart (Register of inhabitants Fig. 16, 17, facing pp. 65 and 66) and the corresponding houses, noted on the plan of the Parambikulam hamlet, (*Fig. 15 on p. 65*).

through the traditional operation of pointing the incisor teeth in his youth (v. below). His features, with the exception of his straight hair, might have been taken as slightly Negritoid, rather, than as Proto-Australoid. But contrary to the curly to frizzly hair of most Kadar, Tambi's was straight. Tambi was also fond of getting it cropped and trimmed in English fashion, during occasional visits to the plains, so that it lay flatly on his skull, instead of forming a natural 'solar hat' in genuine Kadan style. Tambi's intelligent eyes were roundish and frequently opened to the point of showing the entire of the iris, encircled by the somewhat reddish white without touching the frame of the eye-lashes. In spite of this habit which I noticed among many Kadar and which, according to traditional Hindu art-symbolism, is supposed to express ferocity or dread, – these eyes of Tambi's were expressive of an ever-present attentiveness and, at the same time, of a good-natured quietness, which appeared as far from aggressiveness as from dread or fear. Quietness and fearlessness indeed would seem to be the dominant characteristics in most Kadar. These and the clever consideration, when explaining some detail of jungle-life which he thought would interest his foreign companion, were specific qualities of Tambi. His skin colour was a particular chocolate tint, – rarely met in the plains. Measurements of physical features, however, have not been taken, during my field researches among the Kadar.

According to Tambi's own notion he was born 55 years ago in the same settlement of Parambikulam, where he continued to live, though I should have thought him to be scarcely fifty, in spite of his greyish hair.

There were no near relatives (apart from his own family) in the village now. He, having been the youngest of three brothers, had merely Vanandan his eldest brother in Tunakadavu, a near-by village, now that father and mother, as well as his direct paternal cousin Cherakutty have died.

The latter's widow Papati (I/8), was living in his house, during my field-researches.

Tambi, like most Kadar who were born before the beginning of this century, still remembered the days of original Kadan economy and Kadan daily routine. Once we came across human excrements, on a lonely jungle path which, he thought, were that of a plainsman though he could not be quite sure any more since nowadays also Kadar eat rice. The incident reminded him of his childhood when, as he well remembered, his father had one day come across human excrements, indicative of rice diet, and thus concluded that a man from the plains must have come up to the hills. This piece of news spread consternation among his parents' family and its neighbours who left the particular area of the hills immediately, to come back only after the lapse of several days.

Food, in Tambi's early childhood days, consisted exclusively of collected forest products, but was rather abruptly changed when the tramline for timber transport was erected later and Kadar of the younger generation began to work there and also to sell forest products against cash payment.

The first important event in his life, which Tambi considered worth recording, was his marriage with Angay which took place in his 16th year and was celebrated with a feast on which the parents of both parties are said to have spent Rs. 100 (?) – a huge sum in those days, some time before the first world-war! The girl was the daughter of what Tambi called an *annan*, – a classificatory elder 'brother' (cousin) – of his father. The term may in this case, however, signify only a somewhat related friend of his father, as I came to believe when I found that Tambi was unable to recollect the relationship between his father and this his first father-in-law. Yet Tambi's first wife is unanimously stated to have been a

close relative on his father's side, contrary to what Ananthakrishna Iyer said to this point.[3] The marriage was not a happy one and Angay is reported, by other Kadar, to have been "sent away by Tambi, on account of her bad character." We shall see later that there is reason to believe here, – as in so many other cases – it was rather Angay, the Kadan woman, than Tambi the man, who terminated the marriage. But Kadan men are on this score ridiculed by plainsmen and therefore sometimes averse to admitting the real facts. In this case, at any rate, Angay returned to her parental group, settling near Kuryarkutty Forest station, and there married a Kadan, named Perumal. There were no children from Tambi's first marriage.

At the age of about twenty, that was sometime at the beginning of the first world war, Tambi was appointed forest watcher and later advanced as one of the first Kadan forest guards in Cochin, drawing now (1948) a salary of Rs. 43, including dearness allowance. He thinks that this was due to his punctuality, attentiveness, rafraining from ever telling lies and also to his ability to cast magic spells over elephant-traps, thus inducing the elephants to fall into them.

At about twenty-three years of age (probably in the year 1915) Tambi married Karappay as his second wife. She was a girl of sixteen from Tunakadavu near Chungam. On this occasion a sum of Rs. 50 is said to have been spent for the marriage ceremony. Just a month later the girl died of pneumonia.

After the lapse of about twelve months, when he was over 24 years of age, Tambi married for the third time a Kadan girl named Machammal. She was about 18, the daughter of his paternal aunt. He says that he loved her most of all his four consecutive wives. She gave birth to two daughters, Kartiyayani (I/4) and Nallatangal (I/5),

[3] Iyer (1909), pp. 4, 5/I.

but died, some ten years ago, "when Nallatangal was only six years old". Tambi says that the cause of her death was "pains in the stomach" – probably dysentery. He seemed still to grieve, though in a quiet and unassuming way, when re-telling the story of his lost happiness. It throws some light on the structure of the Kadan family that Tambi, in the beginning of 1947, when I took the first census of Parambikulam village, declared that he had two unmarried daughters living in his house, Kartiyayani (I/4) and Nallatangal (I/5), daughters of his late third wife. Obviously he considered them full-fledged and – as we would say – "permanent" members in his household, just as any not-yet-married daughters in their father's house would be. When, at the end of May 1947, I checked up the collected data, I found that the two girls were now living quite happily in the same house of their father;—but along with Kunjunni and Shavary (alias: "Ramapillai"), their respective husbands. On my astonished question how the marriage-ceremonies could have been celebrated without my knowing it, I was told that the sisters had been married to these boys for about three years but had returned to their father's house – much to the displeasure of his present fourth wife Velakkal (I/2). In the beginning of the year, when the girls returned, they had been determined to divorce their respective husbands and not to go back to them and their respective villages,—hence they had then been described to me as "unmarried". Afterwards the boys had come with presents and the girls changed their minds and were therefore now to be considered as married. The question of shifting patrilocally to the boys' families and their respective settlements was pending. Meanwhile the husbands lived uxorilocally in the girls' parental home, to which nobody took exception, except Velakkal (I/2), the stepmother of the girls, – and this also not openly.

During the lethal illness of Machammal, the late mother of the two girls, Tambi tried his best to save her life by

running from one quack doctor in the plains to another, miles away, and spending "at least Rs. 20 to get the proper medicine". Meanwhile the woman was left alone at home with her two little daughters and finally died – "in spite of all the good medicines".....Tambi's funds having been exhausted in that way, for the time being, he was only able to perform the cheap first death ceremony and had to wait for the second[4] until the next year, when he spent Rs. 50 for the ceremony and feast connected with it.

About a year after Machammal's death, when he was approximatively 43, Tambi married his present fourth wife, Velakkal (I/2) (*infra*).

One night, during my presence in Parambikulam, the not unusual nocturnal Kadan-chatter reached such a pitch that I suspected it to be indicative of some difference of opinion. I had many a time before been mistaken in this respect, finding that what I was taking for deadly fighting between enemies was simply an amicable, though spirited conversation between good friends – but in this case, at least, my interpretation of the musical value in the tones and voices was correct, for I found Velakkal sitting on the threshold of Household VI (Vettioren B) (v. below), instead of on her and Tambi's own, pouring forth an unbroken stream of abuse which came so rapidly from her unpleasantly distorted mouth that one might have been tempted to believe it a chant, learnt by heart and recited. The fact was that Tambi had brought a European blouse for his elder, and a piece of "jewellery" for his younger, daughter by his late third wife, – whereas only a red chain for little Matha ("Randa") (I/6), his daughter by the offended fourth wife Velakkal (I/2). Tambi listened quietly for about an hour after my arrival on the scene, sometimes remarking to the collected inhabitants of the "village"

[4] v. Chap. VII, p. 169.

that the accusations hurled against him were not true. No, he had no affair with Vellitaval (III/5), the widow of his younger cousin, who had previously stayed in his house, nor did he visit a certain other widow in a far-off village on the other side of the Cochin border. Finally he suggested rather politely that it was time to go to sleep, what we all did, when Velakkal decided to stay with her friends in Household VI (Vettioren B). The next day she disappeared, leaving word that she was going to divorce Tambi for good, apparently because of his alleged infidelity, but actually because his two grown-up daughters seemed to have decided to settle down for good in her father's house, along with their re-married husbands, what their stepmother resented, though it would not have been nice for her to say so. Anyway, after a week Velakkal had returned to Tambi, in spite of his still present daughters and sons-in-law.

On this occasion there was some show of public opinion against Tambi; especially in Household VI (Vettioren B). But these attempts at Tambi's popularity met with opposition on the part of other households. However, neither on this, nor on any other occasion could Tambi's position in the village be considered as that of an acknowledged chief or "headman". It might have appeared to be so, on the surface, but it definitely was not in his true position. There was no such thing as a *muppan* ("headman") among the Kadar before they came under the direct control of the forest—and state-authorities. It was only then that an attempt was made to create a system of headmanship among them. L. K. Anantha Krishna Iyer, in his book *Hill Tribes* writes in 1906 that *muppans* were "appointed by His Highness the Raja. The *muppan* is given a stick, one end of which is lined with silver. It represents the symbol of his authority. He presides at the marriage, – funeral, – and

other ceremonies and decides all caste disputes and visits all delinquents with corporal punishment, whenever necessary."[5]

This recently-introduced system of headmanship was meant to create a sort of authoritarian village administration, but it has been so much in contradiction to all that Kadan traditions meant, that it had not lasted for a second generation, – in spite of the general eagerness of the Kadar to adopt all that is being introduced from the plains and which they are made to consider as 'civilized'. It seems remarkable that they should have thus tacitly rejected this particular innovation of headmanship with its idea of corporal punishment; – unheard off among original, free Kadar! But so it was and Tambi's authority is merely based on a freely-formed consensus of opinion; he might have lost it, after that eventful night, without any ceremony or outward demonstration, had the majority of his co-villagers considered that he had treated his wife unjustly. This not being the case, the nightly scenes were soon forgotten and the 'divorced' wife returned after a week to 're-marry' her husband Tambi and to reconcile herself with the presence of her two equally re-married step-daughters and their two young husbands. This episode can be considered as quite characteristic of Kadan conceptions of both "headmanship" and marriage (including divorce and re-marriage).

Tambi's outward appearance, as far as dress is concerned, reminded me a little of those film-heroes whom we see in different fantastic costumes every time the scene changes. At home I met Tambi in a short loin-cloth, practical, light, and not unlike in shape to the original Kadan bark-clothes.[6] This dress was also adopted if we crossed thick jungles for long hours and if there was little likelihood of meeting "civilized" people. When going out of his house

[5] Iyer (1906), p. 3 *sub* Kadar.

[6] v. photo Pl. V/b.

and showing himself in the village, however, Tambi usually puts on a white *mundu,* a straight piece of cloth from waist to heels wrapped round them, just as Nayar, Brahmins and others do in the plains, who claim "social respectability". His short and muscular stature does not suit this rather ceremonious garb, yet he also does not look actually strange in it. But when Tambi goes to those parts of the jungle where forest officials and other outsiders might be encountered, he puts on a singlet which not only causes him to perspire profusely, but also gives him the look of a rather down-at-the-heels waiter in a poorly kept coffee-house. If, however, any minor official, minor though he be, was about the village, Tambi could be seen in Kakhi shorts double width, and a heavy Manchester shirt!

VELAKKAL (I/2),

a woman of about 40 and Tambi's (I/1) present (fourth) wife. She was first married at the age of 15 to a man called Kanniappan and had one daughter, Paratalachi, by him, who is now said to be 24 years old. This daughter was married off by Tambi to one Chinnavan (*alias*: Kurkas), a son of Tambi's younger paternal uncle. It was said that normally the girl's marriage arrangements should have been made by the mother's brother, since she had no father. As, however, there was also no maternal uncle alive Tambi, her stepfather, acted instead. The marriage seems to have taken place shortly after the death of Kanniappan, Velakkal's first husband (the girl's father), some 12 years previously.

In spite of her worldly possessions (v. register, *infra*), which are numerous according to Kadan standards, and in spite of the important position which Velakkal enjoys in the village as Tambi's wife, she appeared most of the time sulky, with a disgruntled, sceptical expression on her face, as though life had been particularly unkind to her. This being quite

an uncommon feature among Kadan women, I attempted to find out its root cause and thus came to know that, some two or three years ago, Velakkal had suffered from obsessions, caused by a *pisasu* (evil spirit). She then used to shut herself up in the house, shake and moan and make the whole family miserable. One day a Parayan cooly, employed in the Forest Service, appeared in Parambikulam and advised Tambi to set up an unhewn stone and to light a small oil-and-wick-lamp on it, every Friday evening, accompanied by a plantain or two as gift to the spirit. Tambi took the advice and Velakkal's fits abated, though she does not seem to have become any more sweet-tempered through the process. Since then the stone[8] is being honoured every Friday. The ceremony is generally performed by Velakkal's daughter Matha (I/6), (*infra*).

In her present (second) marriage Velakkal gave birth to this daughter, little Matha (I/6), or Randa, as she is called on account of her two thumbs of which her parents are proud as an auspicious sign. She is much loved by her father Tambi (I/1), who one day explained that he likes this youngest of his daughters best, among all family-members, "because she is the smallest". Velakkal's complaint that her daughter was neglected, as compared to her grown-up step-daughters, does not seem justified.

KARAPPI (I/3),

the youngest sister of Velakkal (I/2), may in 1947/48 have been some 28 to 30 years old and consequently must have been about 14 to 18 when Velakkal married Tambi (I/1). At that time Karappi joined the newly established household of her sister Velakkal and her husband Tambi and lived there, (possibly as Tambi's co-wife?). Later she was married, and lived, with a *mahout* (elephant-driver), called Chatta, a cousin

[8] See plan of Parambikulam, house No. I on Fig. 15 (p. 65).

of Tambi (I/1) and the brother of Chinnavan who had previously been married to Paratalachi, Velakkal's (I/2) daughter by the first marriage. Her husband Chatta was thus Karappi's direct niece's husband's brother. That Chatta used to work at Kuryarkutty, where the young couple lived, and served on the same timber-pulling elephant as Manikan, a Kanakkan by caste, (from the plains) who began to court Karappi. Chatta, her husband, disliked the state of affairs, it seems, less because he was jealous, as for other reasons which I will discuss later.[8-a] He quarrelled frequently until Karappi finally returned from Kuryarkutty, with her lover, to her sister Velakkal's (I/2) and Tambi's (I/1) house in Parambikulam where she was living in 1947-48. Manikan, her low-country lover, was living with her but was not considered to be a permanent member of the household, because he was not a Kadan. This fact also, – not the changing of husbands, as such, – aroused some unfriendly comments about the couple, on the part of their neighbours. Karappi was rather shy and led a more or less secluded life. Her lover from the plains deserted her not long before she gave birth to a little girl, and she herself died after child-birth in 1948. The baby was then looked after by her maternal aunt Velakkal (I/2).

Each in her own way, neither sister can be considered typical as to material possessions. The list of household articles (v. *infra*) and domestic animals in Household I (Kochukura, A) shows that Velakkal (I/2) developed a sense of economy, saving and possessiveness which are certainly not characteristic virtues in an ordinary Kadan woman. But as much as she seems interested in material possessions, so her younger sister is, apparently, completely indifferent to them. Few of the Kadan huts which I have visited contained so little by way of furniture, tools or other household comforts as the enclosure inhabited by Karappi (I/3) and her low-country husband Manikan whom, being a non-Kadan,

[8-a] Chap. VI, p. 140.

it would perhaps be more appropriate to style as her lover. There were two earthenware pots, one tin-plate and three tough sarees,—apart from a neglected fireplace—in the enclosure. This extreme simplicity may again be due in part to the peculiar relationship by which Karappi was half family-member in her older sister's household, where she spent part of her time, and again partly divorced from it through her misalliance.

In one respect the two sisters seemed to be alike; they were almost invariably seen in blouses of European style, long petticoats and tough sarees which they were very eager to drape in such a way that not even the smallest part of undergarment (not to speak of the body!) could be seen. That this behaviour was an acquired one, not normal to the average Kadan when among her own people at home, became evident to me when once I called at Tambi's unexpectedly. His spacious bamboo-house was filled with visitors of both sexes and I did not hesitate to respond to his friendly welcome and enter the hut. The two sisters, like the other women present, had the well-built upper part of their body bare, all the time, without the slightest false shame. But no sooner did they realize my presence, however, then they seized all the bundles of cloths within reach and, clutching them to their bosoms, hurriedly left the hut to seek shelter with the neighbouring Household II (Kochukura B) (v. plan, p. 65). Being newly arrived among the Kadar, I felt very bashful for my apparent breach of etiquette and lack of tact but the numerous men present, including Tambi himself, seemed not to take the slightest notice of the sudden female exodus. It was much later that I came to know how the idea has been spread amongst the more 'civilized' of the Kadan women, namely, the idea that they must on no account remain under the same

roof with a man from the plains, nor allow themselves to be seen, as they are when among Kadar only.[9]

KARTIYAYANI (I/4) (v. Plate No. VI/a, facing photo, p. 80), said to be 23 years, looks like 18 although she is of somewhat heavier build than her father Tambi (I/1). She married at the age of 13 a boy, Kunjunni, who had been 16 then and was staying with his father at Parambikulam, after his mother's death in a flood. Later his father married a Kadan woman from Kuryarkutti and therefore the whole family, including Kartiyayani, migrated to that place. Sometime after the young couple went further west, to Komolapara, where Kunjunni, the husband, had been employed as a cooly. In 1945 Kartiyayani became pregnant and therefore returned to her father Tambi's (I/1) place at Parambikulam, whilst her husband Kunjunni continued work at Komolapara. On the occasion of one of his frequent visits to Parambikulam Kunjunni saw Kartiyayani standing on the verandah of a gang-mate, employed there in the service of the Timber Transport Tramline. Kunjunni became jealous and returned to Komolapara after a quarrel. Kartiyayani delivered a little girl who, however, died six months later at Thunakadavu (Coimbatore Dt.) where mother and child lived with relatives. Kartiyayani's divorced husband Kunjunni did not even attend the funeral ceremonies and is said to have become "somewhat mad and mischievous". After the death of his little daughter, Kunjunni grew worse and some plainspeople advised him to offer a silver statuette to the church at Kanakamala near Chalakudy. This was in January 1947, after which his condition is said to have improved. When, on the occasion of the second death-ceremony of an old woman, many Kadar assembled at Parambikulam in April 1947, he also came, brought presents for Kartiyayani and, with Tambi (I/1) her father's consent, the remarriage was considered legal. The re-united couple continued to live in Tambi's house (v. *supra*) and Kartiyayani became pregnant in 1938.

[9] Comp. Chap. IX, p. 205.

NALLATANGAL (I/5) (v. Plate No. VI/b, facing p. 80), the younger uterine sister of Kartiyayani (I/4) is stated to be 21, though she also looks much younger; – a handsome Kadan girl, more on the heavy, possibly proto-Australoid, than on the more gracile, Negrito side to which her father Tambi (I/1) tends. As a little girl she was often living with her paternal uncle Vanandan at Thunakadavu near Chungam in the Coimbatore District in the eastern, Tamil speaking, plains. There she married at the age of 14 a young man, Shavary ("Ramapillai"), whose father was proud that he, as a British Forest Guard, should have his son married to the daughter of Tambi (I/1), a Cochin Forest Guard. After the marriage the young couple stayed at Tambi's house and all went well until they returned to the father-in-law's house in the Coimbatore District. There they quarrelled and Nallatangal returned to her father's house early in 1947. On the occasion of the death-ceremony in April 1947, referred to above (*sub*: Kartiyayani (I/4) and her re-marriage at the same time), Nallatangal's husband Shavary ("Ramapillai") brought presents and celebrated also a happy re-marriage. The couple stayed on, uxorilocally, in the girl's father's *i.e.* Tambi's (I/1) house until July 1947 and then went back to Chungam in the Coimbatore Dt.

There are so far no children in this family.

MATHA ("RANDA") (I/6) (v. Plates No. VI/b, VII/b, XIX/b, facing pp. 80, 81, 153.)

is the youngest daughter of Tambi (I/1) and his fourth, present wife Velakkal (I/2). Her second name "Randa" is a corruption of *irandu,* Tamil: *two.* This nickname refers to her double thumb which – like in the plains – is considered to be auspicious. The little girl is cheerful, wears a bracelet on each wrist and ankle and a small string of red beads round her neck. She brings on

Friday evenings the lighted wick and a couple of plantains to the unhewn stone, which was set up by a Parayan, for worship, when her mother Velakkal (I/2) used to suffer from fits or hysteria (v. *supra,* p. 77).

Randa is particularly fond of her father Tambi (I/1) whom she serves eagerly and who declares himself that he likes her most of his three daughters "because she is the youngest". I found Randa rather a boyish girl, frequently leading a string of other Kadan children of both sexes in their daily routine of playing at work or working playfully. She seemed also leading in the art of decorating her hair and ears with colourful flowers. Seeing the intense joy of these hill-children, who had not yet been to the plains, where they could have seen the orthodox flower ornaments in the hair of plainswomen, it appeared improbable to believe that this art of flower decoration should have at all been borrowed from the plains. The opposite course, rather, is suggested by the original sureness of the aboriginal children in decorating their hair and ears with flowers. They put flowers behind each ear and, in a haphazard fashion, into their hair. Half-grown Kadan lads are also proud to have each one flower stuck behind their ears.

BALAKISHAN (I/7) (v. Plates No. XIII/a and XIX/b facing, pp. 105 and 153.)

a boy of 8, son Karappi's (I/3) and her divorced first Kadan-husband Chattan. The boy frequently visited this his father though he stayed with his mother (in Tambi's (I/1), her sister's husband's house), and her lover from the plains (v. sub: I/3, *supra*).

PAPATI, (I/8),

a woman of about 40, the widow of Cherakutty who died in 1946. So the widow now lives also in Tambi's house, which to her is her late husband's younger brother's house.

Her late husband had, already previous to her marriage to him, had two other wives, Alamma and Olamma who had both lived harmoniously together in the same house with their common husband, but had both died before he married Papati.

A GIRL-BABY—(I/9),

born in July 1947 by Karappi (I/3), shortly before the latter's death. The girl was not yet named.

Domestic Animals, Tools and Weapons

One male and one female *dog* respectively called 'Toman' and Pandi (two-coloured) are being kept in Household No. I (Kochukura A). Both are trained and said to represent a price of Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 each; puppies selling at Rs. 1 or As. 8. These dogs belong to the husband of the family: Tambi (I/1).

One *cock* and four *hens*, valued at Rs. 3 and Rs. 2 each, respectively. These are the property of his wife: Velakkal (I/1).

Three *cows*, one *bull* and two *calves*, of which each cow was priced Rs. 100, the bull Rs. 60 to Rs. 80 and the calves Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 each. A second bull, whilst grazing, in daytime, on an open meadow in the forest, not more than a furlong from the village, had been carried off and eaten by a tiger. All cattle belong to Velakkal (I/2) who purchased them from savings, made by her husband Tambi (I/1). He said that he would give her these savings occasionally as presents. But it is he, Tambi (I/1) who purchases and sells the cattle, though again in consultation with her. This rather complicated situation of ownership repeatedly changing between husband and wife can, however, not be taken as in any way typical since ownership of such comparatively costly objects as cattle, is a new acquisition of the last two, or in some places three, generations at the utmost.

Two *digging sticks* (*kolwadi*), that means sticks, armed with an iron edge, fitted at the lower end of the sticks.[11] The sticks cost As. 4 each and belong to the husband. One *heavy stick* for pounding rice belongs to the wife.

One *maduval*, a heavy jungle-knife, bought at Namara in Cochin for Rs. 4 (v. fig. 8, p. 36.)

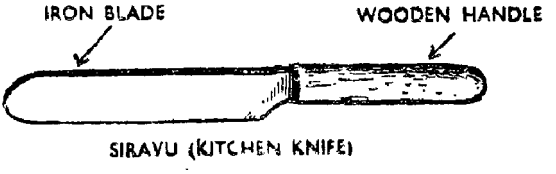


FIG. 18.

One *siravu*, an ordinary kitchen-knife, worth As. 8 to Rs. 1 (v. fig. 18, p. 84), purchased from markets in the plains.

One *katari*, a curved hunting knife (Fig. 9, p. 36), supplied by the Government to Tambi (I/1) in his capacity as forest guard.[12] Also the other knives belong to him personally.

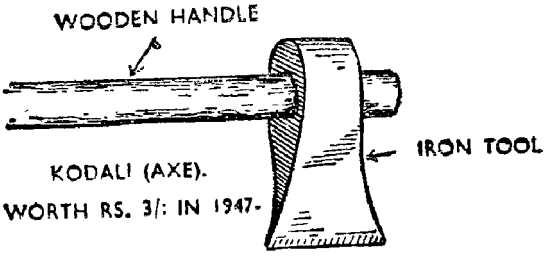


FIG. 19.

One *kodali*, an axe for firewood cutting (v. fig. 19). Also such plainspeople tools are, as in this case the axe, often said to be the property of the wife and this house was no exception.

Few families possess as many tools as these, though digging stick and – nowadays – jungle-knife, ricepounder

[11] *See* Chap. III, Fig. 6, p. 27.

[12] Compare *supra* the biographical sketch of Tambi (I/1), pp. 68-76.

and axe will be often found in modern Kadan homes. These tools are said to be distributed equally among the children of both sexes in the event of the parents' death.

One muzzle-loader gun, purchased for Rs. 25 in Chalakudy "long ago" by Tambi, in connection with his appointment as forest guard.[13] This gun will go to his classificatory brother (*i.e.* paternal cousin), in the event of its present owner's death.

FIG. 20.
Brass Pots
(valued Rs. 5/: each in 1947.)

One big brass pot.

Three small brass pots (*adakkupattaram*) (*amala*) and (*oichala totti*) (v. fig. 20), priced Rs. 5 each and given, by her parents, to Velakkal (I/2) on the occasion of her present (second) marriage.

Eight *kottam* (clay pots) for keeping, or boiling, water, priced As. 10, each.

One aluminium saucepan, two enamal plates.

One *murram* (winnowing fan), made of bamboo, all purchased from the plains.

Three bundles of *pai* (bamboo-mats), collected from the jungle and manufactured by the women of the house, for whom they will be sold, in the plains, by male members of the family. The pots and vessels belong to Velakkal (I/2), the principal female member of the family and, as usually, were given by Tambi (I/1), her husband, as presents. This was apparently considered as the ordinary course of events.

[13] Compare *supra* the biographical sketch of Tambi (I/1), pp. 68-76.

One fishing rod, manufactured and owned by Tambi (I/1).

One old umbrella, acquired and owned by Tambi.

One *kambli* (coarse, thin blanket) supplied for Rs. 5 by the Government to Tambi.

Two wooden and one iron box, with padlocks, belonging to Tambi.

One small glass-bottle, containing *chunam* (lime) for chewing along with betel leaves. Ownership – uncertain.

The milk from the cows is sold at the rate of As. 3 per (small) 'half-bottle' and the income, thus obtained, is managed by the husband.

This list of domestic articles in Household No. I ("Kochukura—A") draws a picture of a rather exceptionally prosperous Kadan household, the chief male member of which, as we have seen, is employed in the Forest Department. Few ordinary Kadan families will be found in possession of so many household goods and tools, though these will be more or less of the same kind, even if much smaller in number. As the number of these possessions mainly depends on the family's relationship to either contractor or Forest Department and thus is of an accidental nature, seen from the ethnographist's point of view, such detailed lists will not be added in the case of other households described below.

To the above list of articles various kinds of clothes, cloths and ornaments must be added; these, however, will be discussed in the chapter on clothes.

HOUSEHOLD NO. II (KOCHUKURA, B.)

SUPRAVO (II/1),

a man said to be 45 but whom I had taken to be well over 50. He is somewhat thinnish and looks not so healthy as Kadar usually do. He does not mingle very much

with the other Kadar, goes frequently for long collecting expeditions into the forests and thus is rarely to be seen in the hamlet. The migratory habits of the Kadar seem to be indeed outspoken in this man for he does sometimes not turn up in Parambikulam for weeks together. Yet his family life appears to be quite happy and his house is kept very neat by his wife, with whom he was united in the genuinely Kadan, "love-marriage", after she had divorced her first husband Murugan (VI/1) (*infra*). Supravo was then 20, and his wife 28, but the affection of the two does not seem to have dwindled during these last 20 odd years of their married life, which is said to have been harmonious and uneventful.

(During the absence of the family, from their house in Parambikulam, when all went for collecting expeditions into the jungles, early in 1948, it was occupied by the old mother of Tambi's (I/1) late third wife and a divorced middle-aged woman, Murugai, said to be somewhat mad: "singing at odd times and migrating from place to place").

Supravo is the son of Tambi's (I/1) maternal uncle and it might seem that the identity of the name "Kochukura", of their two houses, resulted from a consciousness of relationship between Tambi (I/1) and Supravo (II/1) through the maternal line of descent. This, on the surface appeared to me the more probable as the matrilineal communities in the plains of Kerala are traditionally adding the house-names of their mothers' families to their own personal names, thus indicating their identity.[14] But in the case of the two Kadar, though related through the mother, the use of the same name for their respective houses, however, was more than once stated to be purely coincidental; not the result of family relationship. Supravo is not talkative about his past which he spent apparently in a more or less traditional form in the forests.

[14] Comp: Aiyappan: (1937), p. 30 and foot notes.

KARAPPAMA (II/2), formerly known as: KĒTTANI,

a woman of about 30 to 35 years. She was born on the other side of the Cochin State border in the forest areas of the Coimbatore district, adjoining the Kadan homeland on its eastern fringe. Her father, according to her and Tambi (I/1), was the brother of Tambi's (I/1) father which is why she calls Tambi *velai achan* (younger father) and he calls her *magal* (daughter). Both, Tambi and Karappama, seemed to be quite sure when they stated that their respective fathers had been real brothers, but it appears more probable that it was Karappama's grandfather who was brother to Tambi's father and her father therefore must have been a younger cousin of Tambi's, for Tambi never enumerated Karappama as one of the really "near relatives", in spite of his calling her *magal* ("daughter"), in a classificatory sense.

Before her present marriage, Karappama, when she was 15 years old, had been married to Murugan (VI/1) (*v. infra*). Her name was then Kettani. She has had one male child by him, but the baby died one day after birth. About five years later the husband and wife quarrelled and from all records of neighbours, it appears that this was one of the rare cases when a Kadan husband beat his wife, though with his hands only and never with a stick, as it is so often found to happen in the plains, even of Kerala, where the position of women in family and society is stronger than anywhere else in India, – except among the Khasi and Garo of Central Assam. This behaviour of her first husband was so much resented by Karappama (then: *Kettani*) that she not only divorced him but – what is far more unusual – does not speak to him even now, nor will she go by his side, on a root-collecting excursion to the jungle, although he and his present wife are living in the same village (Household VI, *infra.*)

Soon after her divorce she married her present husband Supravo (II/1) and in marrying him changed her name from Kettani to Karappama – "Black Mother", although the Kadar consider her complexion particularly light. She speaks Tamil with the intonation of the Tamilians in the plains, not in the typical Kadan modulation which goes down the scale towards the end of the sentence.[15] Karappama is also disinclined, like her husband, to speak much about the past, beyond the fact of her first unhappy marriage and divorce.

AMMANI (II/3),

the elder daughter of Karappama (II/2) was stated to be about 18 years of age but looked much younger and was said to have been married "six years ago at the age of twelve" to a man called Chanana Pillai who had been a neighbour of her mother Karappama (II/2) in the transborder-village, before the latter's marriage, and migration, to Parambikulam in Cochin.

Ammani has had only one child who died soon after its birth. She was staying with her parents "on a visit" of a rather longish duration, but was not considered divorced from her husband in the Coimbatore district, with whom she had no quarrel, although much shorter separations are being styled as "divorces", if the result of discord, and if undertaken with the express intention to leave one's husband or wife.

VELLAMA (II/4),

the second daughter of Karappama (II/2), a girl, six years old, wore comparatively much "jewellery" – two bangles round each wrist and one round each ankle, as well as one red and black chain round her neck.

[15] Comp. chap. XI, p. 257 seq.

The inventory

of the Household II (Kochukura—B) was much poorer than the one found in House I (Kochukura—A), but there were nicely raised platforms to sleep on and the fire-place was more regularly laid out and kept in better order (v. Fig. 15, p. 65 and Fig. 2, p. 19), than in most other Kadan houses I have seen.

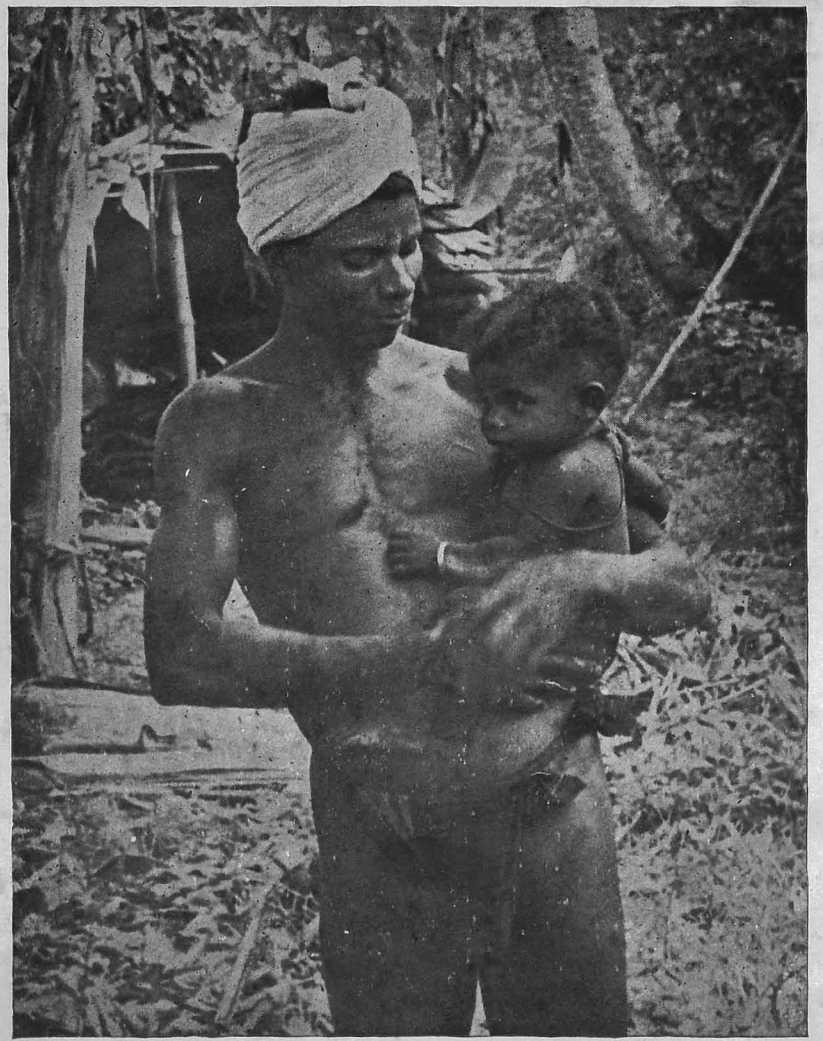
One bitch called "Karavachi" was declared to belong to the husband, whilst two jungle-knives, one big brass-pot, four earthen-ware vessels and two metal-plates, bamboo-vessels, two gunny-bags, two digging-sticks, as well as one rice-pounding stick were said to be the "common property" of husband and wife.

In spite of the well-kept interior of the hut, the roof was in bad condition, water leaking through at several points.

HOUSEHOLD NO. III (VETTIOREN)

VELLI (III/1) (v. Plate No. VIII/b facing p. 90), a man stated to have been 53 but appeared to me, in 1947/48 at the most some 40 years of age. He looked the typical muscular, short Kadan with thick, curly hair.

Formerly he was married to a girl whose "morals" do not seem to have satisfied him and then, – polyandrously – to a woman Veluppu, whose other husband was one Ketappan. The two co-husbands were neither real, nor classificatory brothers, or cousins. Velli (III/1) claimed that it was he who divorced Veluppu after some years of a happy and harmonious polyandrous marriage, not she him. Veluppu, the former common wife, was living now (in 1947/48) with the other husband, Ketappan, at Parayankadavu, a settlement near a contractor's agent's store, about one and a half miles to the East of Parambikulam. She looked somewhat older and much more energetic than either of her husbands. The Kadar do not, however, like to talk to outsiders about



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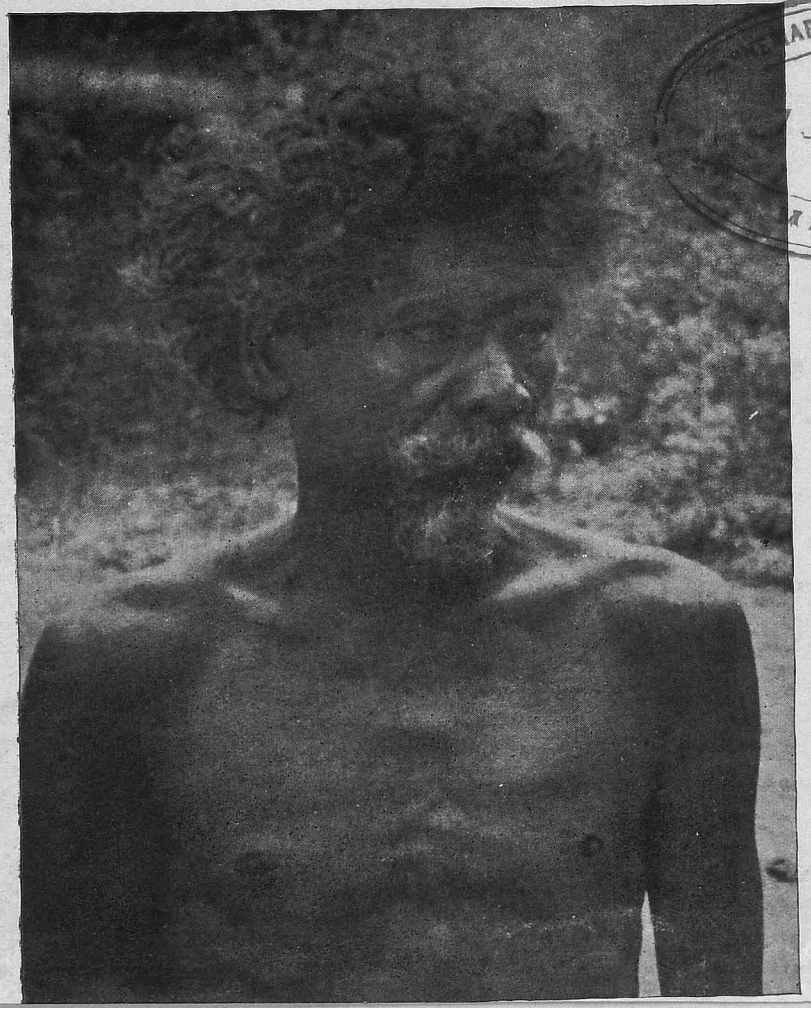


the history of that marriage as they are aware of the latter's prejudice against polyandrous marriages.

There was something queerly passive about Velli (III/1), though he was quick and quite bright in grasping my difficulties and explaining that the so-called "house-names" of the Kadar were not family-names, as they are among matrilineal communities in the plains of Kerala, but that they merely refer to the names arbitrarily attached to the actual huts in which a family, or group of people, lives and that these names get changed according to the usage or fancy of the house's inhabitants or their neighbours. Velli seemed a quiet and utterly unassuming person. But after the death of a 15 year old boy of Parayankadavu[16] who had been devoured by a tiger, Velli (III/1) got obsessed by the god Aiyappan whose vehicle is the tiger, according to Hindu mythology. When the skull and pieces of already decomposing hands and feet of the dead boy were found, the next day, in the thick jungle between Parayankadavu and the Chalakudy river, Velli, in his obsession, crawled on hands and knees and took the remaining pieces of the corpse up, with his teeth, to deposit them in a pit which had been previously prepared by other Kadan men of the two villages. This pit was then filled with mud, and a peg driven into it, thereby invoking Aiyappan to pass an order to the man-eating tiger that it should henceforth refrain from killing humans. As the whole ceremony was the execution of a pre-planned rite and as somebody had to play the part of the obsessed, I thought that Velli (III/1) might have simply acted the part without being actually possessed or, at any rate, without being unconscious of what he did. On expressing these ideas to some of the Kadar, in Velli's absence, they retorted quite spontaneously: "How? Do you mean to say good, old Velli could have brought himself to actually taking up the skull and decom-

[16] *i.e.* the above-mentioned village where Velluppu lived with Ketappan.

posing feet of the boy with his teeth and lips, – unless he was possessed by Aiyappan?"

Velli himself was even more reluctant to communicate anything about his life than Supravo (II/1) with whom he shared the liking for long tours to the forests. He was, however, very fond of his two children (*infra*) and well liked by his neighbours.

After his divorce of the polyandrous marriage with Veluppu, which had been the second consecutive divorce in his life, Velli married:—

KANNAI (III/2),

a woman, said to be "thirty years of age", although she looked 20 in 1947/48 at the utmost. She called Tambi (I/1) maternal uncle (*maman*) and was being called niece (*marumakal*), by him, although they were really cousins through their respective great-grand-parents. Kannai was born at Parambikulam and married her present, and so far only, husband Velli (III/1) after the latter's second divorce (from Veluppu; see *supra* with whom he had been polyandrously married). In the beginning of her married life, Kannai is said to have quarrelled a lot with her husband because he kept visiting Veluppu not unfrequently. But now Kannai seemed to be absorbing all her husband's affections and to get along with him happily. Kannai also spoke Tamil in the fashion of the plainspeople in Tamilnad, but, unlike Karappama (II/2), did not always dress herself up in the present, semi-Europeanized fashion of the Tamilian plainspeople, nor did she always wear European style blouses. She helped her husband actively in collecting jungle products. If then alone, or with her husband, in the forest she kept her upper body free, as also frequently if at home. The two children of Velli (III/1) and Kannai (III/2) were:

KOILI PILLAI (III/3),

a boy of four years, and his little sister—(III/4) (v. Plate No. VIII/b, facing p. 90) a girl about one year old, who had not yet been given a name. The name, however, was soon to be given by either the parents, or by the mother's brother.

VELLITAVAL (III/5),

was a woman about 25 to 28, the widow of a Kadan, Annamalai, who was both a younger cousin to Tambi (I/1) and a maternal uncle of Kannai (III/2). After his death, Vellitaval (III/5) was at first staying with Tambi (I/1) and his wife Velakkal (I/2) in Household I (Kochukura—A). But consequent to a row, during which Velakkal (I/2) accused her husband (Tambi (I/1) of flirting with Vellitaval (III/5) the latter shifted to her late husband's niece Kannai (III/2) in Household III (Vettioren), opposite Kochukura – A (*v.* plan on p. 65). A separate enclosure has been made in Vettioren house, where Vellitaval was then staying with her son:—

CHERRY (III/6),

a boy of five years.

The Inventory

The common possessions of these two families comprised one small dog, only one digging stick, one jungle knife, three earthenware pots, one wooden and two iron boxes and thirty bundles of *vaka*, a bast which is sold at the rate of As. 4 per bundle.

The raised platforms and fire-place were of about the same, somewhat neglected quality as those in Household I (Kochukura – A).

The boy used to play with a nice little toy, made of a bamboo stick, a tin box and a connecting string of bast.

HOUSEHOLD NO. IV (PANDALKURA)

NAGARAY (IV/1) (*v.* Plate No. IX/a, facing p. 91), a very old man of some seventy or more years, the maternal uncle of Pönnala (IV/3) (*infra*), that is the really important man of Household IV (Pandalkura) who, however, acknowledged old Nagaray (IV/1) in spite of the latter's infirmity, due to old age, as the first, and most respected, member of the household. Nagaray was born some 70 and odd years ago in Parambikulam area, where he was living in 1947, and stayed, most of his life, here with his sisters of two different mothers, *viz.*: Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2) and Warachi (Barachi) (IV/14) (*infra*). In the way of the Kadar of old, he was first married at the age of about 26 and to a girl, well after her first menses. The marriage was annulled and there were no children. Nagaray's second wife lived with him for a long time, until she died childless. Afterwards Nagaray married a third time and had five children, of whom two girls died, whilst his three sons (*infra*: IV/20-22) stayed with him in the same house.

Nagaray was made a forest watcher, early in the twentieth century, when the timber transport tramline was opened in the hills. His two sisters (IV/2 and IV/14) (*infra*) are said to have had various connections with the many people who had come from the plains, at that time, without, however, thereby affecting their own or their brother Nagaray's social position. All the three successive wives of Nagaray have died and – apart from his three sons (*infra*) – his nearest relative in the house were his sisters, especially the older of the two, namely

NILAY ("NILAL") (IV/2) (v. Pl. IX/b, facing p. 91), a very old woman of about the same age as her brother Nagaray (IV/1). She was the mother of Pönnala

(IV/3) (*infra*) and was the most important woman-member of the big Household IV, until she died of cholera during the (local) epidemic during November 1947. Soon after her death, her brother Nagaray (IV/1) and his three sons (IV/20-22) migrated from Parambikulam to neighbouring-forest, – and contractor's-stations where they took work as contractor's coolies. Apart from her alleged experiences with plainspeople, after the opening of the tram line (*supra sub*: Nagaray IV/1), Nilay (Nilal) was married for a long time to Andiappan, until he died, and then to a Kadan named Kiri who also stayed with her in House IV ("Pandalkura") until he died in 1942 without, however, leaving children of his own.

Nilay (Nilal) had five children of her first husband Andiappan. The two oldest were daughters (Rajamal and Velattaval). They and the youngest son (Ananda) had by now (*i.e.* 1948) died. The two surviving sons Pönnala (IV/3) and Chadayan (IV/6) (*infra*), were staying until her death in the same house with her and her brother Nagaray (IV/1). Her husband Andiappan had died already in 1932. Nilay was the older paternal half-sister, to Warachi (IV/14) (*infra*).

PÖNNALA (IV/3) (*v.* Plate No. VIII/c, VIII/a facing pp. 81, 90), a strong and rather tallish man about, or a little over, thirty years with frizzy, almost woolly, hair and a rather characteristic smile of an otherwise not too typical Kadan. His comparatively high figure and large face, with the good-humoured and vivid smile, however, made of him the example of a Kadan who calls to mind negroid, rather, than negritoid or australoid racial features.

