

BHUTĀS AND TĒYYAMS



BHUTAS AND TEYYAMS

SPIRITWORSHIP AND RITUAL DANCES
IN SOUTH KANARA AND NORTH MALABAR

AN EXHIBITION

prepared by



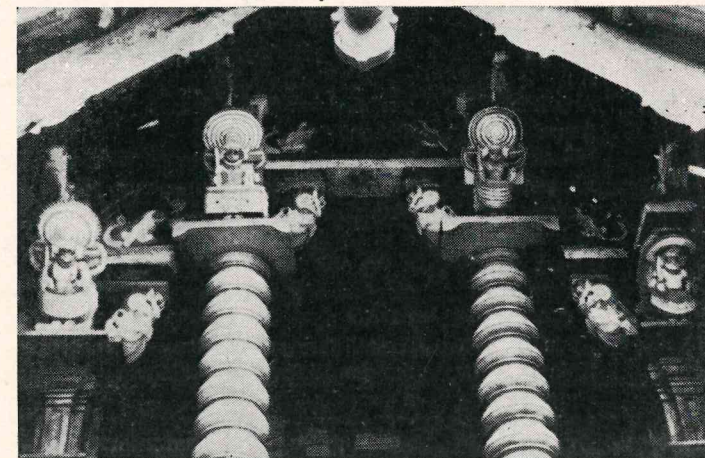
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INDO-GERMAN CULTURAL CENTRE
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to contribute to
the appreciation of Indian folklore

TEXTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS:
Dr. Valentina Stache-Rosen

Kannapuram
bei Cannanore
(Meechiluttu
Tempel)

*Gable of a Malabar
Teyyam shrine.*



On the West coast of South India, villagers worship a large number of spirits. They have corners for them in their houses and small shrines in the village. They make daily offerings to these spirits and once a year a festival lasting for one night or several nights will be conducted. The spirits will be impersonated by certain people wearing gorgeous costumes, make-up or masks and high crowns or something like a halo. The whole village will participate in these festivals. The areas where these festivals take place are in South Kanara, where Tulu and Kannada are spoken, and further South, in the Northern parts of Malabar, where Malayalam is spoken.

The impersonated spirits are called Bhuta or Daiva in South Kanara and Teyyam in North Malabar; they are the subject of this exhibition. The paintings have been done by Balan Panikkar, a teyyam artist from Morazhu, Cannanore district. He paints the faces of teyyams, and he has drawn the designs of some of these teyyams on paper. The photos have been taken at various festivals in South Kanara and North Malabar, they have been enlarged by Quelle Photo, Munich, and by Messrs. Gulrajani Photographics, Bangalore. Mr. M. Pushpajan of Pappinisseri, Cannanore District, has collected most of the stories of teyyams represented in this exhibition.

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Valentina Stache

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Glossary

Alpana	a design of coloured powder on the floor (Rangoli)
Ani	an arch-like halo, worn by Bhuta impersonators
Anjuttan	a subdivision of the Panans
Asura	demon
Billava	Tulu speaking toddy tappers of South Kanara
Bhutasthana	small shrine for a Bhuta
Cakra	disc, wheel
Daivasthana	a small shrine for a Daiva, a superior kind of spirit in South Kanara
Homa	a fire oblation, a sacrifice
Kalam	a square of split bamboo or plantain stems with compartments for offerings.
Kavu	a small shrine for spirits, a sacred grove
Kola	the annual festival of a Bhuta
Kurava	a nomadic tribe
Malayan	"hillmen", exorcists
Manya	temple oracle in Tulunadu
Mogaveera	(Moger) Tulu speaking fishermen of South Kanara
Mundala	a subdivision of the Holeyas, field labourers
Muti	an arch-like halo worn by Teyyam impersonators
Naga	snake, serpent, serpent spirit
Nagamandala	a design of serpents made of coloured powder
Nalke	a caste of mat, basket and umbrella makers who furnish Bhuta impersonators
Paddana	an invocatory hymn to a Bhuta or Daiva in Tulu
Panan	a caste of umbrella makers and exorcists
Parava	a caste of fishermen in Kerala
Patri	a temple oracle in South Kanara
Peru Vannan	a subdivision of the Vannan, washermen
Pombada	agriculturists, impersonators of a higher order of Bhtas
Tampuran	ruler
Thiyya	toddy tappers in Kerala
Tottam	an invocatory hymn to a Teyyam in North Malabar
Vannan	a caste of washermen in Kerala
Velachappad	temple oracle in Kerala
Velan	a caste of exorcists and Teyyam impersonators
Velattan	preliminary ceremony for male deities

Other terms are explained or translated in the text. Writing of Malayalam, Tulu, and Kannada words follows the usage of English-writing Indian authors without regard to the international transcription rules.

SPIRIT WORSHIP AND RITUAL DANCES IN SOUTH KANARA AND NORTH MALABAR

The worship of awe inspiring supernatural beings is in all probability a very ancient custom. One may well imagine prehistoric man propitiating spirits of beings he feared — the forces of nature and the wild animals he encountered while hunting. No traces of such worship have come down to us. Prehistoric man's belief in a life after death, however, is attested by vessels and arms buried together with the deceased. Ancestor worship is common to many countries, and spirit worship is prevalent in many parts of India.

