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IX.
TIGALA CASTE.

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TIGALAS.

Tigala (ತಿಗಲ) is the Kannada term for a Tamil-speaking man. The caste that is known by that name call themselves *Vannéru* or *Vannikuladavaru* (ವನ್ನೇರು ಅಥವಾ ವನ್ನಿಕುಲದವರು), the descendants of Vanni Raja, who, it is said, had five sons, the ancestors of the Vanniya caste. They form a population of 64,847, of whom 32,983 are men and 31,864 women. Tigalas.

The name *Vannéru* is derived from the Sanskrit *Vanhi*, fire, and there is a legend to explain the connection, which is similar to that of the rise of the Agnikulas from a sacrificial fire. In fact, these men say that they are descended from one of the Agnikula warriors. They call themselves the descendants of Agni Banniraya (ಅಗ್ನಿ ಬನ್ನಿರಾಯ). They are also known as the devotees of Dharmarāya, (ಧರ್ಮರಾಯನ ವಕ್ತೃಲು), as they worship the eldest of the Pandava brothers, as their patron deity. Usually they are known as Tótada Tigalas (ತೊಟದತಿಗಲರು) as their chief profession is vegetable and other petty gardening, and as Arava or Tamil Reddis, or Pallis (*i.e.*, villagers). *Gauḍa* (ಗೌಡ) is the title of the headman of the caste and is exclusively borne by him. Their earliest home according to tradition is Kānchi-Puram (Conjeveram).

They talk either Kannada or Tamil. Those that talk Kannada are the earliest immigrants among them into this State, and they are found in Tumkur. Language.

There are two main endogamous divisions known respectively as *Uffi* or *Kannada Tigulu* (ಉಫಿ ಅಥವಾ ಕನ್ನಡ ತಿಗಲರು) and *Arava Tigala* or *Dharmarāyana Vakkalu* (ಅರವ ತಿಗಲರು ಅಥವಾ ಧರ್ಮರಾಯನ ವಕ್ತೃಲು). The latter includes some sub-divisions who are not pure Tigalas, and who are known as *Tondramallaru* (ತೊಂಡಮಲ್ಲರು), those born of a Tigala man and a Vakkaliga woman, *Agamudiyavaru* (ಅಗಮುಡಿಯವರು) or those born of a Tigala man and a woman of a different caste, *Kanjavara* or people of Conjeveram, *Vannigaru* (ವನ್ನಿಗರು) and *Yelé Tigala* (ಯಲೇತಿಗಲರು), those who grow betel-vine. Endogamous divisions.

Uḷi Tigalas (Onion Tigalas) are said to have obtained this curious appellation for the following reason. A troupe of *Dombars* gave an acrobatic performance in a village, of which all except *Tigalas* were invited to witness the show. The latter felt insulted and in order to outdo the *Dombars* in their own profession, they constructed a pole by lashing together onion stalks and made rope by twisting together the filaments of the same frail material, and surpassed the *Dombars*' feats of skill.

Tondramallaru are supposed to be inferior to the pure *Arava Tigala* and the *Agamudis*. They all eat together though intermarriages are prohibited.

Exogamous divisions.

The caste is broken up into a number of exogamous divisions each of which takes its name from a particular patron deity, the members believing that they are all connected by some sort of blood-relationship which distinguishes them from other divisions. *

They have no hypergamous divisions.

Personal names.

The priests of *Dharmarāya* give their children the names of *Arjuna*, *Bhima*, *Nakula*, *Sahadéva* and *Dharmarāya*. There is no peculiarity in other names, those of gods, places or things being chosen just as in other castes. The following are some of the unusual names that have been given in this caste :—

Males.—*Pullappa* (ಪುಲ್ಲಪ್ಪ), *Yarrappa* (ಯರಪ್ಪ), *Lanke* (ಲಂಕೆ), *Tumkúrayya* (ತುಂಕೂರಯ್ಯ), *Tambi* (ತಂಬ), *Hosahalli* (ಹೊಸಹಳ್ಳಿ), *Yatarāya* (ಯತರಾಯ), *Payatanna* (ಪಯತನ್ನ), and *Yá-gappa* (ಯಾಗಪ್ಪ).