His name is derived from *pon* (Tam. : gold) and *ala* (Tam.: a string). The word in the pronunciation of the Kadar, however, sounds distinctly: *Pönnala,* with an *ö,* such

as it is pronounced in the Turkish, Magyar, Scandinavian or German languages.

Pönnala was born in Parambikulam, as the son of Nilay (IV/2) (*supra*). His father was Andiappan who died in 1932.

Pönnala married his wife Chinnama (IV/4) (*infra*) about ten to twelve years ago, when he was a little over twenty and she approximately thirteen only. She was the daughter of his paternal aunt; her father Ambalan (more about him *v.* sub: Agamma (VI/6) *infra*) therefore was thus on particularly friendly terms with Pönnala's father, that is his (Ambalan's) brother-in-law.

Pönnala (IV/3) stated at first that his marriage with Chinnama (IV/4) – the only marriage he had so far contracted in his life – was not a love-marriage but had been arranged between his and her father (who, as we have seen, had been brothers-in-law to each other). Later, however, an altogether different picture transpired from his accounts and more detailed narratives. As so often among Kadan youths, Pönnala used to accompany the family of the girl he liked on their collecting expeditions to the jungle. So he went with Ambalan's family but, really speaking, not for the sake of his wife, Chinnama (IV/4) (*infra*) herself, but on account of her older sister Agamma (IV/6) (*infra*) with whom he had originally been in love. But later the girl decided to marry another man and so it happened that Pönnala married her younger sister Chinnama, and now seemed very happy about the good turn which fate did him, until she died of cholera in November 1947.

The usual practice in all such cases seems to be that a Kadan boy would spend most of his time with the family of his "girl-friend". This state of affairs is – or at least was – not considered objectionable in the least until the parents would one day find their children actually making

love to each other. On seeing this they would not utter a word to the children concerned, but quietly discuss the matter among themselves. This then would be the occasion when parents would decide about the marriage of their children. It seems that this traditional procedure is still in vogue though the Kadar prefer to call it an "arranged marriage" in which love and the feelings of the young couple play no part at all. This, no doubt, is due to the examples and moral values of the plainspeople, set before the Kadar as an ideal example of marriage, in which love is being frowned upon, whilst a mere business-arrangement between the parents of bridegroom and bride is considered as the right thing in matrimonial matters.

It seems, however, safe to believe that Chinnama (IV/4) had not yet reached puberty when she married Pönnala, as asserted, and it is again true that the now frequent pre-puberty marriages among Kadar are another example of the acculturation-effects which the contact with people from the plains has brought about, since pre-puberty marriages appear to have been very rare, if they occurred at all, one or two generations ago, before the acculturation-period in Kadan history, which began in full earnest only towards the end of the 19th century.

Chinnama, at any rate, did not agree with this system, whether newly introduced or genuinely Kadan, but simply refused actual sex-relationship with her husband Pönnala at the beginning. He thereupon went for a year to another village in the East. After his wife has had her first menstruation, he returned and found that she had now come to enjoy married life and also actual sex-relationship. Since then the couple did not, so far, separate for any length of time, and seemed genuinely in love.

The first child was a boy, born three years after the official marriage, that is two years after the beginning of

actual sex life. The boy died "of fever" after nine months. A daughter, born "after two years" met with the same fate when she was about eighteen months old. The third child Krishnakutty (IV/5) (*infra*) was about ten months old in May 1947. Both parents used to be very fond of him and hoped that he may survive. But he too died, along with his mother, in the cholera epidemic of November 1947.

Apart from his own wife and son, Pönnala (IV/3) looked after the two children of his deceased sisters Rajamal and Vellataval (*supra,* Nilay (IV/2), – their common mother). Angammal (IV/16) (*infra*) was the daughter of the late Rajamal and divided her time between Pönnala, her maternal uncle, and her father who was staying in another village. The same is true of Darmapalan, the son of the second sister, the late Vellataval, but as he was just absent, for the last months, he was not enumerated as a member of Household IV (Pandalkura). In addition to this niece and nephew, Pönnala acted also as guardian for a girl of about 12 years, known by the name of Mapillachi, a name given her after her biological father, a Malayalam speaking Christian from the plains who, in Cochin, is called a *Mapillai,* though this designation is reserved for Malayalam speaking Muslims only in other parts of Kerala.

The child was, however, not staying in Parambikulam, during the first half of 1947, and therefore has also not been considered as a "permanent resident" of Household IV (Pandalkura).

Pönnala (IV/3) began his career as an ordinary "gang cooly" when an unexpected event brought him promotion and success. The Conservator of Forests once visited the forest area round Parambikulam when a sudden downpour made the "Chinna river" (a branch of the Chalakudy river) unpassable. Pönnala, the giant among the Kadar, took the Conservator of Forests on his back and

carried him safely through the torrential river, thus saving him the wetting of his ceremonious garb and, consequently, a lot of trouble. Not long after this, Pönnala was appointed forest watchman and after another year promoted to the rank of a forest guard, like Tambi (I/1). Unlike him, he did not ascribe this honour, which to a Kadan is a rare one, to any intellectual or ethical qualifications but rather to his muscular strength, good humour and – perhaps mostly – to his luck.

Pönnala had a keen sense of humour. In the beginning of my first research trip he was – like most Kadar – averse to being photographed. But once he appreciated the likeness of the pictures which the seemingly painful process produced, he started posing and appeared in most fantastic costumes. As soon as he noticed that a family scene of himself, his wife and child was to be taken, he began to comb her woolly hair with his fingers as though searching for lice. This mutual service, of course, signifies special affection, as in the plains, so also among Kadar. I saw a little girl attentively examine her father's hair, similarly as parents, and particularly mothers, would do with their little ones. Husband and wife naturally serve each other in the same way and a wife may occasionally be seen sitting on her husband's lap, whilst he explores her hair systematically. This, and the habit of some Kadan husband and wife, at times to rest in the evening on the same mat together or, if it is rainy and cold, to cover themselves with the same blanket, aroused severe criticism of the Kadar's "shamelessness" among moralists from the plains, even though it was very well known to them that Kadar will under no circumstances make love at home, in their houses; neither during the day nor at night. This *taboo*-like prohibition[17] and the observation of menstruation-pollution are rigidly adhered to even nowadays, when so many other

[17] Comp. : Chap. IX, pp. 202, *seq.*

customs are being more and more neglected. The reproach of "shamelessness", in all these cases, appears therefore to be utterly unfounded since these expressions of affection and comradeship between husband and wife are neither a prelude to sexual intercourse, nor even "consciously erotic".

After the death of his wife and son, during the local cholera epidemic of November 1947, Pönnala appeared imperceptibly changed. He was cruder, less humorous, though he did not show any visible signs of grief or pain. In spring 1948 he contemplated to marry a small girl who had not yet reached puberty; – apparently the only available Kadan bride. She was with her parents in the eastern hills on the Coimbatore side of the border and there were some quarrels with Household VI ("Vettioren – B"), especially Govinda (VI/5), who was a relative of the girl and seemed to have been offended that Pönnala had failed to ask him to act as a sort of go-between, or else has had other plans for the girl.

CHINNAMA (IV/4) (*v.* Plates No. VII/c and XII/a facing pp. 81 and 104), a woman of about 23 years, the wife of Pönnala (IV/3) (*supra*). She was the daughter of her husband Pönnala's *ammai,* or paternal aunt. The term *ammai,* in ordinary Malayalam usage, means: 'wife of the maternal uncle'[18] but among the Kadar *ammai* appears to indicate generally the father's sister alone, who is called: *attai* in Tamil (comp. Relationship Terms *infra* on p. 124. Chinnama is therefore the cousin of her husband on *his* father's side, whilst she would appear to be his cousin on his mother's side, to an ordinary Malayalam speaking observer. The use of Malayalam relationship terms, among Kadar, indicating different kinds

[18] including sometimes also the father s sister, as among the Nayadi, comp. *Aiyappan,* (1937), p. 34, 35 and p. 38, where the author remarks: ".....relationship terms do not have in Malabar the fixity and unchangeableness that Morgan thought they had". Quoted by permission of the author.

of relationship from what they mean in ordinary Malayalam usage appears to be largely responsible for the wrong statements on this subject which we find in the older literature.

Chinnama, – a particularly cheerful, active and well-built Kadan woman, – yet had something about her that reminded one of plainspeople, apart from her rather unusual height and the slightly reddish complexion which might have suggested the possibility of partly non-Kadan ancestry. Apart from this I sometimes felt that she was somewhat more expansive in her attitude towards family-members and neighbours, than the ordinary young Kadan woman would be, and, at the same time, a little more depressed, disturbed or "shy", as soon as she realized the presence of me, the non-Kadan. She played for hours with the smaller children along with her own baby, rolling cheerfully on the ground and letting the little ones crawl over her body, but as soon as she noted my presence, the easiness of poise was gone.

Her sojourns in the *Tinda Chala* II (menstruation hut) were, as usual among Kadar, times of joyful chatting and merry-making with the other girls of the hamlet, especially her elder sister Agamma (VI/6), who used to spend hours with her younger sister in the separate hut. The fact that Pönnala (IV/3) originally wanted to marry the older of the two sisters had not in the least adversely affected their mutual closeness.

One night the already dilapidated menstruation hut was completely pulled down by an unexpectedly early monsoon rain. Chinnama spent the rest of the night practically in the open, cold and wet as she was, rather, than break the *taboo* and return to the common shelter whilst under menstruation pollution. The next morning she and her sisters and girl friends repaired the simple roof with material which, however, was partly brought by the young men of the joint family. This reconstruction work too seemed to be an occasion for

much laughter and merry-making without, however, appearing to follow anything like an institutionalized pattern.

Chinnama was very fond of her baby, who, died with her of cholera in November 1947.

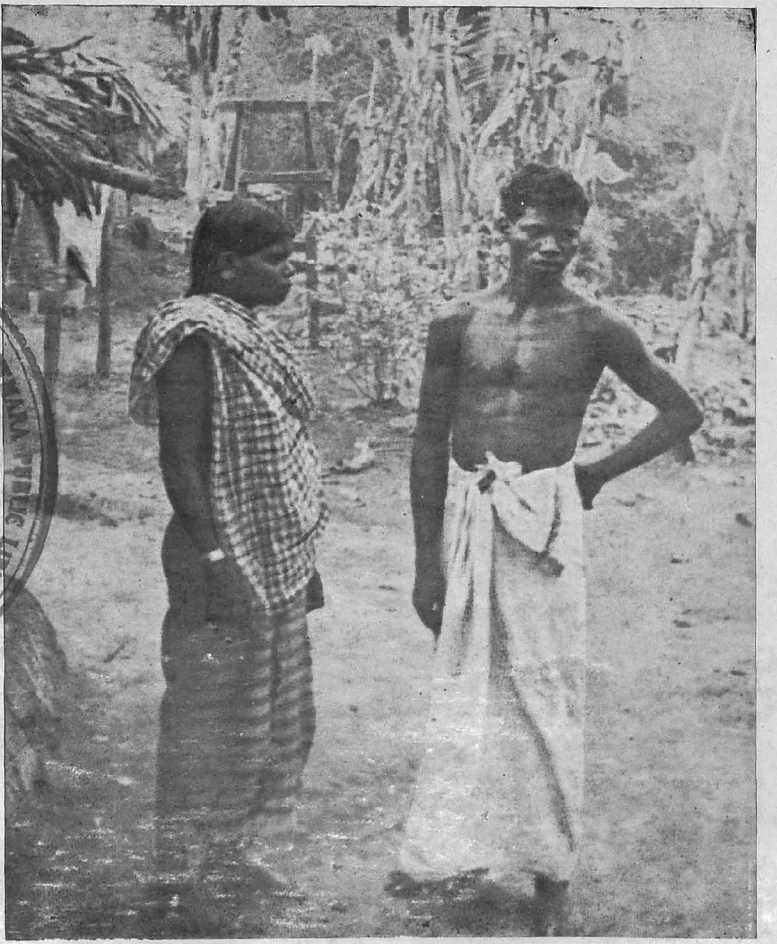
KUTTY KISHAN (IV/5), (*v.* Plates No. VII/c, VIII/a and XII/a facing pp. 81, 90, 104), – in the pronunciation of the Kadar, which means of course: Small (Malayalam: *kutty*) Krishna. In spring 1947 he was a boy of about ten months and thus about a year, or a little over, when he died of cholera in November 1947. The son of Chinnama (IV/4) and Pönnala (IV/3); through him the grandson of Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2).

CHADAYAN (IV/6) (*v.* Plate No. X/b, facing p. 102), a strong man of about 28 years with thickly curled, but not frizzy hair. He exhibited, like his brother Pönnala, (IV/3), Proto-Australoid rather than Negrito features. As a son of Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2), he stayed all his life in Parambikulam, somewhat bossed over, it seemed, by his elder brother Pönnala (IV/3). As a youth of 16 he fell in love and married his present wife :

KALLIYANI (IV/7) (*v.* Pl. No. X/b, p. 102), a good-looking typical Kadan woman of about 25 years. When she was a child, and shortly after puberty, she was living with one of her sisters who was married in Kuryarkutty. Her brother-in-law acted as *"masaipudi"* or master-assistant in the Malayalam school there and rumour had it that he lived as a husband of both these sisters, whereupon Kalliyani's mother sent her to another sister who had at that time been living at Parambikulam. Chadayan fell in love with her and they married. There were no quarrels or divorces and peaceful, happy life does not rouse much comment on the part of the average Kadan, but the couple was childless, though two still-born children had been delivered by Kalliyani. This was a cause of much regret to both of them.

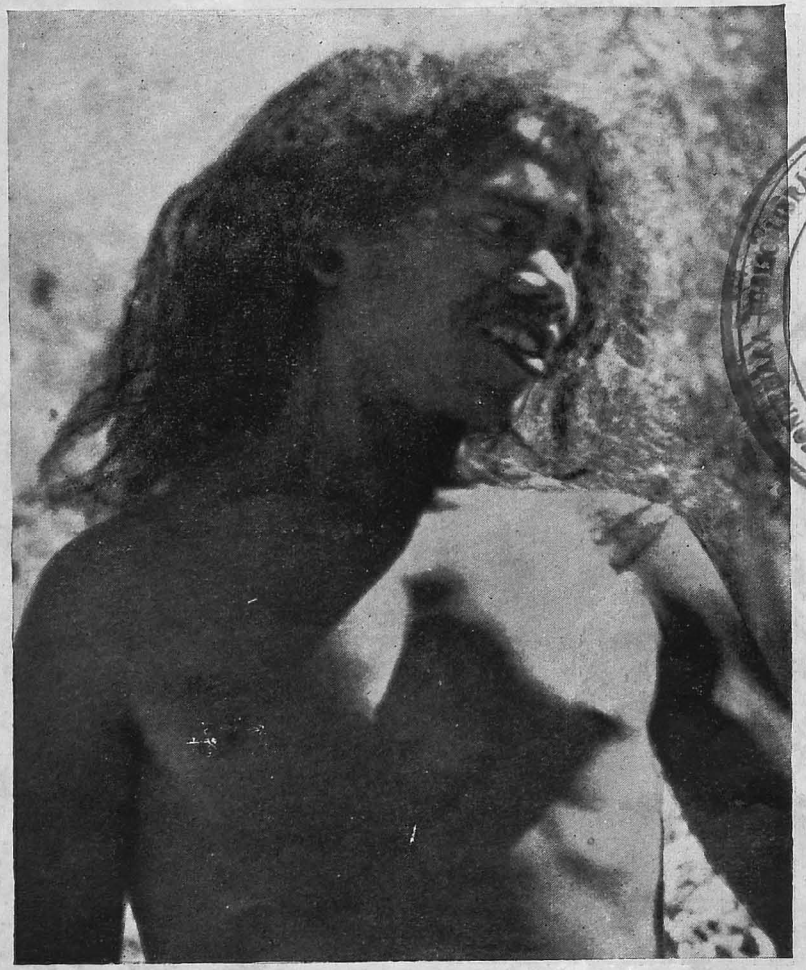
Pl. X/a.

AYUMA



Pl. X/b.

CHADAYAN



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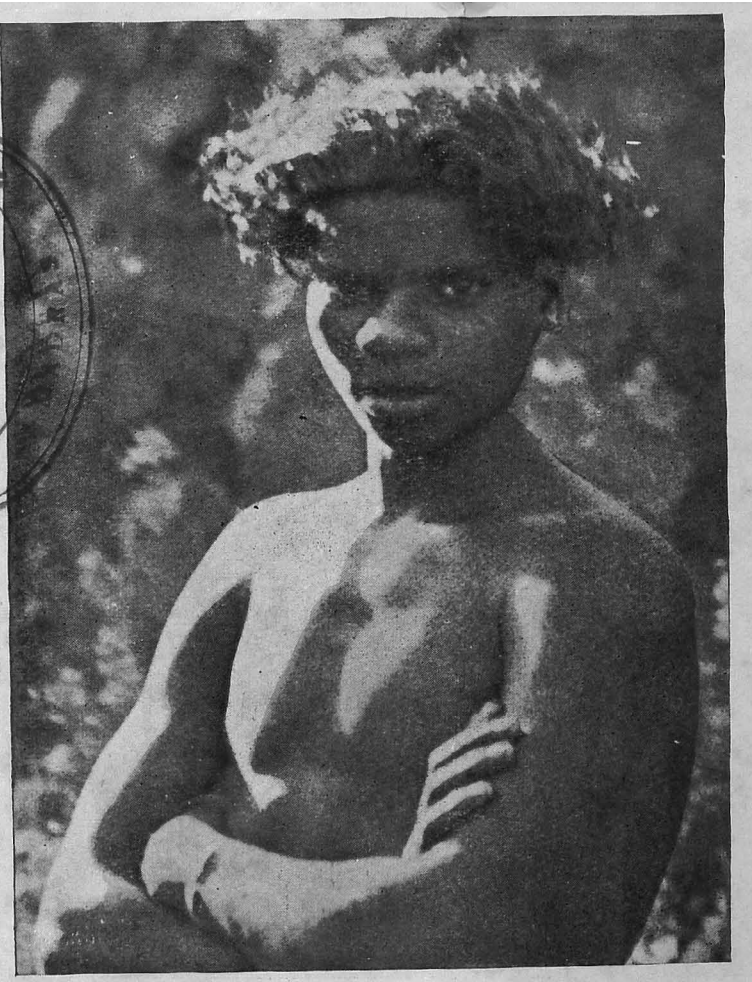
Pl. XI/a.

TUNGUMANI



Pl. XI/b.

WAVY HAIR

MANGAREN (IV/8) showed a strikingly visible family-resemblance to his cousins Pönnala (IV/3) and Chadayan (IV/6) whose mother was the older sister of his own mother Warachi (Barachi) (IV/14). Twelve years ago, when he was 18, he married a little girl of about ten years; Ayuma, with whom he started sexual intercourse at once, though she had not yet had her first menses. The two lived ever since in the big joint family-house IV, "Pandalkura" at Parambikulam, Mangaren being treated as a brother by his cousins Pönnala (IV/3) and Chadayan (IV/6).

One night there arose a lengthy and somewhat overanimated dispute between the three in which Pönnala (IV/3), the elder brother, was accused by Chadayan (IV/6), the younger, to have disposed in an offhand manner of the money, privately earned by umbrella-stick collecting, which he said, belonged to him, the younger brother Chadayan (IV/6) and the cousin Mangaren (IV/8). Pönnala spent the money not for his own personal use, but for liquor which was shared with the other members of the joint family. It seemed at the occasion that no difference in attitude was made towards the brother, as compared to the cousin involved.

AYUMA (IV/9), (*v.* Plate No. X/a facing p. 102). Mangaren's (IV/8) wife, was the younger sister of Chinnama (IV/4) and married at the age of ten, before puberty, inspite of which the young couple started sex relations at once (*supra*). It was in the beginning of 1948 only that Ayuma became first pregnant, that is at the age of about eighteen or nineteen.

MEDUKAN (IV/10), a man of 25 to 30. Being also the son of Warachi (IV/14) and hence a brother of Mangaren (IV/8) and nephew of Nagaray (IV/1) and Nilay (IV/2), he came to join the big Household IV "Pandalkura". He desired for sometime and finally was

married to his present and so far only wife Valliammal through the mediation of his elder brother Mangaren.

VALLIAMMAL (IV/11), about 23 years in 1947/48, was 15 at her marriage with Medukan (IV/10) and delivered twice, but the babies died soon. She was a sister of Chatta, the divorced husband of late Karappi (I/3), but had no direct relations in "Pandalkura", though her old mother Chagadi (IV/15) joined this household after the daughter's marriage. Both left for Muduvarchal along with Valliammal's mother (IV/15), during the rainy season of 1947, as Medukan took work there.

One day one of the small children got into a persistent bad temper, crying furiously for no apparent outward reason and refusing to be consoled or diverted. Two or three of the women, then present, seemed helpless. Suddenly Valliammal took the baby up, in her arms, screamed a little and with her likewise screaming load, ran towards the plantain grove near the Menstruation Hut II (*v.* plan on p. 65). The sudden movement, excitement and change of surrounding cut the bad mood of the baby who returned quite happily with her pedagogically gifted aunt. The incident, even though perhaps a little beyond the daily routine behaviour of an average Kadan woman towards babies, seems yet fairly typical of the treatment of children among Kadar: on the whole permissive and indulgent, but not altogether without benevolent interference. I saw only once a Kadan beating a child, on legs and feet with grass, to make him walk against his will.[19]

TUNGAMANI (IV/12) (*v.* Plate No. XI/a facing p. 103(a boy of about 18. He limped from a stiff knee due to falling from a tree a few years previously. As first cousin of Pönnala (IV/3) on the paternal side, he and his mother (IV/13) participated in the joint family IV of "Pandalkura". The boy was good-looking in a dreamy sort

[19] Comp. chap. X, p. 245.

of way and did not communicate much of his interests and experiences. His bad knee prevented him from joining common jungle-collecting expeditions and, according to some, he was making use of the situation when staying back, in the village, with only a woman or perhaps some children playing around.

MARUTHAMMAL (IV/13) mother of Tungamani (IV/12), a woman of about 40. Her younger children, Rajamuttu, a boy of 9 years, Tangamma and Nally, two girls of 8 and 6 respectively, usually stayed with relatives in Orokumban but visited their mother frequently here, at Parambikulam, just as she often went for long visits there.

WARACHI (BARACHI) (IV/14), a woman of about 60, (*v.* Plates Nos. XII/b and XIII/b facing, pp. 104 and 105), is the younger half-sister although from another mother, of Nagaray (IV/1) and of Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2) with whom she was living here all her life. It was this link between these two sisters and their elder brother Nagaray (IV/1) which made this joint-family of "Pandalkura" so numerous.

Warachi was first married to a Kadan, Maimuthi, of Parambikulam from whom she has had no children when he died in young age. Later she, and her older sister Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2), married two brothers: Andiappan, (the late father of Pönnala (IV/3) and Chadayan (IV/6), (Nilay's two sons), – and Kunjan, – the late father of Warachi's sons: IV/8, 10, 17, 18 and 19, who are now all staying in the same house, IV, along with their wives and children, so far as they are married.

Rumour will have it that old Warachi has had many and intimate experiences with men from the plains in her young days, when the timber transport tram-line was opened, just 40 years ago. Though Warachi did not appear to have accumulated, through these contacts, any lasting possessions of material value, she yet acquired a strong sense

of "shame", which usually goes hand in hand with the sort of "civilization", spread by petty-officials and their servants, among the once free and innocent people of the forests. A main item of her psychological acquisition in the bargain was the conviction, firmly established in her, that a Kadan woman's breasts must under no condition be seen by any non-Kadan, though they are actually kept free in the presence of Kadan men. Whilst the younger women of the joint-family IV were still going about in the healthy, free and dignified manner of olden days, if among themselves, Warachi insisted on either European blouses or huge bundles of filthy cloth, to be heaped on every woman's and even every small girl-child's upper body, so long as there was the slightest suspicion of their being seen by any non-Kadan. Since Warachi wielded considerable influence, she succeeded in making self-conscious the entire Kadan generation, down to the tiniest child, like Randa (I/6), who used to be fidgeting about, with a filthy, little piece of cloth-rag to cover her thin child's breast and then feel – "civilized", rather than go about clean and with a free upper body. The less visible, but all the more effective indirect consequences of this and similar new notions about dignity and "modesty" which are being forced upon the Kadar by agencies more powerful than poor old Warachi, we will have to discuss later. Warachi, however, was not a puritan throughout. She appeared for instance even more fond of arrack than other Kadar, men and women, and after having had a good gulp at the occasion of a second death ceremony at Parambikulam, she danced quite happily and allowed even some of the girls in Household IV to be photographed in their natural attire, only to relapse, however, into her former attitude, as soon as the effect of the liquor had gone.

CHAGADI (IV/15), a woman of about 70, who joined the common Household IV when her daughter Valliammal (IV/11) married Medukan (IV/10) and therefore came to

Parambikulam. Old Chagadi also left, along with her daughter and son-in-law, when the latter found work as a cooly, and shifted with his wife to Muduvarchal, during the rainy season of 1947.

ANGAMMAL (IV/16), an unmarried little girl of about seven years, the grand-niece of Nagaray (IV/1), Nilay (IV/2) and Warachi (IV/14) and the direct niece of Pönnala (IV/3), being the daughter of his late oldest sister Rajammal. Angammal stayed sometimes with her father's relatives, in another village, and sometimes with her maternal uncle Pönnala (IV/3) here.

VELLUTHAPILLAI (IV/17), a boy of about 25, son of Warachi (IV/14) and thus brother of (IV/8, 10, 18 and 19). He was unmarried and suffered from *abasharam*, a sort of epileptic fits, considered to be caused by a malignant female spirit. This was said to be also the reason why he could not climb trees and was bad in collecting, except roots and umbrella-canes which are taken from the ground. Apart from the lack of marriageable girls, this disability was a difficulty in the way of his getting married.

KUMBALAN (IV/18), (son of IV/14, brother of IV/8, 10, 17 and 19), a strong boy of about 20 to 22. He was very good at tree climbing and collecting of honey or any other forest products, but also unmarried, because there were no marriageable girls anywhere near and merely arranged marriages between young folk who do not know each other, were still rare among the Kadar, even of 1947/48.

KOZ*H*INGAL (IV/19), a small boy who looked like 10, but was said to be 12 years old. He was the youngest son of IV/14 and brother of IV/8, 10, 17 and 18. Unmarried.

WANDITALAI (IV/20) (*v.* Plates Nos. XIII/a and XIV/b facing, pp. 105 and 108), *lit*: Wagonhead, as his disproportionately big head reminded people of

the tram-wagon, ever since his birth and even before it became clear that Wanditalai was a dwarf among the Kadar who in themselves are generally short. Wanditalai was unanimously stated to be 20 years old, although he looked like a somewhat broadly-built Kadan of 10 or 12, rather, than the dwarfish, or extremely pygmoid, fully-grown person he was; – measuring only 1.44 cm.

He was the oldest of Nagaray's (IV/1) three sons, and claimed that he had a sweetheart among the good-looking girls of a village further west, although he could not yet marry her "officially" as he could not maintain her yet. He was closely associated with his father (IV/1) and his two younger brothers (IV/2, 22) with whom he left the joint family of Household IV ("Pandalkura"), early in 1948, following the death of old Nilay (IV/2), the sister of Wanditalai's father Nagaray (IV/1). With these two corner-stones of the big joint-family disappearing from "Pandalkura", it looked as though this Household IV was going to break up, although the families of IV/3, 6, 8 and 10 were still carrying on conjointly.

CHULAL (IV/21), a boy of about 14 years, and

KUNJICHULAL (IV/22), a boy of about 10, both the unmarried sons of old Nagaray (IV/1) and younger brothers of Wanditalai (IV/20); they left the household, with their father and elder brother, early in 1948.

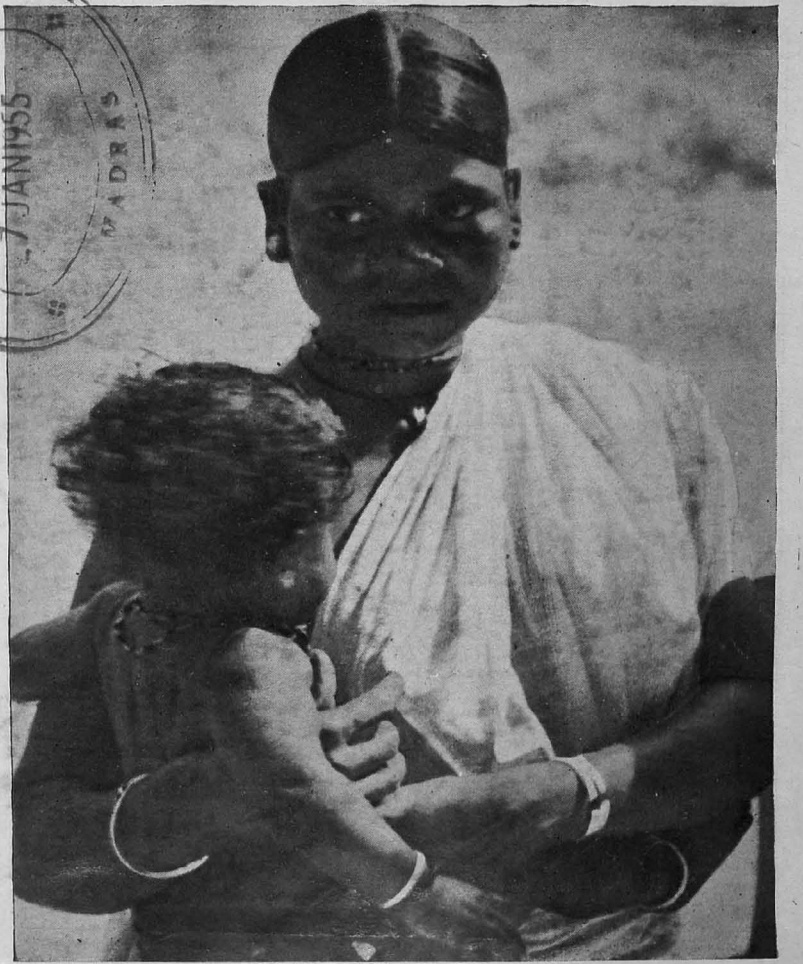
Inventory and Possessions

Each grown-up man, with the exception of old Nagaray (IV/1), owned one dog; but Pönnala (IV/3) and Medukan (IV/10) possessed each two dogs.

One cock and three hens were kept by Chinnama (IV/4), Pönnala's (IV/3) late wife, who had received them as a present from Agamma (VI/6), her oldest sister, married in the neighbouring house "Vettioren" (*infra*). Old Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2) too kept a couple of fowl, or so, during the

Pl. XIV/a. MURUGAN

Pl. XIV/b. WANDITALAI



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Pl. XV/4

second part of 1947. Before she died of cholera, in November 1947, she told her younger son Chadayan (IV/6) that these, and two earthenware pots, should be his; not to be shared with his elder brother Pönnala (IV/3), her first son, since the latter had a regular income from his Government job, whilst the former was solely dependent on collecting jungle products. Chinnama's beautiful cock and hen were first taken by her husband, Pönnala (IV/3), but later returned, by him, to Agamma (VI/6), (*infra*), Chinnama's surviving elder sister, who had previously presented her younger sister with these birds, and with whom she had been on particularly friendly terms (*supra*).

The "jewellery" (ear-ornaments and a few bangles of brass or other cheap metal) which the deceased women were wearing, before death, were buried with them, in accordance with the usual custom, it was said.

There were only six digging sticks in the household at the time when it comprised not less than 22 inhabitants. These essential tools were used alternatively by all members and could not be attributed as a sort of "private property" to each one individual or even sub-family group, so far as their actual use was concerned. Yet there are owners who manufactured the wooden, and purchased the iron, parts of the digging stick and do consider them as their property even though also freely used by others. The same is true also of the use and ownership of the eight or ten clay pots in the household which were used alternatively on only three fire-places.

Each adult man owned a jungle knife and the married couples possessed simple wooden or tin boxes with a few pieces of clothes and odd possessions such as mirrors, bottles, tins and pieces of "jewellery" of the usual kind.

House No. V (No Name)

This comparatively small, square house had no roof until the rains came in May 1947. It was meant to be a spare house

– Pönnala's (IV/3) in case of an emergency – a not quite uncalled for precaution since, as we have seen above, 22 household members lived at some time in House IV ("Pandalkura") on a space of 12 × 30 feet. During the rainy season Pönnala (IV/3) and his brother Chadayan (IV/6) thatched the house for their and their families' own personal use. But after the death of his wife and mother, Pönnala stayed for some time with Tambi (I/1) and Chadayan and his wife went collecting to the jungles so that the house was again out of use. It was for some time given to people from the plains who worked for the tram-line and some small presents were received, instead, from these temporary occupants.

HOUSEHOLD VI (VETTIOREN—B)

MURUGAN (VI/1), (*v.* Plate No. XIV/a, facing p. 108), a man of about 40, looked an ordinary Kadan, though he was perhaps a little stouter than it should be according to type. His right eye was half-closed and almost blind since an accident which he had encountered as a child when he was playing with sticks and got his eye badly hurt.

His father Ramapillai, a brother of Andiappan (Pönnala's (IV/3) father) and his mother Mailachi were staying at Kuryarkutti at the time of his birth. He was the youngest of three, the elder being sisters of whom one still lives.

Murugan was taken to accompany a band of men, digging traps for wild elephants and thus he learned, and became expert, in this art. He even claimed to have later tamed not less than eight elephants and to have taken them to the Maharajah's Palace near Ernakulam. Murugan came in that way to see more of the world than most Kadar do, for even nowadays they rarely visit places beyond Chalakudy, Pollachi and occasionally Trichur, the nearest town with a famous temple and annually celebrated festival.

At the age of eighteen, Murugan married Kettany (now: Karappama) (II/2) (*supra*), who was at that time 15 years

old and had already attained puberty. They had one child which died a day after delivery (*supra*).

After about five years the couple began to quarrel frequently (*supra*). Murugan claimed that his first wife had grown so unpunctual that he had to slap her once, on which she ran away and married Supravo (II/1) with whom she was staying in the same village in 1947/48 (*supra*).

Murugan married after his divorce, a second time and worked for the timber transport line in 1947/48. His wife was then:

KUNJIAMMA (VI/2) a woman well over 30, the daughter of Kannumani and, therefore, sister of Govinda (VI/5). Her father Kannumani was at the same time her present husband Murugan's (VI/1) maternal and paternal uncle, having been his mother's brother and also his father's cousin. Kunjamma was thus to her husband Murugan, at the same time maternal and paternal cousin in the second line.

Murugan said that he had been "well acquainted" with his second wife Kunjiamma before their marriage and his subsequent joining her, and her brother Govinda's (VI/5), common Household VI ("Vettioren – B"). His first wife's alleged "unpunctuality" might have had something to do with this his "old acquaintance". Anyway, Murugan and his second wife Kunjiamma seemed to have been quite happy, during the last 15 years, or so, and nobody has heard that Murugan would ever have beaten his second wife.

RAMAPILLAI (VI/3) son of VI/2 and VI/1, a boy of about 15, was fond of shooting pebbles with the children's toy-bow (*supra*). He was still unmarried in 1947/48.

KANI (VI/4) (*v.* Plate No. XIV/a and XIX/b facing, p. 108 and 153), a girl of about 10 years who has not reached puberty yet in 1947/48 and was also unmarried.

She played a lot with Randa (I/6), inspite of the disparity of age. She seemed particularly fond of her father (VI/1) with whom she was often seen whenever he was at home.

Murugan and his family shared the house with Govinda (VI/5) (*infra*) because Govinda was the brother of Murugan's wife Kunjiamma (VI/2) (and thus the son of the same Kannumani (*v.* sub. VI/2), who is Murugan's father-in-law and his maternal, – and paternal uncle of the second degree; – all at the same time.) But, unlike the various families living together in Household IV ("Pandalkura"). Murugan and Govinda set up a partition wall to divide the house into two compartments, one for each family. They also prepared their food separately.

The long stay with elephant trappers and his trips to Eranakulam and Cochin harbour have made Murugan to be what usually goes under the name of "civilized" : a more than usually acculturated Kadan. He and his wife were particularly fond of all the paraphernalia of European dress and seemed to keep somewhat aloof from the rest of the Kadar in their village. They and Govinda's family have protected their common house with a neat roof of oda-leaves, well before the start of the rainy season in June 1947. The house was made even more comfortable by the erection of a comparatively spacious verandah.

GOVINDA (VI/5), (*v.* Plate No. XV/a facing, p. 109), a well-built man of about 35, somewhat unusually tall, but otherwise a characteristic Kadan. Yet, like Murugan (VI/1), his sister Kunjiamma's (VI/2) husband, he was very "civilized" and thus had something strange about him, seen from the Kadan angle. In his even and well-set face lingered an expression, queerly mixed of shyness, aggressiveness and an observant, yet somewhat dejected, curiosity which is not usually found among genuinely unsophisticated Kadar, but rather calls to mind those of the members of "Depressed Classes" who had hoped for enlightenment, but have found

only cunning, in their contacts with the "higher strata" of society.

Govinda was born in Tuthampara, a Kadan village west of Chungam, in Cochin territory. His mother Pennama had been the maternal uncle's daughter of her husband Kannumani, the father-in-law of Murugan (*v. sub:* Kunjiamma (VI/2), Murugan's wife. Govinda thus lived with his sister Kunjiamma (VI/2) and her husband Murugan (VI/1), in the same house, who joined them, after marrying (Govinda's sister) Kunjiamma (VI/2).

Govinda was the sixth among nine children of whom six brothers died before reaching a marriageable age, whilst two sisters survived, one of them Kunjiamma (VI/2), now sharing the same house, as shown above.

At the age of eighteen, Govinda married a maternal cousin, Murugai after she had reached puberty. She gave birth to two babies. At the time of birth she was afflicted with 'fever and madness'. Both children died soon. He claimed that he had to divorce her "because she went off her mind". Questioned in which way this, among aborigines not too common, defect became manifest, he replied that she began to "sing at night". Though I agree that this habit might be felt a bit disturbing – it should be considered less so, among people, such as the Kadar (and many of their neighbours in the plains), who find it in no way inordinate to conduct a conversation at the top of their voices and over the heads of their undisturbedly sleeping relatives, should anyone of them for some reason wake up, in the middle of the night, and feel the inclination for a casual "small talk". Murugan was in 1947 mostly living among the Kadar round Chungam on the Coimbatore side; beyond the border of Cochin State, but was mostly in Parambikulam in 1948.

After the sad experience with his first wife and her habit of singing when other people slept, Govinda, it seems,

left the usual orbit of the Kadar in disgust. He wandered through various places of the Coimbatore district, went up the Nilgiris and finally found a job as *tappal-karen* (postman) in the British Forest Department at Kunnoor. Among the many things which attracted his curiosity, during these wanderings, it was the skill of a tinker which impressed him most.

Govinda returned with some cash to his native hills and married his wife Agamma (VI/6) about eight or nine years before 1947/48. In spite of her previous experiences in married life (*infra*), Govinda was very particular in stressing the fact that his was "not a love, – but an arranged marriage" (*kalyanam*), agreed upon by the girl's parents, mediated by his brother-in-law Murugan (VI/1) and so to say officially recognised by a gift of clothes, from the P.W.D. Inspector, whom Govinda served as a gang-cooly at that time. His stress on the formal character of his marriage is obviously an acculturation-product, acquired in contact with plainspeople.

About three to four years after this, his second marriage, Govinda got promoted as a tram-line watchman and since divided his time between work in this capacity and as a tinker. He took corrugated iron from a deserted roof-shelter for newly caught elephants, or from old food-tins. Even black-smithery was occasionally practised by him with the help of two comrades, blowing air through bamboo, as air-pumps. Apart from producing tin vessels, he fitted pieces of corrugated iron to the edges and angles of the oda-leaf roof of house No. VI ("Vettioren—B") and thus gave an appearance to his sister's family's house which, if less aesthetic, was certainly more in accord with our present machine civilization than ordinary Kadan houses usually are. From the practical point of view the results appeared to be rather poor which he derived from those hours and hours of hammering to which he kept with astounding perseverance. Unable to solder, plumb or use any melted metals otherwise, he could not prevent his vessels

from leaking soon nor, of course, from getting rusty; two defects, which the original Kadan bamboo vessel of yore did not suffer from. Yet, the fascination of modernism is so strong, also among Kadan women, that they not only put up with the ear-splitting noise of hammering on big tin sheets at every hour of the day, but even paid willingly a rupee, or two, for the newfangled tin vessels instead of cutting a cleaner and more durable bamboo into the required shape; – a work which takes perhaps an hour and no cash expenses at all. The Kadan Govinda's proficiency as a craftsman is perhaps worthy of notice since he is by no means the only example, among non-agricultural and food-gathering aboriginals, who makes a patient artisan, whilst agriculture and, to a lesser degree, keeping of domestic animals will be assimilated by truly food-gathering aborigines only with great difficulty. When one day I felt rather tired and began to resent Govinda's hammering about as much as he seemed to have resented his first wife's singing at night, I asked him to suspend his work for a little so that I may sleep a while after the mid-day meal. He willingly agreed, gathered his utensils and went some two or three furlongs into the jungle, – mistakingly believing that he would not be heard hammering from there. Such was his almost unconquerable eagerness to use every free minute for his newly acquired craft whilst, to the ordinary Kadan, time means of course very little, if anything at all.

Though I am mentioning this because I believe in the relative adaptability to certain crafts, of non-agricultural Aboriginals, Govinda, here shown as such an example, must yet be described as an exceptional personality among other Kadar. More curious, for instance, than most of them, he took genuine interest in my hints at the customs of the mountaineers in my own native country: Austria, and began asking me anthropological questions as his informant, which might not be without interest to the student of the Kadar's

ethical evaluation, in social matters, and may therefore be recorded here.

"Have girls to be married before puberty in your country?" he enquired, apparently because he had come to believe that the "civilized peoples" all over the world are usually observing this Brahmanical rule, which he had found in force as a mark of respectability, wherever he went, – even so far as Kunnoor!

My reply seemed to please him when I truthfully reported that pre-puberty marriages were not allowed in my country; as in fact they are not, officially, also here in India, and that love making to a girl before the age of fourteen was even punished by law. Other Kadar nodded when he expressed his belief that the introduction of pre-puberty marriages, in his own tribe, some 40 years ago, by civilized plainspeople, had not been a success because marriageable girls have become too scarce now. Govinda expressed approval when, on further enquiry, he came to know that *Fensterln*, (*i.e.* "premarital courtship"[19]—an institutionalized privilege of peasant girls in the Eastern Alps), – normally results in a girl's marriage after the birth of her first child. His and his friend's comments were accompanied by a good-natured chuckling which seemed to indicate that what we Austrians used to call *Fensterln* might sound somewhat less unfamiliar, to a Kadan, under the name of joining a honey-collecting expedition with a family of an attractive daughter. Nothing, however, found such acclamation as my reply in the negative to the question whether Austrians celebrate the second death ceremony. The absence of this costly obligation in the Alpine Republic raised her prestige among the hillmen of Cochin considerably. But when I had to reply to further questions, that divorce was a

[19] Comp. the description and anthropological analysis of the custom Loeb, (1950), p. 821, *seq.*

recognized legal feature in the social structure of modern Austria, though not recognized by the church, the disapproval shown was almost as intensive as it could have been expected from amongst the people in the plains. This is the more astounding as, contrary to the customs of many plainspeople of Southern India, the Kadar actually do permit divorce and remarriage of divorced persons quite frequently, as we have seen above. It is not unlikely that the disgust, shown at this occasion, was mainly due to Govinda's wish to present himself "fully civilized" and well aware of the fact that among "caste Hindus" in the plains divorce was, at least to his notion, and at the time of his travels, legally prohibited.

AGAMMA (VI/6) (Plate No. XV/b facing, p. 109) a healthy looking, and rather light-chocolate coloured woman with the typically curly Kadan hair, (unless freshly oiled and combed down), the elder sister of late Chinnama (IV/4) and Ayuma (IV/9). She was particularly fond of Chinnama; used to spend most of her time in Household IV ("Pandalkura"), before this sister's death. Like Chinnama, also Agamma was taller than most Kadan women and had something in her appearance and mannerism which called the socially elevated castes of the plainspeople to mind, – including a certain self-consciousness and lacking confidence *vis a vis* foreign males, – if not even her own menfolk.

Agamma was first betrothed to Pönnala (IV/3), as we have already seen (*supra*).[21] She had changed her mind about the marriage and her father Ambalan appears to have unexpectedly raised objection on the ground that Agamma was the daughter of her proposed bridegroom Pönnala's aunt. That this objection did not, really speaking, hold water at all is shown by the fact that no objections were raised against Pönnala's subsequent marriage with Chinnama (IV/4), Agamma's younger sister who was in the same way related to

[21] Chap. V, p. 96.

him. Anyway, Agamma married one Chittian, instead of Pönnala, who was at that time staying in Parambikulam. After some time she disliked and divorced him and married one Chungan at Thakadi, but also this, her third union, was not found satisfactory and ended in divorce after only six days. I was told that Chungan was not good in tree climbing and in the art of collecting forest products and that it was therefore feared that he would not be able to support his wife. Finally Agamma married Govindan, her present husband (in 1947-48) with whom she seemed to be happily and lastingly united.

Agamma was born as a sister of six children of whom three died soon after delivery, whilst her two younger sisters, Chinnama (IV/4) and Ayuma (IV/9), were married in "Pandalkura" at Parambikulam (*supra*), and a younger brother Karumban (VI/8) (*infra*) used to stay with the parents.

Agamma miscarried three or four times which is why her husband Govinda (VI/5) dedicated a silver statuette to a Christian church near Chalakudy. In April 1947 Agamma gave birth to a girl, named, by her father Govinda:

ANNA (VI/7) after his father's sister's name Annamma.

KARUMBAN (VI/8) a boy of about 12 years, younger brother of Agamma (VI/6). He used to stay with his parents who often came to visit their daughters at Parambikulam and stayed at these occasions always with Agamma (VI/6), the oldest of them. In 1948 Karumban seemed to have permanently settled with her.

AMBALAN (VI/9), father of Agamma (VI/6), Chinnama (IV/4), Ayuma (IV/9) and Karumban (VI/8), said to be 70 years, though he looked like 55 or 60 at the utmost. He too seemed to have settled down permanently in the household of his oldest daughter, Agamma (VI/6), here

in "Vettioren-B", – especially since the death, during the cholera epidemic of November 1947, of his wife:

THADACHI (VI/10) who died of cholera during a long visit here in her daughter Agammâ's (VI/6) house in November 1947.