Females.—*Hombáli* (ಹೊಂಬಾಳಿ), *Ananti* (ಆನಂತಿ).

The *Kannada* section sometimes give opprobrious names to children born after loss of other children.

The class as a whole believe that the spirits of the children that died from any accident or from the bad treatment of the parents, tease the surviving children, and to avert such an evil they put on a talisman known as *Iragára**

* The following are stated to be the names of exogamous groups :—

Siddédévara manetana (ಸಿದ್ಧೇದೇವರ ಮನೆತನ), *Lakshmidévaru manetana* (ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿದೇವರ ಮನೆತನ), *Yellammadévaru manetana* (ಯಲ್ಲಮ್ಮದೇವರ ಮನೆತನ), *Gúle-aravi Lakshmidévaru manetana* (ಗೂಳಿ ಅರವಿ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿದೇವರ ಮನೆತನ), *Indratimmayyana Budakattu* (ಇಂದ್ರ ತಿಮ್ಮಯ್ಯನ ಬುಡಕಟ್ಟು), and *Dodd arasayyadévaru manetana* (ದೊಡ್ಡ ನರಸಯ್ಯದೇವರ ಮನೆತನ).

gudu (ಅರಸರೂಪ), with some inscription in it round the neck of their children.

Adoption is recognised by the caste. It is not necessary that the boy to be adopted should belong to the same stock as the adopting father's. A sister's son or a son of the wife's sister can be adopted. The boy's status for marriage remains exactly as it was before adoption. The arrangement seems to be intended mainly to keep up the continuity of the family to which the boy is adopted. The adopted person is not prohibited from espousing the daughter of the adopting father in marriage. In some families, adopted children are not allowed to perform the funeral obsequies for their adopted parents. Adoption.

Marriages are arranged by the parents or other elders in most cases. Boys are married generally after they are sixteen years of age. The bride need not necessarily be younger than the bridegroom. Exchange of daughters is recognised but discouraged on account of the superstition that one of the married couple meets with bad luck. It is common to take more than one wife; but there is no trace of polyandry and the idea strikes these men as revolting. Family descent is traced through males. Marriage is prohibited between two agnate cousins however remote their relationship may be. With regard to the other relations for marriage, there is no peculiarity in the caste. Two sisters may be taken as wives either simultaneously or at different times by a person or by two brothers. Marriage.

A girl is married generally not later than twelve. If the girl is already of the proper age, she begins to live with her husband after the lapse of the first Gauri festival after marriage. If the girl is yet too young, they wait till she attains her age of puberty before consummating the marriage. A woman is not compelled to marry at any cost. If she chooses to remain single, she need not undergo any mock marriage with trees or swords, or dedicate herself to any god.

If the stars corresponding to the names of the parties agree, a day is fixed and the boy's party with some married women come to the girl's house with coconuts, plantains, betel leaves and nuts and turmeric and *kunkuma* powder. The castemen are invited to be present, but the headman of the caste and the Ganachari (ಗಣಾಚಾರಿ) need not be there necessarily. The foreman in the assembly moots the subject, and the maternal uncle of the girl gives the Marriage Ceremonies.

consent. This is said to be due to the preferential right the maternal uncle himself has to the hand of the girl. If a marriage is performed without such consent, a *pancháyati* is held on his complaint in the presence of the caste headman and the *Gañáchari*, and the delinquent is fined. Such cases are however rare. When the maternal uncle gives his consent, the promise between the contracting parties is ratified by the exchange of betel leaves and nuts and by the utterance of the words "The girl is ours, the boy is yours" or "The boy is ours and the girl is yours" on each side. The articles brought are then presented to the girl by her mother and relatives, and the day ends with a feast known as *Parupusádam* (ಪರವುಸಾಡಂ or dhall and rice), as meat is not cooked on such occasions.

This ceremony binds the party of the girl to fulfil its contract, and a breach of it is met by a heavy fine imposed by the caste independently of any damage that may be recovered by action at law. On the night of this day the boy's relatives remain in the bride's house; and if any bad dreams occur, they would be considered as ill omens requiring the engagement to be broken off. Indeed they attach so much importance to omens, that after they reach home the next morning, they send information to the bride's house that no serpent crossed them on the way, and that while they were talking about the matter they did not hear any pots cracking or cats quarrelling.

The ceremony of marriage takes place in the bridegroom's house and lasts four days.

On the first day styled *Modálarisina* (ಮೊದಲರಿಸಿನೆ, first turmeric), the boy's party with the usual accompaniments of fruits and two rupees in cash called *Madupu* (ಮದಪು earnest) go to the girl's house, where the *Gauda* and the *Gañáchari* will be awaiting their arrival, and these have to assure themselves that the correct amount of money is brought and then permit the other presents to be received. The girl is seated on a plank and presented with the articles; she is attired in the new clothes supplied by the bridegroom and then prostrates herself before the head of the *caseta*

The *pandal* is erected on the second day. It is supported by twelve posts of which one is of *Kalli* plant, being styled the milk post and said to be for ensuring continuity of the line. The milk post must be cut by either the maternal uncle of the girl or the girl's paternal aunt's son. In

their absence the *kólkar* or the beadle cuts the tree and brings it. It is wrapped round with a washed cloth dyed with turmeric; a *kankana* with a package containing nine kinds of grain (ನವಧಾನ್ಯ) and a few coins, is tied round it; and it is planted in the middle of the pandal.

The bridegroom is brought in and besmeared with turmeric. In the evening the bride's party with the bride reach the village and halt at a temple. The bridegroom's party meet them there, and entertain them with drink.

Then the bridegroom's and the bride's parties together go out in a procession to get the vessels for the marriage known as *Airané* (ಐರನೆ) from the priest's house at which the vessels have been kept decorated with drawings of chunam and red earth. The priest is paid one *hana* (4 As. 8 p.) and the pots are taken to the marriage pandal and installed in a part of the house. Lamps are lighted with oil and wicks placed in earthen saucers brought with these vessels. They have to burn continuously during the remaining period of the marriage and it is considered a bad omen if they are allowed to go out.

The chief ceremony called *Muhúrta* takes place on the third day. The bride is smeared with turmeric powder by the bridegroom's party and the bridegroom by the bride's party, and a rice flour cake is waved before each to ward off the evil eye. The bridegroom gets shaved either really or nominally and the bride gets her nails pared. Then they bathe and dress themselves in their marriage attire. The bridegroom paints his forehead with a golden streak while the bride puts on a latitudinal red line of vermilion. The bridegroom goes to the temple with married ladies in a procession, in front of which his sister carries a box containing the presents to the bride. In the temple, after offering cocoanuts to the idol, the bridegroom is invested with a sacred string by the priest and then he and the bride sit on the marriage seat of planks. The *kólkar* ties the *kankana* to the pair. The various office-bearers of the caste and others present are given *tambúla*, and they all return to the marriage pandal.

The pair then knot together the little fingers of their right hands, over which their parents pour *Dhadré* (i.e., pour milk) in small quantities through a funnel of betel-leaf held by the bridal pair. Garlands worn by them are then exchanged by the bride and bridegroom. After this

they both go to prostrate themselves before the sacred pots set up for *púja*. On their way the bridegroom's sisters bars the passage till he utters the name of his wife. He refuses and tries to get off by a promise of giving her a cow or some jewel or the first-born daughter in marriage to her son. Then follows the ceremony of thrusting the hand into a quantity of salt in a vessel.

On the fourth day the couple are taken in a procession to an ant-hill and earth is brought thence to make into balls and deposit them near the posts supporting the pandal. The posts are painted with the paste of red earth by the bride and bridegroom. The bridegroom hands over the balls of earth to the bride who keeps them one by one at each pillar. Then they both go in a procession to a well with married women who carry the sacred pots called "*Airane*." The vessels are emptied of their contents in the well and are worshipped once more. In the meanwhile the bridegroom turns up some soil with a spade or a small plough, while the bride sows some paddy, or sometimes all the nine kinds of grain. A mock conversation goes on between the husband and the wife. The wife says "Husband, you seem to be tired after hard ploughing, take some food," and offers him food. The husband accepts but does not eat. Then the whole party turn back to the pandal, which is then dismantled.