PACHAMMA (VI/11), said to be "about 80", the mother of Ambalan (VI/9) with whom she settled permanently here, in her grand-daughter Agamma's (VI-6) house.

VA*ZH*AVAN—(no identification number)—(*v.* Plate No. XVII facing p. 123), a man of over forty. He was not residing in the Parambikulam hamlet and therefore no identification numbers in Roman and Arabic ciphers were being attached to his name, as it was the case with the "permanent" residents of the Parambikulam hamlet. His name was therefore also not listed in the Parambikulam Relationship Chart, facing p. 65 of this chapter. There are, however, the following reasons which induced me to include him into this collection of short biographical sketches:

(1) his attachment – though in a loose and casual sort of way – to the group of Kadar, residing in Parambikulam hamlet and, more important still,

(2) the uniqueness of his personality and fate which is yet in many respects characteristic of, and in no way incongruent with the Kadan style of life and the Kadan mentality of old.

The opposite is true. Va*zh*avan may indeed be called the *Last Kadan* of truly genuine tribal character whom I could see.

I have heard stories about this independent and self-willed but lonely man, – long before I have myself seen Va*zh*avan for the first time.

"You will see the old bark-clothing, if only we could get at Va*zh*avan", Tambi (I/1) told me once, when I tried in vain to identify with his help trees, the bark of which used to be manufactured into clothing. Or another informant would come to a point in his narrative, where he was no more sure about the details of the old creation myth and, after some futile searching in his memory, he would exclaim:—

"Va*zh*avan might know. But how to find him?"

His home was said to be a cave in some inaccessible slopes on the eastern border of Cochin. But all my attempts to find a guide to the place met with disappointment.

"He will not tell where he actually lives and if we would find out by chance, he would change the place immediately. He does not want his whereabouts to be known; to nobody, – least of all to a foreigner".

One day after I had already started for a tour into the forest, one of the classificatory, "brothers" Pönnala's (IV/3) in Pandalkura came running after us and said "Va*zh*avan is here. He will see you".

Va*zh*avan impressed me at once as an unusual person. Not because he was lean, yet healthy, quiet and yet without actual fear or shyness in his subdued gaze. But talking seemed to cost him some exertion, though of no overtly physical character. There was something like an invisible load on him. On the day of my first encounter with Va*zh*avan he performed animal-imitation "dances" for me, such as used to be commonly acted by Kadar "in the old days, when there was leisure for such things" as the elder people of Parambikulam put it. These dances included monkey,– boar,– tiger,– mousedeer–, (*Moschiola mamina*: Mal.: *kura*), spotted deer,– and jackal – imitations, as well as a somewhat stylized imitation of sexual intercourse among humans which, at least in the performance acted by Va*zh*avan, had nothing obscene, burlesque or repulsive about it, but, without verbal

explanation, would hardly have been recognised as what it was meant to be. It could have been taken for a mere gymnastical exercise of a man lying prostrated on the ground and lifting his stiffly stretched body on the hands whilst extending his forearms. In spite of its incongruity, from the alleged interpretative point of view, there was a rhythmic beauty, almost of the nature of a dance, in the movement. Va*zh*avan seemed exhausted after this performance and I had not the impression that this exhaustion had anything to do with the physical exertion involved.

According to the reports of other Kadar, Va*zh*avan had been married three times and all his wives had died, one after the other, when he finally carried away a fourth girl, but was attacked by her companions, and deprived of his clothes. After that he was said to have left human society for good and to have declared never to come back again.

I was for sometime under the impression that my informants knew, or suspected, more than what they told me and I considered the possibility of an aboriginal sexual neurotic and some hushed up tragedy here. Later it became quite clear to me that my previous suspicions of the informant's hinting at something that they would not like openly to announce, had been utterly wrong and I finally felt convinced that Va*zh*avan neither tried to hide anything before me nor told me anything that he, or the other Kadar, would not believe to be true.

He said that from the beginning he liked the lonely life in the forest, subsisting on the food which he and his first wife collected, rather, than depending on the contractor and his agents. After the death of his first wife, Va*zh*avan thus continued to live alone in the forest until he married again. Also the second marriage was happy until sudden illness killed his second wife; a tragic fate which was repeated after a third marriage.

At the end of these repeated tragedies, Va*zh*avan said that he had lived for some time with a brother and his family in the hills further south and that he was there accused of having courted a married woman, after which he left the company of his relatives in disgust and since then lived alone in the forest. He wore no bark clothes anymore, but a small piece of cotton and had an iron jungle knife in 1947.

When I saw him again in 1948, he had lost the knife but still managed to get sufficient food for himself, and a small dog, with his hands and digging stick, and even to barter some collected surplus against salt, a few chillies and some tea. A little quantity of these "luxuries", some sugar and rice, which I could give him were much appreciated by Va*zh*avan. He gave me a beautiful, clean bamboo vessel full of honey which he had collected himself. His home consisted of a rock-shelter on a steep hill, in which he could keep a fire and which he had fenced in, on one side, with a bamboo screen. Elephants, though passing by his "cave" could not approach close enough to reach actually into it. Tigers, however, could easily have slipped into the cave and carried away either Va*zh*avan himself, or the small dog which had been lent to him. He said, however, that, like most Kadar, he was awakening whenever a tiger approached the cave, and then rolled stone-boulders down the slope or rekindled the fire, so that the tiger gave up the idea of an attack.

More dangerous than the wild beasts, he said, was malaria and cholera. He showed me deep scars on his thighs;—caused by fire, when he fell unconscious during a heavy malaria attack, and burned himself badly in his own fire-place. Worse of all, however, was death which took all the wives from him, with whom he had been happy. He also deplored the ways of the new-fangled girls who wanted costly clothes and rice diet and disliked the old ways of Kadan life,

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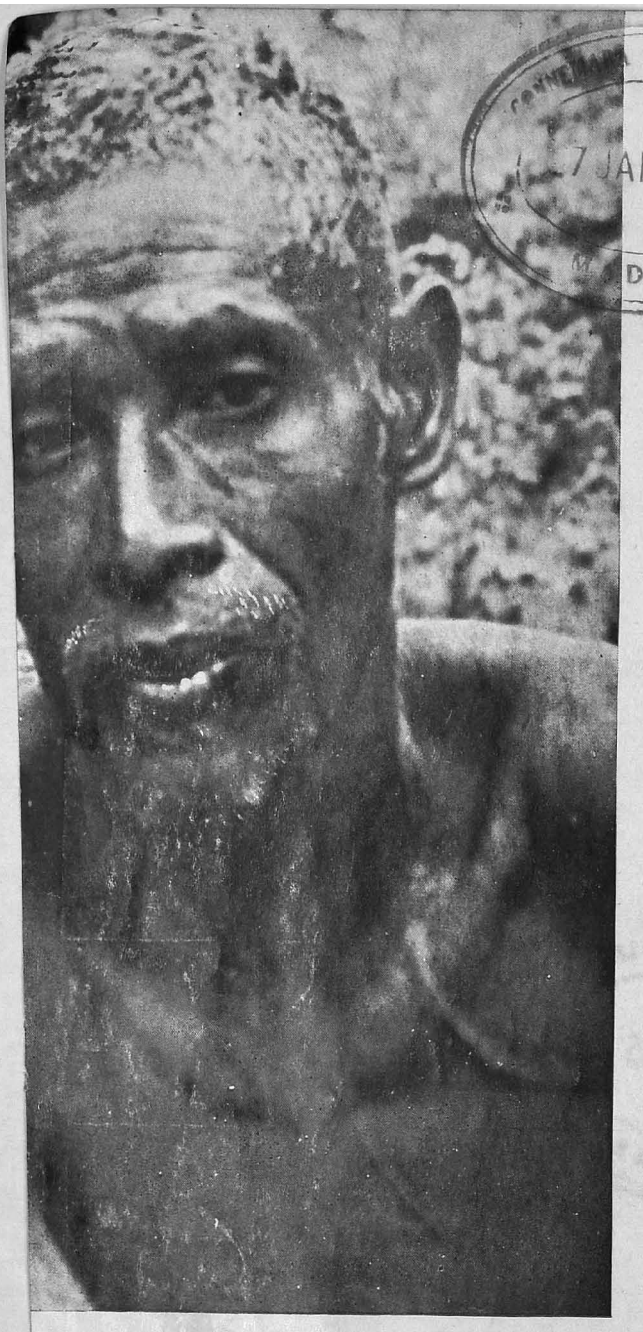
Pl. XVI/b. SITTING WITH STRETCHED LEGS



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VAZHAVAN,
"the last true Kadan".

So he was forced to live alone. There was something utterly convincing in his simple statements and I felt ashamed, when remembering my earlier suspicions.

I suggested to try and find a bride among one of the neighbouring tribes, where scarcity of women was not as acute as among the Kadar, and where the desire for modern, costly articles was not yet so general as among Kadan girls. But Vazhavan rejected the idea as altogether impossible. On further enquiry I found that he did not harbour any feelings of superiority, or inferiority, towards the neighbouring tribes, nor anticipates such among them, but simply could not conceive of inter-tribal marriage as a practical possibility. It was certainly no solution of his life's paramount difficulty. He seemed determined not to return to the society of others, but to stay on alone in the forest.

Kinship Terms

The following list of some of the more frequently used kinship terms was composed whilst collecting the data of the foregoing biographical sketches in the Parambikulam hamlet.

ENGLISH:	KADAN – TAMIL:
Father	*appan*
Mother	*amma*
Son	*makan*
Daughter	*makal*
Elder brother and cousin	*achan*
Younger brother and cousin	*tambi*
Elder sister and cousin	*achi* (or *tamakka*)
Younger sister and cousin	*anuchatti**
Father's older brother	*mutappan*
Father's younger brother	*kuttyappan*

*A term frequently used by Malayalam-speaking plainspeople.

Father's younger brother's wife	*taiya* †
Father's older sister	*mutamma*
Father's younger sister	*mami*
Father's sister (generally)	*amayi* (*ammai*)*
Mother's older – younger brother	*maman*
(Comp. Chapt. VI, p. 135: Father-in-law)	
Maternal uncle's wife	*mami*
Mother's older sister	*mutamma*
Mother's younger sister	*kutty*
Father's father or Mother's father	*peran*‡
Father's mother or Mother's mother	*pati*
Older relatives generally	*muta*
Younger relatives generally	*ila*
Small child	*tuvi* or *kutti*
One's own wife	*matana* or *mat(a)lé* $
One's own husband or caste-fellow (friend)	*mat(a)na* $
We (excluding the addressed)	*nyangl*
We (including the addressed)	*nammal*

† I failed to ascertain why a special kinship-term was used for the wife of the father's younger brother.

* Comp.: Tam.: *attai* and the ordinary Malayalam meaning of *amma*i—see: p. 100, *sub* Chinnama (IV/4), and comp. p. 136: discussion of this term.

‡ This term is used for "grandson" by Tamil-speaking plainspeople who call the grandfather *patan* or *tata*.

$ More details re. *matalé* and *matana*—see: chap. XI, p. 265.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF FAMILY-LIFE AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Introductory Note

THE present chapter is mainly, but not exclusively devoted to the analysis of the various social features which the last, fifth, chapter has presented to the reader. It must, however, be stressed that such of these features only are taken into consideration here which have been found typical of, and coincidental with, observations made elsewhere among Kadar, even if these latter have not been described in Chapter V. The present sixth chapter is, therefore, a summing up of the features that have been observed generally, – not only of those which are described in the life histories of Chapter V, though references will mostly be made to the individuals and families of the life histories narrated therein.

The reference numbers (Roman cipher for house and Arabic cipher for the individual member of that house) of each person mentioned, is always added in brackets if the person belongs to the Parambikulam group. This number also corresponds to that person's name in the relationship-charts, facing pp. 65 and 66, and the Roman cipher to the houses of the village-plan of Parambikulam p. 65. It will be found useful to make frequent use of these charts and lists in order to realize the often complicated and manifold kinship,– or neighbourly relations by which the persons concerned are interconnected and which cannot always be repeated in the following summary of features and conclusions, drawn from them.

By *features* quite a number of negatory qualities have also to be understood in this connection. A full appreciation

of these "negative qualities", will thus be necessary for the proper understanding of Kadan family-life and Kadan organization. These "negative features" should therefore be appreciated as something more than a mere "negation", before the positive elements in Kadan sociology can be adequately judged, or systematized, and will therefore be first discussed here.

Village,- and Family – Groupings

We have seen that not only no indigenous Kadan chieftainship or group-headmanship existed but, what is more, that it failed to get permanently established in spite of the official backing from the highest authority which the *muppans* (village headmen) enjoyed when they were installed by the Maharajah about two generations ago. Even such a prominent person as Tambi (I/1), with the backing of his authoritatively acknowledged position as a forest guard, neither considered himself as anything in the way of a *muppan* with power to inflict corporal punishment on co-villagers, nor could he act as such.

When his wife Velakkal (I/2) kicked up a row, one night, ostensibly because of his alleged infidelity but in actual fact rather because she was jealous of her two stepdaughters (I/4 and 5), Tambi (I/1) did not feel that he had the authority to order silence. Moreover, when members of Household VI ("Vettioren-B") seemed to support his wife's case, he rather showed patience by bringing forward arguments in his favour, instead of trying to suppress the movement by means of his undoubtedly existing personal authority. This is typical of the position, not only of leading individuals in the village, but also in the family.

Similarly as the treatment of children is permissive and they are rarely submitted to corporal punishment, so also are young people not forced into, or prevented from, marriage against their will. Agamma (VI/6), for whom

marriage ceremonies with Pönnala (IV/3) had already been arranged, was for instance free to choose another husband, in the last moment, her father Ambalan (VI/9) making lame excuses to Pönnala, as soon as she had changed her mind.

Observers who are familiar with the position to which village, – and family – authorities are generally entitled in present day Indian village-life of the plains, will be inclined to ascribe this state of affairs among the hillmen of Cochin to laxity, if not to the disintegration of the tribal pattern which undoubtedly has set in, during the last generation or two, though with results, quite different from the here assumed ones. That the special problem under review is, however, an indication of persistence, rather, than disintegration of tribal organization will become quite clear if it is realized how much of the typically aboriginal love for freedom, and also unsettledness of life there still survives. Inspite of the no doubt existing acculturation and consequently following disintegration, little of the plainspeoples' comparative settledness has as yet come to a modern Kadan local group. A Kadan village may, or may not, continue to exist if its immediate surroundings, or the whims of its inhabitants, change. Persons may, or may not, live in the place they had been born in [Comp. as examples: Tambi (I/1), Supravo (II/1), Velli (III/1) and, until her death, Nilay (IV/2) with her sons, brother, half-sister and nephews of House IV ("Pandalkura")]. Individuals and small family groups move so frequently from one place to the other that the very idea of a 'permanent residence' carries little weight in Kadan thought. The two sisters Kartiyayani (I/4) and Nallatangal (I/5) were described, to me, as two unmarried residents in House I ("Kochukura—A"), during March 1947, because they had just divorced their respective husbands and had returned to the house of their father Tambi (I/1) and their step-mother Velakkal (I/2). Two months later they were described as re-married and

stayed with their previous husbands in the same house but, by the end of 1947, had again shifted to the places of their husbands. Maruthamal (IV/13) and, at least Tungamanni (IV/12), out of her three children, were "at home" at Parambikulam, as much as at Orukomban, until they shifted there for a long stay, in June 1947. Angamma (IV/16) or Ambalan (VI/9) and Thadachi (VI/10), the parents of Agamma (VI/6), lived as much with their relatives in Parambikulam, as in other villages, with other relatives. Whosoever almost, among the real Kadar, who happened to be present, when I took census, was *ipso facto* considered a "permanent resident", unless he or she was actually a non-habitual visitor who had come for a short time from a far away place. Membership of a family unit thus appears in a way to be as floating and as subject to changes, as that within a village unit. Both are lacking anything in the way of an organised "village-community";—not to speak of the authoritarian headmanship, referred to in older literature, but found non-existant, as the position of Tambi (I/1) illustrated.

No Family-names, but ceremony of giving Personal Names

Corresponding with this indefiniteness of residence, home,– and family– membership, there do not exist any clan,– family,– or regional names for Kadan sub-groups, either. A person is known by his or her personal name which may occasionally be changed, as for instance in the case of Karappama (II/2) who was *Kettani,* before her divorce. Generally names of both, boys and girls, however, are not changed, though they may be better known by nicknames, than by the "official name".

This quasi "legal name" of a child seems always to be given by the oldest male member of the family, or by the father of the child and allegedly without consulting the

mother's wishes. The name is said mostly to be chosen from a deceased member of either the father's or the mother's family. This, however, seems hardly credible, at least for the present generations, since most names of the youngest (present) Kadan generation are taken from the (Sanscritic) Hindu pantheon, in imitation of a fashion, which has introduced these names, quite recently, into non-Brahmin plains-people communities of Kerala. No doubt these names are not inherited from deceased Kadan ancestors, who had no notion of either the Hindu gods themselves or the use of their names for the designation of Kadan babies. The alleged custom of name-giving, through the father only, without consultation of the mother's wishes, appears therefore also doubtful as regards its truly Kadan origin. It seems to be probable that the original Kadan names, usually indicating in Tamil some existing, or aspired, qualities [comp: Pönnala (IV/3) – "Gold String", Velakkal (I/2) – "White Sister"], where chosen and given by the nearest relatives and perhaps confirmed by the father – as in the ceremony described below. This, however, is only my personal impression, for which I have no definite proof either.

After delivery, mother and child will stay ten days in the ordinary menstruation hut (*thinda chala*) and then shift to a temporary, but somewhat bigger habitation near the ordinary dwelling place (*pathi*). Mother and child will in theory stay at this separate, 'birth hut' along with the other women and girls of their family, until the name will be given to the child, which may be as late as three months after its birth [or sometimes even more, as in the case of the orphan daughter (I/9) of late Karappi (I/3), because the mother had died in childbirth and the father, a non-Kadan, had deserted her]. In practice, on the other hand, they often return also earlier.

On the day of the name-giving, which should be a Friday, mother and child take an oil-bath, followed by a water-bath and return, along with the other female members,

from the temporary to the ordinary dwelling place. There the naming of the child is performed on the same day. A meal will be served to family-members and neighbours which may be in the way of a feast, accompanied by drum-beating, piping, dancing and, now-a-days, the consumption of arrack. I could neither observe nor find any memory, among Kadar, of the custom to sprinkle "a little water on the child three times" or to "call out the name as many times loudly" which Ananthakrishna Iyer describes in this connection.[1]

Genuine Kadan names used to be original and significant with an occasional touch of humour. Wanditalai (IV/20) was a child with a particularly heavy, square head, hence this name (lit : *wagon-head*) was given to him in his babyhood even before it was known that he was going to be a dwarf. But now the urge, among Kadar, to appear "fully civilized" manifests itself in the recently introduced use of Sanskrit names, especially for boys. Members of the young generation of Kadan boys are almost exclusively Ramas and Kṛshnas (Kadan: *Kishan*), though among the girls Laxmis and Parvatis are not yet quite so frequent, as they have recently come to be among Nayar, Tiya and other non-Brahmin communities in the plains of Kerala.

Similarly have house names been adopted, in imitation of the aristocratic matrilineal castes of Kerala, where they are inherited in the female line. The Kadar, whilst adopting these designations for their little bamboo-huts, do not co-adopt the institutions which are associated with these house-names. Though the use of individual names for houses appears to be of quite recent introduction – a matter of 40 to 50 years – it has established itself as a feature of Kadan life, though it is not at all clear to the ordinary Kadan that this institution is of such recent origin in Kadan society, and that it has really no bearing on any social or personal

[1] Iyer, (1909), p. 7.

rights or obligations whatsoever. We have seen that it took me quite a time to grasp this situation[2] which was finally made quite clear, to me, only through the intelligent interpretations of Velli (III/1).

Ties of Family Relationship

With all this looseness and flexibility, there still do exist, among the Kadar even of to-day, family ties of strong emotional and practical value. The parent-children relation is of paramount importance and I have not come across a single instance of neglect from either side. In the cases of their parents having separated, children will usually divide their time between both of them. Balakrishan (I/7) used to stay with his late mother Karappi (I/3) in Parambikulam but to spend also about as much time with his divorced father Chatta at Orukomban. Grown-up children will similarly look after their old parents, as Pönnala (IV/3) and Chadayan (IV/6) looked after her mother Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2), or Mangaren (IV/8) and Medukan (IV/10) after theirs,—Warachi (IV/14).

If there is thus a nuclear entity of parents and children round which Kadan social organization seems to revolve, it is, at the same time, indefinitely enlarged through the extension of emotions, emotional ties and practical responsibilities towards nephews and nieces, as well as uncles and aunts;—emotions which very nearly approximate those that exist between children and parents. Nagaray (I/1) used to be looked after, by his numerous nephews, in House IV. Little Angammal (IV/16) stayed with her maternal uncle Pönnala (IV/3), and was looked after by him, since her mother's death, as much, as by her own father. Old Nagaray (IV/1) was being respected and looked after, by the many sons of his sister Nilay (IV/2) and half-sister Warachi (IV/14), until,

[2] Comp. *sub*: Supravo (II/1), p. 87 and Valli (III/1), p. 91.

however, he left Household IV not long after his sister's death, late in 1947. This fact is the more noteworthy as there is apparently no trace of a truly matrilineal order in Kadan society which could explain this strong tie between mother's brother and nieces or nephews. But if the family-organization is not actually matrilineal, it also is *not* patrilineal nor less could it be described as patriarchal.

It is probably not wrong to say that, among Kadar generally, about the same importance is being attached to the maternal, – as to the paternal ties of relationship, as the cases under review may be taken to illustrate. Govinda (VI/5), for instance, stayed with his sister Kunjiamma (VI/2) in their common House VI ("Vettioren-B"), before she married Murugan (VI/1) and thus made him also to join as her husband. Similarly Kurumban (VI/8), along with his father, mother and grandmother, joined the same household, during 1947, because his sister Agamma (VI/6) had been there.

These and all the other ties of relationship, marked with red lines in the Family-Chart (facing pp. 65 and 66), would seem to indicate the existence of numerous matrilineal family connections, among the Kadar, such as they determined most of the other communities in Kerala. These matrilineal features, like their patrilineal counterparts, however, appear to lack the constancy and systematization which would permit of considering them as either matrilineal, or patrilineal in the full sense of the term. True, the big Household IV ("Pandalkura") was grouped round two sisters (Nilay—IV/2) and (Warachi—IV/14) and one brother (Nagaray—IV/1), instead of round one or more married couples, as in a patriarchal joint family. But then one of the two sisters (Warachi—IV/14) was from another mother and, consequently, would not belong to the same family, as her elder sister (IV/2) and brother (IV/1) would, – had they been members of a genuinely matrilineal society. True also that

the two families of Household VI ("Vettioren—B") crystallized round a sister-brother couple (Kunjiamma—VI/2 – Govinda—VI/5) but then, Govinda (VI/5) took his wife Agamma (VI/6) to his place, patrilocally. But she, again, attracted her younger brother Karumban (VI/8), and her parents, to join the common house in the sororilocal way.

Bilateral Organization

If this stress on the affinity with maternal relations makes itself generally felt it does, at the same time, not appear to be strong enough to warrant matri, – or sororilocal residence, as a general rule after marriage. Brides do more often stay in the place of their bridegrooms, after marriage, than *vice versa,* although also this happens quite frequently, as in the case of Murugan (VI/1) or in that of the two re-married husbands of Kartiyayani (I/4) and Nallatangal (I/5) (in the latter case at least for some time after re-marriage). Karappi (I/3) also lived with her lover in her elder sister Velakkal's (I/2), house, though this may have been so, mainly, because as a low-countryman her lover had no family of his own or habitation in the hills.

The general character of the family organization may thus be best termed as bilateral with a high degree of consideration for maternal relationship and yet with a generally prevailing trend to patrilocal residence of young couples. The economic and customary equality of the sexes, which we found documented throughout the biographical sketches in the previous chapter, lends further colour to this picture of Kadan society as a basically bilateral organization, though modern trends tend to disintegrate this balanced equilibrium.[8]

The Maternal Uncle

This picture finds also further support in the rôle generally played by the maternal uncle. He neither holds the

[8] Comp. Chap. IX (Paragraphs on *Modern Changes and Spreading of Laziness,* pp. 208, 209 and 219-222, 226.

official position, to which he is entitled in a genuinely matrilineal organization, nor is he altogether out of the picture, as among fullfledged patrilineal societies, where he would be less important, rather, than more important than the paternal uncle.

Among the Kadar it is mostly in the case of the father's death that the mother's brother would come in as an important guardian. It is rather he, than any other close relative, who, among Kadar, feels that he is responsible to help his sister's children. Karappi (I/3) for instance had no father, so normally her mother's brother should have looked after her marriage. But since she had also no maternal uncle, it was Tambi (I/1), her older sister Velakkal's (I/2) husband, who arranged for her first marriage, being the nearest approximation to a maternal uncle for her. Little Angamma (VI/16), as we have seen, was, after her mother's death, at least partly looked after, by her maternal uncle Pönnala (IV/3).

A prominent position of maternal uncles in puberty rites or during marriages of girls, whose fathers were alive, was not found by me.

Though there is nothing to prove it, there is yet a certain probability in the assumption that this "emergency position" of the maternal uncle, among the Kadar, has at least partly been borrowed from the plainspeople in Kerala who had been mostly matrilineal, until quite recently, and among whom the position of the maternal uncle is even nowadays that of the most authoritative and helpful relative to whom a child would turn, at any rate, if the father is dead or absent. Most of the contacts with plainspeople is, as we have seen, for the Cochin Kadar on the western, *i.e.*, originally matrilineal Kerala side of the mountains.

It is, however, significant that the position of the maternal uncle is by far more important, among some of the

neighbouring hill tribes, (as for instance among the Muduvar), than it is the case among Kadar.

Cousin – Marriage

Cousin-marriage and an influential position of the maternal uncle are frequently connected sociological features especially so in South India, where it is a wide-spread custom, among matrilineal or at least formerly matrilineal communities to marry one's uncle's daughter.[4]

Though, among Kadar, there does not exist any prohibition against this type of marriage (which I came across in villages other than Parambikulam), it is yet rare, as compared to the frequency of marriages between paternal cousins. Pönnala (IV/3) for instance was married to Chinnama (IV/4), both having been children of two brothers, namely the late Andiappan and Ambalan (IV/9). Murugan (VI/1) likewise married Kunjiamma (VI/2), the daughter of his father's brother Kannumani. Tambi's (I/1) late first wife Angai was the daughter of "a close relative, or at least a friend", and his late third wife, Machammal, the sister's daughter, of Tambi's father. So in both cases they were their husband's paternal cousins.

The relationship terms which the Kadar use (comp. pp. 123/24) appear in this connection to be misapplied Malayalam terms. The term *maman* is primarily used for father-in-law, among Kadar, although it appears also to signify maternal uncle. This term is probably borrowed from the Malayalam *ammaman* (maternal uncle). Since among most communities in the plains the maternal uncle of a man is often his father-in-law, the Kadar appear to have adopted this word (or its

[4] This problem was discussed, by me, in an article on Koili Malayalis, (1943). There it is also the boy who marries his maternal uncle's daughter. Comp. also the extensive discussion of this type of relationship in Layard (1942), where not only in relationship questions, but also other matters, as for instance the labyrinth drawings, a parallel is drawn to South India (pp. 569 ff, 655 c, 681 ff, etc.).

corrupt form: *maman*) to signify father-in-law, even in cases when he is *not* a maternal, or other uncle, at all. The equivocal use of the word *maman* for both: father-in-law and maternal uncle becomes the more misleading as the Kadar call a father's sister *amay* which means maternal uncle's wife among Nayar of the plains. If thus a Kadan would say that his wife is the daughter of his *maman* and his *amay*, he simply states that the girl is (naturally) his father-in-law's daughter and (in the particular case) also of his paternal aunt, but to a Nayar the same statement would indicate that the girl is the daughter of his maternal uncle and (naturally) also of his (the maternal uncle's) wife. This is probably the reason why we find the statement, in the older literature, that "the custom prevails among them (*i.e.*, Kadar) of a man's marrying the daughter of his maternal uncle"[5] and that "a man may not marry a girl related to him on the male side."[6]

For the purpose of marriage, preference seems to be given to the paternal, – rather than to the maternal relatives which might be taken as expressing a feeling of closer family-ties between maternal relatives, as compared to paternal ones, since close relatives are often avoided in marriage. This preference for paternal cousin marriages would seem to indicate matrilineal trends in Kadan society.

Brother-Sister Marriage ?

Kadar deny that brother-sister marriages, or sexual relations between them, exist, and I have not come across any instance of rumours to that effect, though I have come to know of an alleged father-daughter affair, ending in tragedy.[7] Kadar are self-conscious and will meticulously avoid what is considered as "uncivilized" by the plainspeople. The present absence of brother-sister marriage does, therefore,

[5] *Iyer, (1909)*, p. 5.

[6] *Ibid*, p. 4. Both quoted by permission of Higginbothams Ltd., Madras.

[7] Comp. Chap. VII, p. 171.

not prove its absence from former Kadan custom in pre-acculturation days. The absence of a clear-cut prohibition of such unions does, on the other hand, also not prove that it *had* been allowed formerly, nor less that it was practised. Actually it would be difficult to formulate such a prohibition in Kadan phraseology, as there does not exist any term, solely confined to siblings, without being also applied to cousins. Cousin-marriage is, as we have seen, not only permitted but even the rule. To the ordinary Kadan, brother-sister marriage or love-making to one's sister seems, however, simply out of the question and certainly "not done". When, before some of the elderly Kadan men of Parambikulam, and in my presence, the case of an influential plainsman was discussed who, it was said, had married his uterine sister, whilst in Malaya during the Japanese occupation,—Tambi (I/1), Murugan (IV/1) and Govinda (VI/5) smiled incredulously, as though this was a thing hardly to be believed.

Marriage Forms

Kadar will generally assert that they strictly abide by the monogamic rules of which they know that they are nowadays favoured in the plains. There are, however, indications that this had not always been the case though actual monogamy appears to have generally been far more prevalent, among Kadar, than it used to be, or still is, among the plainspeople. Yet, instances of both, polyandry and polygamy, do occur even nowadays. They may have been more frequent in olden times, though I have no indications for such an assumption. We have seen that Velli (III/1), prior to his later marriage with Kanni (III/2), had been one of two simultaneous polyandrous husbands of Veluppu, the other being Kettappan of Parayamkadavu. After long duration of this polyandrous marriage, Velli (III/1) divorced Veluppu, in order to marry his exclusive wife Kanni (III/2), but not without visiting his

first polyandrous wife Veluppu frequently afterwards which, as we have seen, resulted in domestic quarrels with Kanni the new monogamic wife. It is well known and remembered by all Kadar how the three former members of the polyandrous household had lived peacefully and happily together. Yet, when I met Veluppu for the first time at Parayamkadavu and asked my Nayar-companion in English whether Veluppu was the same woman, of whom I had previously been told that she has had two husbands, he replied in the affirmative, adding, however, at once that I should not mention the fact lest Veluppu might get angry that he "gave her away". This sense of illegality was no doubt an acculturation result, – unknown to truly original Kadar, or scarcely present among Kadar if alone among themselves.

Cherakutty, the late husband of Papati (I/8), had previously been married to Alamma and Olamma and they used to stay with him, their common polygamous husband, as peacefully and happily, as Veluppu's two husbands stayed with her, their common wife.

Traces of fraternal polyandry (which seems to be the more frequently surviving form of polyandry in the plains of to-day, inspite of legislation against it, which has been imposed on formerly legally polyandrous communities) have, however, not come to my notice among Kadar.

Matrimonial relations to a man's wife's sister seem to occur not less frequently than they do in the plains, generally, though there is a touch of illegality adhering to them, among Kadar, which was, until, quite recently, perhaps less pronounced among wide circles in the plains. Sex relations with the brother-in-law are not considered "legal" in the sense in which non-sororal polygamous marriages are. Kalliyani (IV/7), for instance, lived as a second wife with her sister's husband (and the sister) in the same house but was later removed from that place, by her mother, who did not like the state of affairs.

By far the majority of all marriages is, and no doubt always was, monogamous in the sense that every person had only one partner *at a time,* though divorce and re-marriage of both partners appear to have always been frequent. So much so that few Kadar, men or women, could be found who have had only one partner throughout a long life. A conscious moral obligation for monogamy or any discouragement of either polygamy or polyandry does not appear to have existed, – prior to the now established contact with the plainspeople. Compulsory, or legally enforced monogamy in the sense of modern Europeanized legislation, certainly did not exist, nor does it even now. But monogamy is the natural thing to which most people will stick for want of any other urge, and without being legally prevented from either polyandry or polygamy. Hand in hand with this voluntary monogamy goes easy divorce, very much also on the part of wives, and an easy form of re-marriage for both partners. Few men, like Pönnala (IV/3) or his late wife Chinnama (IV/4) have been married to only one partner, when reaching the age of about thirty, though from all accounts and personal remembrances, it seems that in olden days men did not marry much earlier.[8] It is, however, probable that in those days pre-marital relations were easier and more frequent as they are now when marriageable girls are so scarce that they are being married even before puberty.[9]

As long as a marriage is not "divorced", extra-marital relations are not frequent. By "divorced" an act of will, known to the community, – no legal regulation – is of course meant. Yet Karappi (I/3) has had an affair with her later Kanakkan lover, long before her then husband Chattan had divorced her and even this, it seems, he did not because he took her love-affair ill but because the Kanakkan's posses-

[8] Comp. Nagaray (IV/1) who married at about 26,—a much higher age than his nephew Pönnala (IV/3), a little over 20.

[9] Comp. Chap. V, p. 116.

siveness and assuming manners as a plainsman got on his nerves. It seems to me that Kadar are generally more sensitive to overbearing, assuming or condescending behaviour than to sexual jealousy. This general impression seemed also confirmed in the case here quoted.

Love affairs of Kadan men with non-Kadan women in the plains are said to be very rare, according to my Kadan, – as well as plainspeople informants.

We have seen that in old times men used not to marry before the age of 25 to 30 years, as was for instance the case with old Nagaray (IV/1), and that girls used not to marry before puberty. Later, Kadar adopted the custom of child-marriage probably in imitation of the Brahmanical rule which has such a high prestige value in the caste hierarchy. Ironically enough, child-marriage began to be considered as a social evil, and was even officially disencouraged, among the plainspeople, not long after it became more and more habitual among the Aborigines in the hills. One additional incentive for child-marriage among Kadar is, as we have seen, the growing scarcity of marriageable girls, apart from the plainspeople's example. This scarcity, again, must be partly ascribed to child-marriage which not infrequently results in the death of child-mothers during, or before, delivery. Thus the vicious circle of child-marriage rising out of the scarcity of marriageable girls, growing numbers of boy-widowers trying to secure a still younger child-wife for themselves, and thus the increased demand for marriageable girls, tends to perpetuate itself and, – to add not a little to the threatening extinction of the Kadar as a tribe. This course of events is further accentuated by quite frequent marriages of Kadan girls with plainsmen -- unions which are not being compensated by marriages of Kadan men with non-Kadan girls (tribal or from the plains) as the plight of Vazhavan has illustrated.

In olden days marriages seem to have often been the result of pre-marital love-making or at least of decisions, taken by the two partners themselves. These were later followed by official "arrangements" of relatives (Pönnala—IV/3 Chadayan—IV/6, Govinda—VI/5, etc.) The type of marriage to which "modern" acculturated Kadar refer proudly as "arranged",— in contrast to "love-marriages", would however still be considered as the result of "free intermingling", by most of the orthodox folks in the plains.

The Marriage Ceremony

The marriage ceremony is celebrated with the usual meal or "feast", given to relatives and neighbours, accompanied by the Kadar's beautiful music and dance, but nowadays, also by arrack drinking, which was obviously not so in pre-acculturation days, because unlike many other hill people of India, Kadar do not distil liquor themselves but consume exclusively drink, processed by plainspeople. The bridegroom ties a tali of brass, or occasionally silver, to the girl's neck; – obviously a ceremony, also adopted from the plains, though most Kadar say, and honestly believe, that this has "always" been so, similarly as the bridegroom would nowadays hand a European style blouse, a factory-made sari and a paper rupee to the girl; – features which, in spite of the Kadar's assertion, can hardly be considered as "aboriginal customs". Bride and bridegroom then put a little food in each other's mouth, with their own hands, similarly as Izhavar do with sweetmeats at the occasion in various rural parts of the plains. But the exchange of betel, – and areca-nuts, the tying of the *tali* by the bridegroom's mother or the custom to put a turban on the bridegroom's head, – all mentioned in the older literature[10] were neither practised nor remembered by the Kadar of to-day. They may have featured in one or the other big ceremony,

[10] Iyer, (1909), p. 5.

conducted in the presence, and under the influence, of Government officials or other outsiders, when acculturation began.

That most, if not all, ceremonial in celebrating marriages are indeed comparatively recent adaptations from the plains-folk, appears to be at least probable. Second or third marriages are not being celebrated ceremoniously, although no stigma of illegality is thereby being attached to them.

When Karappi (I/3) was divorced from her former (Kadan) husband and came with her low-country lover Manikam to her sister Velakkal (I/2) and brother-in-law Tambi (I/1), even this authoritative and comparatively sophisticated couple found the whole process *comme il faut* and accepted it. It was quite natural to the sociological conception and tradition of the Kadar that a wife should divorce her first husband and marry a second one, – even if he was a low countryman. The couple, consequently were accommodated in the common house, although the new husband was a non-Kadan, – a fact which certainly complicated the case. Tambi's own daughters Kartiyayani (I/4) and Nallatangal (I/5) remarried their divorced husbands without any ceremony, to which also nobody took exception.

A jurist would probably doubt our justification in speaking of a divorce here, as in any other case, when a woman is simply "running away", either to stay with her parents or to live with another man. On the face of it we have none. There is no breaking of pots or twigs, or severing of threads, nor fines to priests, officials or any other representatives of public opinion, nor are there decisions over the division of property, nor, in most cases, any public accusations or counteraccusations. But from the point of view of Kadan Law, it is a valid divorce, if a woman, or a man, leaves the partner with the admitted intention of divorce. Velli (III/1) divorced Veluppu, who had been his and Ketappan's common wife, in order to marry his present wife Kanni (III/2). Nobody

dreamed of considering him as "legally bigamous", because there was no ceremony connected with his divorce from Veluppu, which was simply made known to the neighbours in an informal manner. Though it is true that such divorces are usually based on a more or less outspoken agreement between the parties concerned, on disagreeing with each other, – it might yet appear as though there was no illegality at all, and for that matter also no legality either, in Kadan (matrimonial) law. To say this, however, would not at all be true. Extramarital sex relations *do* occur and are both resented as well as censured. Velli's (III/1) visiting his former wife Veluppu, after the divorce and after his subsequent marriage with Kanni (III/2), was considered "illegal" by the latter who, on account of this, created domestic troubles, until he gave up the visits. The wife of an apparently impotent husband in a group of Kadar, whom I met not far from Parambikulam, where they passed by food-collecting, went with two men to the jungle: a married man of her own age and an unmarried, somewhat younger boy. After complaints, on the part of her legal husband, the neighbours and elders decided that the younger man was to marry her, although without a formal ceremony.

More or less permanent sex-relations of Kadan women with men from the plains are similarly considered as "legal" marriages, by the Kadar, even though they may not be so, in the eyes of the husbands concerned. Children of such unions are invariably accepted as Kadar, even if physically different from an average Kadan and, in such cases, usually named after the caste, or appearance, of the father.

It would be misleading to describe these patronymics as cases of patrilineal inheritance of the name. They are references to a child's visible characteristics, as most Kadan names originally were. The residence of such children, in their mother's families, can similarly not be ascribed to true matrilocality, being simply the result of their fathers' lacking a

home and relatives in the hills. The same argument may be brought forward against interpreting, as matrilineal, the acceptance of such children in the tribe of the mother. This mere acceptance appears to be more the result of permissiveness and social tolerance, than conscious expression of matrilineal kinship affinity, though it is certainly significant that the admittedly existing extra-tribal paternity of such children does not make them non-Kadar.

Menstruation-seclusion, Puberty-rites, Tooth-deformation, Ear, – and Nose – piercing

Menstruation pollution is rigidly observed and, during their menses, girls have to stay in separate huts, or under leaf-shelters, for at least three or four days. These menstruation

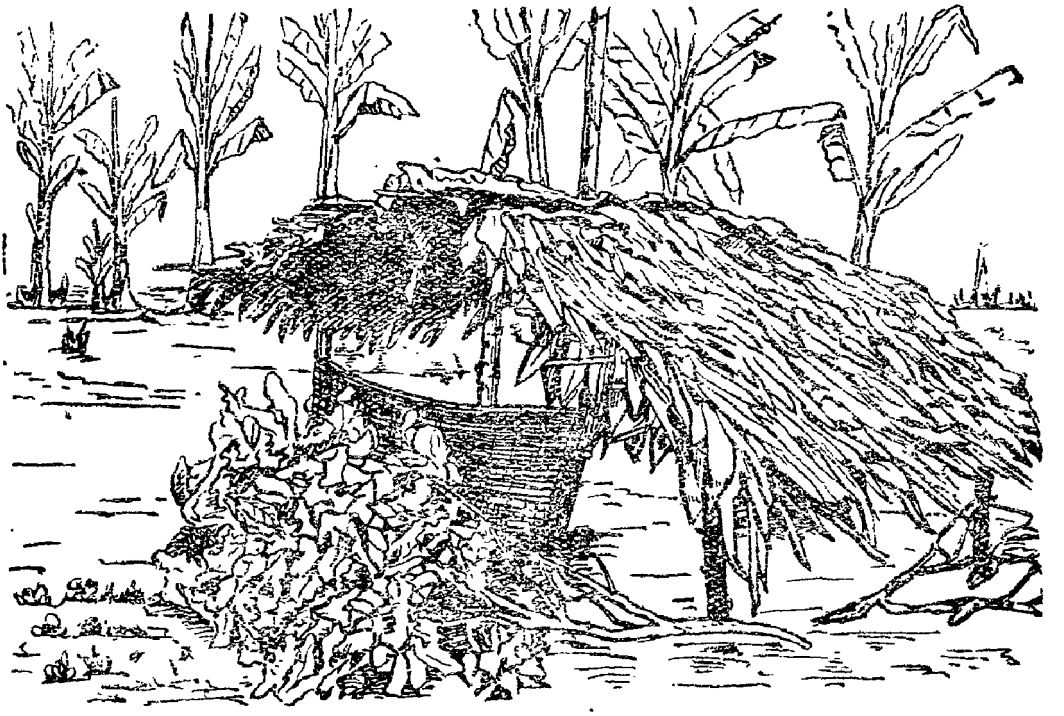

FIG. 21.

Menstruation Hut

huts (*thinda chala*) (Fig. 21), will also serve as a kitchen for menstruating girls where they prepare their food for which

the raw material is being brought by sisters, mothers or girl-friends who are all allowed as visitors, or even night-companions, in the *thinda chala*. Nursing mothers will also bring their babies with them, whether boys or girls. But a woman under menstruation pollution should, under no circumstances, go to the common dwelling place, lest disease or violent death, generally expected to be caused by elephants or tigers, may befall the group concerned. This fear of the evil effects of breaking the menstruation *taboo* is still a very real one, even with those among the Kadar who otherwise laugh at many a more beautiful and useful old custom of the tribe. We have seen that the rules, resulting from this fear, are still observed strictly and even if considerable inconvenience is thereby involved, as in the case of the menstruation hut which was destroyed by a thunderstorm in the middle of the night. But if no unexpected storm destroys the *thinda chala* at night, the stay there may be considered rather as a sort of holiday, than a burdensome "seclusion", by the women concerned. They would receive visits from girl-friends, sit together, prepare food leisurely, comb, oil and search each other's hair for unwelcome inmates and often chatter so cheerfully that quite a "girls' club" seems to be gathering round the *thinda chala*. This is a pleasant aspect of the monthly separation, but if a tiny girl of about 10 or 12 years has to go for the first time to the hut, some 15 to 30 yards outside the circle of the ordinary dwelling place, and has to spend the night there with perhaps only one older woman as a companion, it requires no doubt courage, for there is not only the psychological dread of being excluded from the orbit of the common dwelling place, but also the quite real fear of elephants and tigers of whom the former not infrequently destroy human habitations, if sparsely populated,[11] whilst the latter do get sometimes into the habit of men-eating and then

[11] A strong and well-experienced forester, a Nayar gentleman, had a narrow escape in February 1947 when he spent the night in a tent near a Kadan village and was attacked by an elephant. The tent was destroyed.

prefer stray children outside the forest-villages, or – camps to any other diet.[12]

When the actual menstrual bleeding ceases, *i.e.*, usually on the third or fourth day, a good bath will be taken, if possible in a river, after which the thus purified girl would mix *manjil* (turmeric) with water, carry it back to the village in a pot and sprinkle the mixture on the huts and inmates, in the immediate neighbourhood of the girl's own home. This ceremony marks the termination of the monthly pollution.

There does not seem to be much difference between the celebration of ordinary and first menstruation, apart, of course, from the greater importance which the *thirandu kalyanam*,[12-a] carries psychologically. This is a sort of small feast, accompanied by drum-beating, piping, dancing and arrack-drinking, which is generally given to relatives and neighbours after a girl's first menstrual seclusion has ceased. This feast or *thirandu kalyanam* may be the survival of a real puberty, – or initiation – rite for girls, now degenerated into a mere "feast", as among other groups. But there is also no definite proof for this assumption either.

There is, however, another custom which seems to indicate more clearly that there had been true initiation ceremonies for both, girls and boys, in the tribe. This is the *pallikothu kalyanam*, the "tooth-cutting-festival" as the word literally means. This "festival", as it is called, consists in the chipping off of the incisor-teeth by a chisel until they assume the shape of pointed triangles. The operation is carried out by an elderly person who is experienced in this work. Apparently the tooth-chipping used to be done for girls, at the time, possibly even at the occasion of their first menstruation ceremony, whether they be married or not, and on boys at any rate before their first marriage. The custom

[12] Comp. the case of Parayankadavu, mentioned sub: Velli (III/1) on pp. 91.

[12-a] The word as such is used by Brahmins mostly.

was no more practised during my stay with the Kadar in 1947/48. Yet there are five features in this practice of tooth deformation which can still be traced and which do seem to point at formerly existing initiation rites:

(1) The connection of tooth-deformation with the first menstruation ceremony in the case of girls, and with the first marriage, in that of boys.

(2) The name of the ceremony, *pallikothu* (*lit.*: tooth-cutting) *kalyanam* (*lit.*: feast)[18] suggests a deeper connection of the custom with marriage and sex-life. Nowadays girls can, and actually are, being more and more often married before puberty. But since this acculturation feature is as foreign to Kadan culture, as in fact the actual real marriage-ceremonies themselves; both appear to be adopted customs. Boys too used to get their teeth chipped off, before beginning marital relations. The word *kalyanam* ("ceremony" or, feast) as part of the term: *pallikothu kalyanam* (tooth-cutting-ceremony), therefore seems to suggest that in Kadan pre-acculturation days sex-life was not to be entered, until teeth had been operated upon, or, perhaps, that tooth-deformation was part of initiation-rites which took the place of the present more or less Hinduized marriage ceremonies, before the latter had been borrowed from plains-folk.

(3) Questioned about the reason for the unique custom (which is equally strange to their aboriginal, – as to their lowcountry – neighbours), the Kadar will explain that they do not want to be "like animals", but wish to look "beautiful". The obvious inference for the questioning ethnologist with

[18] The use of the same term *kalyanam* in the word for first menstruation *thirandu kalyanam* and for the tali-tying, *talikettu kalyanam*, in the plains is of course equally significant and points to the former connection of these ceremonies with sex life and youth initiation; a problem which I discussed at some length: Ehrenfels II, (1941), pp. 63, ff. 109, etc. Compare also: Bachmann (1941), p. 204.

undeformed teeth is: that he himself consequently looks like a wild beast, and is very ugly. Yet this logical conclusion amazed every Kadan with whom I discussed the problem. To him it is not a matter of aesthetic valuation, but rather of tribal tradition, that teeth should be deformed in order to look "beautiful". Are we not, therefore, justified in assuming that "wild beast" stands in this connection simply for *un-initiated,* and therefore not fully accepted, member of the tribe and "beautiful" for *initiated?*

(4) The pains of the actual tooth-sharpening process and the inconvenience caused by swellings, headaches and not infrequently a day or more of fever, are considerable and were usually borne in a spirit of equanimity, characteristic of fortitude – and endurance – tests elsewhere.[14]

(5) In spite of its not negligible inconvenience, the tooth-sharpening was still frequently carried out until quite recently, when Kadar have begun to give up most of their old habits which stand in marked contrast to the much admired and eagerly copied civilization of the plains. This persistence of the painful tooth-chipping ceremony seems to indicate its former importance in the entire make-up of Kadan sociology.

It has perhaps also some bearings on this question that the ear, – and nose – piercing of girls is not connected with the *pallikothu kalyanam,* but performed separately, sometime between the ages of five and eight. An elderly man, considered to be an expert in the art, will perform it, preferably on either the *Onam,* – or *Vishu* – day, the foremost Hindu festivals in Kerala. There is no name or functional importance attached to this ceremony, other than the wearing of cheap ornaments which are imported from the plains. The piercing of ear and nose may therefore seem not to have been practised by the Kadar in pre-acculturation days.

[14] Comp.: Smith (1951), p. 33.

Succession and Inheritance

Succession in family, – clan, – or other group-names does not exist since, as we have seen, there are normally no indications, in a Kadan man's or woman's name, to either of the parents, or to any locality where that person might have been born. Names, even if coincidental with any relative's personal name, do not assume the character of family,– clan–, or house-names but remain also in that case exclusively personal designations. They generally referred – especially before the introduction of Sanskritic names – to some bodily or other characteristic features. There is, consequently, no institutionalized inheritance of names in either the male, or the female line.

Though it would not be correct to say that there is no inheritable property either, its ownership is too vague and of too little importance to the Kadar as to evolve anything in the way of codified inheritance laws. Still, younger and near relatives feel that they have a claim on the personal property of their deceased parents and mother's brothers. It is probable that this feeling has, in the acculturation process, been accentuated, if not, entirely borrowed from the plains. Tambi (I/1) declared that his rifle will be given to a younger paternal relative, if he should have no own son at the time of his (Tambi's) death. That does not, however, mean that "male relatives inherit to the exclusion even of the own daughter". It simply means that Kadan girls have not taken to shooting with firearms, so far, and that therefore a rifle would be of little use to one of Tambi's three daughters which is why he thinks of leaving it to a near male relative. The cheap ornaments of a woman will, as we have seen in the case of old Nilay (Nilal) (IV/2) and young Chinnama (IV/4),[14-a] at burial, be left on the body, whilst other property, such as tools, fowls, accumulated forest products and cash, will be distributed among those of the children and sister's

[14-a] Chap. V, p. 109.

children, who lived with the deceased person, at, and before, the time of death in the same house, or leaf-shelter, as the case may be. If there is an unmarried sister, she will be given a share which, it seems, is not quite so frequent in the case of a brother. A certain preference to relatives in an economically weaker position is generally acknowledged, as it was in the case of old Nilay (IV/2) who left her belongings to her younger son Chadayan (IV/6), not because she disliked the older son Pönnala (IV/3), but because he drew a monthly salary as forest guard.

The question of inheritance in immovable property does not arise as there is no private ownership in land. Houses, or leaf-shelters, will not be broken off at the death of even its most important inmate. Parts, if not the entire family of the deceased will continue to live in the place and the most active and responsible member of the surviving family will organise its repair in co-operation with other family members. Though the house may be considered as common property of the whole family, not of individual members, – even this common ownership rests more on tacit understanding than anything like legal acquisition.

Social Consciousness

Kadar are well aware of the difference, not only between them and other hill tribes, but also between all the aboriginal hill people on the one side, and plainsfolk on the other. They call their aboriginal neighbours *sinegidar* (friends),[15] whilst a lowcountry man is a *nattukaren* (country man) or a *kongan* to them. The word means a person from Kongunadu, that is the part of the Tamil country which roughly corresponds to the present Salem and Coimbatore Districts, east of the Kadan area. The designation for a plainsman as a *Kongan* is interesting, because in that part of the Kongunadu, which corresponds to the modern Salem District, a tripartite Tamil –

[15] not *maṭalé*. Comp. Chap. XI, (Language) p. 260, No. 1.

as deep a knowledge of the informant's mentality, attitudes and temperament, as possible, are likely to help in the difficult task.

It will, therefore, be useful to review the religious beliefs of our old friends, the Kadar of Parambikulam, rather than those of other Kadar, less well-known to the reader, since we have by now acquired at least some knowledge of their personalities. This procedure will also enable us to judge the degree of each individual's contacts with plainsfolk and thus to estimate the amount of culture contact results in this person's statements. The picture which we will thus be arriving at may give us a cross-section of what an average person may profess to believe. It should, however, be well remembered that this picture is no more representative of the original Kadan religion, such as it must have been two generations ago. About this I came to know something from single individuals, partly outside the orbit of ordinary Kadan Society. Perhaps this situation finds further illustration by the following experience which I passed through. Once I had learned something about genuine Kadan religious concepts, my Kadan friends at Parambikulam also began to talk more freely about such matters, of which they seemed before reluctant to speak.[1-a]

Ethnographic records on abstract conceptions, such as religious beliefs, are based on statements made by aboriginal believers or half-believers. The expressive value of gestures, face and sound, accompanying such statements, has therefore some bearing on their genuineness and should not be neglected, lest injustice will be done to the recorded statements, by the observer.

An ethnographic record of religious conceptions would require far more than a mere translation of words; more even than a conscientiously collected summary of statements

[1-a] Comp. Evans (1927), p. 139.

about abstract thoughts. Shades of beliefs and disbeliefs often find expression in the halftones of conviction and the subtleties of make-believe, – or real mockery. A true picture of a person's religious concept, therefore, can only be built up on the knowledge of all the mutually opposing tendencies and sentiments of which every human soul comprises so many; no doubt also that of an aboriginal.

But our present description cannot be made to attain the voluminousness of a *Forsyte Saga* among the Parambikulam Kadar. The records on conscious beliefs, pious frauds, subconscious doubts or alleged mockery of old-fashioned conceptions which are yet continuing to play their psychological rôle;—all these and more have, therefore, to be reduced to a general statement on the religious dilemma in which most Kadar find themselves at present. It will be advisable to remember, at each and every step of the subsequent descriptions, that this is a real dilemma which influences each Kadan's *weltanschauung* and conception of right and wrong; not by any means a product of anthropological deliberation and theory, – merely thrust upon the Kadan mind.

Another defect in the following descriptions is the absence of more than one or two Kadan *women's* religious expressions. The distrust and shyness which they have acquired, in their contact with low-country men, made an examination of their religious conceptions even more difficult than that of their position in social and family life. Only a woman ethnologist, or an anthropologically educated Kadan woman, herself would be able to fill this serious blank in our knowledge!

Religion

Tambi (I/1) said that *pisas, bhut, yakshini* and *gandharva* – male and female spirits – are all found to live in trees as also near such deep waters as will be surrounded by old umbrageous trees. The designation *muni* which is sometimes applied to such beings, by the Tamil-speaking hill tribes

in the East of Southern India, was intelligible to, yet not used by, Tambi (I/1) but by other Kadar with whom I discussed the uncanny tree-dweller and who considered him as a malignant male spirit.[1] Tree-spirits do not seem to play a very important rôle in Kadan religious life. They do harm, especially to children, but are not actually worshipped, addressed in prayers or represented in any form. But sometimes a man will tremble and shake and afterwards, blow his breath on children, to drive away tree spirits. These spirits are also included in Kadan Bhadrakali worship, as we shall see presently. If a person cuts branches from any particularly prominent tree and after this falls ill, it is pretty evident that, as for instance in the case of Tungumani (IV/12) who still limps after the fall from a tree, the tree spirit felt offended and caused the disease. This causal connexion is even more clearly proved if such a person dreams of the spirit after the mishap.

Two miles west of Kuryarkutty is a deep, tank-like pool in the river, known as Karimdhalapara. It was first described to me as a place, surrounded by huge trees, where *yakshis* and *gandharvas* ("female and male tree – spirits") were dwelling. The old trees were no more there, in 1947/48, but the tree spirits were still believed to inhabit the place, although its main importance was centred round the annual Bhadrakali worship which is here being celebrated during the months of Makaram-Kumbam (in February). Two main *pujaries* are supposed to dream at which date the ceremony is to be executed, though the actual date seems to depend rather on the amount of subscriptions and the availability of the required offerings, especially of arrack, to be bought from the contractor, or brought from the plains. Attendants were mostly, though not exclusively, those Kadar who lived along the valley of the Chalakudy River and near the timber trans-

[1] A similar feature of the same name was described: Ehrenfels-II (1943), p. 69.

port tram-line. Guests from the eastern side were rare. Non-Kadar did not attend in any appreciable numbers. The subscriptions, collected for the *puja* in 1947, were insufficient and the *puja* was postponed. Extra-seasonal rains swelled the river soon, so that the *puja* could not be held on the rocks round the pool, until the actual breaking of the monsoon, when it was definitely too late. The feast was then conducted on a small scale in the village of Kuryarkutty. The calamities of the year, especially the killing of a Kadan boy by a tiger and the deaths during a cholera epidemic, were ascribed to the neglect of this ceremony. In 1948 the *puja* was conducted in state, with subscriptions of over Rs. 300 on the 8th of Kumbam (21st of February).

During the forenoon of this day, a square bamboo *pandal*, with a flat palm-leaf roof, was erected on the rock facing the pool. At this place a statue of Bhadrakali is believed to have been sunk into the river. By whom and when or why this was done, nobody could say. Kadar are aware of the fact that they are neither carving any images nowadays nor, according to themselves, as well as to all indirect evidence, had done so ever before. Yet tradition has it that the image of Bhadrakali had been sunk into the river somehow and by somebody, whether Kadan, or non-Kadan.

Three bamboo sheds of the same construction, but smaller than the main *pandal* for Bhadrakali, were set up on prominent rocks around the pool. These smaller huts were meant for the tree-spirits, the spirits of ancestors and of dead children respectively, though nobody knew which of them belonged to which of these groups. Each of the smaller *pandals* were provided with a bamboo swing, suspended from the centre of the roof. This swing was of the kind, children use to play with, in the plains. In each *pandal* offerings of

broken cocoanuts, plantains and *jaggery* (raw dark brown sugar) were placed on plantain leaves.

In addition to these offerings, there were in the main *pandal* for Bhadrakali also *puri* (fried raw rice), a big, new earthenware pot, filled with boiled rice, live chickens, arrack-bottles and opium. Drum-beating and pipe-music began at 4 p.m. but appeared to me much less rhythmical than it used to be at the occasion of dancing feasts. Old Velama, the chief *pujari,* took the pot filled with boiled rice on his head and immersed himself three times in the pool of the river, letting its water enter the pot. Three of his assistants and later also other male attendants in the main *pandal* began to shake and jump rhythmically which they continued for almost four hours, though in turns. During this time some of the live fowl were dipped for a moment into the pool and then immediately given to the *pujaries* who bit off their heads, thus offering blood to Bhadrakali and drinking from it themselves. One of the assistant *pujaries* beat himself with a piece of split bamboo but not by pressing it against his forehead and striking against it with the other hand, as it is usually done at similar occasions in the plains, but by striking his legs from behind and below the knees. Though no blood was flowing as he wore a long, white *mundu,* in Brahmin fashion, his movement yet recalled to mind the particular way in which Semang are reported to offer their own blood at hearing heavy thunder claps.

Women, children and those of the men who were not taking part in the actual *puja* in the main *pandal* were all scattered round the pool. Three women began to tremble and shake, of whom two at least seemed to be genuinely overtaken by a nervous attack whilst a third, somewhat elderly lady, appeared rather to act. She arranged her sari cautiously after she had jumped into the water and began to talk much about her importance, saying, among other things, that her name was to be immortalized by transmission to her

grand-daughter, whilst the two others were unostentatious in their behaviour but seemed to suffer, as though from nausea. In order to drive out their evil spirits, one of the assistant *pujaries* would approach the suffering girls, all the time continuing his jumping in the rhythm of the main performers. He would then take hold of a bundle of hair on the girl's crown and blow on it, to drive out the evil spirit, he being the representative of Bhadrakali. The rhythmic jumping would all the time be kept on by the man.

After the *puja* a great banquet was held during which all offerings, including the arrack bottles, were consumed. After this, a brawl over respective contributions ensued without, however, seriously disturbing the festive occasion of general mirth. Even the discontented elderly lady, whom I suspected of acting her obsession, let herself persuade to remain with her husband and to annul her former decision to divorce him.

All attendants had come in long and heavy clothes of modern style and fashionable colours, the school-going children having obtained theirs from the authorities as a reward for their rather casual attendance, the grownups, having paid to the contractors' agents for theirs, double the price and more, of what the material would have cost them in the plains. Little girls, before the first menstruation, wore long, coloured frocks and European blouses, whilst the others had white, coloured and even black saris and wore, in their artificially flattened hair, plastic men's combs, instead of the beautifully carved bamboo ones. Many men had long mufflers in addition to heavy shirts and long *mundus;* all brand new but soon soaked in a mixture of sweat, water from the sacred pool and, of course, mud. Though colourful enough, this *mela* did not look exactly like a meeting of the once free and simple food-gatherers in the virgin forest, nor can it be said to contain many features which have not written visibly on them the mark of importation from the plains. Yet this

annual feast took in 1947/48 a central position in the average modern Kadan's religious interests, – apart from some other similar ceremonies conducted mainly on the eastern side of the hills. Such *pujas* were mainly mentioned, whenever religion, understood as religious *ceremonies*, came to be discussed.

In spite of the prevalence of such ceremonies, Tambi (I/1) said in 1947, that there were two very, very old Kadan gods. When I asked him who these were, he began by first laughing apologetically but ended by outlining the following myth mentioned to me not long after my first contact with Tambi in a mood which grew more and more serious, the longer he talked.

Malavay[3] and Malankuratti were two gods. They were the first beings in this world and had come from below the surface of the earth. It was through the two holes *Karazhi Purapara*, near the northern slopes of the dominant and picturesque double-pronged *Karimalai* hill, that they appeared. They were stark naked and hence the name of the holes which, in Kadan dialect, means: "Without-clothes-(born)-Rock". They were the creators of the first Kadan man and woman. Tambi added that he knew not much more than this, but advised me to contact one old Appupilla of Kuryarkutty, a place not very far from the two holes. When I contacted that old man, he gave a version of the legend which, so far, showed no difference whatsoever from that of Tambi's (I/1). But according to old Appupilla of Kuryarkutty, though not to all other Kadar with whom I discussed the matter, later, one *Yakshini*, Attuvacheri Amma, was also the daughter of Malavay and Malankuratti, the two gods. Attuvacheri Amma is a kind, motherly spirit, residing in the big banyan trees, which surround a pool in the river near Manjakutti on the eastern borderline of Cochin. Figures

[3] Reference to this god without, however, his consort Malakuratti is made by Iyer, (1909), p. 11, under the name of Malawazhi (ruler of hills).

are there carved into stones which, according to Appupilla, no human being could ever have made. The old man was quite definite that Kadar themselves never carved figures from, or into, rocks. "So", he concluded "they must have been made by the deity (*amma*).[4] Attuvachery Amma was to be worshipped at her sacred place, the pool near Manjakutti, but Malavay and Malankuratti could be addressed in prayers anywhere. They were the primeval beings: "Once the ocean began to rise. The water came up very high and all the caves in the interior were filled with water. Thus Malavay and Malankuratti had to leave them and came through the two holes at Karazhi Purapara to the surface. They came naked from under the ground, thus as we all had been in olden days. After this they created a man and a woman who, in their turn, became the ancestors of the present Kadar."

Asked whether brother and sister thus used to marry in old days, Appupilla seemed puzzled. He did not think that this was so, nor did he altogether deny such a possibility. He could not say whether these two first humans had been brother and sister at all. They were created, not born from, the two gods.

Later he continued: "Malavay and Malankuratti created the mountains. These two mountains here began to fight badly. The *chora kulam* is between the two mountains. There, blood can be seen even nowadays. So badly did the two mountains fight!" The two hills, referred to here, are the two peaks of the double-pronged Karimalai (Gopuram Kovil), the word *Karimalai* meaning black mountain, whilst *gopuram* and *kovil* are Sanskrit and Tamil designations, respectively, for a temple-tower or sanctuary. The hills are named "black", partly on account of the dark clouds, by which

[4] Later I found there a little temple in ruins, structure and carved figures of which conformed to the type of more modern village shrines on the eastern (Tamil-speaking) side of the mountains.

they are often covered when other, lower peaks, are not, partly also because of the dark, bare rocks, showing on their steep precipices, whilst most other hills in the Kadan country are covered by green jungles.

The affection for Malavay and Malankuratti is genuine among most Kadar, though overshadowed by the depressing fact that the belief in these two gods is generally not shared by the plainsmen who come up the hills.[5]

Kadar pray to the two gods if they feel themselves in danger and, it is said, also in joy. But there are neither any places, nor less structures or temples, dedicated to them, nor are there any *pujaris* entrusted to worship them, as there are for the worship of spirits or of Bhadrakali.

I have occasionally seen little statuettes of Kali, among those of the more migratory Kadar who visit Tamil markets and there purchase the idols which they place not infrequently in neat little bamboo-huts, – miniature pile-dwellings, on bamboo-poles—such as the Muduvar construct more regularly for their deities. But I have never seen so much as a stone, erected for Malavay or Malankuratti; not to speak of any more elaborate representation of them. Their worship is absolutely un-iconic and, in contrast to that of Kali or tree, – and water-spirits, also free from any institutionalized cere-

[5] A divine couple is known to certain plainspeople, as Malakŏran and Malakoratti, and by similar names. Not worshipped in temples, they are considered as hill-gods. Panan especially worship them in some places. The headmaster of the Malayalam School at Kuryarkutti told me that he had seen devotees burying themselves for half an hour, and more, in a covered pit over which a fire was burnt, whilst other believers, recited *mantras*. After such tests in the firmity of their belief, the buried worshipper came out alive. But there are not many adherents to the Malakoran,–and Malakoratti–cult in the plains and most of them belong to the Panan, a poor mendicant community. (Comp.: Iyer: (1909), Vol. I, pp. 171, 174, ff. & Aiyappan: (1937), sub: *Maladaivan*, p. 46, 73, 79, 81 *seq.*

monial or, in fact, from any elements that had been ostensibly borrowed from the plains. There are neither sacrifices, nor places, times or persons, considered to be sacred to, or connected with, the worship of these deities. They are beings who came at any rate naked through the small holes of Karazhi Purapara to the surface of the world, made it as it is now, and are not conceived as the parents but rather as the creators of the first Kadan couple. "But where are they at present?" – "Who could say that . . . They are there, though." – "But we cannot see them. Will we be united, with them, after death?"

"Perhaps. How can we say? Nobody can say that".

In these outlines of thought, most Kadar agreed. But it was this very vagueness which gave a characteristic touch to their narrations about the divine couple, in contrast to the elaborate and numerous, but divergent, stories current about other deities, which have been obviously adopted from the plains.

Murugan (VI/1), the one-eyed ex-elephant-tamer repeated the essential features of the story of Malavay and Malankuratti, as it was just outlined above. But he thought it was not much use praying to them, as there were much more powerful gods and goddesses to pray to. He also recounted that a Parayan *pujari* had told him, in his youth when he was living in the plains, that Malavay and Malankuratti could not have created the world but that they had been created by the gods in heaven of whom sun and moon were the visible and most prominent ones. Later on Malavay and Malankuratti might have created the hills, animals and human beings in the forests. Murugan (IV/1) recommended particularly Kundathi-Kali in the temple of Muringayali near the Velappara Estate on the Tamil side of the hills. This temple, he asserted, was as important to the Kadar as the Shavery-Malai

Aiyappan shrine in Travancore is to the plainspeople who assemble there for pilgrimage, in the tens of their thousands, every year. During *Kumbalan* in February a devotee of Kundathi-Kali has to fast, along with his family, to take three baths a day, refrain from chewing, from purchasing or borrowing anything and from even talking to a woman. If all these prescriptions are punctually observed, the devotee will be able to remove the bamboo posts which two priests of the temple hold in front of a 50 feet long pit, filled with burning logs, and then will walk over the fire without suffering the least harm, because the heat of the fire will miraculously be transferred into two golden sticks in front of the Kali image in the temple. After the successful termination of his fire-walking, the devotee will find himself in command of occult powers to remove evil spirits and fever from himself, as well as from others, but will also be able to inflict harm on others, if he so wishes.

Govinda (IV/5) agreed to these accounts of his brother-in-law and he also thought that the old gods of the Kadar, Malavay and Malankuratti, could not perform any such miracles and, therefore, were really much less interesting than the gods of the plainspeople. He stressed also the miraculous power of the Christian church near Chalakudy which saved his child's life, after he had dedicated a silver statuette there.

Velli (III/1) knew all about the two Kadan gods, but stressed the importance of Aiyappan. We have already seen that he performed a queer ceremony in connection with the lord of tigers. Every Kadan should mutter *Aiyappan rekshikawam* when leaving for, and returning from, the forest, as this will bring him the god's protection from tigers, similarly as the same prayer should be offered to Anakulam-Bhagavathi, the goddess of the elephant-tank.

Among the many Kadar with whom I discussed these and similar questions, practically everyone knew some particular

name[6] of Aiyappan or Kali, Bhadrakali or Hanuman whose worship, in the fashion of plainspeople, was to be performed either at a particular shrine, mostly in the Tamil country or, sometimes, even in one's own hut. Names and rites and times for worship varied as much as the miracles and powers which were ascribed to these deities. Only the somewhat vague, but in its simplicity impressive story of Malavay and Malankuratti, and also the affectionate remembrance of their daughter Attuvacheri Amma near Manjakutti remained constant, in various accounts, without any essential variations or additions. One of the few exceptions to this rule of conformity was Veluppu, the former wife of Velli (III/I) in his first, polyandrous marriage. She also said that Malavay and Malankuratti had come from the two holes, *Karazhi Purapara* and, as we all know, stark naked. But she added the story of an "old spirit Karia Muppan (Black Old Man) who saw them, gave them clothes, advised them to create the first two Kadar and then disappeared." I thought that from this description one should conclude that this Karia Muppan was really the first Creator, as he saw the two, coming naked from the Karazhi Purapara holes. But Veluppu was quite definite that this was not so. "No, Malavay and Malankuratti were the first gods and they created the first two Kadar, along with all other things in the world. They did not give birth to them, nor were they born by the old spirit Karia Muppan who simply met them in the jungle and advised them to create the living beings that are now there."

[6] The most frequently worshipped are Aiyappan Swami (protector against tigers and panthers), worshipped at Adhurappilly on the west-side. Anakulambhagavati (goddess of an elephant tank), at a shrine near Anamalai Road, on the East, Kundathu-Kali at the Muringayali hill on the eastern side, Marutha Viran (Hanuman), protector against witchcraft, at shrines on the eastern side. Madu-Ammal, a goddess protecting cattle and Mattumacherithavu, a goddess protecting humans from disease. All these deities are described in the form of their conventional representations in low-country shrines and their *puja* is conducted in the way, followed by low-country devotees, with the use of betel, arrack, plantains and, occasionally, opium or *ganja*. These and many more similar deities are no doubt borrowed from different parts in the plains, by different individual groups of Kadar, and gradually replace their old gods.

Murugan (VI/1), who had come from his work as gang coolie at the tram-line, became involved in the discussion. According to him the mysterious adviser of the divine couple appeared somewhat less romantic: Karia Muppan he asserted, was an old man who had lived, long ago, even before the construction of the tram-line and before the first contractors had come. At that time he used to collect forest products from his fellow Kadar and to sell them in the plains. Whilst thus wandering through the forests, he might have come across Malavay and Malankuratti. "But" added Murugan (VI/1) in contradiction to his first statements on this matter, "they are no real gods at all. They are Maruthi (Hanuman) or simply a sort of *Karia Kurangu* (Black Monkey)". And, he added, as though confirming an opinion which one feels to be in opposition to generally held views: "I am quite sure about that."

Another exception in the general conformity (and vagueness), among Kadar, on the question of the divine couple, was Velama, the chief *pujari* in the Bhadrakali worship at Karim*dh*alapara. (*supra*). He said that Malavay and Malankuratti were not gods at all, but simply reformers who introduced civilization, especially the wearing of clothes, the use of fire and the preparation of boiled food. The Kadar were not created by them but by Ishvara (Shiva). At first I thought that this seems rather to confirm the idea of an underlying Kadan trinity: Shiva (or Karia Muppan) – Malavay – Malankuratti –, which Veluppu's above-quoted version suggested. But I could so far not find any further support for such an assumption. The desire, on the other hand, to appear "civilized" and to be recognized as children of the same god, who is being worshipped by the peoples in the plains, seems to be a more likely explanation of the few digressions from the general conception of Malavay and Malankuratti as the creators of the first Kadar and the rest of the world. Velan's assertion that they were "reformers

who introduced clothes" is furthermore inconsistent with the name of the two holes from which they appeared on the surface of the earth: Karashi Purapara (a rock from which naked ones were born). This name is quite uniformly used by all Kadar whom I heard mention the place.

Malavay and Malankuratti thus appeared to be the nucleus of the Kadan Creation Myth, if not religion, as I have shown in a separate study[7] the complete context of which need not be repeated here after what has been described now.

Burial and Death Ceremonies

After death the body is not, usually, buried at once but kept for as long as three or even four days in the house. During this period, and the seven days following the burial, a *veedhu* (portion) of the daily food will be placed in a three-stringed pending fibre vessel-holder for the soul of the deceased person. This food will be consumed by elderly family members only, after it has been kept for some time in the container.

On the day of the actual burial, near relatives and direct neighbours may assemble and will be given a moderate feast accompanied by the same type of music which is also played at the occasion of ordinary Kadan dances. Afterwards the party accompanies the dead body to its resting place. I had, however, no occasion to witness an actual funeral. The body is said to be washed and carried on either a bier, made of bamboo, or in a sarcophag constructed of stems of the banana tree. The grave is dug at some suitable place in the jungle where digging is not difficult. The head is reported to be placed so, as to point towards the South, as among plains-people, and a number of burial gifts will be buried along with the dead body. Among these gifts, there will always be a digging stick, an earthenware pot, a cocoanut spoon and,

[7] Ehrenfels-II, (1950/A) pp. 165-176.

nowadays, also a small tin pot for drinking tea. In the case of a woman her jewellery will be left on the body[8] and in that of a man a jungle knife added. After the death of a child, the mother will press some milk from her breasts and sprinkle it in the direction of the grave. Graves, however, are not visited, but rather, it seems, avoided. I did not find any definite rule in the sense of a *taboo* or superstitious restriction on approaching graves either. "It is not done".

There exists, apart from the actual funeral, a second death ceremony, which is more in the way of a memorial feast. It will be celebrated with as much pomp as possible. Sometimes big parties, up to a hundred people, would assemble, on these occasions. A *pandal* is generally being erected for this ceremony which is at least socially more important than the first rite: the actual burial, for it is after this second death ceremony (*adiandaram*) that the soul of the deceased can leave the orbit of his former daily life and "go high up into the air".

The actual ceremony of the *adiandaram* is simple. Big quantities of each kind of food will be placed at the *pandal* in neat heaps and big pots. Of each variety a small portion will be set apart and these will then be distributed to the old men and women, by the oldest male member of the party. After this a general feast will be celebrated with drum-beating, piping and dancing throughout the night and well into the next day. Such feasts are usually an occasion of general meeting where new marriages are being contemplated and old, divorced ones re-arranged and renewed. There was no palpable element of mourning in these reunions of a great number of relatives on the occasion of the second death ceremony which I had the opportunity to attend. It is a happy event, rather, for which comparatively big sums are being spent by the relatives of the deceased person.

[8] Comp. Chap. V, sub: Nilay (IV/2), and Chinnama (IV/4), p. 149-50 (comp. p. 109).

Life after Death

Continuation of consciousness, after death, in some form or other, appears to be part of the general belief among Kadar. Old Veluppu, for instance, was rather definite about the fate of the souls after death: "The body decomposes but we remain to go for sometime to heaven and, afterwards, be reborn in another body. This may be the body of an animal or that of a human being". Murugan (VI/1) shared this belief, but added that the souls of persons who met with a violent death would be transformed into a *mudhiar* (spirit) and would then be loitering about the jungle. Especially the victims of tigers would accompany their former slayers. This conception is very much like the plainspeople's belief in the *pretham* of a killed person, but the word *mudhiyar* seems genuinely Kadan.[9] It is recalled that Murugan (VI/1) had long experiences with peoples from the plains and lived there even himself. Pönnala (IV/3), on the other hand, thought that for some time all souls remain near their former residence or within the previous living space. He said: "After death each person's soul loiters about the jungle and near the place he has been living in. It is only after *adiandaram*, (the second death ceremony), that a soul can get high up in the air and join the other souls there. That is why *adiandaram* has got to be observed". Govinda's (VI/5) reformist ideas about this second death ceremony have already been mentioned in connection with his appreciation of the Austrian hillmen's ignorance of this second death ceremony.[9-a] The belief in a postmortal existence, somewhere in the sky, is widespread and also Tambi (I/1) subscribed to it. He was pretty sure that after all his achievements, his kindness towards all others, refraining from telling lies, from using abusive language, or from behaving boisterously, he was going to get to *sohlam*, the heaven of the plainsfolk, which was high up in the sky.

[9] Chap. XI, p. 266, No. 5.
[9-a] Chap. V, p. 116.

But also *narakam*, the hell of the plainspeople, is there. Whether Malavay and Malankuratti would be met there, or would be living there, at all, no Kadan was able to say. I did also not hear any idea expressed, as to the nature of life in either heaven or hell. I feel inclined to think that both conceptions are comparatively recent introductions from the plains, as in fact the idea of reward or punishment in after-life seems to be foreign to Kadar. One young man, only, among those with whom I discussed this problem, thought that the souls of virtuous persons will be re-born in a human body, whilst the others would be re-born as animals. It was significant that the list of evil deeds that might bring a person to re-birth in an animal's body, contained mostly sins that have been unknown to the ordinary pre-acculturation Kadan of yore who has had no contact with "civilization": – telling lies, stealing, robbing, insubordination to forest officials and love affairs with other men's wives. The young man who related these conceptions had, moreover, been long in the plains. To understand the fundamental difference between pre-acculturation, – and present Kadan mentality, it will be helpful to realize the infrequency of criminal, or mere "abnormal" behaviour, among un-acculturated Kadar. There was, for instance, a rumour that some 15 years back, a Kadan on the eastern side of the hills (where some of the Kadar were engaged in coolie-work and even in shifting cultivation near the coffee-estates, and thus have been in closer contact with plainspeople), has had sexual relations with his daughter and that when she threatened to speak about it to her mother (*i.e.* that Kadan's wife), he had hanged himself. The soul of such a person, it was said, would remain near the place of his death and would not go to heaven.

What, however, life in heaven might possibly be like, – I have not come to know through any description of my Kadan friends. There is a basic difference, though, between Kadan attitudes towards deities adapted from the plains and

the genuinely Kadan gods. Whilst the host of various gods from the plains are generally being localized at the places of their worship, or at least connected with their function as protectors against certain worldly troubles, by their Kadan devotees, there were only doubts and more or less vague beliefs regarding the residence of Malavay and Malankuratti. It was not considered impossible to meet them, after death, though there was also nobody who had ever authoritatively said that this was so. Thus the matter was best left to be seen, in due course. We all shall have to experience that Life after Death; – so why worry about it now?

Tribal Traditions

Few Kadar profess to know more about the history of the tribe than the bare facts that once upon a time they had lived alone in the forests and that in those days they used bark, fibres and leaves for clothing, bamboo splits for fire-sawing and digging sticks for collecting and for the hunt. Most Kadar know that Malavay and Malankuratti had no clothes when they created the first two Kadar; – "long ago, even before there was a tram-line, and even before there was a contractor". But the length of time that passed between the world creation by the divine couple and the appearance of plainspeople in the hills appears to be more or less a blank in the historic conception of most Kadar.

One of the few exceptions, whom I met, in this respect, was Bombay, a talkative old woman in a village due east of Parambikulam.

"Malavay and Malankuratti had children" she said, "but nobody knows where they put them. After the birth (she did not say creation, as the others did) of these children, Malavay and Malankuratti arranged heaps of food of various kinds on the *Madutinipara* (*lit*: Beef-Eating-Rock). Then they invited all the different kinds of people to come, assemble there and eat of the food. On this the Kadar said: 'We

eat neither bison nor beef'. So we Kadar were ordered to disperse and live in the hills. We are, therefore, the highest caste. We are the Nambudiri Brahmins of the hills. It is not true that we are the children of Malavay and Malankuratti. The other hill-tribes may be their children. The Muduvar and the Malai Malasar, but not we! We are the children of the Maladevata!"

The word *Maladevata,* usually used to signify all hill gods, is being composed of the Dravidian root *mala,* hill, and the Sanscrit *devata,* gods. It is simply a more Sanscritized form of Malavay-Malankuratti; "hill-gods."

On another occasion Bombay said that when the gods distributed food to all the people of the world, they made them bite a cattle string, instead of eating beef or bison's meat. But the Kadar refused to do even this. They could not be deceived! Later the gods distributed money which everyone of those, present, accepted with folded hands. The Kadar, in their eagerness to get this precious gift, stretched out their folded hands, forgetting at the same time, that they were standing in front of small trees which they thus embraced whilst folding their hands on the other side of the stem. After the money was placed into their hands they withdrew and, whilst thus opening the folded cup of their hands, scattered all the coins on the ground. That is the reason why so many valuable things are now growing on the ground of the primeval forests and in its trees. This also is the reason why the Kadar have to collect these valuable things from the ground and from the steep rocks and high trees of the jungle. But they must bring all these collected treasures to the contractor who will give them but little money or small coins in exchange. "So we are now the losers on account of the simplemindedness of our ancestors who embraced small trees when folding their hands to accept money from the gods!"

Parts of these stories were known to other Kadar also, so for instance to Tambi (I/1), who chuckled: "Yes that is so. We Kadar are always in need of money and yet cannot make both ends meet because we must now buy clothes, to be fully civilized, and arrack, to do proper *pujas,* and we must pay double the price from what the rich people in the plains have to pay. The contractor demands it. So what can we do?"

A young Kadan, who came from one of the tea estates on the eastern side of the hills, had a long and touching story to recount which, however, can hardly be taken as a tribal tradition. The hero of this story was one Ramapillai, taken to have been a Kadan, who served a big Maharajah Siva, in the North (Sivaji?) and cured his valuable horse of a disease. Later he rescued his wife and children and was offered a big kingdom and a beautiful princess and very much money and very many clothes. But after many battles and adventures, he passed through the Western Ghats and there met a Kadan girl in her parents' leaf-shelter. On seeing her, he fell to the ground and remained seven days unconscious, whilst the maiden from the forests nursed him. When he finally opened his eyes, – she looked into them and fell unconscious herself. Again he nursed her for seven days until she recovered and, from then onwards, they lived happily in the hills. "In this way we Kadar became poor hillmen, although we have got a very noble ancestry."

Similar stories are also being recited nowadays by those Kadar who live on the Tamil speaking eastern side of the hills where they work on tea, – and other estates and come in contact with plainspeople and also with other Aboriginals, mostly from Travancore. These recitations in the typical Tamil fashion are certainly being admired but, to my knowledge, not yet repeated by the less acculturated Kadar of the Cochin forests. Yet there are of course also genuine Kadan

traditions, but it was only one of Pönnala's (IV/3) generous moods, stipulated by a bit of arrack, of which he had got hold, somewhere, which induced him to talk to me about one of these "old stories."

"We Kadar had been lucky fellows"; he began to brag, "once upon a time there had been huge *kari kurangu* (Black Monkey) in these forests. That size!" And he opened his long, muscular arms as wide as possible. "These monkeys had much longer tails, than they have now. So they could be caught easily. And fruits! All the jungles were full of fruits! In those days we had not to bother about those heavy, nasty digging sticks of ours. We simply went to the jungle, and without digging into the mud, we had just to reach out for the fruits on the trees to get enough of them and without chasing and hunting, we caught the monkeys at their tails and thus lived in plenty and happiness!"

Apparently something has changed since then, I wondered, and Pönnala continued with the rough, amused and yet somewhat pathetic smile of his:

"Sure, something has changed! Some mischievous boys and girls went alone to the jungle. They were silly little things and could not grasp anything with their clumsy hands. So they got hold of some sticks and began to dig into the ground, out of curiosity. There was no need for that, for there was no hunger, in those days, with all the delicious fruits and the long-tailed black monkeys. Yet they dug for roots and the deeper they dug, the farther away went the roots. But the silly children dragged the roots out from under the ground. Ever since this their foolishness, the whole tribe is doomed to the drudgery of using our heavy digging sticks. Yet those were *kuronkol,* digging sticks, without any iron or stones at the end. Later, when the roots still further receded into the ground, the Kadar of those days affixed stones at one end and since that time we are using the *para-*

kol (*lit*: stone sticks).[10] But in those days people used to dig daily just as much only, as they would require on that very day for filling their stomach and not more! Not a bit. They never had to sell any forest produce to the contractor. Probably there were no contractors at all, in those days, and life was less pleasant, than it had been previously, because the fruits and long-tailed monkeys had gone. Yet life was not too bad either. Still there was already much difference in the life of the people as compared to what had been originally. People were no more naked, as they had been in the days of Malavay and Malankuratti. They had already taken to short clothes made of bark, bast and leaves. Time passed until later, when also these things and everything else, changed.

"Then Forest Guards, and the contractors came. We people began to arm our *koorankole* (*i.e.* the digging sticks without stone, – or iron tips) with iron instead of with stone. So we collected so many forest products that it became necessary to construct the tram-line, in order to transport all our riches to the plains. It was in that way that the plains-folks became too rich and they brought clothes and arrack and opium and all the other achievements of full civilization to our hills. The Kadan women fell ill and had very rarely a child who usually dies now after a day or two. So we Kadar became few and so precious that it is now necessary to open schools. These schools are made for these few surviving children, so that they may learn reading and writing Malayalam which they will, of course, never do. Also we are now eating rice and are getting stomach-ache, like the civilized people, and are dying of cholera, like them. So it became necessary to open a hospital. But there is no doctor in the hospital. We have to die anyway!'

Tambi (I/1) knew the same story, like many other Kadar whom I met, though in his mind the old legend seems

[10] The same word is also used for iron-clad digging sticks, comp. Chap. III & IV, pp. 26, 27, 51.

to have got mixed up with the mythological story of food-distribution by Isvara on the *madutinipara* (Cow-Eating-Rock) and the distribution of golden coins to all the people of the world.

"Those children with the first *koorankole* (*i.e.* digging sticks without either stone, – or iron – edges) were simply digging for fun. There was no reason to do so. Therefore the roots became hard and ever since then they stick firmly in the ground. And then God (Isvara) gave boons to all people of the world." The Kadan lost his hand full of sovereigns when folding his hands whilst embracing a small tree, – in the way, as it has been described by Bombay (*supra*). When thus nothing was left for him, he asked for a digging stick, a knife, a basket and a piece of flint. With these things he went to the jungles and collected all he needed. "And", added Tambi (I/1) on a tour through the jungles, "we people take no food or any other provisions, when starting for the jungle and yet we find enough to maintain us, wherever we go! You *must* take provisions, tins and a bedding roll, but we need nothing and are yet quite happy on our tours."

Two negative features which I found in different versions of the same legend, may be worthy of notice:

(1) The myth of the golden age without digging sticks, though it has its parallel in the plains of Kerala, yet differs from it in an essential point. There, in the plains, it is said, that once upon a time the cocoanut tree used to bow down, whenever a person wanted to pluck a nut, so that it was then not necessary to climb the trees for getting nuts, such as is the case now. But once a menstruating woman approached the tree, and ever since then, it did not bow down any more and the burdensome and dangerous palm-tree climbing has become necessary. Contrary to this myth, the Kadan version of Paradise Lost does not put the blame on womanhood, nor does it even say that digging in the ground was disrespectful

to the earth-goddess, there being no conception of such a deity. There was also no hint at a connection between sex-life and digging in any of the recorded versions of the myth, which I came to know. This digging has simply been a foolish thing to do. The lack of guilt or motivation for the Kadan children's digging, which turned out to be so fateful an enterprise, is another characteristic, though also negative feature in this myth.

(2) The *mādutini para* (Cow-Eating-Rock) complex of legends contains no elements of reverential respect for the cow but, on the other hand, shows the Kadan as refusing to eat beef, along with bison meat which, as we shall see presently, is to him *unclean* but *not sacred*. That the Kadan's impulse for refraining from eating beef is not that of reverence or love for the cow, as among plainsfolk, but rather a feeling of repulsion, appears from yet another version of the same legend. God Isvara ordered the Kadar to eat from the heaps of food, placed on the *madutini para* (*i.e.* the Cow-Eating-Rock) and when the Kadar refused the food, because it contained beef and bison meat, the God ordered them to bite a cattle string or, according to others, a string which had been dragged through cow-dung. Even this the Kadar refused to do and thus were ordered to live in the hills and subsist by digging and collecting roots only.

Among other stories, loosely connected with tribal history, there is one describing the "fight between the mountains" to which old Appupilla of Kuryarkutty referred vaguely in his version of the world-creation by Malavay and Malankuratti. The double-pronged Karimalai Gopuram Kovil is here described, not as the two contesting parties, but as a brother-sister-pair. Perungunnu and Mayangunnu, two big hills, some 20 miles to the east, asked for the sister as their (polyandrous?) wife. Her brother refused and gave his sister an elephant to escape into the jungle. Later he married himself and took the sister back, after she had returned from

the jungle. Since then she used to move a lot, at times staying with her brother and his wife. After this the brother, Karimalai hill, shot a missile in order to kill Perungunnu, one of the hills on the east. But Perungunnu bowed down, and thus avoided Karimalai's missile. But ever since then he is now smaller than Karimalai Hill. On seeing this, Mayangunnu, the other hill on the eastern side, shot a missile towards Karimalai hill and hit him, so that parts of him fell down into the river near Kuryarkutty where a Kali image is held to be immersed and now the annual *puja* to Kali is being performed (*supra*). It is on account of this hit that the northern side of Karimalai Gopuram Kovil Hill is so steep and that the black rocks from the interior are showing up on this side.

Yet another story which is often narrated among Kadar, seems to connect the advent of Kali in the hills with agriculture. Kali was a very big and powerful lady who had one day come to the hills. She had no husband, but two servants and a dog. Yet these were not of the ordinary type. The servants consumed a thousand roots, a thousand bags of cardamom, chillies, rice, ragi and also a thousand kerosene tins of honey, daily, and the dog was not an ordinary dog but – a huge tiger. The servants cultivated a big stretch of land for their mistress and the tiger guarded it. But one day a boar with his family settled down on the outer end of the fields and began to feed his family and himself on the rich crops of the cultivated lands. The servants came and warned the boar not to do that as they had a very powerful mistress who was going to punish him. But the boar replied that he did not care and that he was very strong and nobody could defy him. His wife also warned him and proposed to go to some other place, but he would not listen to her. On hearing this, Kali sent her dog. But the dog was not a dog. It was the tiger. And the tiger began to fight with the boar for one full day until he had killed him. So Kali had her cultivated lands cleared of all boar.

Taboos

The bison, to the Kadan the *kadu pottu* (*lit.*: Forest buffalo), is after the elephant the second biggest, and a fairly numerous, animal in his native hills. Whilst Kadar are eager to get any other game for meat, they will not touch bison flesh, though they have no objection to shooting it for the use of others, as happened when a party of officers had visited Parambikulam early in 1947. The taboo on bison flesh is so scrupulously kept that even the big copper vessel was put out of use, in which on this occasion skull and horns of the killed bison had been boiled.[11] I did not come across any explanation of, or reference to, this taboo in a tribal legend connected with it. The rather clumsy way of asking direct questions, to which I finally resorted, produced no results at all. "We must not eat, or touch, bison". This was the only and rather laconic reply I got. Yet this much was clearly palpable that there is by far more of pollution fear, than of reverence, if any, in this prohibition. The bison taboo, among Kadar, is more reminiscent of the sentiments which orthodox Muslims and Jews show in connection with pigs and pork than of those which characterize the orthodox Hindu's attitude towards the cow or beef.