Tera.

The bride price or *tera* is one rupee and a half.

Puberty.

There is no peculiarity in the ceremonies when a girl attains puberty except that the headman of the caste and others attend on the last day thereof. There is no regular ceremony for the consummation of marriage. The bridegroom or his parents present the bride with a new cloth, fruits, a *pán-supári* bag and betel leaves and nuts in the presence of the elders of the caste. After two meals are over, the party of the husband take the girl to her husband in his house and the two can thenceforward live as husband and wife. It is stated that the bridegroom need not attend these feasts.

Remarriage

Marriage of widows is allowed, though as a matter of sentiment, they prefer a maid to a widow or a divorced woman for marrying. There is no rule that a particular number of days should intervene between the death of the husband and the remarriage, which, however, cannot take place during the first ten days after his death. Remarriage takes place in the widow's house. The headman,

his beadle and other castemen are invited. Married women, though they attend, do not take part in the ceremonies. The bride is helped by widows and marriage has to take place in the evenings only. The husband presents a *tali* of gold and a new cloth to her. A widow is not allowed to marry her deceased husband's brother. But she may marry as many times as she chooses without thereby subjecting herself to any censure.

The *tera* is the same as for a virgin woman.

A woman may be divorced for adultery or for reasons such as want of harmony in the married life, in which latter case the parties may separate by common consent. When a woman has left her husband by divorce obtained from mere whim, she has to pay back his marriage expenses. An impotent husband can be divorced by his wife returning the *tali* to him, and the woman can remarry after paying a fine of Rs. 3 given to the caste. If such a man does not consent to the dissolution, she has only to return her *tali* to the Gaúda and Gaṛachari in a caste assembly, after which she ceases to be his wife. Divorce.

A woman loses her caste if she misbehaves with any person of a different caste. A man may with impunity consort with any woman except that of a *panchama* caste, and the issue of such connections are nevertheless Tigalas. Adultery is compoundable by the payment of a small fine to the caste. In cases of adultery within the caste, a woman is merely chastised by her husband but does not lose her caste, in case she pays a small fine to the community. If a woman is turned out by her husband on account of adultery, the man who seduced her may keep her as his wife, paying a small fine to the husband. Sexual license is condoned if the girl marries the man subsequently, but the marriage is celebrated only in the inferior form of *kudike*. Adultery.

There is no trace of marriage by capture from other tribes.

When a man dies, his body is carried on a frame of *kalli* or bamboo, the pieces tied together with a rope of twisted straw. The body soon after being placed on the frame, is washed with warm water, anointed and cleaned with soap-nut. Dásayyas come and repeat *Tirumantra* (ಶಿವಮಂತ್ರ). The body is then taken to the burial ground. Death ceremonies.

the mourners accompanying it with the beating of drums and cymbals. There a stone is installed to represent Harischandra and worshipped. Then those that are the votaries of Siva place dishes of rice and water for the spirit. In the fringe of the cloth wrapped round the body, some rice is tied up apparently meant for the use of the spirit while on its way to the next world. When the body is lowered into the grave, some ashes are thrown over it, and the Gauḍa and Gaṇáchari each throw a handful of rice and then a shovel of earth over it. The body is then duly buried and two pies are placed over a corner of the grave, which the tóṭi or village watchman takes for himself, after touching the four corners of the grave with cakes of cowdung.

At the spot in the house where the person died, rice and water are kept for the spirit. As the principal mourner enters the house while returning from the place of sepulture, he rolls the vessel he has carried in his hand at the threshold and prostrates himself before the Gauḍa and Gaṇáchari, who offer their condolences.

On the 3rd, 5th and 12th days, they give food and water to the departed spirit. On the 12th day, the priest and the elders of the caste go to a tank and perform purificatory ceremonies. The principal mourner gets a shave. He fixes a stick in the earth to represent the dead soul, and funeral ceremonies are performed under the direction of a Brahman priest. Then the whole party go to a temple to get the doors of heaven opened for the departed soul.

The period of *Sútaka* (mourning) is twelve days for the death of adult persons and three days for that of children. The Vaishnavas observe five days for children.