This disgust of the bison is also being extended, by Kadar, to the domestic buffalo. Buffalo milk is being refused by many Kadar, and they would not touch a pair of buffaloes which a *shikari* from the eastern plains had brought up as a bait for tigers. This fear of direct contact is the more noteworthy as it is not only entirely absent in the orthodox Hindu attitude towards the cow but, on the other hand, present in the Paraya's attitude towards the domestic buffalo. He will

[11] Only one rather modernized young Kadan once told me that, on the advice of a plainsman, he had dipped his feet in bison blood and ate bison flesh, as a cure against the painful cracks on heels and toes without, however, feeling any relief afterwards. This superstitious cure is frequently resorted to, for the same trouble, in the plains, where the domesticated buffalo's blood, or meat, will be used instead of the bison's.

use it as a ploughing animal, but wash his hands afterwards, although beef eating is not, or used not, to be prohibited to his caste.

It is not considered auspicious by Kadar, to meet bisons, although one very often does in the Kadan-forests. There is, on the other hand, among Kadar no fear of evil consequences in case of a breach of the taboo on bison, as there is for instance in regard to all restrictions placed on menstruating women. Kadar do drink tea from the small tea-shops along the roads on the eastern side of the mountains, although they know pretty well that in many cases the Tamilian tea-shop owner keeps a she-buffalo and prepares the tea with its milk. The taboo on drinking buffalo milk, or touching the animal, is not taken very seriously but kept more in the way of a superstitiously shown disgust. Beef is not eaten, in imitation of the plainspeople, from whom cattle are nowadays occasionally purchased, and kept, for the use of their milk. But both: the use of the milking cow and the refraining from eating beef are obviously recent innovations.

Kadar will freely eat game of any kind, including crabs and tortoise. But tiger's, bear's or elephant's flesh, it is said, would not be touched out of respect for these royal animals. The small *Vela Kurangu* (White Monkey *Macaca radiata*) with a naked face is not eaten because "it looks like ourselves" whilst the *Kari Kurangu* (Black Monkey probably: *Kasi johnii*) with its all-covering black fur, is a delicacy to the Kadar, though a rare one, as the swift animal is not easily caught (comp. *supra*).

Semi-religious Beliefs and Omens

Kadan attitudes towards the megalithic monuments in their hills may be said to be on the fringe, though not actually in the nature, of religious awe. It was in this connection that I heard also from Tambi (I/1) the word *muni* or *muniar;*

which in the Tamil-speaking districts is also used for an evil spirit. Among Kadar the *muni* are the spirits which are supposed to sit *on the* megaliths of their country and, according to some, carry away handsome Kadan girls, of whom they are very fond.

No explanation, however, was either given or apparently ever considered, of how these stone-monuments might have come into existence, or whether they are the work of men or superhuman beings. In this the Kadar differed from the Periya Malayalis of Salem, whose lore on the antique megaliths of their hills I have published elsewhere.[12] Retelling the gist of this mythology to some of my Kadan friends, I stated that Periya Malayalees hold the megalithic structures of their region to be the works of a pigmy-race that had lived in the present Periya Malayalee Hills, prior to the latter's, the Periya Malayalees, advent from the plains. These dwarfish pre-Malayalee people, according to Periya Malayalee-lore, had amassed treasures of gold and precious stones but kept them miserly to themselves. God sent severe punishment to visit them: a rain of fire, against which the dwarfish people tried to protect themselves by erecting the megalithic structures, the true nature of which: – tombs containing burial urns and frequently iron weapons as burial gifts – seems to have escaped the Periya Malayalees' attention. Though my field researches among this tripartite hill-tribe of the Salem District coincided with the Battle of Britain and the spreading of tales about air-bombardments also in Southern India, I satisfied myself, that the story of the megalithic monuments as protective shelters against fire, raining from the sky, was a piece of old lore, – not recent "newspaper – acculturation" – among Periya Malayalees.

My Kadan friends, however, stated that they had so far never heard anything of this kind, – even though they found the stories quite interesting and even amusing.

[12] Ehrenfels-II, (1943).

Elements of Hindu mythology and devotion to particular figures in the Hindu Pantheon have no doubt been mostly assimilated during the last half-century, or so, – even though its presence, among Kadar, prior to this epoch of rapid acculturation, cannot be ruled out as impossible.

Reference has already been made[13] to Velli's (III/1) particular devotion to Aiyappan, the hunter-god of the Hindu pantheon who protects humans from tigers and panthers, as also to Velli's (III/1) reluctance to speak much; – particularly, it seemed, about religious matters. On the morning after a boy was killed by a tiger, near a village east of Parambikulam, parts of the victim's hands and feet were found in the jungle. Velli (III/1), who was in no particular way related to the killed boy, became obsessed by Aiyappan and went with Murugan (VI/1) and one Kadan, from the boy's village, to the jungle. There he gripped the already decomposing remnants of the body with his teeth and, crawling on hands and knees, transported them to a small hole which had meanwhile been dug by the two other members of the party. Finally the scant bodily remains were buried and a wooden peg driven into the meanwhile covered hole with invocations to Aiyappan. This, it was said, would cause Aiyappan to prevent the tiger from killing any further humans. The nervousness which was yet generally felt, even after this ceremony, proved, however, that the belief in its efficacy could not have been too firm.[14] When discussing the genuineness of Velli's (III/1) obsession, his friends asserted: "How else could he have taken the boy's decaying remnants into his mouth?" They seemed convinced of the genuineness of the obsession, whilst Velli himself declined to talk about the subject.

Velli (III/1) is, however, by no means the only Kadan who gets obsessed by Aiyappan. Old Veluppu, to whom he

[13] Chap. V, p. 91, 92.

[14] One more Kadan was killed, probably by the same tiger, at the end of the same year (1947), near Mudarachal whilst digging roots.

had been formerly a polyandrous co-husband (*v.* pp. 90, 92), spoke more freely about this quality which she shared with Velli (III/1), her former husband. She said that she knew very well that a Kadan was going to be killed, before the death of the above tragedy in February 1947, and her neighbours confirmed that she had been shivering a few days previously, saying that a tiger was about to kill a Kadan. Occasionally she shivers at night and when the people then get up, to look round the fires, they find generally a panther or tiger nearby who will then retreat without inflicting any harm.[15]

If a person is killed by a tiger and the victim's head comes to point to the South when the body has fallen to the ground, the tiger will not, according to Kadan belief, devour it.

Omens and prediction do not appear to play an important rôle in Kadan life. We have seen that it is not considered auspicious to meet bisons and this dislike of the animal seems to be a genuine expression of Kadan sentiments. The same can perhaps not be said regarding the belief that it is a bad omen, especially for a person who is just about to leave for the forest in search of game, if he sees a widow, a bundle of firewood or an earthenware pot. As among the plainsfolk, it is also considered inauspicious to hear the *kalankozhi* (lit.: death-chicken), – a night bird the ornithological identity of which, however, I was not able to identify.

In the rocky hills, north-east of Parambikulam, just on the border line between Cochin State and the Coimbatore District, are three stones which, although in no way conspicuous, have a particular significance to the Kadar. The highest situated but smallest among these three stones is

[15] Veluppu claimed to see Aiyappan from time to time in a vision and described him in the form of his traditional representations in temples and on coloured prints although she said that she had never visited any temple in the plains.

taken to represent an old Kadan who had wandered there with his family. A little lower down, on the eastern side of the hill, and thus already in the Coimbatore District, is a somewhat bigger stone,—the wife of that Kadan. A group of flat rocks in its direct vicinity is taken as the mats of the pair, whilst a biggish square rock, further down, is the son. This stone is called *pillaikall(u)*, or Child's Rock. Pregnant women will occasionally visit the place and, standing on another smaller rock east of the *pillaikall,* will throw pebbles, towards it, with their foot, on which the pebbles have been placed. If the pebble hits the stone and falls towards the west, a boy is going to be born, whilst if it does not hit the rock, or falls towards another direction than West, it will be a girl.

Primitial offering?

Before drinking arrack, Kadar, like the Cherumar (Pulayar) and Parayar in the plains will dip their finger in the liquid and sprinkle a few drops on the ground. The same custom is observed when the season's first honey-comb has been taken and honey is tasted for the first time in the season. This sprinkling of a few drops on the ground is considered as a sacrifice to Malavay and Malankuratti or, as some say nowadays, to all the Maladevata, the hill-gods including Kali, Aiyappan and Hanuman. Another *puja* is said to be performed at the beginning of the cardamom,– and one month before the honey-collecting seasons. These rites are meant to increase the growth of cardamom and the number of bees. They are conducted with ordinary ritual of *pujas,* as will be performed in the plains, using broken cocoanuts, bananas and *jaggery* or betel leaves. Yet it may be that this *puja* in the general Hindu type is the survival of an older rite of primitial offerings to Malavay and Malankuratti. I have not been able to attend such a *puja* during my stay among the Kadar.

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS CONCEPTIONS

Introductory Note

AS in chapter six, in which the social concepts of the Kadar of chapter five were analysed, so also here, in chapter eight, an analysis of Kadan religious thought is being attempted, after its description in the foregoing chapter. As it was there, so also here, references will mainly be to observations, made among the small Kadan-group of Parambikulam, or its neighbourhood, and thus to persons with whom the reader has already been made acquainted. In all such cases the name and reference number of this person will again be given, in order to enable the reader to identify that particular informant on the relationship chart of Parambikulam or in the short biographical sketches of the Parambikulam Kadar, contained in chapter five. It must, however, be stressed, that these our old Kadan friends were by no means the only sources of information for the material to be analysed in this chapter. Their statements were taken into consideration only after checking them up, and comparing them, with those of general Kadan religious sentiment as I found it also expressed elsewhere. Informants belonging to the group of informants of these latter cases are generally not named; lest they are in any way prominent or if their position in Kadan society makes their statements particularly noteworthy.

Three types of non-bodily beings

The general Hindu type of worship, as practised by the poorer classes of the agricultural population in both: the Malayalam, – and Tamil-speaking plains, west and east of the Kadan territory respectively, dominates also Kadan religious life. The main deities round which this worship is

centred are Kali, especially in her more terrifying aspects as Bhadrakali and Bhagavati, Aiyappan and Maruthi (Hanuman). Although the type of worship, directed to them, has undergone slight modifications, in its execution among the Kadar, as compared to the practice followed by the plainspeople, – it is yet doubtlessly taken from them. These deities are localized, by their Kadan-worshippers, at the places of their respective seasonal worship, by the plainspeople, and named accordingly. Their qualities and powers are the same as are those, ascribed by the plainspeople to these particular places of worship. Kali protects humans from disease, especially in her aspect as Bhadrakali, and commands evil spirits to desist from attacks on human victims and cattle. Kali as Anakulambhagavati (*i.e.* : *Elephant-tank-Goddess*) is being worshipped also by her Kadan devotees at the shrine, which was erected for her, by plainspeople, near the Anamalai Road, and she is held to protect devotees from attacks of elephants. Aiyappan the lord over tiger and panther, according to plains beliefs, helps also his Kadan devotees against these animals, whilst Maruthi (Hanuman) will protect his devotees from harm, imflicted by black magic or witchcraft. Although these deities seem to be actually identified, by their Kadan worshippers, with the images and temples, erected to them in the plains, their worship among Kadar, remains yet un-iconic; – with the exception, perhaps, of those among them, who frequently visit small markets on the eastern side of the hills and there purchase cheap idols of the deities, of which I saw one in a temporary Kadan camp in the hills. In the generally *un-iconic character of worship* lies the main difference which it has undergone in the process of adaptation by the Kadar. Otherwise the same offerings will be made of broken cocoanuts, bananas, raw sugar, betel-leaves, arrack, occasionally opium, rice in various forms, and chicken, such as we find them sacrificed to these same deities by the plainspeople. This has also been observed at the annual Bhadrakali ceremony at

Karim*dh*alapara pool of the Kuryarkutty river where, as we have seen,[1] an elaborate *puja* is being performed during a particular month of the Malayalam calendar and is being conducted on the lines of similar ceremonies in the plains. Though we found (*supra*) that this worship is being mythologically connected with a statue of the goddess; – it is yet characteristic that the statue itself does not exist visibly but appears to be merely part of a legend, and is supposed to have been submerged into the deep pool of the river. Another goddess who commands much respect and also affection among the Kadar, Athuvacherry Ammal, is also loosely connected with human figures carved on the little temple of Manjakutty, near the river-pool, dedicated to the goddess on the Eastern frontier of Cochin, but the goddess herself is not depicted in a statue and the carved figures on the temple walls are not the work of Kadar, but held, by them, to be of supernatural origin. This goddess, contrary to Kali, is often being described as the daughter, or the creation, of *Malavay and Malankuratti*, the Kadan gods *par excellence*. These circumstances and also the particular affection, shown to the deity, suggest that the female aspect of the divine played a not negligible rôle in Kadan religious thought, even before Kali-worship may, as a first step in the acculturation process, have been introduced from the plains, and adapted by the Kadar, perhaps not very long ago.

A *second* group of invisible beings, playing an important rôle in Kadan religious thought, is connected, but by no means identified, with the worship of the gods and goddesses in the ordinary Hindu practice of the plains. It is the host of tree,– water,– and similar "nature-spirits". They have no proper names among Kadar, nor is any particular individual *puja* offered to them. No particular tree has either been pointed out, to me, as a seat of any individual such spirit. Yet tree spirits *are* connected with the annual *Bhadrakali puja*

[1] Chap. VII, pp. 157-160.

at Karim*dh*alapara where they are supposed to have lived in the trees that had formerly surrounded the pool and where a special hut is also now being erected for them at the annual *puja.*[2] Bhadrakali is generally supposed to be the mistress of all sorts of spirits and *genii* and this annual Bhadrakali *puja* at Karim*dh*alapara might well have taken the place of an already formerly existing special sacrifice, offered to the tree spirits there, though there is no direct proof for such an assumption. It is, however, noteworthy in this connection that in the *pandals,* erected at that festival, for the tree-spirits and also for the souls of departed ones, small bamboo swings are being placed for their use. This feature is, to my knowledge, not common at similar celebrations in the plains and may yield a clue to the estimation of the relative age of the belief in tree-spirits among the Kadar. Its un-iconic and vague character, combined with the yet existing conviction of the tree spirits' reality should rather convince us of the antiquity and originality of this feature in Kadan religious life. We have seen that even such a typically acculturated, modern man, as Tambi (I/1), well acquainted with various types of plainsfolk and officialdom, – yet firmly believed in the activities of tree-spirits[3] and that the stiff knee of Tungumanni (IV/12), a quite young boy, was also attributed to the action of an angered tree-spirit.

The names used as generic terms for these tree-spirits, however, seem to contradict such assumption of their old age in Kadan religious lore: *yakshini, gandharva, muni* and *pisasu* are, with the exception of the two last ones, non-Dravidic literary words for *genii* generally. The Dravidian word *muni* (*muniar*) which is in use, for an evil male spirit, among hill tribes in the Tamil speaking districts, is known and used, by Kadar, for tree-spirits, as also for the spirits, supposed to sit on megalithic monuments. The word *pisasu* was also heard,

[2] *supra*: p. 157, *seq.* (Chap. VII).
[3] *supra*: p. 156 (Chap. VII).

by me, in this connection. It is difficult to believe that entirely new, literary, names should have been adopted for a class of spirits, if the belief in their existence would have been of old standing among the Kadar, though even this is also possible. It is, on the other hand, also true that the Kadan belief in tree-spirits does not show any of the many borrowed features from the plains, such as setting up of stones, applying of vermilion, or the offering of fowl-sacrifice, which are nowadays such common features among hill tribes, – notably in the Tamil districts, where a particularly old tree is not infrequently considered as the seat of a tree-spirit and thus honoured. The determination of the origin and age of the worship among the Kadar would thus seem to be rather enigmatic yet.

A third group of religiously respected figures is sharply distinguished from the two former ones. This is the divine couple *Malavay* and *Malankuratti* which takes a unique place in Kadan mythology. It is true that the name of these two gods: *Malavay* and *Malankuratti* which may be translated as meaning "The one from the hills", and the "female one from the hills", appears to be connected with *Malakuran,* a hill-god, worshipped with magic rites, by a number of various classes in the plains. But the nature of Malavay and Malankuratti, as conceived by the Kadar, is different from that hill-god Malakuran and his worship in the plains. There he is just one male god from the hills, associated with certain magic rites, whilst Malavay and Malankuratti of the Kadar are a divine couple, – actively connected with the creation of the world. The Malakuran worship of the plainspeople has only one outstanding common feature with the Malavay – and Malankuratti worship of the Kadar; – that is its un-iconic character and the absence of any temples, or particular places of worship, dedicated to him. To the Kadar, on the other hand, the divine couple Malavay and Malankuratti represents both: a "tribal deity", as creator of the first Kadan man and Kadan woman, and also the creator of the world as such. The myth

of these two closely connected gods is, as we have seen[4] characteristically connected with a general world-flood, with the emergence of the two deities from underneath the surface of the earth and with a double-pronged mountain which is actually situated in the very centre of the present Kadan area. The creation of the first Kadan couple is also connected with this flood-myth, which shows parallels and similarities, especially with flood myths in the South-East Asian area.[5] The motifs of a floating gourd, carrying the couple (frequently of siblings) to safety and often *landing them* on a double-pronged mountain, however, are absent in this Kadan flood,– and creation-myth; – even though *located* at the foot of a double-pronged mountain. These features bear remarkable resemblance not only to world-creation myths of several South-East Asian peoples generally, but particularly to those of the Semang in Malaya.[6] Malavay and Malankuratti are also so persistently combined that they almost come to be considered as one entity in the way in which Shiva-Shakti may be said to be one.[7] In this the divine couple of the Kadar shows again the stress, laid on the presence of the female aspect of the supreme being, which we have already mentioned above, – in connection with Atuvacherry Ammal. In this, Kadan concepts would appear to approximate Hindu mythology; especially that of Shiva-Shakti, though in other respects Malavay-Malankuratti would appear quite original and distinctly un-Hinduistic. Kadan religious worship is un-iconic, so far as we can speak of institutionalized worship at all, for there are neither particular priests, temples, consecrated stones or places – nor even any fixed times, dates, months or seasons where, or when, the divine couple is to be approached in prayer. Prayers are being addressed to them, but there are

[4] *supra*: p. 161 (Chap. VII).
[5] Walk, (1948/49), & Ehrenfels-II (1950/C), p. 36 *seq.*
[6] Ehrenfels-II, (1950/A), p. 176.
[7] Ehrenfels-II, (1949/E), p. 23; (1950/A), p. 37.

neither formulas nor rituals nor even conventionalized body positions prescribed, or observed, during such prayers. And yet Malavay and Malankuratti are, or at least were until quite recently, the Kadan gods *par excellence*.

That this is no more so, now, is palpably due to the self-consciousness of, and even inferiority complex from, which practically all Kadar are suffering in their eagerness to appear as "ordinary plainspeople", as children of the same gods and followers of the same impressive and generally accepted rituals there.

All statements made by Kadar and quoted below[8] which contradict the original conception of a high position of Malavay and Malankuratti, bear the visible marks of such self-consciousness. Murugan (VI/1), for instance, a man who had not only lived for a long time with plainspeople, and partly in the plains but even stated that he had been enlightened, by a Parayan friend, about the true nature of the various gods, made two different statements on the subject of the Kadan gods Malavay and Malankuratti. At first he said that they came from the two holes at Kara*zh*i Purapara, after the great flood, and created the first Kadan couple, but, he added, after this, their great feat, they are no more of real importance, whilst certain deities in various temples in the plains grant help and protection and should therefore be worshipped. Later he said that Malavay and Malankuratti were not gods at all, but simply, "black monkeys", a sort of Maruthi (Hanuman), who had come through those holes, at the foot of the two-pronged "Karimalai Hill," and that they were not the gods of the Kadar either. This eagerness to show that the Kadar are not "primitive" descendants of their simple hill-gods, became also quite manifest in the tribal legends re-told by an old woman known by the name of Bombay. She said Malavay and Malankuratti were not

[8] *infra*: p. 193.

the parents of the Kadar, but of the other hill-tribes, the Muduvar and Malai Malasar. The Kadar, on the other hand, refused to eat beef or bison and are – the "real Nambudiri Brahmins of the hills." The baselessness of any claim to connections between Kadar and the Nambudiri Brahmins of the plains hardly needs elucidation here.

Some more importance should, I think, be attached to the statement of another old woman, Veluppu, the former polyandrous wife to Velli (III/1). She said that Malavay and Malankuratti were advised by an old spirit *Kari Muppan* who told them to create the first Kadar and the rest of the world. Veluppu had quite obviously neither notion, nor intention, to mystify the connection between the Kadar and the simple hillgods. Murugan (VI/1), however, stated that this Kari Muppan was simply not a god but, what we may term "a historical figure", – a well-known Kadan who is said to have done business in forest products, before the contractors had established their agents in the hills. This explanation, however, seems to put an end to the theory that in Veluppu's statement, the remembrance of a still earlier deity remained alive, – a god who has created Malavay and Malankuratti themselves. But even assuming that Murugan's interpretation of the "old man" as a historical Kadan feature was wrong, – the fact remains that Veluppu's version of the divine couple as the executioners of a third divine agency, an "old spirit", had no support or parallel in any other narrative which I had heard from different Kadar and at different places. Yet also to this there is one exception: Old Velama, the chief *pujari* of the Bhadrakali annual worship of Karim*dh*alapara said that Malavay and Malankuratti were not gods at all, that they were simply reformers, born from Siva (*Isvara* or *Saksha deva*) and that they had come to introduce the wearing of clothes, the use of fire and the boiling of food. At first I thought that the statement of this old *pujari*, as the high priest of such an important annual celebration as the

Bhadrakali worship of Karim*dh*alapara no doubt is, should be taken rather seriously. Later, however, I began to doubt in the validity of this deliberation. The entire Bhadrakali-*puja* at Karim*dh*alapara appears as a comparatively new feature in Kadan religious life. The eagerness to adopt customs and ceremonies from the plains generally, especially such impressive types of *puja,* as the Bhadrakali worship of Karim*dh*alapara, is a great incentive. I came to think that Velama's story was rather a later super-imposition on, than the last remnant of an otherwise almost forgotten tradition. These doubts are further strengthened by a serious inconsistency of Velama's version: Malavay and Malankuratti are here conceived as reformers who *introduced* clothes. He himself, like all other Kadar, agreed that the two had come through the Kara*zh*i Purapara holes. The meaning of this name used for the two holes is: *Naked-born-rock.* All Kadar furthermore agreed that Malavay and Malankuratti came naked through the holes. Velama's contention that they were reformers who *introduced* clothes appears therefore rather as an *post festum* – attempt to save the respectability of the old Kadan gods, in the eyes of modern "civilization", by showing them as heroes who had brought just the one thing: clothes, which they had not, according to general belief, but which, to most modern Kadar, is the very essence and symbol of "civilization", "respectability" and of all that makes a man from the plains such an admirable piece of creation, – however dirty and stinking the clothing and other standards of this hero may be. That here the Kadar show inconsistency and infidelity to their old gods is doubtlessly true. In this, however, they are by no means alone. Their eagerness for assimilation of, and adaptation to, the civilization of the plains manifests a keen sense of observation, which too can be seen in other instances. Kadar do not, usually, sit cross-legged like the plains-people, but with legs straightly stretched in front of them. As soon as my Kadan friends noticed me nearing with a

camera, they would order their children to sit cross-legged and do so themselves,[8-a] simultaneously trying to heap as many dirty rags of cloth on their, and their children's bodies, as they could possibly lay hands upon. On jungle tracks, my Kadan companions sometimes *did* take off their sweat-wetted singlets, shirts, and mufflers. But as soon as the barking of a dog announced the nearing of any jungle tracker, – possibly another Kadan – they would stop and put on all the paraphernalia of civilization in the form of sweat-soaked dirty clothes, – hoping thus to impress the newcomer; – even if he may be only a poorer brother from the forest.

Images of Gods and any other religious customs, terminology, or habits practised in the plains, are likewise eagerly adopted wherever the occasion arises.

Whilst describing Tambi's (I/1) house, we have seen that a stone was set up, at the advise of a Parayan, and that a weekly *puja* was being conducted there in a simple manner, by his little daughter Randa (I/6). We have also mentioned that some Kadar purchased small statuettes of Kali at markets, in the plains, and carried them to the hills. In all these cases I was proudly informed of the origin of these new forms of worship. It was, therefore, out of the question for me to consider them as survivals of an old Kadan custom. In other cases of religious acculturation, such as Kali-worship for instance, the process might have taken place a generation ago or, possibly, as the result of a more gradual and very slow infiltration of ideas. This is what seemed to be happening in 1947/48 also to the Malavay-Malankuratti complex. In the minds of many modern Kadar a change of attitude towards the divine couple took place and thus produced narrations, such as that Velama's, in which Malavay-Malankuratti appear as two reformers and introducers of – clothing, having been themselves created by Isvara.

[8-a] comp. Fig. 10 on p. 50.

Veluppu's story of the old spirit Karia Muppan, however, allows still for the possible assumption of an original, almost forgotten Kadan belief in an ultimate creator, also of Malavay and Malankuratti – in spite of Murugan's (VI/1) assertion that Karia Muppan was merely an early, "Kadan business-man", – a historical figure – who actually lived shortly before the construction of the timber-transport tram-line, and the establishment of the Minor Forest Produce Contractor system, in the hills.

Summing up the creator deity conceptions, prevailing among a majority of present-day Kadar, we find a double aspect nowadays: a simple, somewhat vague conception of a primeval couple, conceived almost as *one entity*, appears genuine and not self-contradictory, whilst a second set of religious notions is composed of several elements, taken from Hindu, – and partially also Christian places of worship. These features have been no doubt adopted from the plains quite recently. The Hindu conceptions among these acculturation features seem more closely related to the Tamil speaking East, whilst Chalakudy in the West with its strong Syrian Christian and recent Christian convert population, exercises its influence more in this latter direction.

Life after Death, Sacrifice

Summing up current Kadan conceptions of the *destinies of the soul* after death, we find them comprising these notions: – The soul remains near its former living space as *mudhiar*. This word is, to my knowledge, used by Kadar generally, but neither in present-day Malayalam, nor by the Tamil-speaking plainsfolk in the East. The Malayalam word *pretham* is no doubt also known to the Kadar of to-day, yet they generally use their own word for this stage of postmortal development during which a "death-spirit" loiters near his former house. After the second death ceremony,[9] the soul

[9] *supra*, p. 170, (Chap. VII).

goes "high up into the air". About what happens then and there, conceptions appear to be considerably at variance and betray no doubt traces of Hindu, – or Christian teachings, ranging from sporadically appearing elements of a belief in the transmigration of souls to that in reward for charity, atonement for marital infidelity or insubordination, shown to the forest authorities. The basic concept of the second death-ceremony as an essential and liberating service, rendered to the soul of a deceased person, for the latter's benefit, however, seems to be deeply rooted in Kadan present-day institutions and concepts, without showing indications of recent borrowing from the plains.

We have seen[10] that burial gifts and avoidance of the dead body's resting-place combine somewhat antagonistic attitudes towards the dead body. These burial gifts, varying in the case of men, women and small children, as well as also the avoidance of the burial place, after interment, can, to my knowledge, not be traced back to any recent influence from the plains. The sprinkling of a mother's own milk on the ground, in case of the death of a baby, is perhaps significant in this connection and may be compared with the custom of sprinkling some honey (and arrack),[11] as a "first gift" to the gods. It is possible that here survivals of the primitial sacrifice are still palpable.

Mythology and Lore

The conflict between original Kadan conceptions and adaptations to the ideas of the plainspeople is also very clearly marked in the Kadan tribal stories and connected lore. The myth of the *Golden Age* when the jungles were full of fruit-trees and edible animals, especially black monkeys, gives a vivid and beautiful picture of the original food-gathering stage of the tribal ancestors, when they were presumably still

[10] *supra*, p. 168 (Chap. VII).
[11] *supra*, p. 169 and 185, (Chap. VII).

in the plains. In those days, the story goes on, not even digging sticks were required. This would show a very persistent mythological memory, indeed, going back to times when no tools were used at all. It may, of course, be argued that this conception is perhaps as unhistoric, as the idea of a forest, full of fruit-trees, or of animals with such long tails, as everybody can easily get hold of. This merely fantastic, or perhaps symbolic description of a Kadan Garden\Eden may therefore be included into the long list of allegoric descriptions of a Paradise Lost, – similarly as the plainspeople's tale of the bowing cocoanut tree, which is common in all Kerala. But a difference is here significant. Whilst in the plains of this once predominantly matrilineal area, the responsibility for tree-climbing has been laid upon womanhood;–as a consequence of, or punishment for, a menstruating woman's mistake in approaching the miraculous and kindly bowing cocoanut tree, it was, among Kadar, the foolish digging of unnecessary holes by which some silly little boys and girls[12] brought disgrace, and with it: the burden of the digging stick, on the tribe. Though it is no doubt probable that a sub-conscious connection exists there between digging and sex life, – there are yet no traces of a conscious or openly expressed association of sex and the feeling of guilt or sex-life and sin.

The gradual adoption of, first, stone and later iron, for strengthening the digging strick's edge, is also clearly depicted in this tribal legend which I heard at first from Pönnala (IV/3) but which I found later repeated by almost all grown-up Kadan men and women whom I met. I abandoned, therefore, my previous suspicion that in this tale we are facing a fanciful adaptation of the Biblical version to Kerala plainspeoples *Golden Age* concepts and Kadan conditions. So far as my knowledge of the sources, local conditions and environments permits – I am satisfied, as to the genuinely Kadan character of this tribal legend.

[12] *supra*, p. 175 (Chap. VII).

A host of other lore and stories which I came to know, however, shows marked signs of borrowing from the tales, as they were and are, also nowadays, being re-told, among the plainsfolk. The distribution of heaps of food to all castes by a lordly god,[13] and the somewhat ridiculous, if dignified, position which is there accorded to the Kadan:– all are based on elements of low country ideas which appear, to a certain extent, adapted to the fancies and pride of the Kadar. A perhaps unconscious tendency becomes manifest, in all these stories, to expose the plainspeople's ever present desire to humiliate the simple Kadar and also of their own proud refusal, to take the bait, offered for such humiliation;– a refusal, however, which the combined influence of officialdom, the lure of arrack, opium and clothes and the examples of coolies from the plains have succeeded in breaking to the disadvantage of the present Kadan generations. In old Bombay's and also Tambi's (I/1) version of the same tale, beef was offered to the Kadan. When he refused it, he was induced to bite a cattle string, or a string, passed through cow-dung. The disconnection is here clearly visible between the taboo on beef among Kadar, and the general Hindu respect for, and love of, the cow. It is the transformation of Hindu refraining from killing, and eating, cows to a taboo on touching things connected with the cow which borders on disgust. This aspect of a similar eating – plus – touching – taboo is still more clearly pronounced in the case of the bison. As there are indications of a similar attitude to the tamed buffalo, among Parayar, it is possible that here a very old aversion to the bison is still surviving, which need not necessarily have anything to do with Hindu mythology but may, on its part, have provided the material for the Hindu mythological concept of the bison as the vehicle of the god of death. This latter conception, or in fact any connection of bison and death, is, however, not suggested in Kadan stories,

[13] Described on p. 178 (Chap. VII).

though it is not considered as auspicious, also among Kadar, to meet a bison in the jungle.

Omens

There are few other ideas current, among Kadar, about auspicious or inauspicious things, which moreover seem to have been recently borrowed from the plains,[14] and show little originality: – with the only exception, perhaps, of the *pillaikal*[15] the "children's rock", where pebbles are being thrown from a pregnant mother's feet, in order to ascertain the sex of the expected child. Connection between this rather elaborate oracle and the remnants of megalithic buildings in the Kadan area has not been traced by me. It is surprising that the rather inconspicuous rocks, connected with the "pillaikallu – oracle", should have assumed such an importance, in the minds of the Kadar, if there was no previous tradition to give them such eminence which they could scarcely have attained by virtue of their appearance, shape or natural constitution.

Megaliths

The megaliths of the Kadan country are known as *muniar,* the chambers of the *munis,* or spirits, which appear somewhat less malignant, as their namesakes in the trees. The spirits of these megaliths are said to be frequently sitting on the monuments and, also, to carry away beautiful Kadan maidens which is, incidentally, supposed to be one reason for the numerical disproportion between Kadan-girls and boys. These conceptions are in marked contrast to the lore of the Periya Malayalees which I heard in the Salem District about megalithic structures, there ascribed to a race of extinct dwarfs.[16] Two elements in the Kadan stories would appear

[14] *supra*, p. 184. (Chap. VII).
[15] *supra*, p. 185. (Chap. VII).
[16] Details *supra*, p. 182. (Chap. VII).

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to indicate a formerly existing direct contact between the Kadar and the people, or peoples, who constructed these monuments: (1) the spirits of the Kadan lore are supposed to sit on the stones – a frequent habit of megalithic peoples themselves; – and (2) the idea that these spirits carry away beautiful Kadan girls. None of the other spirits or demigods of present Kadan belief is being accused of this rather human misdeed which may be well in line with the character of a megalithic people in South India, who, armed with iron and the superior power of a technically advanced civilization, they appear to have been.

Spirits – Obsessions

Cases of alleged obsession by spirits are not infrequent. Shaking and shivering are the usual indications of some nervous derangement which is here manifest. In the case of old Veluppu the presence of a tiger, or panther, also seemed to provoke such shaking even without her knowledge of such an animal's presence. From the way in which the actual coincidence of these nervous symptoms with the later observed visit of a tiger, or panther, in the orbit of the village, was reported to me, I should feel inclined to believe that we are here faced with an instance of that real mental contact between certain individual humans and animals which has often been reported from other fields of ethnographic observation. But I had no occasion to witness the phenomena myself, so that it may also have to be relegated into the long list of miraculous stories, based on secondhand reports.

CHAPTER IX

SEX LIFE, THE POSITION OF WOMEN AND ACCULTURATION IN FORMS OF DRESS

Sex life

KADAN sexual life is determined by a regulation which one might almost feel tempted to call a taboo. This "regulation" is the social ban on any sex-activity in a Kadan home, including leaf, – or rock-shelters in the forest. Sexual intercourse, therefore, does not take place at night when the Kadar are generally "at home", and when it is uncomfortable, even dangerous, to go to the jungle. All sex activities are thus confined to excursions into the forest during daytime. The restriction therefore moulds not only sex-habits as such, but determines also the daily routine of all grown-up people —who are generally married. This restriction certainly plays the rôle of a powerful *taboo* – functionally, though there are no punishments, or threats, to prevent its neglect. It is simply "not done". The only cases of disregard, of this restriction, which I had come to know, were the alleged affairs of Tungumanni (IV/12), the lame boy, which he was said to have had with some married women, when all other grown-up persons of the camp had left for collecting expeditions into the forest.[1] But even in these cases, though nobody approved of the alleged affairs as such, there was also no hint at a possible punishment, supernatural or otherwise, for the infringement of the ban on sex activities in a house, though there might have been a dispute, or scandal, had any particular woman been directly accused of illegal connections with the lame (and not yet married) boy.

[1] *supra*, p. 105.

The reasons, given by the Kadar themselves, for the existing restriction of marital sex-life to the open forest and, generally, to the hours of the day, as against the night, are quite rational:

"Houses, leaf-shelters or caves are too small," Kadar would say, "too overcrowded and too open as to allow of any enjoyable intimacy". Moreover sexual intercourse must not take place in the presence of children. And children are everywhere.

This same difficulty is also strongly felt by other aborigines of the same region but these overcome it in quite a different way. Muduvar– and Malai Malasar– children, after weaning, sleep in bachelor,– and young maiden-halls respectively, and parents are thus at night undisturbed in their houses. Among them no restriction is imposed on sex life either at home or during the night.

But among Kadar the ordinary routine of marital sex life is quite different. A husband would suggest – generally in the morning, or late afternoon – to go and collect firewood in the forest. The wife will take this as just the correct form of approach, to which she will generally respond willingly, unless contemplating divorce or expecting menstruation very soon. If the two have thus expressed their intention to "collect firewood", no other Kadan with the least common sense and decency in him would ever dream of accompanying them, though Kadar go for *real* collection expeditions generally in somewhat bigger groups to the forest. Very small babies will be taken along, by the mother, and put under a thick shrub or bamboo bush, before she lies down to unite with her husband. A certain risk for the baby is here undoubtedly involved, for jackal, hyæna, panther and tiger are more likely to snatch away a baby, lying alone at some distance from its parents, than to attack these themselves. Yet I have neither heard of any such tragedy, nor of fear expressed on this score, by the parents.

The rôle of the Kadan woman no doubt appears more passive as might be expected, considering her relative independence in matters, not only of marriage, divorce and remarriage, but also of collecting and selling forest products. Reports of low country coolies who were married to, or had sexual relations with, Kadan women and spoke quite freely about their experiences, stressed this picture of sexual passivity. Kadan women, according to these descriptions, are even more passive and simple, in sexual matters, than the poorer classes in the plains, which means quite a lot, since in Malabar sexual, – as any other activity and originality of women, is generally considered to be a prerogative of the higher, formerly matrilineal classes. The low-country lover of the late Karappi (I/3), for instance, bragged that he had to teach her the art of the erotic kiss, as well as the variation of body-positions, during love-making, of both of which she had had been ignorant, when he began his affair with her.

Such reports should no doubt be taken with precaution. The attitude of most low-country men towards all aboriginals and therefore also to the Kadar, is generally so antipathetic and uncharitable that they have, as statements of facts, little more value than mere expressions of disgust and assumed superiority over the "poor wretched aborigine". Otherwise quite reasonable, educated men from the low-countries told me more than once: "O these Kadars! They are much worse than animals! They don't save money, they feel no affection whatsoever for their benefactors from the plains who bring them decent clothing. They know no gratefulness. Not even a mother would feel anything for her child or do as much as fondle or kiss him!" I have, of course, seen myself Kadan mothers kissing and fondling their babies quite often and this, in spite of the general stiffness and formality which they observed in the presence of a plainsman, like myself, and a foreigner at that! I have also experienced gratefulness, especially on the part of elderly men, such as Tambi (I/1)

for what little I might have done for the welfare of the tribe. But the contempt shown to Kadan women, by most low-country men, is of a subtler, – yet by no means less effective kind, than that by which the aboriginal man is usually cowed, through shouts and threats. Though Kadan men and women are talking freely among each other, the ordinary low-country men would never address a Kadan woman, unless he means to begin an intrigue. This mannerism is of course not consciously calculated to lower the position of Kadan women in their own society, but is merely the outcome of present-day mores in *purdah* –, and *gosha*-ridden India. The man from the plains who neither addresses, nor looks at an aboriginal woman simply behaves, as he is expected to behave in the plains. But he creates at the same time an atmosphere of stiff formalism and utter disregard of women and womanhood which is bound to have its effect on aboriginal social concepts internally. Manners and behaviourism which were originated in an atmosphere of *purdah, gosha,* and absolute male superiority over women are thus being applied to aboriginal women who have so far had no experience of either. The general effect of this sort of culture contact is distrust and a sense of puzzled inferiority on the part of the simple-minded aboriginal woman.

It would therefore not seem unlikely that an ordinary Kadan girl feels, under these circumstances, too over-awed, by the social position of her Paraya,– or other low-country-lover, as to behave naturally towards him. The statements of some coolies and other men from the plains may, therefore, not be taken as infallible proof of the alleged sexual passivity and indifference of Kadan women. But there are other sources of information which seem to confirm these statements to a certain extent. In the mimic performances in which the love-play of various jungle-animals as also of humans was acted by Va*zh*avan,[2] a passive rôle was attributed

[2] p. 120, *seq.* (Chap. V).

to the woman, acted by a young boy. Similar plays were also enacted by a group of Kadan visitors who had come from the Tamil plains to celebrate *Vishu* in Cochin. From these dramatizations too, it appeared that the normal thing for a Kadan woman was to lie down quietly, on her back, and to leave all other activities to her partner.

It seemed, however, that Kadan men were generally less pre-occupied with the topic of sex than low-country men, though they spoke more easily, or "naturally", on this subject than most men from the plains whom I met in these hills. Kadan husband and wife are supposed to take a plunge-bath after sexual union; – provided there is a river near by. In the absence of such an opportunity, at least a good washing and rubbing of the body with water should be done.

We have seen (*supra*, Chap. V) that, apart from the actual sexual aspect, marital decisions are very much dependent on the attitudes, taken by women. That sex and fulfilment of sexual desire, however, do also play an important part, among Kadan women, became quite clear to me, through many narrations, told by Kadan men. The wife of one Krishnan, in a more migratory Kadan group, generally roaming in the area east of Parambikulam, complained one day to her relatives and neighbours that her husband could not satisfy her sexually. Soon after this she went one day to the jungle in the company of young Ramapilla (VI/3); – a boy, younger than herself, and of the quarrelsome husband of Kartiyayani (I/4). Since this adventure in the jungle was done quite openly, the woman's husband complained and, because the elder of the two men, Kartiyayani's husband, was married himself, it has been decided, by a group of elderly relatives, that young Ramapilla (VI/3) should marry the woman who was dissatisfied with her husband. The person who narrated the whole story at first to me was a man from the plains and expressed utter abhorrence, not so much of the fact that the dissatisfied wife took the two lovers with her to

the jungle, but because she freely admitted that this was done because of certain physical shortcomings of her husband. "A female in the plains would never have dared to say that;—at least not in the presence of male members! O these Kadars! They all are an utterly shameless, lazy, and uncivilized lot! That is also the reason why their females divorce them with impunity. If a man works a little harder in the forest thereby getting too tired to satisfy his wife sexually every morning and afternoon, she will at once divorce him and run away with another man!" was the comment of the scandalized low-country man.

The pending divorce case referred to here was, incidentally, withdrawn later. Krishnan, the outraged husband of the dissatisfied woman, earned some money from the contractors and, after this, his wife seemed to have found it more convenient to stay on with him. So young Ramapilla (VI/3) remained unmarried and went to a place west of Parambikulam where he took up coolie work.

Kadan attitudes to Sex

All such matters were in 1947/48 still being discussed in a straightforward matter-of-fact tone by Kadan men and, it seems, also by Kadan women, provided no non-Kadan was present. Kadan women hear of course the remarks, passed by low-country men, such as the one quoted above, and are quick in picking the spirit of hypocrisy by which these judgements are tinted. The psychological basis for the approximatively equal position of the sexes, by which Kadan social order was characterized, is fast disappearing under such circumstances and an ideology is gaining ground, every day, which sees in women but the drudge, destined by providence and nature, to serve men and to be eternally ashamed of her degrading nature and position as "a mere female".

Ordinarily Kadan men and women still do more or less the same work together, prepare and eat their food together,

dress in a similar way, – at least whilst at work, – and discuss among each other the same matters of their similar lives in a similar manner. But as soon as there is any contact with outsiders from the plains – the rôle of women is radically changed. My meals, for instance, were for some time prepared by one of the few Kadan boys who had been educated in the plains. He consequently made his wife wear the type of white sari – plus European blouse – attire, which an *ayah* would wear in the plains. He spent no doubt a lot on this dress of his Kadan wife who was thus rendered quite incapable of digging roots from the dusty ground in the forest. So she had to pay for the questionable privilege of wearing an *ayah's* dress, by being lazy, having less food to eat, or being dependent on what her husband earned as a cook. Apparently she did pay the price – though perhaps unconsciously – as readily as most women do who are told that their humiliations are privileges. The drama, played by the introduction and spreading of *purdah*[3] was here repeated on a small scale, but scarcely with much less disadvantage for the family-life concerned, with which it has frequently been enacted in this country and elsewhere. Hand in hand with this "purdah in the primeval forest" went the lowering of the woman's position, which seems to be an inevitable part of the whole process. When, for instance, water was to be carried, or a piece of cloth to be washed, my "civilized" Kadan servant at once called his wife to do such work which, he thought, was below his dignity. This, at least, was what "civilization" had taught him and what he, on his part, faithfully taught to his wife. One evening I saw him bringing my food to the next room of the forest bungalow in which I was staying. It was dark and he wanted some light to put the banana leaf for my rice and *sambar* on the usual place. His wife, standing outside the door, stretched her arm as best she could, to hold out the

[3] Comp.: Ehrenfels-II, (1949/D), pp. 98 *seq.*

small cocoanut lamp to her husband, without entering the room, even in the presence of her husband, because – I was sitting next door. It would, according to low-country mores, have been – "immodest" for her to enter the room. The change of conscious attitudes—not to speak of unconscious reactions—thus set into motion, can hardly be overestimated.

The formerly free and independent position of Kadan women is thus fast disappearing under the influence of modern machine-civilization. This process is further accelerated by the contempt, shown and freely expressed, to the Kadar, on the part of practically each representative of that civilization and it is not checked by any tribal laws of inheritance or a legal position, reserved for women; – such as we find in matrilineal societies. Kadan civilization was too simple, knew too little of property or family-coherence and was too exclusively based on a free equilibrium of the sexes, as to evolve anything of this kind. In this basically bilateral society, the comparatively equal and strong position of women was solely based on a sense of equity and economic co-operation; not on any legal regulation. As soon as the two former factors disappear, the one-time equal position of women breaks down completely and is likely to deteriorate fastly into that of utter dependence and serfdom by which it is characterized among a majority of "civilized" peoples in the plains.

We have seen how the first factor: the psychologically founded sense of equity in dealing with womanhood is being uprooted by contact, not only with civilization, but with its most ruthless, though quite unconscious propagators—socially superior Government officials, contractors, and their servants who are acting as missionaries of the patriarchal order the more successfully, as they are doing it unconsciously.

It now remains to be discussed how the second factor, the economically equal position of Kadan womanhood, is disappearing.

The position of Kadan womanhood

Kadan economy is still based on the same principles of collecting the products of the forest, on which it had been even in the Kadan Golden Age before, according to mythology, "some silly boys and girls had started the quite unnecessary game of digging into the ground, with sticks"[4] for roots, although better food was easily available in those days – and even without the help of digging-sticks. Meanwhile the

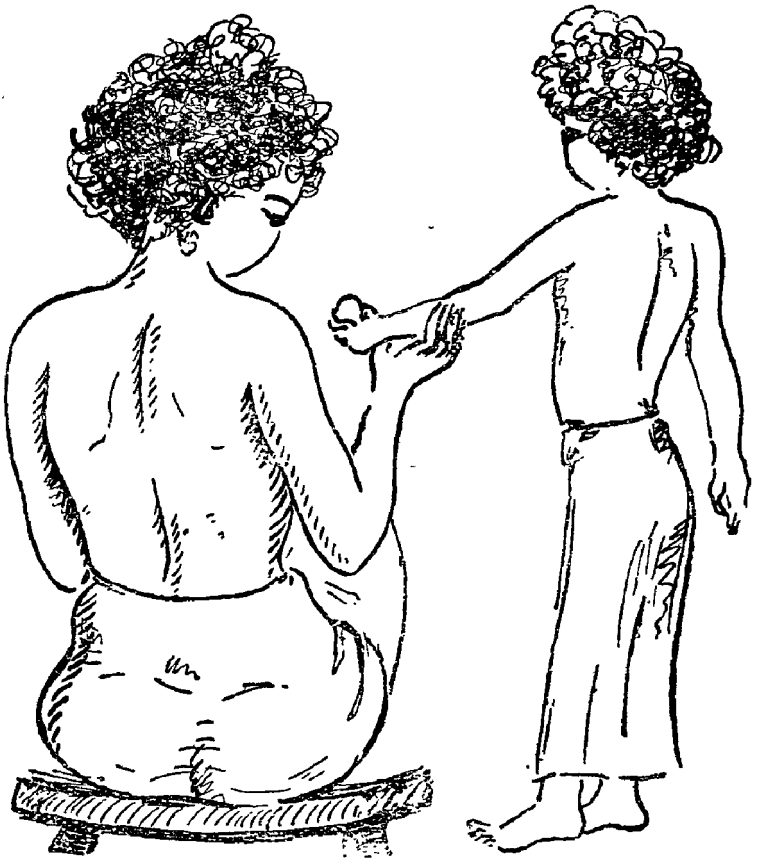

FIG. 23.
KADAN MOTHER
on a low-country stool.
(Hair and dress little acculturated. Compare: Fig. 24 on p. 225).

digging-stick has come to be clad with an iron tip, but it still continues to be the main instrument used by Kadan men and

[4] Comp. p. 175 (Chap. VII).

women alike, for the collection of forest products. These products are no more consumed directly, but are now sold, to the Minor Forest Produce Contractor; – yet they still form the main source of income to most Kadar, apart from occasional service as forest-watchman or –guards and a little dairy-farming.

How then, it may be asked, could the economic equilibrium between Kadan women and Kadan men come to be upset?

In answering this question, we will first have to realize that though Kadan men may get employment as forest watchers and forest guards in Government service, and may occasionally earn some money as coolies, the same opportunities are not afforded to Kadan women. Though this opportunity concerns a comparatively small number of persons only, their influence is yet bound to make itself felt in the entire tribe, which is numerically so weak.

But quite apart from this regularized influence, on the part of Government officials, there is also the contractor-system, which introduced two entirely new features in Kadan daily routine. It is these factors which changed the entire position of womanhood. There is, firstly, the attitude of the contractor's agent who would not deal with women. He may not do this, with the conscious intention of lowering the position of women, but merely in accommodation to the values of his own social system which he considered as "natural and decent". The full appreciation of this particular acculturation aspect would no doubt necessitate an analysis of the social structure, environments and concepts, by which the contractors and their agents are determined themselves. It may, at first sight, seem rather surprising to find here so outspokenly patriarchal attitudes, attributed to contractors in an area, such as the Kadan hills, which is in the close vicinity of the once predominantly matrilineal plains of Kerala; – and this

the more so, as matrilineal hill-people in other parts of this country, for instance the Khasi, continue to allow a considerable part of their business-transactions to be done by their women.[5] The position among them, however, is in more than one respect different from that of the Kadar. Let us first consider the position of the Khasi:

(1) Khasi themselves have a system of clearly defined rights and privileges reserved for their women, according to their matrilineal social order.

(2) Most of the wholesale dealers, with whom Khasi women have to trade, are either themselves Khasi, brought up in the atmosphere of the matrilineal order; – or else Assamese plains-Indians who have come to accept the Khasi matrilineal order as a well-established, though to them strange, system of social order. If they may often ridicule, or criticize this system, they yet do not actively try to abolish it, – in the way the plains-Indians do in Kerala, as will be shown presently (*infra,* p. 213, para 3).

The respective circumstances in the Kadan area are different:

(1) The Kadan system, being bilateral, rather than matrilineal, knows of no articulate privileges for women, such as the matrilineal order would provide.

(2) A high percentage of the forest contractors, in the Kadan Hills, as well as their agents and servants, belong to those classes of the plains in Kerala which had been *patriarchal,* even *before* the disintegration of the matrilineal system of Kerala set in, whilst others come from the eastern, Tamil-speaking plains, where a patriarchal order prevailed already since at least a number of centuries.

[5] Ehrenfels-II, (1951/A). Observations to which reference is made here, are the result of field-researches, which I was financially enabled to carry out, by a Grant-in-Aid from the *Viking Fund,* Inc. New York, and for which I received special leave from the University of Madras. To both these institutions my thanks are here recorded again.

(3) Even the members of formerly matrilineal classes in Kerala, act not infrequently in an extremely patriarchal way, in order to prove that they have fully assimilated the newly introduced patriarchal order and spirit which school, officialdom and sometimes even their own elderly family-members represent as the culture-ideal of modernism and "progress" to them.

Whatever their reasons; forest contractors and their agents exclude Kadan women from trade and thus frequently from earning the profits of their labours. Kadan men alone sell now to the contractor, what men and women have collected in equal labour together. The contractor provides rice – the only available substitute for edible roots and tubers – in exchange for forest produce. Men are thus made to be the "breadwinners" even though women work, or at least used to work, (*infra*) just as much as men. This innovation, which the contractor system has introduced in Kadan economics, changed the social position of Kadan women from the very beginning. But the change was not yet complete because it was still counterbalanced by the strongly developed sense of equity by which a simple, bilateral social organization, such as the Kadar's, is characterized. The psychological derangement and breaking up of this sense of equity and of the harmony which was formerly an intrinsic element in Kadan sociology, is being effected by another acculturation feature which has also come as an innovation of the contractor's activities in the hills.

Dress, acculturation and the position of women within Kadan society

This second important change in Kadan life was the introduction of foreign dress. Clothing fashions determine no doubt the conscious, and more so the unconscious, or subconscious, behaviour of men and, more so, of women. If this is true of peoples with a long tradition of using manufactured

cloth, for their garments, it must be the more so in a case, like that of the Kadar, where cotton – or any other woven cloth – was unknown only two or three generations ago.

Kadan dress consisted at that time of a skirt, made of bast, fibre, or bark, with the addition of some leaf garments. Women seem to have carried small babies in a sling, made of such material, much in the way as they do now with a piece of cloth. This kind of dress was well fitted to the climate of the Kadan country, and to their occupation: namely work in open air. This type of dress covered the sexual organs and protected also the more vulnerable parts of the body against thorns or elastic, and thus sharply hitting branches, when marching through the forest. It did not overheat the body during the hot hours of the day, or unduly chill it, when rain and storm passed over the hills and wetted these fibre, – and leaf-garments. Leaf-garments do not get soaked in water, or sweat, such as cotton clothes do and – moreover – leave the upper part of the body usually free. This is of importance in a tropical climate as it allows the very necessary cooling down of the overheated system through the lungs, heart and other essential inner organs, situated in chest and abdomen, by giving access to the sweat-evaporating breeze. In days of rain and chilly winds, on the other hand, no wet and sometimes bitingly cold cotton-clothing were then kept on the body which is the case now; when dangerous chills and pneumonia are developed in that way.

So much has already been said and written, by anthropologists, medical authorities and social workers, on the havoc which European, all-covering clothing played with especially the health of South Sea, South Asian and other tropical peoples that these well known acculturation features need hardly be re-described here. However, stress should in this connection be laid only on the *structural change* of society, which the adaptation of half-Europeanized, that is to say all-covering, clothing provokes especially with regard to the

position of womanhood. Let us therefore first consider the technical facts of introducing all-covering cotton-clothing into a community which was formerly adapted to fibre, – and leaf – clothing.

1. Whilst fibre,– and leaf-garments are easily and frequently thrown away and replaced by new materials, – cotton-cloth is too expensive and, consequently, is being worn, without proper washing, until it becomes the seat of dirt, filth, contagion, disease and, at any rate, the source of foul, sickening smell.

2. Whilst fibre-garments dry quickly and, usually, are not being kept on chest and the upper part of the body, newly introduced half-Europeanized dress-fashions, such as are now prevalent in this plains, cover these vital parts, thus overheating them unnecessarily in the very hot dry seasons and acting as ice-cold wet-refrigerators during rainy and cold seasons.

3. This particular danger proves fatal, especially to babies and small children, who used to be carried against the mother's warm, yet never overheated, back or breast which, on account of perspiration, was cooler than the average temperature in hot weather daytime and warmer than the air during the rainy seasons. With cotton-cloth-dressed mothers, babies are pressed against either a piece of cloth, soaked in hot, stinking and sticky sweat, or else against a blouse, soaked in cold rain-water, which will not dry for hours, and thus causes the baby to shiver and suffer from actual cold, as has been pointed out by Grigson.[6]

4. Scanty fibre,– or leaf-dress used to afford little opportunity for parasites to make themselves comfortable there. But cotton, – or other clothes,– become veritable breeding places for all sorts of insects, ringworm and itch-causing

[6] Grigson, (1938), p. 70.

parasites, in the hands of poor or aboriginal population groups in tropical countries, who cannot afford to have their clothing permanently washed; – even *if* there is enough water available, which often is not the case.

5. Whilst a dress-fashion which does not, usually, cover the upper part of the body, hardens and increases the power of resistance, the opposite is the effect of an all-covering dress in tropical climates. During the very hot times of the year, or the day, the body gets so accustomed to excessive overheating, that it can hardly stand the rapid change of the climate which alternates with severe chill; – especially in the hills. Still more dangerous is the sudden cold, imparted by wet clothes, if sticking to the skin during the sometimes quite cold nights in the rainy season.

Almost all these physically detrimental effects of the all-covering cloth-dressing-fashion affect women, notably during lactation, even more than men. It has no doubt rightly been ascribed to this fact that the death-rate of aboriginal women increases on account of contact with civilization disproportionally more than that of men.

Incidentally, it should be realized here that the lack of supply in, and the consequently increased demand for, women has not led to any improvement of women's position within aboriginal society, – but to the reverse. The near to "equal" position of aboriginal women in a bilateral type of primitive food-gathering society is neither based on legal rights nor the law of supply and demand, but on equal partnership. The new element of increased demand for marriageable women, in conjunction with the example of the Brahmanic system, practised even by many *non*-brahmin classes in the plains, has *not* led to an increased "market-value" of the "commodity in demand", namely marriageable girls but – to the introduction of child-marriage by which every young widower, or unmarried boy, tries to secure a wife for himself. If no grown-

up girl is available, anymore, owing to the increasing death-rate, of especially young women, he will ask for a child-wife.[7] Child-marriage, in that case, means sexual intercourse with the child-wife, which again results not infrequently in serious damage to the girl's health and even in death, but also in a general lowering of the social position of women. Child-wives are no more considered as equal, reliable partners in life, such as adult wives used to be, but as a sort of useless, though at times quite pleasing little toys who have to be taught, what they must do and what not, and who are only too easily bossed over by the husband. He is moreover taught to imitate in this, as in all other respects, the "civilized" men from the plains. Increased female mortality, partly caused by all-covering clothing, thus adds not inconsiderably to the already existing trend, among aborigines, to follow the example of low-country men in the matter of child-marriage and the ensuing treatment of their women-folk as a sort of irresponsible minors.

Thus far we saw the medically palpable effects of half-Europeanized, that is to say: all-covering dress on people, working in open air generally, and on Aboriginal Womanhood in particular and gauged its indirect effects on the social position of women within their own society.[8] But quite apart from this indirect influence, all-covering dress also affects the position of Kadan women in yet a far more direct way.

Kadan women keep the upper part of the body usually free, even nowadays, provided they are alone among themselves, that is, among Kadan men and women, or quite alone in the deep forest. In such cases they usually wear a short cotton-garment round their loins, which is frequently washed, whilst river-bathing, and a longer upper cloth. In addition, however, they carry with them a bulge of a usually dirty mill-saris of considerable length, in order to cover their breasts

[7] Comp. sub. Pönnala (IV/3), p. 100 (Chap. V).
[8] Comp. Ehrenfels-II (1949/C).

and shoulders as soon as any stranger appears on the scene, If a non-Kadan passes by and the Kadan woman has no long sari at hand, she will bow down and sit in a crouching position, covering their breasts with crossed arms and spread palms, waiting until the outsider has passed by. The generally well shaped, healthy breasts of Kadan women, once a matter of pride and a sign of health and fertility, have thus come to be considered by them as something, one has to be ashamed of; almost as something that is repulsive, and degrading, at the same time. It is, of course, not the Kadan man who is to be held responsible for this change of attitudes. There is no sense of shame or self-consciousness, attached to free breasts, in the presence of other Kadan men, – even nowadays. But the influence of plainsmen has done the trick.[9] It is they who are in the habit of laughing ostentatiously and passing remarks, whenever they see a Kadan woman's free upper body so that it would require a good deal more self-confidence and pride than a "poor aboriginal" can afford in these days, to stand up to them. Kadan women, consequently, adopt the method of hiding, crouching, running away – all things unknown to their original attitudes and self-confident bearing.[10] Self-consciousness thus becomes such a dominant feature with the Kadan women who live at places where non-Kadan frequently pass that even little girls of five and six years begin to imitate the humiliating gestures,[11] in such areas, covering their scarcely discernible baby-nipples with outspread palms, crouching and bowing down in a servile fashion, as soon as an outsider appears. I have not noticed similar ostentations of "feeling humiliated" among equally naked, or half-naked, children in the plains. It seems, therefore, that

[9] As we have seen in the case of Warachi (IV/14), whose alleged past has made her a chief propagator of European blouses among Kadan girls of to-day. (*supra*, p. 106 Chap. V).

[10] Comp. Sankara Menon: (1931) pp. 285/86.

[11] Comp. Matha ("Randa") (I/6), p. 106, (Chap. V).

these gestures, and corresponding attitudes, are so eagerly being copied by the Kadan children *because* they are something quite new and out of the ordinary among the once free and independent Indian Aboriginals. If there is something true, in this tentative explanation of the difference in the behaviour of Kadan women and children, as compared to the plainsfolk in similar situations, the latter's recent history in regard to clothing habits will have to be considered, if the relevant situation is to be fully understood.

In the days of the first contact of plainsfolk with the Kadar in their hills, that is about half a century ago, when the timber transport tram-line was constructed, men and women of Malabar still used dress of truly Indian style, that is, they left the upper part of the body free. But the first groups of plainspeople, who came up the hills, on the tram, were already acculturated and had come under the influence of the then ruling Victorian Europeanized mentality. Very far from being proud of the customs and costumes of their homeland, which were well-fitted to the climate, they considered them as "barbaric", "uncivilized" or at least as merely "old fashioned". On this background flourished the aggressive contempt of the "poor, wretched Aboriginal" who was to be taught the lessons of civilization as impressively as possible so that he should not darken, by his very presence, the fair name of India as a country lacking civilization. Petty officials, merchants, their coolies or whoever else came from the plains, thus began to vie with each other in the attempt to show their respective superiority over the "wretched naked Aboriginals". These, not slow in understanding the insult, got into the habit of heaping as many clothes on their bodies, as they could afford, physically and economically, thereby following only the example of the powerful man from the plains. Instead of enjoying the fresh breeze of the green forests, he, the example-giving plainsman in his powerful position, overdressed in a way which almost defies description. Over his

white *mundu*, – a long skirt covering the legs down to the heels and falling on the ground, – he wears a singlet, dripping with sweat and sticky with a mixture of dust and perspiration. Over this an usually brightly coloured shirt will bulge and over this a three yard long *veshti* would be draped several times round throat and shoulders, whilst the head is generally being covered by a heavy turban which, in the mistaken, though traditional, belief that malaria is contacted by "bad air" will often be tied round, not only the head, but also chin, ears and mouth as well, – and all this at an average day temperature of 85 to 100 degrees F. . . ! The more affluent among the visitors from the plains add not infrequently solar hats, European coats, neckties and heavy leather boots to this costume. The tiny tram-car, bulging with cloths and clothes of all kinds and descriptions, if bringing up a party of visitors from the plains under the accompaniment of the puffing and shrill whistling of its wood-heated steam-engine, is certainly impressive and awe-inspiring enough to any aborigine – an effective "propaganda-train" for the spreading and adoption of clothes; clothes of all descriptions and all kinds – the more and the heavier – the better. Nor is this all that is being done, to give to the Kadar the impression that the greater the amount of cloth, a person wears on him, – or herself, the higher is that person's social standing and his or her value to – "civilization"! At the annual distribution of presents, by the representatives of Government, and in the Kadan schools, cloth is being distributed free of charge as a means to propagate the "civilizing" efforts of the authorities. Kadan forest-guards, or –watchers, are ordered to wear "full dress" if passing through, or working in, the forest. In fact nothing is omitted which might help to give the impression that nakedness is the most shameful of all sins and that civilization consists mainly in heaping as many pieces of cloth on one's body, as possible. Consequently, this is, of course, what most Kadar, men and women, have come to believe.

This trend of events, moreover, suits the self-interest of the contractor only too well. He sells cloth at double, sometimes three times, the rate of what they would fetch in the plains, and gets the price he demands because the Kadar think that these clothes are in fact the sum-total of civilization and therefore the most precious goods which their money can buy.

The effect of all this on men is strong enough. A Kadan does not look very happy, aesthetic or harmonious with a *mundu,* much too long for his height, over which he stumbles at every pass, with a shirt, hanging down below his knees and wide enough to accommodate his entire family in its folds, crowned by a bulging *vesti,* a muffler round his neck, – all stiff with a mixture of sweat, mud and water from the last heavy rain. But the transformation, which all these paraphernalia of "civilization" bring to Kadan women, is even more remarkable. The same person who looks dignified, free and self-confident in her healthy simplicity – well adapted to climate and open air work – becomes the caricature of dirt-covered, cringing servility, we had to describe above. The dress-mania of modern civilizations, Western and Oriental alike, demands its full share in sacrifice of human happiness and self-respect.

It does not require a very deep insight into the problems of psychology, to realize that these changes leave their marks on women's mind. And Kadan women are indeed affected by the constant crouching and cringing, hiding and covering of their breasts as though these were ulcers or boils – stinking as their clothes in fact are. Kadan women are also not insensible to the aesthetic values of the dirty cloth-bulges which they thus feel obliged to heap on themselves whenever a non-Kadan passes by, even though they may consider them as "marks of respectability." The conclusion drawn from all these observations, and encouraged by the clever contractor, is the acquisition of brightly-coloured European blouses,

though at fantastic prices, in order to cover her breast once for all. But if a woman works, or digs roots, only for half a day, with a tailored blouse on her body, the coloured cloth of the garment will stick to her skin, marking nipples and the more prominent parts of the breasts ostentatiously with dark mud-colour. The very thing, attempted to hide, becomes then even more prominent. So the more affluent, among Kadan women, go yet one more step further, and resort now to wearing underwear "singlets" beneath their European blouses. These underwear singlets are made of heavy cotton weaving – originally meant to protect women in the severe cold of northern European and other subarctic countries. I do not know who conceived of the idea to introduce them into tropical countries where they become instruments of a subtle self-torture for women, as well as men. If Kadan women feel the itch and discomfort too much, or if the baby wants his milk, they will lift blouse and singlet over one, or both, breasts and thus move about in a state of artificial half-nudity, the effect of which is neither that of harmonious beauty, nor that of Victorian "modesty"....

Kadan women do not, of course, consciously analyse these consequences of the vigorously propagated idea that all but fully covering dress-fashions are "indecent". Yet there can be little doubt that they are strongly affected by these ideas and feel their consequences. Women, among Kadar, are also not slow in drawing the same conclusions from this propaganda battle against the bare breast which other women have elsewhere been drawing from *purdah*,– *gosha*,– or similar all-covering clothing fashions. They take all the impositions on their freedom and physical comfort as so many tributes, paid to their physical "charm", their preciousness and, consequently, are quite ready to play the rôle of *Man's Costly Toy*.

Modern Kadan women quite naturally find it increasingly difficult to go to the jungle and dig for edible roots in the dusty ground, thereby spoiling their costly blouses and

getting over-heated in their thick singlets. To avoid both: they begin to sit at home. In the laziness and uniformity of this latest form of *purdah*, other new affectations are being adopted from the plainspeople. Heavy oiling and flattening of the naturally curled hair is one of them. Kadar of both sexes used to twist the naturally formed tuft of short and curly hair on the crown of their head and to be proud of it as a visible mark of their racial identity, as our photos illustrate. Nowadays aping of plainspeople demands artificial flattening with the help of oil, and much time, devoted to the purpose.[12] Kadan women thus get into the habit to idle away their hours in gossip and laziness.

It is the Kadan man who has at first to pay the price for the laughter and remarks of the plainsmen, at the sight of a Kadan woman's free breast. It is he who has first to put up with the necessity of collecting enough forest produce to buy him the rice required for an idling wife and children at home and it is he who has to get the money for the coloured European blouses and white underwear for her to wear. In most cases he pays the price, without of course consciously realizing the change that is taking place in the relations between him and his wife. He need not be aware of it, for he will come to feel almost "automatically" that his wife is a useless, idle and vain thing, interested only in her blouses, her oiled, flattened hair and the little mirror which he purchases for her, at the suggestion of the contractor, for half a tin of honey (worth Rs. 35 in the plains, where the mirror can be purchased for one or two rupees). A feeling of resentment on account of the constantly growing demands for more clothes grows in the Kadan man. Soon it will be the Kadan woman who has then to pay the full price for the laughter of the plainsman and the gifts of "civilization" that have come in its wake—the full price not only in money, but also in human dignity and happiness of life. The Kadan

[12] Comp. Fig. 22, p. 152 and 24 on p. 225.

wife will no more be the equal partner as she was in the bilateral order of society before, but – an economic burden. She will then no more take part in the collection of food, in the jungle, at all, – for such work is incompatible with all covering clothes – will no more be producing and consuming on almost equal lines and in the same way as do men, but will have become an economic burden. From here it is then only one more step until the woman will have become a commodity herself and the completely patriarchal system thus be established in its full force. This process, to a large extent, inaugurated by the introduction of all-covering clothing, is further hastened by the example of the plainsmen and their attitudes, as has already been discussed before, when dealing with the introduction of child-marriage in Kadan sociology.

Though dress fashions and clothing prejudices no doubt play a major part in this process, there are also other factors working in the same direction.

We have seen[13] that Kadar used to cut combs from their favourite material—bamboo. These combs used to be beautifully ornamented with patterns of small lines in a particular geometrical style which, as we have seen, bears resemblance to Semang ornaments. The cutting of these designs requires time, patience and creative work on the part of men. It added to the interest in, and joy of, life. The combs fitted well to the tufts of loose, curly hair, which used to form on the crown of typical Kadar, men and women, and which as we have seen (*supra*) were a matter of pride to the ordinary Kadan of both sexes, as it is now only for men, whilst women imitate the flat hair of the plainspeople. The traditional Kadan bamboo combs are being gradually replaced by factory plastic combs. They are long and flat, instead of narrow and high. If stuck sidewise into the heavily oiled, flattened hair of modern Kadan girls, these plastic combs do

[13] p. 23 (Chap. III).

not only look ridiculous, and certainly unaesthetic, but also prevent their owners from moving freely, for fear of loosing the awkward, but precious, object.[13-a] Here too men have to pay in cash for the new type of ornament, where they had

FIG. 24.
ACCULTURATION FEATURES.
(Flattening hair with oil, sitting on a Malabar-type low stool,—cross-legged, instead of with stretched legs as illustrated by Pl. XVI/b, facing p. 122. At home the upper part of the body is still kept free. Comp. also: Fig. 23 on p. 210).

formerly to exert their energy and creativeness if they wanted to please their wives, or brides, with the present of a bamboo comb of their own workmanship.

All these changes in dress and ornaments foster a mercenary spirit in the relations of the sexes among Kadar which, again, results in that particular disintegration of vitality, happiness and creativeness which has so aptly been described, by Verrier Elwin, in his "Loss of Nerve" and elsewhere.[14]

[13-a] Fig. 22 on p. 152.
[14] Elwin, (1943): pp. 14, 18, ff and 31 and (1947): pp. 654, *seq.*

The Kadan tribe is no doubt also disadvantageously affected in the way described there. Its aesthetic sense, self-respect and dignity, its joy of, and interest in, life are being muffled. But the particular effect on women is stronger still, than that on men, because their standard of life does not only go down along with that of their menfolk, but their *relative* position to men, within the tribal unit, is in addition lowered. From a free and equal partner in life's struggles and joys, the Kadan woman is gradually but steadily sliding into the position of: first a commodity, then a menial serf and ultimately a drudge. Once an equal partner of men in the strenuous, but healthy life of independent food-gatherers, she now becomes the slave of enslaved men, working in the iron grip of the new order which foreign clothing habits, economic pressure and direct propaganda are introducing into this originally bilateral society. A process is here repeated, before our eyes, which has done much to de-Indianize and thus to disintegrate the once well integrated ancient culture of this country.

This process could only be put a halt to, if its roots were to be eliminated. These roots are economic inequality of, and psychological contempt for, women which are in no small measure caused by dress-prejudices and clothing fashions, equally un-Indian, in the true sense of the word, as they are at the same time un-Keralian and un-Kadan! Unless these features are eliminated, there is little hope for an arrest of the line of further developments, indicated by present events.

The creative re-birth of a genuinely Indian pattern of outward appearance, well adjusted to climate and racial qualities of beauty and strength, are necessary conditions for a rehabilitation of the former good position of women in the tribe. And this alone could also reverse the steady decay and disintegration of the tribe into one of building up new economic and artistic values, which form the necessary basis for cultural activity.

CHAPTER X

DANCE, GAMES, THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND REHABILITATION

Dance

FEW manifestations of a culture are equally fit to indicate its vitality as is dance.[1] Not only the dance in itself, its mood and temperament, but also the occasions, chosen for its performance, the sex and social position of the dancers – all these bear more than accidental significance to the vitality and nature in a given culture.

It was therefore with growing concern that I saw week passing after week during my first stay with the Kadar, early in 1947, without being able to see one single dance being performed. I knew, of course, that the Kadar did celebrate various events in their lives with dances at night and the many starlit, pleasantly cool evenings of these months seemed to invite for such celebrations. Uncounted sparkling fireflies, illuminated the dark, thick growth of the virgin forest, closing in on the patches of light, which the open fires of the Kadan huts threw on the space between them. The illuminated forest changed the immediate surroundings of the Kadan village into a veritable fairy land. Yet there was no dance.

Indirect indications of the former custom of dancing, among Kadar, were plentiful but no instances of its present practice were forthcoming. I had in vain tried to come to know something about the Kadan dance through the indirect approach and finally resorted to the least desirable of all ethnographic methods of investigation: direct questioning.

[1] A fact which is impressively illustrated in Layard (1942), pp. 269, 311, *seq.* :—descriptions of Maki rituals.

The result was one of those stories which I had already been told at various other occasions mixing an only too flimsily covered hint at the eternal *baksheesh* with a genuine outcry against "civilization", which was the more appealing, as it was quite unconsciously formulated:

"How can we dance, if we are not happy? If you wish to see our young folk dance, – you can well order a tin, full of arrack, from the contractor. You are a big man and so he will not ask from *you* honey or cardamom for it. You may purchase it against mere money!" Tambi (I/1) thus closed our first talk on the subject. His judgment had always been sound and his opinions were generally accepted as fair and so I appealed to these his sterling qualities for a straightforward reply:—

"Look here, Tambi: if your people were dancing in olden days, when there was neither a contractor who would sell arrack, nor even the notion of its mere existence, among your people, – how can you say that Kadar are only happy if they get arrack? Were they not happy in the days of your father?"

"Ah then! In those days we used to have ample time and, consequently, we were happy. We were not tired, and so we could dance. We used to eat our roots which we had leisurely collected during the day in the forest, so there was no need for purchasing rice. Therefore there was no hurry in collecting either. We used to wear clothes, made of fibre and bark and leaves; so there was no need of purchasing costly *mundus*, *saries*, shirts and blouses and underwear. Work was done leisurely; as much work as we needed to live, not more. We did not feel hungry and tired. So we used to dance at every bright evening, such as this, to-night".

But now there is drudging for honey, cardamom, ginger and umbrella-sticks, and for more and more of it. The necessity to barter for more clothes, every year and to pay more

for the same quantity of rice, makes life tiresome. And then there is the lure of arrack and opium.

"They have become part of our lives. We cannot go on, without them, any more," Tambi added.

All energy is being consumed in the effort to procure more and more goods. These goods are highly valued as symbols of civilization, rather than for themselves – with the only exception of the two stimulants which can now alone produce that state of leisurely happiness, which had once been normalcy for the Kadar, but has now become the rare result of intoxication!

Religious and semi-religious ceremonies, however, possess a sufficiently strong conserving power to keep old customs alive. Such an occasion was the *adiandaram,* the second death-ceremony, celebrated in April 1947 for an old woman, a distant relative of Tambi (I/1), who had died in 1946. During the feast, which was part of the *adiandaram,* more than 70 Kadar from distant areas – partly even the estates in the Coimbatore district – assembled and performed dances during two nights and one-and-a-half days. Later I saw more dances at different other, less important, occasions of social gatherings.

The Kadan dances, which I could thus observe, were always accompanied by music. In this music I was not able to discern any peculiar Kadan elements, – different from instrumentation, rhythm or melody of either the usual Parayan orchestra in the villages of the eastern (Tamil) plains, or that of the Cheruman on the West-coast, which I found also in use among the Paniar of Wynad and elsewhere in North Malabar. This orchestra consists of one or two drums and one, sometimes two, pipes. (Fig. 25.) There is always a high-pitched pipe, producing a vibrating tone which is held at equal level, changing but slightly, in the course of

one dance which may last from ten minutes upto half an hour, or more. This high-pitched, long-drawn-out note is a very characteristic feature in South Indian village music. It stands in a fascinating, almost ecstatically monotonous contrast to the sharp rhythm of the drums with all their changing variations, based on the principle of one emphasized beat, followed by two lesser ones at shorter intervals. The second pipe adds modulation, though in a stereotyped tune – familiar to anyone who has travelled in South Indian villages.

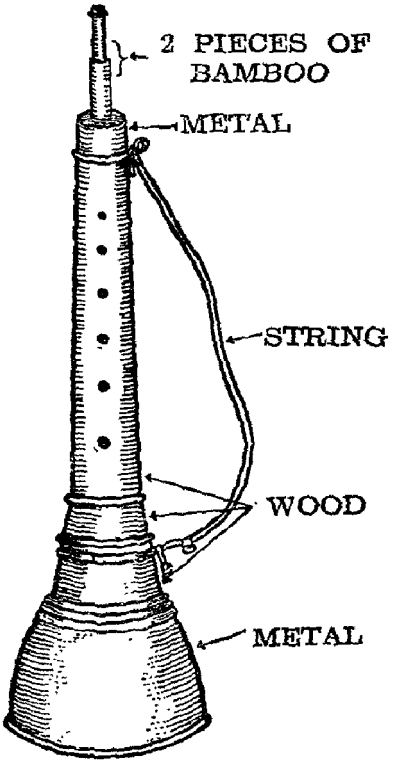

FIG. 25.
PIPE
used by Kadan musicians at dances.

The urging tune of the high-pitched flute carries the rest of the orchestra. Hearing it, the dancers would soon get restless and rush to the open space between the huts. There they would form themselves usually into two or more groups, generally consisting of four persons, each. Sometimes the sexes are mixed, sometimes the boys dance separately and the girls form a dancing group of their own, which occasionally exceeds the number of four.

In the dance itself, I discerned two main types. The first is a simple one-step pace, accompanied by a slight bending of knees not unlike a slowly danced *rumba*. The second type of Kadan dance which I was able to observe, consisted in one big forward stride of the right foot, each time coinciding with the emphasized beat of the drum, and then followed by two shorter paces of the left foot, coinciding with the two lesser

emphasized beats of the drum, which are separated by shorter intervals. The left foot is, in this second type of dance, at first placed parallel to the right foot after the latter's long stride. The second pace of the left foot will then bring it into an outward slanting angle to the right foot. Both these paces of the left foot, as well as also the preceding big stride of the right foot, are all accompanied by short, pushing movements of shoulders and loosely hanging arms, again reminiscent of the modern *rumba*. The dance begins in a slowly drawn-out rhythm and is gradually being accelerated to higher speed, which corresponds to the increasing enthusiasm of the dancers, each step being accompanied by corresponding movements of arms and hands. As soon as the spirit of the dancers rises to a sufficiently high speed of the dancing movements, a new feature is introduced. Hands are, at this stage enthusiastically and rhythmically clasped; alternately, once in the middle of the dancing group, at the height of the dancers' faces, or a little lower and once outside the circle of dancers, that is behind their backs. The second clasping of hands is accompanied by a forward bending of the upper body-part, thus lowering the hands, to the height of the dancers' knees and below, whilst clasping them behind the back. Each group of dancers forms in that way a unit of vividly undulating rhythmic movements. All these movements are carried out with temperament which is expressive of both: individual joy and unity of the group. There is harmony of movement in the entire group as such, and also in the co-ordination of upper and lower body parts, or of legs and arms of each single dancer. The aesthetic impression of the dancers' group, as well as that of the single person, is rarely disturbed by an occasional *faux pas*. The quicker the movements of hands grow, the bigger will their circumference be.

At this stage of heightened enthusiasm, gestures of arms and hands begin to take a different turn in the case of the sexes. The clasping of hands will be replaced by two different

types of movements among men and women. Men will swing their arms and hands forward, with every step, as though grasping an imaginary object in front of their faces. Girls, on the other hand, begin a queerly spinning movement of their hands and arms, as though they would take up an invisible string, from an equally imaginary ring in the centre, of their group. One might, in the dark of the night, be led to believe, that they are passing on the "invisible string", from one to the other. This imaginary string, taken from a likewise imaginary ring, appears to hang in the centre of the circle, which is being formed by the dancers' bodies. Whilst they continue turning and stepping to the rhythm of the steadily accelerated tune, the spinning movement of their arms and hands will likewise be accelerated, until it grows into a fast movement of circling hands, held in the height of the dancers' hips, or a little higher up, and finally reaches a stage in the dance, expressive of restrained excitement, in an almost ecstatically regular, racing rhythm.

I could not find any explanation for, or particular meaning attached to, this queerly spinning movement.

Another characteristic feature of the Kadan dance is a short, hissing sound which often accompanies the single steps, and especially the longer right-foot-strides of the girl-dancers. It is the same hissing: *Sss – sh* sound, which almost every *dhoby* all over India can be heard uttering when bringing down his piece of cloth on the famous, or notorious, *dhobi's stone.*

Indian earth,– stone,– and wood – workers too accompany their rhythmic movements of work, with such hissing sounds, whenever beating their axes, hammers or chisels against the materials of their respective trades. A similar labial sound, different from the world-wide habit of "sighing with relief" is, in India, often being produced by a tired and overheated person, when finally sitting down, say under the shadow of a

tree, or on a seat, that has at last been vacated in an over-crowded bus, – or railway-compartment. The elements of beating and thus loosening an accumulated tension, are present in the Kadan dance, especially in its final stages, when this particular mode of hissing is being produced. It accompanies the beating rhythm of the dancer's feet and is usually resorted to, when the dancers begin to feel not only exuberantly animated, but also exhausted. The "hissing with relief", however has no rhythmic element. But another association of thought leads here to the comparison of this hissing with the peculiar way of loudly exhaling in *Yoga* breathing exercises.

I have no explanation to offer, for this similarity of hissing sounds, which we find thus practised at different occasions, and by as widely different persons, as are aboriginal dancers (mostly girls) washermen, carpenters, stone-cutters, over-heated railway,– or autobus-travellers and – *Yogis*.

Yet the similarity of expressing relief, by uttering a peculiar kind of hissing, instead of "sighing", seems more than merely accidental. There is, so far as I am able to judge, no parallel of this particular habit outside the Indian area. The possibility may, therefore, be considered that this habit spread either from aboriginal dancers to artisans and people, loosening tensions, generally, and from them to the by no means "primitive" forms of *Yoga* exercise or – that it took the opposite course. Finally there is, of course, the possibility of convergence. The habit might have had two different and merely co-incidental sources of origin, without any real connexion in common, though nature and distribution of the mannerism do not seem to support such an assumption.

There is still another feature in the simple Kadan dance of to-day which may appear to connect it with yet another characteristic form-element of Indian civilization in one of its most highly specialized and certainly not "primitive" or "aboriginal" aspects.

Kadan men-dancers express the growing excitement of their rapture, during the fast accelerated last stages of a round, by going down, into a position of bent knees, whilst still keeping their upper bodies erect and straight, thus awkwardly contrasting the stylized stiffness of the upper part of their bodies to a soft elasticity of the lower part, moving in dancing steps, which are being carried out on bent knees. This body posture is in some way reminiscent of that in the highly stylized Kathakali Dance. The mysteries which surround the origin of this dance-type of Kerala are by no means clarified, and so the question of culture-contact and of priority comes in, also here. Though there are no doubt very sophisticated and by no means aboriginal elements of possibly Tibetan origin clustered round the Kathakali – this interesting and beautiful type of South-west Indian dance, – the possibility can yet not be offhand rejected that an element of extremely old cultural age may also be surviving here. It does not seem probable that the other way of acculturation has here taken place and that Kadar now reproduce unconsciously acculturated Kathakali forms of body posture in their dances. Even if we assume that the rare cases of some Kadan, witnessing a Kathakali performance in the plains, might have led to his imitating the body-posture in his own dance –it would yet seem unlikely that this should have become habitual, among Kadar generally, and moreover just in the moment of the climax in dancings when no repression of old habits and forms of expression should be expected to govern the movements of the dancers, by introducing a highly stylized new form, such as Kathakali or its elements would be to the Kadar.

During these last stages of a dance, I saw occasionally also men beating each his own buttocks with a loud, clicking sound of the palm, whilst going down in that particular posture of bent knees and straight upper part of the body. This feature, entirely absent in Kathakali, reminded me of a very similar phase in the *schuhplattler*, the popular folk-dance

of hillmen in Austria and Southern Bavaria, though even the most extreme diffusionist, may be hard put to detect here an element of possible culture-migration that has travelled either way and without leaving any known traces on the way from the Eastern Alps in central Europe to the Western Ghats in the extreme south of India, or *vice versa*.

Ananthakrishna Iyer describes a dance during which the Kadar "form a ring by joining hands and advance in step towards the centre and again retire by circling round and round. When wearied with dancing they sing".[2] According to this description, the Kadan dance would appear to be reminiscent of the *kolo*, the folk dance of the Balkans. I have never come across a dance of this kind, among the Kadar or even their aboriginal neighbours, nor did I ever notice that singing was resorted to, if either dancers or musicians felt tired. Songs and tales, such as are generally being recited at fairs in Tamil villages, are certainly being heard also among the Kadar of to-day. But this happens rather on quiet nights or, in any case, *before* the dance, not usually, after it or in intervals. It is generally the musicians, rather than the dancers, who feel exhausted and sit down to take rest. But as soon as they take up their work again and the high-pitched note of their pipe hangs in the air, supported as it were by the strong rhythm of the drums, at least some of the dancers will rush to the open space, where the musicians play, and will join their rhythmic tune, with the movements of feet, legs, arms and their whole bodies.

Though general meetings during which dances are being performed, are occasions for match-making and marriage proposals, also among Kadar, there does not seem to be any direct or conscious connection between dancing and sex life among Kadar. But if the enjoyment of the rhythmic movement and the appealing music overtakes the dancers after

[2] Iyer (1909), p. 26/I., quoted by permission of Higginbothams Ltd., Madras, as the publishers.

dedication, to it, for hours together, – a body-posture is sometimes taken by boy-dancers, reminiscent of both: the typical Kathakali position of bent legs and erect body, as also of mimic performances at which I saw a Kadan imitate animals in love-making.

Imitation of Animals

Imitation of animals, so often a pastime and form of creative mutual entertainment among Aborigines, was no doubt well known to the Kadar, as to most other Indian Aborigines. Va*zh*avan, who lived apart from the rest of his tribe,[3] showed me several of these animal-imitations, full of a keen sense of observation, dynamic power and the joy of action.[4] The older people all agreed that formerly it has been a common thing to play at such mimic performances for one's own, as well as the onlookers' enjoyment. I saw myself the imitation of boar, deer, mousedeer, tiger, monkey and man, and their respective love-plays. But modern Kadar seem to look down upon this art as "uncivilized". I never noticed children imitating animals, although I tried to understand, some at least, of their games, which I did not leave unobserved.

Old Bombay quoted, in this connection, a particular song addressed to the mouse-deer (*moschiola mimina*), called *kudan* by the Kadar. Her song consisted in a repetition of the words: *va kudan, vaaa Kudane, va, va!* in a somewhat amused sing-song tune. These words mean simply "Come Kudan, come, O come, Kudan!" and are supposed to be the words of the hunter, going to the jungle to catch mouse-deer. There seemed, however, to be a comic, or perhaps somewhat erotic underlying meaning attached to these words, or the whole idea of catching these very small deer, not bigger than a large rat. Old Bombay, a humorous Kadan lady, burst

[3] Comp. p. 119 *seq.* (Chap. V.).
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 120, *seq.*

each time into fits of laughter whenever she began to recite these simple words. This her laughter was so overwhelming that it prevented her each time from completing the simple line to the end. Or was there a second, suppressed, line to follow?

Obscene Performances

Merry-making and a "feast" were celebrated, on the occasion of a meeting of Kadan visitors from tea-estates and forests on the eastern border of Cochin, with the Parambikulam group. The feast consisted of a big quantity of rice and curries, arrack and dancing, which lasted throughout the night. I did not observe anything that would remotely recall obscenity or transgression of normal behaviour, among Kadar, as I knew them.

The next morning, however, a few of the visiting young men gave a sort of performance in the buffoonery and "strong jokes" which are frequently displayed at fairs and festivals in the plains. A wooden club, or stick, of about one yard in length and three to four inches in diameter, was worn pending between the legs of one of the visitors and used almost as a lance in mock-fights and mock-attacks among the boys, girls or women being not interfered with, in all the variations of rather "strong jokes" which followed. The local Parambikulam-Kadar of the Cochin territory did not seem to catch up with the jokes, but some of the younger boys among them, including Pönnala (IV/3), took part, rather imitatingly, as it appeared to me. (Pl. XVI/a, facing p. 122).

My impression was, that this type of entertainment must have been borrowed quite recently from the plains; especially also as there seemed no point of resemblance between these and the purely imitative performances in which Kadar performed animal,– or human behaviour in love-play. In these Kadan imitation-performances, there was neither an element

of obscenity, nor of joking, with the sole exception of the mouse-deer hunt, though the subject-matter of the imitation *was* undoubtedly "love-play" of either animals or humans.

Proverbs

Genuine Kadan proverbs, riddles or plays of words, have not come to my notice. What I did find in use, among Kadar, in the way of proverbs or standing phrases, seems all to have been borrowed from the plains. Thus it is said:

Kallam, kallam kondotam – "Through cunningness a thing may be taken (even with his knowledge) from its owner". Another Tamil proverb, sometimes quoted, is :

Pidichathu irumbu, kadichathu kairumbu – "Caught iron – bitten sugarcane". If one wants to catch a thing, one should consider it as hard, as iron, if one wants to eat a thing one should consider it as sweet as sugarcane. Also the following proverb will be repeated occasionally :

Attu-valai piddichal, kara karillai; anai-valai piddichal, kara karum – "If a goat's tail is caught, the climbing of the shore will not be possible; if an elephant's tail is caught, it will be possible". The advice, given here, is that one should depend on powerful persons only; not on weak ones.

All social conceptions as well as most of the material objects, contained in these few proverbs were, and partly still are, foreign to genuine Kadar. The cunningness, which the first proverb advises to apply, when a thing is to be taken from its owner was as foreign to the un-acculturated Kadan,[5] as the use of iron and sugar, both of which figure in the second proverb. The conception of dependence on socially strong, or weak, persons in the third appears equally unfamiliar to genuine Kadan sociology. The domestic goat—an unknown feature to original Kadar—also appears in the third

[5] Sankara Menon (1931), pp. 286, *seq.*

proverb. All these proverbs are no doubt recent acquisitions, borrowed from the plains. It would thus appear that Kadar had originally no proverbs, or riddles of their own – or forgot them all?

There are two standing phrases in use, among Kadar, which can, however, not be classified as proverbs, but rather as a mild sort of swearing:

Athu puli thin-padai – "That (thing) – the tiger must have eaten it!" This exclamation, in an angry tone, can be heard whenever any object, from a jungle knife to an ear-ornament, is momentarily missing and cannot be found in spite of searching for it. Still less polite is the exclamation:

Ninna puli pidip-padai – "You may be caught by the tiger!" This kind of friendly wish is accorded to good neighbours and relatives, in a sudden rush of anger, but never meant seriously. A parent may even occasionally be heard saying the familiar phrase to his or her own child, though it is certainly not meant to invite the actual happening; – a real possibility even to the Kadar of to-day!

These standing phrases in swearing can, however, hardly be considered as Kadan proverbs. It seems the more surprising that there are no original Kadan proverbs, as both: the Tamil and also the Malayalam of the plains is particularly rich in proverbs.

Absence of Dreams?

Another astounding "negative feature" among Kadar is the alleged absence of dreams, – other than those indicating the presence of a tiger, or its visitation in the near future.

Neither qualified for work in the psycho-analytic technique, nor linguistically sufficiently armed to judge the real nature of the denials of any dream-life on the part of my Kadan informants, I can only record the stated fact, without

trying to offer an explanation for this hardly credible statement. During my various and divergent futile attempts at getting any narrations of dreams, I have been aware of the possible source of misunderstanding which lies in the fact that a "dream" is in India sometimes understood to be, what we might be inclined to call either a halucination, vision or appearance. But in spite of my taking into account this possible source of error, and trying to discuss real dreams, my informants claimed not to know the phenomenon -- apart from dreams, indicating present or future visits of tigers, as in the case of old Veluppu.[6]

Children's Toys and Games

Children's gaiety is a prominent feature among Kadar. Kadan children are also fond of toys and seem to invent constantly new ones which they manufacture from the old, traditional material: bamboo and fibres, as well as from any foreign material that has come within their reach. They seem to be rather more prolific in inventing than children from the plains. There are a sort of stilts, manufactured from cocoanut shells, cut into halves and joined by a long fibre-string which is running through the holes that have been pierced, for this purpose, in the centre of the half-shells. This string is passed over the shoulders of the child, whilst standing on top of the half-shells, keeping the string between first and second toes.