During the first year they perform monthly ceremonies to propitiate the dead. In succeeding years the whole body of deceased ancestors are worshipped on the new-year's-day and the Mahálaya new-moon day.

Social
habits.

Tigalas are persons of settled habits. They have divided themselves into sections by the tracts of country inhabited by them, each section called a *Kaṭṭemane* (ಕಟ್ಟಿಮನೆ) being under the jurisdiction of a headman or Gauda with a council of elders. The different *Kaṭṭemanes* are named after

some important place such as Tumkur, Kunigal, Turuvekere, Kadaba, etc.

Persons from any higher caste may be admitted into the Tigala caste, but in the matter of eating together and marriage, the older members do not easily reconcile themselves to join these new men, till in course of time their origin is forgotten. A child of a mixed marriage is considered inferior in caste status to one having both parents Tigalas.

They follow the Hindu law of inheritance

Inheritance

They are agriculturists, specially skilled as kitchen and flower gardeners. A minority among them are Government servants and coolies receiving daily wages. They are well known for their economy and hard work, and are unrivalled for the careful cultivation of fruit gardens.

Occupation.

They eat animal food and are allowed a pretty wide range, there being no objection to pigs, fowls of all sorts, fish, tortoise and large species of lizards. Kuruba is the lowest caste with which they eat, while he in return eats with them.

Food.

There are both Saivas and Vaishnavas in the caste, and they worship all the Hindu gods, only regarding either Siva or Vishnu as their family god. They worship all the minor gods such as Maramma, Marigamma, Munisvara, Kollapuramma, Yellamma and Siddedévaru. During marriages they do *Puja* in the name of Agni Vanhi Raya, their progenitor, burning frankincense. Women worship Gangamma during the prevalence of any epidemic disease in order to escape an attack. They go to a tank or well, worship the water with saffron, break a cocoanut and offer a new cloth in the name of Gangamma and wear it afterwards. Stones carved with the image of serpents are worshipped. On the festival of Gauri, cocoanuts and flowers are offered.

Religion.

The distinctive tribal festival is that of Karaga, (ಕರಗ), which is celebrated with great zeal and ceremony once every year in the month of *Chaitra* and lasts nine days. The functionary called the Ganachari is the grand master of ceremonies for it, whose directions on all matters are to be scrupulously observed. During the whole period, he has to keep himself pure, bathing in cold water either in his own house or some tank outside, and

taking only one meal a day, which his wife has prepared in *maḍi* (washed state). The *Pūjāri* conducts the worship. He also bathes regularly and has to live on fruits or other uncooked food during the period. On the first day he has his head and face shaved clean and dresses himself in the fashion of females with clothes dipped yellow in turmeric. He wears bangles and a *kankana* or wrist thread made of woollen yarn and turmeric root. When the *Pūjāri* goes to the well to bring the vessels on the seventh night, his wife takes off her bangles and *tāli*. In fact, she is considered a widow during the whole period of this festival. In addition to the *Gaṇāchāri* and the *Pūjāri*, there are others taking part in the celebrations who are known as *Komāramakkalu* (ಕೊಮಾರಮಕ್ಕಳು, i.e., young children) over a hundred in number. These have to bathe and observe fasts and be strict in the matter of meals. Their food is to be prepared by their wives only, who before the commencement of the festival subject themselves to a purificatory ceremony by having their tongues touched with a burning turmeric root and by drinking *tīrtha* or holy water. All these, men and women, keep aloof from other persons during this period, so as to preserve their holy state. If any of the women has the monthly sickness in the interval, she remains outside for three days till she bathes, and the husband has to cook his food:

On each day of the festival, the *Gaṇāchāri*, the *Pūjāri* and *Komāramakkalu* take *Chattri*, (umbrella), *bhaṇḍārada peṭṭige* (ಭಂಡಾರದ ಪೆಟ್ಟಿಗೆ), i.e., a casket containing turmeric powder, a whip, bell, seal, etc., to a well, and wash themselves and the things. Each of the *Komāramakkalu* offer *Namaskāra* prostrating themselves before the *Gaṇāchāri* and *Pūjāri* and receive their blessings. Then the procession returns attended with a band of musicians. Each *Komāramaga* * carries his sword with him, waving it occasionally in the air. In the temple of *Dharmarāya* the idol is enthroned and the washed things are brought in and deposited in the inner sanctuary. The assembly disperses after *pūja*.