Standing on these half-shells, the child would pull the string with his hands at every step and thus straddling along proudly and three or four inches taller than its real height.[7]

Small bamboo vessels, old match boxes, and the like are often stringed together and used by smaller children and babies as a toy timber tram-train. I have, however, never seen Kadan

[6] p. 184, (Chap. VII), though she spoke of "shivering" only.
[7] *v.* Fig. 26 on p. 241.

children playing with a bamboo bull-roarer, such as I saw Malai-Malasar children doing, in the direct proximity of the Cochin Kadar.

FIG. 26.
COCOANUT "STILTS"

Little fire-places are often dug, by children, and imaginary root, – or rice-meals prepared in small pots or old tins, containing real water, which is boiled there, on real fire. In playing at "being grown-up", Randa (Matha) (I/6), a girl of six years, went even a step further by putting up a nice little leaf-shelter hut just behind the puja-stone which had been erected for her mother's sake. Sometimes

she invited Kannai (VI/4), a girl of about 12 years, to her "house" and there produced all sorts of imaginary Kadan dishes in small clay pots and old tins, using real fire, water and some leaves or roots. The two girl-friends seemed proudly to enjoy these feasts in their own little leaf-shelter.

Boys constructed immobile "steam-engines" in imitation of the timber-transport tram-line locomotive. I did not, at first, recognize the similarity between the toy and the machine, it was meant to represent. But once told what it was meant to be, I understood. Steam was actually evaporating from the tin-pots which represented the tram-engine and this was a great success and delighted the children for many weeks.

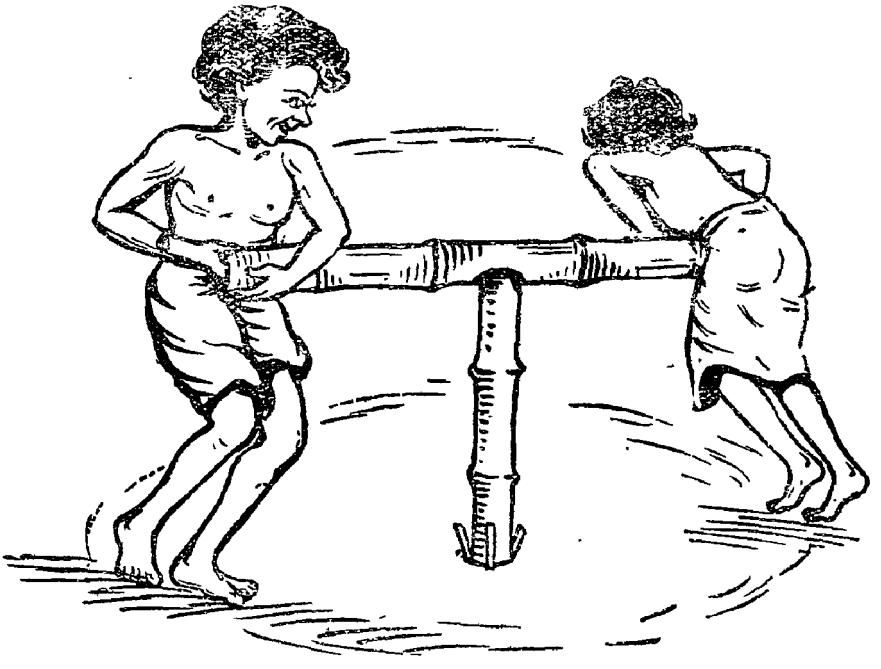

FIG. 27.
KADAN MERRY-GO-ROUND
(constructed of two bamboo pieces).

In a Kadan village, on the eastern Coimbatore side of the Cochin Kadan area, I saw an ingeniously constructed merry-go-round, consisting of two bamboo-poles; a vertical one, firmly set in the ground, the other, turning on the former's tip as on an axis, in a horizontal position. (Fig. 27). Each one child was leaning on

the two outer ends of this horizontally placed pole and both were running fast in the same direction, until turning round by gravitation. The few seconds of flight through the air, thus achieved, were a real joy to every one of these small fliers. I do not believe that the Kadan children of this lonely jungle village required the example of the daily plying Madras – Coimbatore – Ernakulam – Trivandrum aeroplane to instil Ikaros' age-old longing into them. Their merry-go-round appeared to be a genuinely Kadan type of a child's game, of which I had not seen a sample in the plains.

I watched children frequently in group-plays, holding each other's hands and letting each one member of their group pass through the arch of their companion's raised hands, similarly as they blindfold one among them occasionally with a piece of cloth, whilst the others parade proudly behind their blind-folded fellow-player. But in neither game could I discern an element of competition, catching, hiding, or running away. Both types of game seemed to be based, simply on the enjoyment in the typical Kadan child's gaiety of the somewhat unusual movement. It is, however, possible that these games were invented in imitation of games, taught to attendants of the Kadan Malayalam Schools.

Both girls and boys are very fond of bathing and are not bad in swimming, though this is done in the dog-fashion, instead of in the frog's. The tremendous joy and vitality which find expression, during such bathing and swimming expeditions of a group of Kadan girls and boys, are truly heart–refreshing and should convince every unprejudiced observer that there is certainly no lack of energy and enough will to live, among the Kadar, whose rapid decline in health and in numbers is no doubt due to outward influences; not to decrease of vital energy in themselves.

The Education of Children

Institutionalized patterns of traditional education are not traceable among the Kadar of to-day, such as so many Aborigines have evolved in the ritual, connected with youth-initiation, admission into the community of the tribe, the age-class, or –group, and related ceremonies. But we have seen that in the celebration of the first menstruation[10] and more so in the institution of tooth-deformation,[11] customs, survive, which can be suspected to indicate the former existance of youth-initiations among original Kadar. This is particularly true of the tooth-deformation ritual – a custom which is peculiar to the Kadar and not practised, by their direct aboriginal neighbours, or any among the plainspeople, whilst first puberty ceremonies for girls are. The problem whether the latter can be considered as survivals of a former initiation-rite for girls, also among plainspeople, is too complex a question to be discussed here. For the present, not more can be said, as that this possibility exists also in the case of the Kadar, apart from the probable origin of the present tooth-deformation-rite as an early youth-initiation ritual that has meanwhile been disintegrated and in parts been altogether forgotten. The reason, given by Kadar, for chipping their teeth, *viz.*: "in order not to look like animals", suggests the youth-initiation character of this custom, though it can no more be actually described as such. There is no formal initiation into either tribe or any sub-group, such as clan, age-classes and the like, which, as we have seen, do not exist among Kadar.[12]

Apart from this, there is, of course, the ordinary day-to-day education of children. What G. W. B. Huntingford stated in this same respect, though of another, primarily food-gathering people can also be said of the Kadar:

[10] pp. 144, *seq.* (Chap. VI.).
[11] pp. 146, *seq.* (Chap. VI.).
[12] Chap. VI.

"In a primitive people" (*i.e.* the Dorobo in Kenya Colony, E. Africa), "there is little formality in the educational system, which consists of training in obedience, behaviour and techniques, which are learned from the parents and others with whom the child comes in contact. These contacts are not large, owing to the nature of the country and the social system, and thus the relatives with whom a child is seriously concerned are but few".[13]

Among the Kadar, too, there does not seem to exist any articulate or conscious course by which children are trained in their daily duties, or taught to obey their elders. Among them, too, contacts with others are confined to few individuals, as among the Dorobo. Kadan children are, on the whole, amazingly well-behaved. They will generally obey their parents at a mere hint, though – or perhaps rather: *because* corporal punishment is rarely applied and the Kadar's attitude towards children is determined by permissiveness. If parents resort to punishment and discipline at all: – this seems to be done in imitation of the plainspeople only. Kadan adults, as a rule, appear to have a good hand with children. Once I saw a baby crying persistently, and this without any visible reason, other than just bad temper. After all attempts had failed, at changing the child's mood by persuasion, a girl[13-a] took him up and ran to a nearby plantain grove, where she put the child down. On arrival there the bad temper of the child was gone. The rapid movement and change of environment had done the trick and the girl returned after a minute or two, with a happily smiling baby in her arms. There are, of course, exceptions. After the birth of her last daughter, in February 1948, Velakkal (I/2) fell ill and got rather worried. She had now to look after the motherless child (I/9), of late Karappi (I/3), and her own youngest baby. It seemed that she expected too much, in the way of

[13] Huntingford (1951), p. 29, quoted by permission of The Editor, *Anthropos*.

[13-a] Valliammal, p. 104 (Chap. V.).

help, from her oldest daughter, little Randa (I/6), who, moreover, felt jealous of the two little babies. Velakkal (I/2) herself was, as we have seen[14] a bad-tempered person who had suffered from hysteric fits. The frequent scenes of her beating her own daughter Randa (I/6) and the latter's bitter complaining and crying, during the weeks, following the birth, became quite a dominant feature in the settlement during 1948, but, I think, cannot be taken as typical.

Apart from this tragedy of an elder sibling – so frequent a feature also elsewhere – I noticed only one single instance of a parent beating his child! It was a man who hit the feet of a child with grass or twigs, in the way South Indian plains-people are in the habit of doing. In this case, however, the beating was not hard. It has been administered by a Kadan *en route* to the Coimbatore area, who was not personally known, and at some distance visible only to me. By the time I had reached the place, he had apparently beaten the child into obedience and left the place on the winding jungle path. Kadan children are observant and imitative and thus learn the various methods of collecting the Minor Forest Produce and – what is more difficult – how grown-up Kadar try to outtrick the Contractor and his agents. Accompanying the parents, or other elders, helping them in their daily work and learning from them—all merges into one behaviour-pattern for Kadan children. It is therefore also that Kadar are particular at their children's accompanying them and do not want them to stay at home, or sit on the high benches of the newly instituted Kadan schools which had been opened by the Government of Cochin and which the Kadar-children and grown-ups – consider as a queer way of inducing children to idle away their time, instead of working.[15]

[14] pp. 76-77, (Chap. V.).

[15] (*infra*) p. 249.

The knowledge of tribal gods, tribal legends or mythology, is amazingly poor among Kadan youngsters of today. Whenever asked about such things, they would invariably reply:

"Better enquire from (so and so – an old man, or old woman), we are young. We have neither seen, nor heard, of any such things".

It seems, however, that this has not always been so because these older folks are not, what among plainspeople might be called priests or *pujaries* or anything in the way of "initiated", but just ordinary Kadar who remember what, in their young days, appears to have been general knowledge, or was commonly spoken of.

Young people laugh nowadays at everything that appears to them typically Kadan or else different from what they imagine to be the world of "modern civilization". I found that sometimes the actually existing knowledge of Kadan religion, or Kadan mythology and lore is being concealed, for the mere dislike of appearing: "uncivilized", by proffering knowledge of something that, whilst typically Kadan, is considered as unusual in the plains.

This attitude of present-day Kadan youths, to their tribal history and religion, is no doubt the outcome of the inferiority complex which culture-contact brought to them.

One of the main factors, in this process, is the contact with the contractor's agents and other persons who come up from the plains, to make money in the forests. Even benevolent teachers add to this course of events. The present system of schooling Kadan children also contributes, though perhaps inadvertently, to the psychological disintegration of the tribe, as will be seen presently.

The *curriculum* of the *Kadan Malayalam Schools,* which have been opened by the Government of Cochin, does not

include any vocational training of Kadan children though they could gain much in a proper instruction for improved methods and widened scope of their activities in the forests. This, at least, is my conviction, which I formed not only in observing the technical and practical side of the question but, more so even, the opinions of Kadan parents. They hold that a Kadan must first of all know to live securely and without want in the forest. This is not an easy thing to learn and it requires more practical than theoretical knowledge. But the knowledge imparted to the children in their schools is purely theoretical and, moreover of such nature as cannot be expected to appeal to their otherwise keen sense of observation and imitativeness. The medium of instruction in the Kadan schools is Malayalam as is indicated by their official designation: *Malayalam School.* But Malayalam is not actually the mother-tongue for an ordinary Kadan. He speaks his own lingo, – a slightly oblique Tamil, interspersed no doubt with Malayalam elements. The script taught in these schools, likewise, is the very difficult Malayalam script which is quite undigestible to the ordinary Kadan child and less suitable to his speech than the much easier Tamil script. Plainschildren see Malayalam characters written on every tea-shop, hut, sign-post or piece of newspaper. These signs are part of the plainschildren's everyday experience and they see other people reading them, and getting apparently some benefit, out of the process. All this is not the case with Kadan children. Consequently they do not take the plainschildren's natural interest in these white, worm-like things, scribbled in chalk on a black board, by a schoolmaster. Schoolmasters themselves pointed out to me that few Kadan-children learn more than the simple Malayalam: *R* and perhaps some of the vowels; – and this even during a course of three or four years. There is nothing that attracts their interest or attention in the present *curriculum* but, on the other hand, there is the mild, but burden some and

unnecessary torture of sitting on high benches, instead of on the ground. Parents, as we have seen, are reluctant to send their children to school. They are required in forest and home and parents want them to learn the art of collecting forest products, by which they will have to live, once they will be grown up. In order to lure children into the school-going habit and induce parents to send them to school, small quantities of wheat and big quantities of cheap, thick cloth are being distributed to those of the children who while away some time in the school. Just to obtain these gifts children go to school sit there and will at the end hand over the obtained presents to their parents. These presents which the Kadan parents consider as a meagre recompensation for the loss of their children's help in forest and home, are the only tangible result of this education. The Kadan parents generally regret the thus entailed neglect of their children's instruction in the techniques and knowledge of what is going to be their future life's profession. To put it blankly: these gifts are looked down upon as a sort of payment, or bribe, received for the parents' permission, to torture their own children unnecessarily, by making them sit on high benches, wrapped in many yards of sticky cloth, and forcing them to watch a learned man from the plains, whilst he is producing unintelligible funny signs, on a black board. On top of it all he speaks in a sort of high-flown Sanscritized language which it is difficult for Kadar, generally, to understand and quite Greek to Kadan *children*.

Most of the teachers, whom I met in the hills, were full of the best intention and aware of the shortcomings in the present educational system, but helpless to change it, as they were bound to the *curriculum* which they cannot alter. Some young teachers, with no experience of work among hill tribes at all, consider their transfer to these "wild malarious hills" as an unmitigated blow of fate, if not actually as a punishment. Such teachers feel neither interest in, nor sympathy with, their pupils or the children's "uncivilized" background. To

assert, however, their position of superiority, this type of teacher will exhibit ostentatiously all the paraphernalia of "civilization" as they know it, from European shirt and a thick muffler slung on top of it, at 100 degrees F. or from smoking and chewing tobacco, to loudly hawking and spitting and depositing nose-snot on the ground, without the least compunction. The inevitable result of this example, on the part of some teachers, is that they are being copied by their pupils. Smoking and chewing tobacco, spitting and nose-excreting or urinating on the very ground on which one sits or goes about barefooted, drinking, bragging and wearing of half a cloth-shop's inventory on one's body – all these are foreign vices in the plains of Kerala, as well as in the Kadan hills. But since they have come to stay there they are being spread, even more vigorously also here. The teachers assert their position, by exhibiting these habits which have come to have prestige-value in the plains. The hill people, on the other hand, take it that "civilization" consists in these very things and consequently go to the contractor's shop where they will pay willingly double the price for mill-manufactured, unhealthy clothes, in order to assert, on their turn, their own position as "modern", "civilized" and "educated" Kadar. The teacher, *maistry, masa-pudy,* forest-guard – or any other person from the plains, who is not quite sure of his position and wishes to impress the "wild hill tribes" with his dignity as a progressive representative of modern civilization, puts on more clothes, smokes, spits, blows his nose ostentatiously and shouts more boisterously, or marks the line between him – the educated man – and the mere aboriginal "females" the more sharply. The contractor certainly knows where his profit lies and does everything to keep the wheel turning in this vicious circle, with the result that plainsmen in the hills and hill tribe vie with each other in the exhibition of vices which were unknown, to either of them, only one or two generations ago.

In some parts of the plains, the process of de-Indianization has not gone so far as in the hills, under the influence of this competition for appearing "civilized". When travelling from a rural district of Malabar, into the Kadan area, one feels leaving a country, where most men, and even some women, are still seen in the beautiful and wholesome Indian fashion of wearing a free upper part of the body, and entering a distinctly different atmosphere wherein every woman will heap some nine yards of cloth on her breast, as though carrying a load, and where every man affects English dress with singlets, European shirts and mufflers, or North Indian turbans, on top of it. And this, in spite of the fact that these very same hill-people, will still discard the burdensome loads, as soon as they are among themselves, and go about naturally and happily with a free upper parts of the body. This "double moral" in affected standards and actual behaviour has no doubt serious repercussions on the education of children. They continue to respect the authority of their own elders, though they are taught to follow themselves different principles and aim at different standards. Children who are forced, by their teachers, to sit on high benches, with European shirts, or blouses on their overheated, sweating bodies, get into these habits – and stick to them – even outside the school. What must be the feeling of a child towards his parents and elders, if the school-authorities teach that the normal clothing–, and sitting-habits of these same parents and elders are "uncivilized", "bad" or not good enough for school? Apart from the psychological effect, there is also the factual result of all-covering-clothing. Collecting of forest-products becomes a burdensome, taxing task. It tires those who are overdressed and spoils the costly shirt or blouse, of which most children own just one piece, kept on the body, day and night, until it actually falls to pieces. Consequently, these children do not like, any more, to kneel down, on the ground and to dig into it. They begin to prefer

sitting on some benches, – possibly in tea-shops – and talking. The talk circles round possible methods of earning money easily; – not by the hard work of collecting forest products, but by black-marketing, by swindling or perhaps by getting a job, which offers the opportunity to sit again on a bench and behind a desk, wag one's legs and take money from every one, who comes in. The hard way of earning one's livelihood, such as the Kadar of old observed, is being looked down upon, if not actually laughed at, as "uncivilized", by those of the young who imbibed a certain concept of "progress".

These tensions undermine not only the social order of the Kadan tribe generally, but its educational system in particular. If the harmony of health, happiness and self-respect in the tribe are to be saved, at all, this process needs to be reverted. Education and the example of those officials, who have to deal with the Aborigines, alone are able to bring about such a reversal of the present trend towards disintegration.

Rehabilitation

A scheme for the rehabilitation of the Kadar of Cochin was sketched out in a *Report* to the Government of Cochin, submitted by me, when I was working in this Government's service – prior to the merger with Travancore.[16] As far as education goes, this scheme contains the following main points.

(1) *Curriculum*:

(a) Vocational instruction in (possibly improved) methods of collecting jungle products. Such instruction should include some knowledge of the botanical, zoological and industrial nature of the collected products and could be best taught in open-air courses. These courses should be

[16] Ehrenfels-II (1951/B), pp. 109-135.

given by Kadan instructors who may have acquired basic zoological and botanical education.

(b) Experimental vocational instruction in new industries, such as bee-keeping, chicken-farming, dairy-farming, development and systematization of fishing, basket-making, matting and rattan-work.

(c) Development of the beautiful Kadan bamboo-cutting art for industrial purposes, as well as also for the embellishment of their own articles of daily use.

(d) Utilization of the collected forest products on co-operative lines, to the advantage of the tribe, and its members and the Government, rather, than outsiders who come to the hills to make money.

(2) *Method of Instruction*:

(a) Introduction of a simplified type of script, possibly that of a simple form of Tamil, which ordinary Kadan children may be able to assimilate.

(b) Use of the Kadan language, as the medium of instruction; not a newly introduced language, but a slightly simplified Tamil, with adaptations from Malayalam and a few specific words and expressions.[17]

(3) *Revitalization of Kadan cultural life*

(a) Instruction in the specific Kadan lore, tribal history and religious tradition. The Kadan religion, other than that of many Indian hill-tribes, can now be considered as being within the pale of Hinduism. Yet it is not exactly the same form of Hinduism which prevails among the poorer agricultural classes of the plains, the "Depressed Classes", but is

[17] Comp. : Chap. XI, on Language.

centred round the divine couple: Malavay and Malankuratti. These, as we have seen,[18] are two specific gods of the tribe, though also Kali, Bhagavati, Isvaran, Aiyappan, and Hanuman are being worshipped.

(b) Instruction in the beautified Kadan dances and music.

(c) Instruction in the traditional art of animal imitation thereby sharpening the sense of zoological observation and, at the same time, offering a good opportunity to release physical and mental tensions which are created in the school-room and result in nervous stomachaches of which Kadan children complain frequently whilst at school, but rarely at home.

(d) Campaign against the use of alcoholic drinks, opium smoking, or chewing of tobacco and the thus newly acquired habit of spitting and nose-excreting on the same ground on which one sits, sleeps and goes about barefooted.

(e) Re-establishment of healthy clothing and dress-fashions on the lines of Kadan tradition and of a truly Indian pattern of civilization and beauty-ideal, under exclusion of prejudices and habits, which were originally as foreign to the plains as to the hills of India.

(4) *Re-establishment of Kadan Self-respect*

(a) Instruction in the racial and culture-historic importance of the tribe, seen from the all-Indian point of view.

(b) Instruction in the economic importance of the tribe to Cochin.

(c) Instruction in the basic principles of cultural history, as seen from the tribe's point of view.

[18] pp. 190, *seq.* (Chap. VIII).

(5) *Re-establishment of an equal position for Kadan women and girls with men and boys*

(a) Stress on co-education, which, however, is also practised now, though girls are frequently being neglected.

(b) Insistence on an approximatively equal number of girl-, with boy-students, instead of systematically neglecting the former in favour of the latter, as it is practised now.

(c) Special courses for girls in hygiene, general medical knowledge, elementary principles of midwifery and the preparation of wholesome and tasty meals from jungle roots and other forest products.

(d) Instruction in the problems of child-marriage and the disadvantages of sexual intercourse before puberty, as a consequence of child-marriage which, as we have seen, is a habit, imported from the plains.[19] Though the institution opposes original tribal customs, and is even branded as a crime, by the Indian Penal Code, it yet continues to spread with the growing influence of plains-habits in the hills.

(e) Instruction of Kadan women in their civic rights. They have a claim on personal property, marriage at personal choice, divorce on their own and re-marriage, according to Tribal Law, though modern acculturation tends to deprive them of these privileges, in spite of the latter's coincidence with the ideals of the Hindu Code Bill.

The Staff of teachers, entrusted with the execution of such a programme will have to be specially selected and instructed as well. A basic knowledge of the problems of social and applied anthropology is in this connection indispensable.[20]

[19] pp. 140 (Chap. VI).

[20] comp. : Dube (1951).

The employment of Kadan teachers is recommended and where, or so long as, none are available, the employment of aboriginal teachers from other tribes, or possibly of such teachers is recommended whose home, economic and social background is not as different from that of the Kadar as that of plainspeople. Should such aboriginal teachers, however, are not available, such men and women should be employed, among Kadar, who have acquired some knowledge of, and sympathy with, Aboriginal Life. It is further recommended that such teachers might be encouraged to take a permanent residence in the hills, along with their wives and children, if these are acclimatized to life in the hills and willing to take part in the execution of this programme.

CHAPTER XI

THE KADAN LANGUAGE

THE influence of the plainspeople has so much altered the daily .routine and outward appearance especially of some among the Kadan groups, that certain aspects of aboriginal life in the Cochin Hills appeared already in 1947/48, more Europeanized there, than in some of the more untouched rural areas of the plains. We have seen that this was particularly true of clothing habits, though also housing and food have undergone far-reaching variations. At some of the 1947/48 Kadan settlements in the immediate vicinity of timber-depots or contractor's godowns, one might have felt nearer the typical modern bazaar-atmosphere of a rural town, than one was in many a village of the plains at that epoch of Kerala culture –history.

Yet in one respect, even most of the comparatively acculturated and sophisticated Kadar of that period, preserved originality: namely—in the nature of their pronunciation.

Kadar no doubt speak Tamil. From at a distance single words cannot be easily understood because the intonation of Kadan Tamil is quite distinctly distinguished, not only from the modern Sanskritized Malayalam of the West Coast, but also from the local Tamil dialects, spoken in the rural areas round Pollachi on the eastern border of the Kadan Hills in Cochin.

The two peculiarities which a newcomer is likely to notice in this connection are, firstly, the considerably lesser speed of Kadan—as compared to plainspeople-talk (both Tamil, and Malayalam); secondly, the peculiar cadence in Kadan speech, beginning each sentence on a fairly high tone-level which is then gradually falling, until it comes down, at the end of the sentence, a good deal lower than the average Tamil intonation, to begin the next sentence again at a high

note. This regular cadence contrasts with the typical Dravidian evenness of tone-level. The gradual falling of the tone gives to ordinary Kadan brogue a broad and reproachful intonation, such as we might expect to go along with a sentence, if pronounced somewhat haltingly:—

"*But* I must say *this is* rather funny . . . Why did you not tell me that before? . . . *Now* I have come all the long way, just for exactly nothing at all..." [Comp. also Chap. V, p. 77 sub Karappi (I/3)].

A quite happy exchange of views may then go on, in this tone without there being the least suggestion of reproach at all, nor any discontented or vituperative meaning attached to it. Here the question seems to be posed, whether this linguistic mannerism stems from a forgotten, possibly pre-Dravidian language? Hearing Kadar talk at a distance among themselves on my first arrival in the hills, I was instantaneously reminded of a vivid, though merely verbal description of Pygmy music, which had been given to me more than ten years previously.[1] This admittedly loose basis for comparison aims of course at nothing but a mere suggestion to those who, unlike myself, had, or have, the opportunity to hear themselves Pygmy music and parlance, either in S. E. Asia or Africa. I later felt that the particular cadence in Kadan talk increases proportionately to the speaker's ease, or feeling at home and among themselves, whilst it is less marked if the partner is a plainsman and, particularly, if the conversation is conducted in Malayalam. The other characteristic feature of Kadan pronunciation, which is slowness, persisted however, even in such cases. The somewhat halting, if convincing tone of Kadan speech can neither be likened to drumsticks, rapidly belabouring a solid block of wood, as does Tamil, nor, like Malayalam, to a waterfall, splashing

[1] By my former colleague at the Vienna University Institute of Ethnology, Dr. Heinrich Simbriger, ethno-musicologist in S. E. Asiatic music, [*vide*: Simbriger (1938)].

rapidly down over a flight of hollow rocks—but reminded me of the more boorish dialect of some districts in either Upper Austria or the mountainous parts of Bulgaria.

These two features in the Kadan lingo:—cadence of tone in each sentence and slowness, generally, roused my curiosity in some Kadan words which seemed to me peculiar and were partly not understood by either Malayalam, or Tamil speaking plainspeople.

A list of such Kadan expressions, which I collected during my fieldwork in 1947/48, comprises a number of words, which, though now oblique in modern Tamil, Malayalam and/or other Dravidian languages of South India, are yet traceable to some common Dravidian root. There are, however, also one or two words which to ascribe to a Dravidian origin might be less convincing than their derivation from another origin and which may thus be suspected as the last vestiges of a genuine Kadan language of possibly extra-Indian affinities. I have not been able to show this word list to a scholar of Austro-Asiatic languages, nor to a specialist in Semang dialects, with which a connection of Kadan words might be suspected. Not being a linguist or philologist and hence quite incompetent myself, I am publishing these words here in the hope that they may suggest a comparative study by one, better equipped for the task.

Below is the short list of 28 words, and some of the comments, given in personal discussions, by my colleagues, the Heads of the Departments of Dravidian Languages at the University of Madras: the late Prof. Dr. C. Achyuta Menon, (Malayalam), Prof. R. P. Sethu Pillai (Tamil), Sri. M. Mariappa Bhat, M.A., L.T., (Kannada and Tulu). Dr. W. Graefe, a keen Dravidist of Germany, now living at Bangalore, very kindly replied to my questions in letters which I received already during, or shortly after, my stay among the Kadar. My gratitude for the generously offered co-operation and help is here once more expressed to all these scholars in Dravidian languages.

KADAN WORDS

A list comprising old Dravidian & possibly non-Dravidian roots

	English.	Roman Kadan.	Remarks.	Tamil.	Malayalam.
1.	Tribal connotation ("Friend" m. sp.; or: "Husband"), (m. & w. sp.)	Matalé	Tam. (?)	தோழன் Tōẓhan	ചങ്ങാതി Changati— കെട്ടിയോൻ Kettiyōn
2.	Tribal connotation; if a small girl— (w. sp.); a wife—(m. sp.)	Matana	Tam. (?)	சிறுமி Chirumi	പെൺകുട്ടി Peṇkuṭṭi
3.	Pot-bellied person	Kandamali, Pandamali	Mal. (?)	தொந்தியன் Tondiyan	പള്ളയൻ Pallayan
4.	Tall person	Kuttamali	Kan. (?)	நெட்டையன் Neṭṭayan	നെട്ടൻ Neṭṭan
5.	Death spirit	Mudhiar	Tam.—Mal.	ஆவி Āvi	പ്രേതം Prētham

6.	Stomach	Palla	Kan.—Mal. (?)	வயிறு Vayiru	പള്ള Palla
7.	Breast	Chuchi	Mal. (?)	முலை Mulai	മുല Mula
8.	Hair	Parave	Tam.—Mal.	மயிர் Mayir	മുടി Muti തല (നാർ) Tala (nār)
9.	Naked	Kaẓhali	Mal. (?)	அம்மணம் Ammaṇam	മറയ്ക്കാത്ത Maṟakkātha
10.	Female sex organ	Muthi	Tam.; Mal.— Tel. (Drav.) (Tam.:—*kiss*)?	சிதி Citi (Madras area)	പൂറ് Pūṟu
11.	Male sex organ	Mulli	Tam.—Kan., etc.; Mal.—(?)	சுண்ணி Chuṇṇi	മുട്ട Muṭṭa കുണ്ണ Kuṇṇa
12.	Egg	Elare	Mal. (?)	முட்டை Muṭṭai	മുട്ട Muṭṭa

	English.	Roman Kadan.	Remarks.	Tamil.	Malayalam.
13.	(Edible) Root	Thättam	Tam.—Mal.	கிழங்கு Kizhaṅgu	ഴവർ Vēr
14.	Star	Mannive	Tam.—Mal.—Drav.	விண்மீன் Viṇmin (Classical)	മീൻ (Old Malayalam) Mīn
15.	Winnowing fan	(Chulakam) Chumade	Mal. (?)	முறம் Muram சுளகு Chulaku (Southern Dists.)	മുറം Muṛam
16.	(Five-pronged) Comb	Chägar	Tam.; Mal. (?)	சீப்பு Chippu	ചീർപ്പ് Chīrppu
17.	(Musical) Pipe	Karimbu	Mal.	குழல் Kuzhal	കുഴൽ Kuzhal
18.	Small knife	Chiravu	Mal.—Drav.	சிறுகத்தி Chirukatti	വെട്ടുകത്തി Cheṛukatti

19.	Pain	Kattu	Tam.	நோவு Nōvu	നോവ് Nōvu
20.	(Pricking) Pain	Mul, Mulada	Tam., Mal.		ഉളുക്ക് Ulukku
21.	Anger	Chammat	Tam., Mal.	சினம் Chinam	ദേഷ്യം Deṣhyam
22.	(Small) Chicken	Nackan	Mal., Tulu. (?)	கோழிக்குஞ்சு Koẓhik Kunju	കോഴിക്കുട്ടി Koẓhikuṭṭi
23.	Awaken, to get up	Manda	Tam.	எழுப்பு Eẓhuppu	ഉണർ Unar
24.	Dig	Akakka	Class. Tam.	தோண்டு Tōṇḍu	കിളക്കുക Kilakkuka
25.	Go	Povadé	Dravd.	போ Pō	പോക Pōka
26.	I will go	Nan entadayallum povadé	Mal.	போவேன் Pōvēn	ഞാൻ പോകും Ñān Pōkum

	English.	Roman Kadan.	Remarks.	Tamil.	Malayalam.
27.	From	Vechiru	Tam.	நின்று Ninru இருந்து Irundu	ഇൽ നിന്നു Il Ninnu
28.	Sweet	Kani	Tam.	இனிப்பான Inippāna தித்திப்பான Tittippāna	കനി (പഴം) Kani

The third column *Remarks* indicates possible connections with oblique or classical roots in Tamil, Malayalam or other Dravidian languages, suggested by one or the other of the above Dravidian scholars. Rather doubtful relationship with any of these Dravidian roots is indicated by a question mark (?)

COMMENTS ON THE WORD LIST

1. *Matalé*-tribal connotation; "friend" (m.sp.), or: "husband" (w.sp.), *cannot* be taken to signify "Kadan", as the latter word was originally *not* used by the tribes-men and -women themselves who do not seem to have known anything in the way of a tribal self-designation, before the plains-people-word *Kadan, Kadar,* or *Kadan-mar* has come to be used by themselves, if speaking to plainspeople. *Matalé,* however, is used as a form of address by a Kadan man, speaking to another Kadan man and, frequently also, if speaking to the male member of any of the other (*i.e.*, non-Kadan) hill tribes of the Western Ghats. A Kadan woman, however, addresses exclusively her husband with this term – not any other man. (More – see: *infra sub* item two and also: Chap. V., p. 124).

Etymologically the word may be connected with (*matalai*) a Tamil expression for *child,* and then would appear to be of Dravidian affinity. (Professor Sethu Pillai).

2. *Mataná*-tribal connotation; "small girl" (w.sp.) or "wife" (m.sp.). This word is used either by small Kadan girls, addressing each other, or by husbands, addressing their wives, but *not* by grown-up women, among themselves, nor by men, addressing grown-up women, *others* than their wives.

Etymologically probably of the same derivation as No. 1 (*supra*) with a possible reversion of sexes, as in Tulu: *amma* – father and *appa* – mother, instead of *vice versa* as in other Dravidian languages. (Professor Menon).

3. *Kandamali* (*pandamali*) – a pot-bellied person. *Kandamala* is the Malayalam name of a disease, causing swellings round the neck, like a garland (*mala* – a garland). Possible connections: swellings round the neck and swollen stomach? (Professor Menon).

4. *Kuttamali* – a tall person. Kuttai in Tamil means *short*: but *Kutta* in Kannada – *steep,* whilst *Kuttan* is a

Malayalam proper name, usually for a person (supposed, or hoped, to be) above the average.

5. *Mudhiar* – the (transitory) death-spirit.[1] *Muthu* is a a Tamil word for *old* and *Muthiyar* means a reverenced old lady in Malayalam. Connection between *old* and *death spirit?*

6. *Palla* – stomach; *Palla* means a pit, depression or hole in the ground, in Kannada, and is used for *stomach* in the Malayalam of lower classes only.

7. *Chuchi* – breast. *Chu* or *chum* is used in colloquial Malayalam to indicate the quick outflow of any liquid.

8. *Parave* – hair. The Tamil √பரவு (paravu) indicates *to spread, to extend (itself)*. Parave is in old Malayalam *that what is spread.* (Dr. Graefe, Professor Menon).

9. *Kazhali* – naked. *Kazhal* is in Malayalam *root* or *leg*; of course kept free from garments by anybody who, like the Kadar, moves in the forests. (Connection: *naked?*)

10. *Muthi* – female sex organ. *Muti* is in Telugu *face, mouth. Mutuka* in Malayalam – *to kiss* with the past tense *muti.* Dr. Graefe considered the derivation from Tam. √மு (mu) as a possibility, saying that முத்தி "würde dann etwa das Hervorbringende (Organ) sein" – *the creative organ.*

11. *Mulli* – male sex organ முள்ளு (mullu) is in Tamil, Kanada and other Dravidian languages a word for *a thorn,* but *mulluka* is in certain areas of Travancore a word for passing *urine,* though not in other parts of Kerala (Professor Menon).

12. *Elaré* – egg. *Eiya* means tender in Malayalam as *e.g., elanir* – (tender coconut) composed of *el* and *nir* (water). Professor Menon considers a connection possible,

[1] Comp. Chap. VII, p. 170.

though there do not appear to be any other Dravidian parallels for this word.

13. *Thättam* – (edible) root, Tam: √தேடு – *to seek, acquire,* or *tetuka* in Malayalam. தேட்டம் (*Thättam*) would then be *the seeking* (of edible roots) – and finally the roots. (Dr. Graefe).

14. *Mannive* – star, from Dravid. √ மின் *to glitter* (Professor Sethu Pillai), though *manni* – in Kannada and Sanskrit was held of doubtful origin by Rvd. Kettel (Sri Mariappa Bhat).

15. *Chulakam* (*Chumade*) – winnowing fan. This word means in Malayalam – a *hand,* hollowed to hold water, whilst சுளகு (*culaku*) – is *winnow* in Tamil.

16. *Chägar* – (five-pronged) comb Tam: √சேகரி (to collect together) would indicate the function of a comb to gather together hair (Dr. Graefe), whilst *chekaru* or *cheraku* is a Malayalam word for *wing* (Professor Menon), which may indicate the protruding, V-shaped part of the Kadan bamboo comb (comp. *fig.* 3, 5 and 14 on pp. 24, 25, 59).

17. *Karimbu* – a pipe (musical instrument) – *karimbu* is the Malayalam word for *sugarcane.*

18. *Chiravu* – small knife; probably derived from *chiru* – small.

19. *Kattu* – pain. கட்டு (kattu) – Tam. a swelling, boil.

20. *Mul, Mulada* – pricking pain முள் (mul) – Tam. a thorn; but *Mulada,* not a Tamil form, may be connected with *atal* – Malayal. pain, discomfort.

21. *Chammat* – anger. சினம் (*chinam*) – Tam.: anger and *chammattu* – Malayal. : insulting gesture, blow.

22. *Nackan* – (small) chicken. *Nakkal* indicates in Malayalam anything unfinished and *nakkuka* – to lick. The

Tulu word for a small chicken is *laki* (Sri Mariappa Bhat), but Tulu not being a written language, may have itself adopted, and preserved, a possibly non-Dravidian word.

23. *Manda* – awaken. மானவு (*manavu*) – intellect. clearness with √மானு, resp. √மான் means in modern Tam. : *to doubt,* be careful or circumspect and may be connected with the meaning *awaken* (Dr. Graefe).

24. *Akakka* – to dig. √அகழ் (*akazh*) – to dig in classical Tamil (Professor Sethu Pillai).

25. *Povadé*–go, a queer form of the common Dravidian root.

26. *Nan entadayalum povadé* – I will go. *Entadayalum* Malayal. : – whatever happens, at any rate (Prof. Menon).

27. *Vechiru* – from. Connected with வயின் (*vayin*) – Tam. : house and the locative ending (Dr. Graefe) or with *vechu* plus *iru* equal to : *placing* plus *exist, be, sit* (Professor Menon).

28. *Kani* – sweet. கனி (Kani) – Tam. : fruit, ripe fruit.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Of the 28 words, listed here, because of their being different from modern Tamil (or Malayalam) usage – seven (*i.e.* the numbers 1, 2, 19, 23, 24, 27 and 28), appear to be traceable in some form or other to Tamil; six (*i.e.* numbers: 5, 8, 13, 16, 20, 27) to a common Tamil-Malayalam source, seven (*i.e.* 3, 7, 9, 12, 15, 17 and 26) may be rooted in Malayalam parlance and the remaining eight (*i.e.* 4, 6, 10, 11, 14, 18, 22 and 25) in common Dravidian roots which, however, have become oblique in modern Tamil and Malayalam. The Dravidian derivation of ten among the listed words may perhaps one day turn out to be less convincing than a non-Indian, possibly Austro-

Asiatic derivation. These words are the numbers: 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17 and 22, among which five, *i.e.* the numbers 4, 5, 6, 11 and 22, would appear to stand in closer relationship to Kannada and (the unwritten) Tulu; both spoken in the Western Ghats north of North Malabar, that is in a territory separated from the present home of the Kadar by the full length of both: South– and North Malabar. This circumstance may suggest the possibility that non-Dravidian (and non-Aryan) words have been preserved, not only in the Kadan *lingo,* but also in these two Dravidian languages Kannada and Tulu which are geographically marginal just as Kadan is culturally, and of which Tulu is not a written language with a separate script of its own. It may therefore be assumed more likely that oblique words of possibly non-Dravidian origin have been preserved in these, than in more literate, or classical Dravidian languages. The similarity of the seemingly Dravidian word *gunnu* for *hill* with the Negrito *gunong* can here only be recorded, without any attempt at an explanation.[2]

But even conceding the possibility of linguistic affinities, vague though they may be; the justification for including the present chapter on some stray peculiarities in Kadan linguistic habits into this book on Kadan social anthropology may be questioned; particularly in view of the author's professed incompetence in linguistics and etymology. The reason for the inclusion of the above word list and connected remarks on the Kadan language, instead of their relegation to the end of the book as an appendix is, however, found in the fact that the Kadan lingo is one of the few characteristics in Kadan culture which seems consistently to resist the acculturation process. This fact, apart from throwing some light on the theoretically interesting question of perseverance in languages, is also of importance to the understanding of Kadan culture.

[2] see: Chap. XII, p. 290.

Kadan speech, like that of other hill tribes in the Western Ghats, is generally described as a "corrupt form of Tamil and Malayalam", by the plainspeople. From some of our samples (1, 2, 24) it might, however, appear that Kadan Tamil is contrariwise in many ways more classical and *less* corrupt than the modern Tamil, as it is spoken in the plains. This observation would not appear to fit well into the working hypothesis of the Kadar, seen as the relics of a (possibly pre-Dravidian) group which had little, if any, contact at all with the Dravidian speaking peoples of the classical Chera, Chola, and Pandya kingdoms, but would rather suggest the designation of the present-day Kadar as proto-Dravidian, instead of acculturated pre-Dravidians.

Though the present knowledge of all the co-efficients, here involved, is undoubtedly insufficient to venture out on any definite hypothesis, based on linguistic observations, one factor should yet be stressed here and now. This is the basically different intonation of Kadan– as compared to plains-Tamil, to which reference has been made already at the beginning of this chapter. The persistence of a type of intonation (and musicality) which is consistently different from that, not only in other Tamil– but even most, if not all other Dravidian dialects, would seem to indicate a more than superficial difference. Musicality and rhythm are not always as easily adopted as are words and even grammatical structure. I have, in my student days, heard many sentences in German, spoken by my friends among the Indian students of the Vienna University, which were grammatically correct and in words and phraseology, typical of the town and epoch – and yet, I could be in only one case deceived to take the speaker for an Austrian, when hearing, without seeing, him. Tamil pedlars, selling their customary goods in the streets of Madras have evolved a mannerism of calling out the names of their goods which, though overloud, sometimes is yet not altogether void of a certain melodiousness which is in

accord with the Tamil language, even though, of course, in its least refined aspects. If, however, the same street vendors take to selling "ice-creme" or whatever half-frozen substance goes under this name, and if they then bawl out the name of their stuff in the English language, their cry: *ooit – scrēām* appears not only to have preciously little in common with the English word *ice – creme,* but actually sounds like an insult, or at best like a war-cry, rather, than like the advertisement of a supposedly pleasant food-stuff.

It is not suggested here that English is a necessarily aggressive, or Tamil a necessarily sweet language, but that the tone and musical values of languages get markedly distorted, if spoken by people who have not fully imbibed, and/or assimilated the very spirit of the foreign tongue which they are using. That the American English, spoken by American Negroes is often a more beautiful, yet different English from the American English spoken by non-Negro Americans, has too often been described to be discussed here at length.

What may be of importance, in this connection, is the possibility of the survival of a non-Tamilian, possibly non-Dravidian submerged language, if not in some words, syntactic or grammatical forms, so perhaps in the intonation of modern Kadan-Tamil, which sounds "corrupt" to modern Tamilians (and Malayalees), even though it may contain more old, and even classical words than the speech of modern plainspeople.

CHAPTER XII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

General Impression

THE picture, finally emerging from these eleven chapters on some aspects of life among the Kadar of Cochin, as I found them during 1947/48, confirms on a broader scale the impressions under which I choose to describe this tribe as a paradigm for the food-gathering group of South Indian hillmen in my book *Mother-right in India.*[1] The present monograph has been kept as brief, as possible, in order also, among other reasons for brevity, to enable Indian students of cultural history to avail themselves of its main results without an elaborate study of anthropology. It is therefore hardly the place here to dwell at length upon the hypothetical questions, regarding origins and age of the Kadar as a group, who no doubt belong to the comparatively few South Indian hill tribes conforming to the pattern of truly pre-agricultural and pre-pastoral food-gathering.

Economy and Material Civilization

The Kadar, even of 1947/48, were food-collectors in the true sense of the word, without agriculture, animal-husbandry or the knowledge and technique of a type of hunting which would justify their description as "higher hunters". This is true, even though one of my main informants, Tambi (I/1) actually was the proud owner of an individually acquired cattle herd, and a fire-arm, and in spite of a few, also quite recently acculturated, families who have taken to gardening and a sort of "imitation-agriculture" on the Coimbatore side of the Western Ghats.

[1] Ehrenfels-II, (1941), pp. 23 and 44-47.

Food-gathering, however, was, in 1947/48, no more done exclusively for direct consumption, as previously, but to degrees, varying from group to group and also from time to time at different periods of the year, within the same group. Gathering is now often done for the purpose of selling, or bartering away, those collected materials which the Forest Produce Contractor desires to purchase. This combination of gathering and monopolised local trade could have given rise to a type of economy and culture, combining the merits of a truly food-acquiring economy with those of a modern co-operative trade-systems,—given the necessary time to develop and guidance of anthropologically trained administrators. This opportunity, however, was allowed to slip and the introduction of the least desirable features of the modern machine-civilization were invited to compete successfully with the healthy simplicity of original Kadan habits, diet, clothing, housing and daily routine. The probability is, at present, that Kadan culture as such, and even the still surviving Kadan families who carried it as a live force so far are both doomed to die out. One of the few surviving cultures among the peoples of India, who carried on a living tradition from probably palaeolithic, or mesolithic, days is thus likely to disappear within a few years, unless energetic steps are being taken.

That Kadan culture actually did preserve an uninterrupted and living tradition from such a remote past becomes probable enough from comparison with other food-gathering tribes in South India and is moreover reflected in Kadan mythology retelling the Kadan version of a Golden Age, into which the use, first of simple, – later of stone-tipped, and finally of iron-clad digging sticks has been introduced (p. 175, *seq.*).