On the day the idol is enthroned or some subsequent day the ceremony known as *gāvanna* (ಗಾವನ್ನೆ) takes place. The *pujari* cooks ten seers of rice in the precincts of the temple and offers it to the idol, the rice being coloured

* *Komāramaga* (ಕೊಮಾರಮಗ) is the singular form of *Komāramakkalu* (ಕೊಮಾರಮಕ್ಕಳು) in Kannada.

yellow with turmeric powder and scattered about in the four directions for the deities presiding over the four quarters.

On the 7th night takes place the most important ceremony, the bringing of the Karaga. Then the potter (*Kumbhāra*) observing a fast the whole day prepares an earthen vessel and takes it unburnt to a well and keeps it there at night. A procession from the temple consisting of Gaṇāchāri, Pújāri, Komāramakkaḷu, Gauḍa, Yajamán and the caste people goes to the well and returns to the temple with this pot.

After the vessel is brought from the well, a Brahman Puróhit is invited and a grand worship is conducted by him till about 4 o'clock in the morning of the next day. One or two maunds of camphor are burnt in the course of the night. The Karaga pot is decorated with flowers, and wrapped in a cloth dyed yellow with turmeric; and its mouth is closed with a bamboo basket inverted on it. The Pújāri, the Gaṇāchāri and Puróhit offer *pūja* to the Karaga, screening it from the view of the public. The Pújāri then takes the Karaga into his hands and keeps it on a platform. The Komāramakkaḷu beat their chests with the blunt ends of their swords before it. It is said that when times were better, they used to cut themselves with the sharp edge without being injured. The Pújāri carries the Karaga on his head and the Komāramakkaḷu arrange themselves round him with their swords drawn as if ready to kill him if he dropped the Karaga down, the penalty being required to ward off evil to the whole tribe from such a mishap. The procession goes round the city and on its return to the temple, the carrier goes round the car and the temple more than half a dozen times. The Karaga is finally installed in the temple and worshipped once again.

On the 8th night it remains in the temple with the usual *pūja* conducted in grand style.

They do not employ Brahmans for the conduct of ordinary ceremonies, though they have a guru who is a Vaishṇava Brahman. He occasionally visits them and offers them *tirtha* and *prasāda* and receives some money as fees.

According to Buchanan, the gods peculiar to the Pa is are Mannárswámi and Páchamma said to be his

mother. But no sacrifices are given to them but only to their attendant *muntis* who are all males. In the yard belonging to the temple, a great many figures in potter's work which represent horses and elephants are to be found which are supposed to be the attendants of the gods. These figures are set up as offerings after recovery from any illness supposed to have emanated from the influence of the deity. Pallis frequently offer sacrifices to Paṭṭāmma, Māramma and other saktis and worship both Siva and Viṣṇu. *

Tigalas believe in omens and oracles.

Caste organization.

Tigalas have a well defined caste organization. They have a Gauda (ಗೌಡ) as their head, and one learned in their caste and religious beliefs, styled Gaṇāchāri as next to him. The Pújāri of the temple of Dharmarāya is the latter's deputy, and they have a Yajmán besides. The Gauda, the elders of the caste and Yajmán form an ordinary caste council, while Gaṇāchāri and the Pújāri form additional members of the caste council at head-quarters. The decision of an ordinary caste council is not final as an appeal is open to the larger council at the head-quarters of the *kaṭṭemane*. Those who do not abide by the decisions of these councils are deemed to be outside the pale of the caste. But in cases pertaining to divorce, settlement of minor disputes about boundaries of land and rights of inheritance, the decisions are not binding in this sense. Penalties imposed in such councils are utilised for the purposes of temples and annual caste festivals.

It may be noted that in the absence of the Gauda in council, the Gaṇāchāri is entitled to take his place and exercise his privilege of giving the casting vote.