The Kadar re-tell this story as part of their Creation Myth; not by any means as an excuse for their alleged "laziness" of which they are being frequently accused by plains-people, engaged in generally less arduous work, than food-gathering in primeval forests. Even the most primitive form

of shifting-cultivation is no doubt alien to the Kadar and was always so. It was not given up in a process of degeneration, nor by any chance neglected in "laziness". Food-production is as alien to the Kadan, as food-collecting in the forest, is to the plainsman. This is further illustrated by the fact that shifting cultivation is being practised, not only by the comparatively rich Muduvar in the Kadar's neighbourhood as a specialized type of civilization, organized on the basis of matrilineal sociology, but also by the economically poorer and in matrilineal character less pronounced Malai Malasar, and Malaiar. All these tribes are living in the direct neighbourhood of the Kadar. If these tribes continued shifting–, and gardenpatch – cultivation to this day, it would be difficult to account for the Kadar having it given up, without leaving a single trace of it, had they ever practised any kind of agriculture at all. The nearest cultural and economic parallel to Kadan civilization in South India is found among other food-gathering hill-tribes, such as the Mala Pantaram in Travancore,[2] the Paliyar in the Madura District,[3] or the Paniyar of the Wynaad in North Malabar,[4] – the latter already in a state of disintegration as a tribe, and of economic dependence and need, as well as social depression, of which the hill-tribes were originally free. Outside the Western Ghats there are particularly the Irular in Tamilnad and the Chenchu in Telingana who come nearest to the Kadan culture pattern of food-gathering, as economic basis for a bilateral social organization of small family-groups in a semi-nomadic state of individual migrations. There is every reason to believe that the remote ancestors of all these groups lived at one time in the then well forested plains, but have later been gradually deprived of their erstwhile collecting, – and hunting grounds,

[2] Krishna Iyer (1937), pp. 96-107 and, Kunjan Pillai (1932), Vol. XXVIII, p. 399.

[3] Thurston (1909), Vol. V., pp. 461-472 and: Kunjan Pillai (1932), Vol. XXVIII, pp. 401/2.

[4] Thurston (1909), Vol. VI, pp. 57-71.

when at first agricultural, – and later horse-riding people, with organized armies, came to dispossess them. The flight into the hills is a frequent motif even among the more highly specialized matrilineal (shifting) cultivators of South India,[5] but it is quite feasible that the reference to a once far easier life under rich fruit trees and with black monkeys to be easily caught by their tails, which we found in the Kadan Golden Age legend (p. 175), refers *inter alia* also to a memory of a residence in the plains.

Starting from this assumption, we should be surprised to find certain not quite superficial differences between the Kadar and especially the food-gatherers outside the Western Ghats, – particularly so in the field of material civilization. There is for instance the absence of the bow and arrow as a serious weapon (p. 55), apart from the pellet, and toy-bow, used by Kadan children. It has to be assumed that each of the formerly perhaps neighbouring groups of South Indian food-gatherers, who were later forced to emigrate from the plains into different and separated hill-tracts, came under the special influence of their later respective neighbours. These may have been considerably different from each other. Yet even this assumption would not seem to account for some of the noted differences between Indian food-gathering hill tribes. The bow and arrow is an example to the point. It is used among Kuruchar in the Wynaad and Malayalar of the Coorg foothills in North Malabar, – both matrilineally organized shifting cultivators among whom I have seen differently constructed bows, which appear, in part, similar to bows formerly used by the Veddas of Ceylon,[6] and the Chenchu of Hyderabad,[7] whilst the food-gatherers in the same hill-tracts: the Western Ghats, are not using bows and arrows at all.

[5] of which I discovered two original legends among Malai Malasar and Muduvar (not yet fully published); comp. also the tribal myth of the Kolli Malayalees in Ehrenfels-II, (1943), pp. 49, *seq.*

[6] Seligmann (1911), pp. 32, 42, 116, 324, *seq.*

[7] Fürer-Haimendorf, 29 *seq.*, 33, 67, etc.

Retrospective differentiation between the hypothetical ancestors of the now existing food-gathering groups is hardly possible on the strength of this single difference, – remarkable though it is. But the conclusion, yet suggested by this distribution, would appear to be that bow and arrow were not part of the earliest food gathering civilization, in South India, but part, rather, of the wave, or waves, that brought shifting cultivation and the simpler form of matrilineal culture (to which I referred in my book on Mother-right as "Pul-group".[8] There are remarkable differences in architectural styles among South Indian food-gatherers – if this word may be applied to various types of bamboo,– branch,– and mud-huts. These differences may best be explained as the result of adaptations, to local types of more advanced house-building neighbours. The Western Ghat food-gatherers seem to have copied the style of a people who built rectangular houses, since a long period, whilst, at the same time, preserving the old type of leaf-shelters and wind screens,—especially during periodical forest expeditions. Both types of shelters were still in use, among the Kadar, in 1947/48 (p. 49, *seq.*).

This parallelism of two techniques, and two modes of life, runs like a red tape through all aspects of Kadan life;—especially its visible manifestations in the realm of material civilization. The tuft of curly, frizzy hair in spirals, is still twisted proudly on the crown, as a symbol of *Kadanism* (Plates No. V/a, XXI/b, facing pp. 23, 203). This is especially so among men, whilst among women, the same girl who twisted her crown-tuft yesterday, may, on getting hold of some oil and a factory-made comb, try to flatten it to-day in the plains fashion, bind it into a knot at the back, and even put a silver chain over it, in imitation of a now oblique, Moghul fashion of the plains. The use of plastic, – and Kadan-made bamboo-

[8] Ehrenfels-II (1941), p. 48 *seq.*

combs (p. 59), side by side, is another instance of this kind of cultural parallelism; – particularly interesting, for the similarities between Kadan combs and those cut, and worn, by the Negritos of Malaya (p. 60). To this similarity between the two physically kindred people too, further reference will be made presently. The use, side by side, of bamboo vessels, and metal pots, tinkered by a Kadan who has travelled a lot in the plains (p. 113-114), finds a parallel in the equal importance which the digging stick and the bill-hook play, the metal parts of which are imported from the plains.

The type of clothing, and outward appearance, generally, as it prevailed among the Kadar of Cochin during 1947/48, reflected this dichotomy vividly, though I was no more able to see the leaf– and bark– garments which, however, were still remembered by Kadar, and non-Kadar as the former's traditional dress. The Kadar conform with all these features to the picture of material civilization, which earlier reports drew of the hill tribes in the Western Ghats. The use of the pellet-bow and absence of any traces, or tribal remembrances, of bow and arrow as a serious weapon, remaining an unsolved matter of speculation here. That the bill-hook is a recently acquired, and actually imported universal tool and weapon, can hardly be doubted. Without it and without bow and arrow, carrying a digging stick as his only weapon and tool, the Kadan would, however, appear to have been a poorly equipped hunter.

Tooth-chipping, another typical feature in Kadan life, on the threshold of material and social culture, is to my knowledge only practised by the Malavetan (Cheruvetan), of all other South Indian tribes. This is a no more food-gathering, acculturated community in the foot hills of Travancore,[9] showing, however, palpable survivals of a formerly bilateral

[9] Krishna Iyer (1937), Vol. I, p. 136.

organization.[10] The photograph reproduced there[11] and elsewhere[12] shows Malavetan tooth-chipping in the way, it has been described to me, also by my Kadan friends, though I was not able to witness the operation among Kadar any more myself. The suggestion that in this custom an ancient tribal initiation-right survives (p. 147) finds a certain amount of corroboration in the report which Krishna Iyer quotes, saying that the tooth-filing is performed, by the Malavetans, in order to distinguish the tribe from others and that the god Chathan would be hungry (*sc.* : *angry?*), if the tooth-filing were neglected.[13] A similar operation was recently reported and photographed from the Rhaday (or :Rhade) tribe in Indochina and "the operation" – added the report – ". . . . is practised by many of the aboriginal tribes of Indo-China".[14] This fact would seem further to strengthen the otherwise suggested possibility of Kadan cultural ties with S. E. Asia generally and the Negritos of Malaya in particular.

The Kadan method of tree-climbing (p. 32, line drawing on p. 33) is another instance, to which Thurston has already drawn attention.[15] A similar, though in details different method is adopted by the Malapantaram; – a small food-gathering tribe of Travancore; – close to the Kadar geographically and culturally. They tie the bamboos with nodes and rings of cane to big, branchless trees,[16] instead of to wooden pegs, driven into the stem, which is the Kadan method.

[10] *Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 149/50.

[11] *Ibid.*, Vol. I., Plate facing p. 145.

[12] *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Plate facing p. 59 and Kunjan Pillai (1932) : Plate XVI, facing p. 412.

[13] Krishna Iyer (1937) Vol. I., p. 159.

[14] Smith 1951), p. 33.

[15] Thurston (1909), Vol. III, pp. 15 *seq.* and photograph facing p. 17.

[16] Krishna Iyer (1937), Vol. I, p. 114 and a photograph facing Vol. I., p. 105; again reproduced in Vol. III, p. 149.

The absence of any ornamental art, except that of cutting beautiful and original patterns into the protruding parts of Kadan-made bamboo combs, deserves perhaps mention in this summary.

Though my Kadan-informants and -friends took a lively interest in photographs, sketches and water-colours of other aboriginals – as well as of plainspeople, which I showed them, I found no one to try a hand in sketching or drawing, even of the simplest kind.

Family and Social Organization

The general impression of a truly bilateral social system, into which neither patrilineal–, nor matrilineal laws of inheritance and succession have yet permeated to an appreciable degree, has been confirmed by detailed individual, – and family– descriptions and their movements in 1947/48. The sample-group of Parambikulam, has been chosen for this purpose, being representative of 1947/48 – Kadar in that it comprised also a number of men who had extensively travelled; – mostly on the Malayalam speaking West Coast, but partly also in the Tamil speaking eastern plains. The social situation, which these Kadan travellers to the plains found there, as acculturation factor, was a rather puzzling one. On the West Coast:—numerous survivals of the matrilineal system, which was followed, especially by the land-owning and martial feudal aristocracy, are now being replaced, with all the eagerness of the new convert, by the patriarchal order which especially the influential Nayar have adopted under psychological pressure from in,– and outside, after the First World War. On the Tamil, eastern plains, the patriarchal order predominates since much longer. It is therefore the more noteworthy, indeed, that even with all these mutually opposing examples, before them, in which the patriarchal strain strongly dominates, the acculturated globe-trotter-Kadar of to-day continued to conform to the basic bilateral pattern

of the truly classless Kadan society where, as we have seen (p. 74-75), the institution of a Government-sponsored *chief* failed to take root.

The Relationship-Chart, (facing p. 65 and 66) would appear to illustrate this general observation by showing possibly patrilineal–, and possibly matrilineal (matrilocal, uxori– and sorori-local) ties of relationship in red lines and patrilineal in black ones.

Apart from the bilateral,—we noticed also a strongly migratory trend (pp. 127-128, etc.) in Kadan society. It is in this connection particularly characteristic that small groups and single individuals, rather, than whole settlements are thus moving: "But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the members of single families or small groups of two families living and hunting together".[17] What Seligmann here said of the Veddas would equally fit as a description of the Kadar.

The application to both sexes, of the tooth-cutting ceremony (p. 146), especially if interpreted as survival of a now extinct youth-initiation for both sexes (*supra*), supports this general impression of a bilateral seminomadic society.

The existence, however, of a monthly observed menstruation seclusion for girls, and seclusion of mothers after childbirth, would appear to lend an altogether different colour to the picture, were it not that several facts suggest a comparatively late introduction of this feature into the life of the Kadar, as in that of the other bilateral gatherers in the Western Ghats of South West India. The menstruation ceremonies of the Kadar (p. 145) and other S. W. Indian food-gatherers are in no basic way different from those, observed by the matrilineal shifting cultivators among the

[17] Seligmann, (1911), p. 62 *seq.*

hill tribes, nor those of the plainspeople of Kerala. The seclusion hut, generally some 30 to 300 yards outside the village, is aboriginal enough, from the architectural point of view (p. 144 and line-drawing on p. 144), but the name used for it: *Tintha Chala* is a half Sanskritic word, borrowed obviously from the plains. The distribution of puberty-rites, or menstruation-seclusion, among food-gatherers, and kindred groups, would also suggest that this feature of their present civilization was borrowed from the once matrilineal plains-people in S. W. India. Among the Veddas there were no puberty ceremonies for either sex, apart from acculturated groups.[18] Though, among the Negritos of Malaya, pregnant women have to observe taboos, there do not seem to be any rituals connected with first or subsequent menstruation[19] and a woman may give birth in the living hut,[20] whilst we have seen that the Kadar erect a separate birth hut (p. 129). The Bhil, except those in the Udaipur-Kharwara area under strong Rajput acculturation, do not celebrate menstruation.[21] Koppers inclines to consider this as a preserved old custom and refers, in this connection, to other more primitive groups (Chenchu, Baiga, Vedda), as having no menstruation ceremonial, whilst more specialized groups (mentioning: Munda, Kharia, Korku and Gond) have.[22] The Baiga woman is not confined to strict seclusion, – yet must observe taboos.[23] Among Chenchu, both puberty and menstruation-ceremonies are again absent.[24]

The Malapantaram of Travancore, on the other hand, observe taboos, including the seclusion in a menstruation hut.[25] It is perhaps of some significance that, according to

[18] Seligmann. (1911), p. 94.
[19] Evans, (1937), p. 245.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 246.
[21] Kopper (1948), p. 129.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 130.
[23] Elwin, (1939), p. 210/11.
[24] Fürer-Haimendorf, (1943), p. 287.
[25] Krishna Iyer, (1937), p. 102.

Krishna Iyer's report, not only girls, like among other S. W. Indian tribes, but also boys keep the secluded girl company,[26] which might be interpreted as indicative of a initiation-ceremony, formerly observed by both, girls and boys. The Paliyar of the Palni-Hills and neighbouring parts in Travancore observe a pollution of 15 days for a girl, after attaining puberty, and resorting to a seclusion hut. The final ceremonies, also conform to the pattern, observed by plainspeople, in which cooked rice (*i.e.*, an imported foreign food to original gatherers!) play, an important rôle.

From this distribution of puberty– and seclusion-rites among food-gatherers it would appear that the custom has been borrowed from the plainspeople in the (matrilineal) S. W. Indian area only. Assuming this hypothesis to be correct, our interpretation of whatever other matrilineal features in Kadan society we may come across, will also be affected. The importance of the maternal uncle, somewhat unexpectedly stressed in the Kadan family, in view of there being no exclusively matrilineal succession and inheritance, may be cited as an instance here, and so may perhaps some cases of matrilocal or uxorilocal residence, though the latter appear to be consistently more integrated into the truly bilateral *i.e.*, double-sided structure of Kadan society, than the prominent position of the maternal uncle.

The question of premarital freedom and polygamy, especially polyandry, may of course also be discussed in this same connection, though this raises some questions of methodological importance. Cases of both: polyandry and polygyny are rare in Kadan society. We noticed (p. 137) that modern Kadar, at least, hesitate to admit the existence of these unions. I was inclined to interpret this reluctance as an

[26] *Ibid.*

acculturation effect[27] – but I may of course also have been wrong in this assumptions and it is possible that there is something of an underlying Kadan monogamous sentiment which makes Kadar reluctant to admit to outsiders the undoubtedly existing non-monogamous unions. However, one should in that case expect anything like internal criticism of non-monogamous families among Kadar, of which I did not come across any indication whatsoever. It appears therefore more likely to assume that polygamy was an institutionalized, though not a frequent feature among the Kadar in pre-acculturation days, and that, therefore, the Kadar do not furnish an example of the assumed primeval monogamy, in the sense of complete absence, or a tabu-like prohibition of non-monogamous marital unions. This is, at least, what the present picture of Kadan attitudes seemed to have proved to me, as I was not able to see an originally Kadan trait of attitude in the general bashfulness to discuss freely the cases of polygamy and especially polyandry (p. 138); – an attitude which finds its complete counterpart in the behaviour of economically and politically powerful communities in the plains, equally unwilling, not only to discuss recent cases of polyandry but sometimes even to admit its existence in the past, in spite of overwhelming literary, direct and indirect evidence.

However, the existence of comparatively few polygamous unions, both: of the polygynous, – and polyandrous variety, does not, at any rate, disturb the picture of an essentially bilateral social organization, in which the position of men and women is on the whole on the same footing, even though in one case a woman may have the liberty to marry two husbands

[27] also, among other and more direct reasons, because we find that in the tribal legend the (personified) mountains Perungunnu and Mayangunnu ask for mountain Karimalai's (-a double-pronged hill –) sister: – obviously as their polyandrous wife. She refuses the offer and leaves her adelphilocal residence for the jungle, rather, than follow the bridegrooms, it is true, but there is no indication that this was done so because of the polyandrous character of the proposal.

simultaneously and in another one man two wives. I have not come across indications of fraternal polyandry or the Levirate, but found that sexual liberty for a husband with his wife's younger sister are not infrequently taken for granted, (p. 102) in a way, quite common among more than one group in the patriarchal plains of South India. This fact deserves perhaps some emphasis as it would appear to be a rather patriarchal feature in Kadan sociology, which we found otherwise bilateral, with matrilineal acculturation features of the more remote past, and patriarchal ones, as far as the recent acculturation, connected with timber-transport, tram-line and Minor Forest Produce Contractors, is concerned. It does not seem to me likely that the attitudes towards younger sisters-in-law should be the result of this latest patriarchal acculturation movement, to which no doubt the newly acquired "shyness", (pp. 105-106, "laziness" (p. 223), and reluctance to take part in money-transactions (p. 213), on the part of Kadan women, belongs.

Mythology and Religion

Perhaps the strongest revision of my original views on the Kadar, gathered from earlier literature, and expressed in 1941, (quoted: p. 10), had to be made in the realm of religious concepts, after my field-work. It has originally been my view that in the guise of Kali-worship, an old substratum of a very early Mother-goddess-worship was surviving, also among the Kadar, as it undoubtedly is among numerous agricultural classes in the plains. We have seen that the nature and accessories of Kali-worship as such (p. 157) and its connection with the story of an ikon, brought from outside the Kadan area, and submerged in the river-pool near Kuryarkutti (p. 158), are both indicative of the non-Kadan origin of Kali and her worship among them. No trace of an originally Kadan *Magna Mater* could be found in the rôle, *played by Kali* in present Kadan religion. On the

other hand, fowl sacrifice, the setting up of pandals, offering of jaggery, plantains, raw rice on plantain-leaves and the shaking of obsessed pujaries; – all are features, as obviously non-Kadan and foreign to them, as for instance the setting up of a stone (p. 77) to drive out the evil spirit, plaguing Tambi's wife Velakkal (I/2); a religious act, which was done on the express advice of a Parayan from the plains.

The worship, by Kadar, of tutelary deities in some of the neighbouring Hindu shrines, including a goddess, connected with an elephant tank (p. 187) falls under the same category and the only genuine Kadan religious concept, connected with female deities, would thus appear to be grouped round the Kadan Creation Myth, with Malavay and Malankuratti as the central features (p. 190).

Attuvacherry Ammal is of some importance in this connection. This is the female deity whose position as daughter, or as creation, of the divine couple (pp. 161-162) is not clarified, but who would, in either position, seem to strengthen the female element in the Kadan pantheon which, after the deduction of the obviously recent adaptations from neighbouring Hindu plainspeople, comprises only the two main figures, Malavay-Malankuratti and Attuvacherry Ammal, the former's affectionately considered daughter-creation; and lesser tree-spirits—unless we include the rather doubtful father-figure of Karia Muppan (p. 166) here, which, however, I did not feel justified in doing after consideration of its probably recent historical origin (p. 167). My previous assumption of stress, laid upon the female aspect of the deity, which I linked up with the rôle, played by Kali in Kadan hagiography (pp. 157-160), would thus appear to have been the grain of truth which the blind chicken picked by ascribing to Kali Ammal what actually should have been linked up with Attuvacherry Ammal and with her mother or creatrix: Malankuratti.

This, then, is the still more important significance, of a female aspect in the Kadan pantheon: the creatrix in the divine couple Malavay-Malankuratti: the goddess Malankuratti who is inseparable from, though perhaps not fully identical with, her male counterpart: Malavay.

Before discussing this feature, a word on methodology may here be permitted. I stated (p. 5) at the beginning of this monograph that in my opinion absolutely unprejudiced anthropological work is impossible and indeed has never been done. It is in a way as though anybody would try to describe himself objectively – a *contradictio in adjecto.*

What, however, can and should be done in anthropological research is in my opinion:

Firstly, to become conscious of one's own pre-judgments (*i.e.,* pre-judices) and,

secondly, to confine their interplay with, and participation in, ethnographic fact-finding to the smallest possible minimum.

That I did aim at this minimizing of pre-judging becomes perhaps clear from my remarks, in the beginning of this monograph (p. 5). How far I succeeded in it, is for others to judge. However, to ease this judgment of my own records on the Kadan divine couple, I am here recording briefly the history of my own changing views of the Kadan Creator Deity(ies).

The powerful personality, and teachings, of Professor P. W. Schmidt no doubt dominated my outlook on these questions when we both were still in Austria; – he as the Head of the *Viennese School* of Anthropology and I as student and member of the ethnological institute, Vienna University. I had, however, at that time various qualms of doubt, whether there is not a basically opposed concept of a female creator deity, largely submersed under patriarchal acculturation sheets, but still palpable among such people as Negritos of Malaya and perhaps the S. W. Indian Kadar,

whom I knew at that time only from the literature with its stress on Kali-worship. Short, but instructive personal contact with P. Schebesta in the anthropological museum collections of Vienna, somehow strengthened, rather, than dispelled my unorthodox views (seen from the Viennese *Kulturkreis* point of view); – a fact to which I gave also expression in my doctor's thesis (1937).

When I later detected the Malavay-Malankuratti legend in the field (1947), I thought that this was a typical *ancestral couple* even comparable to other Indian *caste-ancestors,* and possibly related to an almost entirely submersed primeval father-creator Kariamuppan (p. 166), whom I came later to consider as an absolutely human, non-religious and historical personage (p. 167). For some time, during especially the earlier part of my field work in 1947, I felt hardly any doubt in the *ancestral-couple*-character of Malavay and Malankuratti, until I was in this corrected by one of my informants, when camping in a Muduvar shifting-cultivator's village and trying to understand the Muduvar tribal myth: a mother-goddess, whose seat and temple in the eastern plains was flooded "long ago" and who carried her children (– the ancestors of the present Muduvar –) on her back (Mal. : *mudu* – back) to the hills. The Muduvar identify their tribal mother-goddess with the Shakti of Aiyappan at Shavary Malai in Travancore in particular, and with the Hindu Shiva-Shakti complex generally. The insistence of my informant on the parallel of the Muduvar– (and general plainspeople belief in Shakti or in Shiva-Shakti) with Malavay-Malankuratti appeared to me for some time as just one more manifestation of the otherwise only too often observed eagerness, among Kadar and other tribes, to shun their own culture and tradition and to disguise, or hide, its features under names, patterns and institutions of the plains. Hearing, however, the account of the Malavay– Malankuratti legend retold, several times, I came to feel that in spite of its originality and the absence of

any features, ostensibly in common with, or borrowed from, Shiva-Shakti, Malavay-Malankuratti', show yet a certain community of principle and character with this parallel Hindu divine couple. Doubts beset me, whether we may "have here hit on one of the roots from which the Shiva-Shakti complex of All-India importance has been derived" as I said in a paper, read before the Anthropological Society of Bombay, on February 10th 1949, not long after the termination of my field work among the Kadar.[28]

The divine couple of the Kadar – Malavay and Malankuratti – would thus appear to be comparable with a widespread religious idea, showing particular affinities to the Hindu-Indian Shiva-Shakti complex. This line of connection is not easily explainable, in terms of tangible culture contact, because such contacts would have to be postulated for a period, long antedating the modern "acculturation-epoch" of Kadar, or any other South Indian food-gatherers of basically bilateral social pattern.

There is, moreover, a certain parallel, to this Shiva-Shakti-like concept of the Kadan Malavay-Malankuratti, in the Negrito attitude towards their main deities. We find there that: "The Immortals can be divided into two classes. To the first belong Karei and Manoid and their children, Ta Pedn, Bedrak and Takel. The last is a female. Ta Pedn and Takel are unmarried . . . Karei's wife is Manoid."[29] Ta Pedn, moreover, is identifical with Skeat's Ta' Ponn (comp. the Kadan name *Pönnala* (IV/3)?), Vaughan Stevens' Tapperu, Evans' one-time spelling: Taparu and Schebesta's Taperu, and finally: Ta-Pedn.[30] Evans says that

[28] Ehrenfels-II, (1949/E), p. 23.

[29] Evans (1937), p. 152 (verbally quoted by permission of the Cambridge University Press). The quotations from Evans on the Negrito of Malaya comprise of course also observations Schebasta's and various other Negrito explorers, whose results are synthesized in Evans' work, in addition to his own researches. The original publication of Schebasta and others are not accessible to me now, but frequently quoted by Evans.

[30] Evans (1937), p. 150.

in the Chinoi expression "Tata Ta Pedn" the word *tata* does not mean "grandfather", as Schebesta thought, but that he found in 1935, after enquiries, "ancestor" to be "the correct translation".[31]

Previously Evans told us that "Taperu appears to be a kind of deified tribal ancestor[32] whose wife Jalang" taught the Negritos how to make combs, headdresses and other personal ornaments.[33] The concept of original creators in the form of a pair becomes still clearer when Evans says that Taperu again has a father Kukak and a mother Yak Takel,[34] who would thus appear to be parallel to the aforementioned Karei and Manoid.[35] The essence of this position is further repeated in the statement of Evans: "Tang-ong and Yak Manoid are husband and wife. Their children are Taperu and Jalang . . ." etc.[36] These aspects of Negrito belief in generations of divine, or semi-divine, couples would seem to correspond with the Kadan belief in the couple Malavay and Malankuratti, who created, rather, than begot the first human (*i.e.*, Kadan) couple and, at the same time, also the beloved (quasi-tribal) goddess Attuvacherry Ammal. To this there is a further parallel in the belief that Taperu is the son of Kukak and Yak (grandmother) Takel and that "Yak (grandmother) Lepeh is the mother of Jalang, while Jamoi's mother is Yak Manoid. These three Grandmothers live under the earth .... and make the waters rise".[37] These Negrito Grandmothers stand not only in a position to Taperu which is reminiscent of that in which Attuvacherry Ammal is related to Malavay and Malankuratti, but they also live under the earth, make the "waters rise from under the

31 *Ibid.*, p. 151.
32 *Ibid.*, p. 141, F.N. 6.
33 *Ibid.*
34 *Ibid.*, p. 142.
35 *Ibid.*, p. 152.
36 *Ibid.*, p. 143.
37 *Ibid.*, p. 142.

earth, causing *henweh* (accompanied by storms and subsistence of the ground....)"[38] which finds a close parallel to the Kadan belief that Malavay and Malankuratti were driven, from their original abode underneath the ground, by the rising waters of the ocean.[39] There is a further, though somewhat less direct resemblance in the belief regarding mountains, current among the Grik aborigines in Malaya and the Kadar of Cochin. According to the Grik "Kari and his younger brother, Taperu, . . . were magicians . . ."[40] who fastened their fishing rods in the ground where they later became mountains, *i.e.,* Gunong Kĕndĕrong and Gunong Kĕrunai, the top part of one had been broken off,[41] whilst the Kadar recount a story of the two mountains Perungunnu and Mayangunnu who asked for hill Karimalai's sister as their wife. In the ensuing fight, Perungunnu bowed down, to escape the missile, thrown by Karimalai (Hill). There is even a similarity of the Negrito expression *gunong,* and the Kadan word *gunnu* for mountain which, however, I have not further discussed in the previous chapter on language, as I am convinced of the Dravidian root of the Kadan word *gunnu,* without however to be able to offer an explanation for the similarity of the Negrito word *gunong,* the origin of which is quite unknown to me.[41-a]

The original Creator deity of both Negritos and Kadar would then seem to appear as a divine couple, characteristically associated with related and important female deities. The character of a divine *couple* is maintained, among the

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 142 and F.N. 4 there and p. 146, F.N. 3: "Thunderstorms accompanied by welling up of water from under the earth . . ." (quoted by permission of the University Press, Cambridge). Compare also the subterranean residence of female deities, indicated by the Negrito blood sacrifice, Evans (1937), pp. 171/72 & 174/75.

[39] Comp. esp. Evans (1937), p. 187 where "the subterranean lake" is mentioned "from which Manoid would let the waves rush out" (*i.e.* in the way they apparently did in the Kadan creation Myth) "if the blood sacrifice were refused." (Quoted by permission, University Press, Cambridge).

[40] Evans, (1937), p. 144.

[41] *Ibid.*

[41-a] *Comp.* Chap. XI, p. 269.

Kadar, in spite of Malavay and Malankuratti's similarity in name, and inseparability, in the minds of their devotees. A parallel to this is found in the predominantly but not exclusively female[42] Garelamaisama of the Chenchus, further north in South India, who is "like two deities, one male god and one female god . . . but have both the same name."[43]

This configuration seems to support the view, to which I hinted,[44] before I began field work among the Khasi of Central Assam, at the end of 1949 and in 1950,[45] namely that a peculiar similarity exists between the duo-theistic concept with special stress on the female side (through other female minor deities) among Kadar of Cochin, as well as Negritos of Malaya.[45-a]

Before beginning field work among the matrilineal Khasi of Central Assam, with their old tradition of agriculture, specialized house-building, iron-smelting, and black-smithery, a democratic Government and complex clan,– as well as family –organization,—my prejudice certainly expected a very differ-

[42] Fürer-Haimendorf (1943), p. 180.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

[44] Ehrenfels-II, (1950/A), p. 176 (Appendix).

[45] which to carry out, I was financially enabled by a Grant-in-Aid from the *Viking Fund* Inc., New York, and permitted by special leave from the University of Madras. To both these organizations my thanks are here again recorded.

[45-a] Compare: Reichard (1950), where description of a "First Pair" as the "primary cause of disaster in the lower worlds" in Navaho mythology (p. 26), the closeness of this pair to the deity (p. 28), the stress on male and female symbolism (p. 29), mythological floods, causing emergence of beings from the lower world (p. 31), the appearance of a female baby, growing to become an important mythological figure: Changing Woman (p. 26), difficulties which First Man and First Woman meet in their world-creation (p. 30) and finally even the birth of monsters (p. 31), are described. There is a certain resemblance of this set of Navaho mythology to especially the Kadan creation myth, but also to related features among Negritos of Malaya and certain basic principles of Khasi religion; – all summarised in the foregoing paragraphs. This work on Navaho Religion reached me, through the kindness of Miss Maud Oakes, only when the page proof of the present book had already gone to the press. Its discussion can hence no more be included in this book, though implications of these religious similarities may be expected which have been independently recorded among the Navaho in North America and the Kadar in South India.

ent type of *Magna mater* with fertility,– and agricultural associations among them. Though there is no doubt a connection between the Khasi Great Deity and certain agricultural rites,[46] I yet found the position of an original creator deity, known by one name *Blei,* which may, at occasions, be pre-fixed with the definite article of masculine gender: *U,* and at others with *Ka,* – the definite article of feminine gender, whilst at rare, but emotionally stressed occasions, both the articles are combined in the expression *U Blei – Ka Blei,*[47] with a stress on the femininity of Ka Blei which was quite strong, and consciously expressed, even so late as 1885.[48] In my comparison of this deity, (or divine couple?) with the Kadan Malavay and Malankuratti, I also referred to the latter's connection with not only a primeval flood-myth, but also a double-pronged mountain[49] which play an important rôle among many S.E. Asiatic, Austro-Asiatic speaking peoples.[50] Professor Hutton has, moreover, shown various affinities between Polynesia.[51] Assam,[52] Malaya,[53] Madagascar,[54] with a supposed centre in Indonesia,[55] reaching out also to South India.[56] This then would further support the hypothesis of Malayan Negrito – South Indian Kadan affinities, were it not for the fact that all the culture affinities referred to here (Tiyya of Kerala, sea-fisher of Ceylon or the southern East– and northern West Coast) belong to a stage of technological–, as well as sociological specialization which the Kadar have not reached now

[46] Ehrenfels-II, (1950/C), p. 29/30.
[47] *Ibid.,* p. 28/29.
[48] *Ibid.,* p. 31.
[49] *Ibid.,* p. 36.
[50] Walk (1949), pp. 63 *seq.,* 114.
[51] Hutton (1937), p. 171, 180, etc.
[52] *Ibid.,* p. 162, 176, 177, 182, etc.
[53] *Ibid.,* p. 161.
[54] *Ibid.,* p. 173, 174, etc.
[55] *Ibid.,* p. 162, 182.
[56] *Ibid.,* p. 182.

and which was no doubt outside their experience when the Proto-Kadar would have parted their ways from the Proto-Negritos of Malaya, where,– how,– and whenever that might have been the case.

It is, on the other hand, worthy of notice, in this connection, that the Khasi religion, like that of the Kadar, is un-iconic, does not know any temples, structures or regular places for worship nor an organized priesthood, – apart from the functions of the Lyngdohs and especially the youngest daughter in the family. A trace of primal simplicity and lack of religious, or what we might call, "church"– organization thus appears common to the basic religious concepts of both: Kadar in South India and Khasi in Assam,—inspite of the latter's infinitely more specialized general civilization which was just on the threshold of original literary development when too close contacts with other literate societies (eastern, middle-eastern and western), prevented its further development.

This situation run against my pre-conceived ideas regarding a probable basic difference of religious concepts between the food-gathering, bilaterally organized Kadan-Negrito group on the one side, and the agricultural, matrilineal Khasi, on the other. During, and after, my field-work among the latter in 1950, I have been informed, by airmail-correspondence, of researches in classical Greek mythology and comparisons with ancient Egyptian, as well as modern Greek folklore, which are in progress since 1938/39.[57] These brought forth points of resemblances, between the Kadan *Malavay-Malankuratti* and the Khasi *U Blei– Ka Blei* double sex character, on the one side, and essential features in Kybele, the Ephesian Artemis, Anahita, Astarte and Gaia on the other. Deducing from results of these studies, which are not yet completed, I feel that undoubtedly there is a similarity in

[57] carried out by Baroness Fridl Ehrenfels, engaged in these studies since her emigration to Greece in 1938, when world events separated us.

essence. But I also feel the great difference in the iconic, priestly and temple-bound type of worship there, as compared to the much lesser difference (– comparatively –) between the Khasi, – and the Kadan religious background; though not of their general culture pattern. The Khasi *U Blei – Ka Blei,* like the Kadan *Malavay – Malankuratti,* do not belong to the type of highly specialized literate civilizations, such as the classical Egyptian or Greek traditions were built upon. Yet there is one common element in all of them; the interchangeability or at least double polarization of the sex character of the divine beings; – or its splitting up into an inseparable couple. This couple is almost being considered as a psychological unit with two bodies, – such as we also find it in *Shiva-Shakti.* I would not have conceived the possibility to see in this unit, with a strong emphasis on its female aspect, the same essentially monotheistic concept, which has been observed among other primeval food– gatherers,[58] had I not been made acquainted with certain general principles regarding the worship of goddesses and the interchangeability of male and female concepts of the deity,[59] through writings of Bô Yin Râ.

With this knowledge, however, I believe now that a more than merely accidental similarity may be assumed to exist between the Malayan *Karei-Manoid, (Kukak-Yak Takel,* etc.) of the Negritos, the South Indian *Malavay-Malankuratti* of the Kadar or the Garelamaisama of the Chenchu and the Assamese *U Blei – Ka Blei* of the Khasi; – in spite of the latter's so widely different general civilization and also religious specialization; especially in the fields of egg-divination, ancestral mythology and the symbolic significance of the cock, as compared to the truly simple and very probably primeval religious concepts of both: Negritos in Malaya and Kadar in Cochin.

[58] Schmidt (1911), (1937).

[59] Bô Yin Râ (1935), pp. 110 *seq.,* 116, 159 *seq.,* and: (1932), pp. 126/27.

There was no animal-sacrifice among Kadar observed by me, – apart from the fowl sacrifice at the Kali– *puja* of Kuryarkutti (p. 159).

I could, however, also not find any institution among the Cochin Kadar, which I should confidently describe as an unquestionable survival of a primicial offering, though the dripping of liquor on the ground (p. 185) may be interpreted as such, but is also found among plainspeople.

The same is true to say of the taboo on touching, or eating, bison, –even drinking of buffalo milk. The similarity in these attitudes with plainspeople, especially Parayar (pp. 180-181) can hardly be doubted, but offers no clue as to the question of the ultimate origin of these avoidances, observed by so widely different groups.

Black monkeys are, in direct contradiction to general Hindu concepts, considered a delicacy now, and also were so, in the tribal legend, whilst the white monkey should not be eaten, on account of its alleged similarity with humans.[60] In this latter feature there seems again a resemblance to survive, with Negrito attitudes to certain monkeys as friends of one's own ancestors;—a sort of totemism in the making? There is, however, also the ban on eating buffalo (bison) and tiger-flesh; two animals who are not associated with humans, or ancestors, by the Kadar, the former being considered as "unclean", whilst respect is due to the latter.

[60] Evans (1937), p. 161, recounts a story which he obtained from a Negrito at Ijok, Salama, Parak, in 1913, according to which there was a fight between the *mawas* monkeys and the *siamang* monkeys (not related to the South Indian species though) during which the ancestors of the Negritos and the Raja Siamang (monkey) hid themselves in the same plain, covered by lalang grass. Evans refers to similar other stories, among the Trang-Patalung Negritos of S. Peninsular Siam (*Ibid.*, p. 161) and says "that the *baweich*, there mentioned as being friendly to the Negritos, is...." a Macacus, which would appear to be zoologically a relative of the Kadan "white monkey". Schebesta recounts a similar legend and "suggests that the dark *siamang* apes really represent the Negritos driven inland by a fairer race (Schebesta, *Among the Forest Dwarfs*, p. 216)", quoted from Evans (1937), p. 162 (by permission of The University Press, Cambridge).

It should, in this connection, be recalled that, among the Negritos of Malaya, the god Karei and his wife Takel have a "son, Hanei, the tiger"[61] and that "Karei makes the thunder. He has long hair all over the body, like a *siamang* monkey (*Symphalangus Syndactylus*), but is white and shines as if it had been oiled."[62] That may no doubt be a reference to the light-nature of Karei, who "shines with fire, which comes from him"[63]; – instead of, contrariwise, a reference to relationship with a monkey, the animal. Yet the fact may be recorded here. There we find also that "He sits upright in heaven upon a *galogu* (a beam) . . ."[64] which again may be interpreted as purely symbolical, or—also—as reminiscent of the Kadan children's merry-go-round, turning on an upright bamboo-pole (p. 242 and fig. 27).

I was reminded, of the particular method applied by Negritos of Malay in drawing blood for sacrifice from their leg,[65] by the way in which obsessed men among Kadar were beating their own legs with sticks, during the annual Kali puja of 1948 (p. 159).

The connection between agriculture, a materially richer type of (matrilineal?) civilization and the goddess Kali is illustrated in a Kadan folklore (p. 179) where the tiger appears as Kali's dog.

Tree-nymphs and other "silvan deities" play a rôle in Kadan belief, though not one of great emotional stress. Swings were put up, for such spirits, during the Hinduized Kali Puja of 1948, (p. 158).

[61] Evans (1937) p. 157, The tiger is also Karei's executioner (*Ibid.*, p. 182), or a supernatural being (*Ibid.*, p. 208) transforming himself into a man and *vice versa*.

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 144.

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 151.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 151; – all three references: quoted by permission of the University Press, Cambridge.

[65] Described in the Vienna Ethnographic Museum by P. Schebesta personally as also by Evans (1937), p. 171 and photos facing p. 180.

Folklore, connected with the megalithic structures in the Kadan territory, (p. 181) would suggest the possibility that here encounters with the original megalith-builders are being preserved, and that, at any rate these latter belonged to an outgroup, as they did in the belief of the Periya Malayalees of the Salem Dt. (pp. 150, 182).

The only instance of divination, apart from shaking at the (unseen) approach of tigers or panthers (pp. 183/84), which I came across, was the *pillai kallu* – oracle (pp. 184/85), by which a pregnant woman hopes to find out the sex of the expected child.

Of the magic powers, which plainspeople are so often convinced that the hill-tribes, including Kadar, master, I have found very little reliable indications, if any, among Kadar themselves. Experience of medical herbs and their supposed, or real, effects and knowledge of love-charms, however, seem to be considered as belonging to the same kind of mental achievement.

Kadan culture in space and time

The Kadan legend of the Golden Age (pp. 175, 177) gives the account of a time during which no tools have been used, followed by a period with "sticks" as main instruments, which were later armed with stone–, and finally iron edges, as most of the digging sticks of to-day are now (p. 26 and line-drawing on p. 27). This legend covers an extra-ordinarily long epoch of Kadan history in terms of technology; – an account which seems to fit well into general anthropological and archaeological experience. Co-ordination with any of the still little known older strata of archaeological civilizations of South India seems hardly possible in the absence of Kadan stone implements, unless we may assume the very earliest, "Proto-Kadar" to have been responsible for the Madrasian hand-axe industry. Though

the suggestion may sound fantastic, at first sight, it would seem to find some support in the very long period of culture-development, covered by the Kadan Golden Age legend, which, however, would in that case have to be considered as not quite exact either, since it omits any mention of stone-tools, let alone *coup de poing,* speaking first of the use of bare hands, than of unarmed sticks (which may be taken to indicate a true *Bamboo Civilization*), and after this directly of stone-tipped sticks (presumably referring to a flake-industry), before the modern age came finally along with iron. The core of original Kadan culture can at any rate be taken as the oldest yet palpable survival of food-gathering peoples in South India, whatever their archaeological affinities might have been. The situation in terms of space is more complex even than that of time.

Though there are no doubt many affinities with non-agricultural (food-gathering or semi-food-gathering) hill-people of South-India (pp. 281/2), there are even more similarities with the far distant Negritos of Malaya. Some of these latter similarities are not internally (or necessarily) interconnected, as *e.g.* in the fields of physical anthropology (pp. 6, 68/9 and photos; esp. showing frizzy to woolly hair), technology (tree-climbing, pp. 8, 32 and fig. on p. 33), art (p. 8-9 and fig. on pp. 24, 25, 59), but especially also in that of religious lore and concepts (pp. 288-290). They thus seem to point to real historical relationship between the Kadar of Cochin and the Negritos of Malaya.

This particular bond of affinity is not easy to explain. Both the two groups are separated by either the whole length of peninsular, gangetic and eastern India and further by that of Burma, or – by the Bay of Bengal. Neither Kadar nor Negritos, or their ancestors, are likely to have migrated over such vast distances, on the land-route, at any rate after the occupation of India and Burma by literate societies, or to

have crossed the ocean on boats. It would appear easier to believe that both these groups represent the last surviving "pockets" of a once widely distributed though numerically weak South Asian population of food-gatherers which had been driven to refuge–areas by the many waves of later immigrants into India and Malaya respectively.

This brings us to the question of a surviving primeval civilization in India, the traces of which can still be recognized among populations of this country, who have taken to agriculture and/or cattle-breeding not very long ago.

Professor Koppers discussed this problem in connection with his field-researches among the Bhil of Central India and came to the conclusion that:

(*a*) such a substratum in the present Bhil-Civilization is palpable[66] and that;

(*b*) the culture-configuration in S. India, as I assumed it to be in my monograph on *Mother-right in India,* with regard to matrilineal and totemistic civilizations, is well in accord with the circumstances found by him, among the Bhil.[67]

He also remarks there that these circumstances do not in themselves decide the correctness of my assumption of comparatively simple, but well established matrilineal civilizations which, though no doubt younger than bilateral food-gathering civilizations, appear yet older, on the Indian scene, than totemistic civilizations[68] and of course also much older than the far more advanced latest matrilineal civilization in S. India namely that of the "Nayar Type". Koppers also points

[66] Koppers (1949), p. 157, where, along with the Bhil, the Kadar (and also Chenchu, Reddi, Baiga Nahal) are mentioned as representative of the oldest non-Aryan, non-Dravidian and non-Austro-Asiatic cultural stratum in India. comp. also *Ibid.,* p. 219 and: Kopper (1940) and (1948).

[67] Koppers (1948), p. 136.

[68] Ehrenfels-II, (1941), p. 101.

to the parallel configuration of circumstances among the Chenchus which, in the description of Dr. Fürer von Haimendorf,[69] indeed supports my aforementioned hypothesis, though he does not mention it.

The circumstances, as I found them among the Kadar of Cochin suggest this same assumed culture sequence even more strongly. There is no clan-organization or totemistic belief among the Kadar, unless the avoidance of eating White Monkey's flesh, because of the Kadar's professed feeling of similarity between these animals and themselves, should be considered as such. The avoidance of eating tiger– , and bison-meat, the former, out of respect, the latter because it is considered as defiling, appears likewise disconnected with totemistic concepts, especially as these three animal-avoidances with such widely different motivations, are frequently being bracketed together (p. 294) by the Kadar themselves. Though the Negritos of Malaya do recount in their legends, some connection of their ancestors with one variety of monkeys (p. 295 F.N. 60), the Kadar do not. If there had been any migration of Proto-Kadar (possibly from S. E. Asia in the neighbourhood of the Negritos) and through the Central-Indian area, after the settlement of totemistic civilizations there, it should be expected that comprehensible traces of totemistic conceptions should have been adopted by them. The absence of such concepts, among Kadar, as well as Negritos, may therefore be taken further to lessen the probability of a Kadan– or Proto-Kadan migration from Malaya to South India, or a Negrito migration in the opposite direction, – even in remote days.

These speculations seem to be all—and certainly not much—that can now be said, with some amount of probability, about the part played by the Kadar in Indian pre-history and whether South India was their original home.

[69] Fürer-Haimendorf (1943) p. 292.

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As to the future, we are in a better position, so far as probability of guessing goes, though no anthropologist – or any human being with an appreciation of cultural values, for that matter – will enjoy this "better" position, namely an almost complete certainty that the Kadar will soon be sharing the sad fate of the Tasmanian Aborigines, the Veddas of Ceylon or the Chenchu of Hyderabad, who seem now to be the latest arrivals in the long and ever mounting list of peoples and cultures falling prey to the over-population, greed, corruption and misery of the "civilization" that is our own.

There was, and in a way still is, some remote hope for physical, economic, sociological, religious and even a generally cultural re-generation and a happy, co-operative share which the Kadar could take in a truly "New Deal" for the hill-people of South India. My suggestions for such an attempt at building a future (p. 252), however, are not likely to be carried out in the near future. The one Indian society,[70] concerning itself with Tribal Welfare, has published only these,[71] and no other suggestion for the Kadar. It seems, therefore, that there are no other attempts at reconciliation under way. All we can thus hope for the tribe, in acute danger of extinction and cultural disintegration, is that these recommendations are being carried out.

[70] *Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh,* Delhi.
[71] Ehrenfels-II, (1951/B).

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