It is not known when the cult of Bhtas and Teyyams started in South Kanara and North Malabar; its roots may go back to prehistoric times. In the oldest Tamil literature of the Sangam period mention is made of hero worship. Warriors who lost their lives on the battle field were praised in songs and hero stones were set up in their memory.¹ According to the ancient Tamil poets the priest at that period wore a red cloth and a high headdress, a feature that may be observed in Teyyam impersonators today. The Teyyam cult is considered to be a synthesis of the ancient cult of the war god Murugan, the worship of heroes, and primitive folk dances.²

In the Tamil epic Silappadikaram we hear of a priestess of Kali, who was attired like the goddess and who, in a state of trance declared that the goddess was angry because no sacrifice had been offered to her for some time. The heroine of the epic, Kannaki, was herself venerated as a goddess after her death, first by tribal people, the Kuravas. She was propitiated by bloody sacrifices. Later, when the Chera king Senguttavan Perumal came to know of this cult, he is said to have built a temple in her honour.³

Two elements of present day spirit worship are found in this Tamil epic. The first is the fact that a human being impersonates a deity and becomes possessed. The second concerns Kannaki, who died under unusual circumstances and was venerated as a deity. The Kannaki cult was later merged with that of Bhagavati⁴. The Silappadikaram is generally ascribed to the 2nd cent. A.D.; S. Vaiyaapuri Pillai



The Bhuta Panjurli
Indian Mythology

The Teyyam Panjurli



Vayabile

in his "History of Tamil Literature" takes it to belong to the 10th cent.⁵ Inscriptions of South Kanara of the 16th cent. mention Bobariya, one of the chief Bhutas of Tulunad.⁶ In later inscriptions, other Bhutas are referred to. The cult of spirits, called Bhutas and Daivas in South Kanara and Teyyams in North Malabar, varies from district to district, yet there are several features common to all of them. These spirits appear to be of different origin. Some seem to be totemistic as for instance Panjurli, the pig spirit worshipped in South Kanara. The tiger and the buffalo spirit as well as various serpent deities belong to this category.⁷ Other Bhutas are tutelary deities of particular areas, such as Ullaldi, the Daiva of Ullala, or Malaraya, the Bhuta of the Ghats in South Kanara, or the various Bhagavatis of certain places in Kerala. Among the female spirits, many are connected with illnesses or childbirth. Puthiya Bhagavati, Karuval Bhagavati, and Vasurimala are disease mothers of small pox.⁸ Several Teyyams are worshipped in the Malayan Kettu ceremony to protect pregnant women. Women in South Kanara pray to Manibale or Maidalti for safe delivery and the welfare of children. The majority of these supernatural beings are so called heroic godlings, deified human beings who generally died of a violent death, either on the battlefield, who were murdered, executed, or who committed suicide. Koti and Channaya are two heroes of the Tulu people. They were brothers, one of whom died on the battlefield, the other followed him to death by committing suicide.⁹ Tacholi Othenan was a Nayar hero who lived in the 16th cent.¹⁰ Some of the names of Bhutas in South Kanara correspond to the masculine and feminine forms of addressing persons belonging to certain castes such as Bante, Korage, Korati, Nalkaitaye, Hasligamma, and others.¹¹ Some of the Bhutas are related to each other as husband and wife or brother and sister, others are independent. In South Kanara, Koti and Channaya are twins, Bobbarya and Ummalti are husband and wife. In Kerala, Makkan, a woman who was murdered by her brothers is worshipped together with her children, who were also killed by their uncles.



Yakshi
TG 10

Among the deified heroes, some are of recent origin like Murikkancheru Kelu Nayar, who fought against Tipu Sultan in the 18th cent.¹² On the other hand, some of the spirits seem to be of great antiquity. Yaksha and Yakshi are worshipped as spirits. Yakshas were the godlings of rural communities in ancient India. A prayer from deliverance of calamities in the Atharvaveda is addressed to the sky, the asterisms, mountains and Yakshas. In Jainism, Yakshas were among the attendants of the 24 Tirthankaras, and they have been depicted on the Stupas of Bharhut (2nd cent. B.C.) and Sanchi (1st cent. B.C.). Their altars were under trees, and Yakshas were associated with fertility.¹³ Kalaratri, a Bhuta of South Kanara is found in the Mahabharata, where she is described as coal black in colour, with swollen mouth and eyes, wearing red garlands and clothing. She was considered as the deity presiding over the night of death, dragging away the soul of deceased persons with a cord in her hand.¹⁴ Some of the Bhutas and Teyyams have been associated with Brahmanical deities. Berme in Tulunad is considered to be the chief Bhuta, he is said to be the same as Brahma.¹⁶ Karimkuttichatan, a dark demon who is believed to strangle the necks of people is said to be Baby Krishna; Ucchit, a spirit of Kerala is identified with Krishna's sister. Most of the Bhutas and Teyyams are however associated either with Shiva or Kali. It seems that indigenous demons and godlings were aryanised in this way. Not all Bhutas are of indigenous origin. A legend about Panjurli of Basrur, a port town of South Kanara, says that she was made fun of by some Bhutas from China. She was annoyed and took five of the foreigners prisoner and locked them up in her shrine where they are now worshipped as her attendants. Haiguli Bhuta of Marankatte in Coondapur Taluk also captured a Chini Bhuta.¹⁶ Ali Bhuta in South Kanara and Ali Chamundi in Kerala are Muslims propitiated by the Hindu population as spirits. In the Special Study Report on the Bhuta Cult in South Kanara District of the Census of India 1971, some 340 names of Bhutas are listed, and it is said that this list does not purport to be exhaustive.¹⁷ Some 200 odd names of Teyyams

"After the earth had been created, Lord Shiva sat on his throne on Mount Kailasa, surrounded by Ganas and Bhutas who begged for food, Shiva commanded: 'Go to earth and trouble the sinners and obtain your food from them, but do not trouble those that believe in me. In the world, I have created sooth sayers, astrologers and those that prepare charms. Through them men will come to know that you do it, and then they will give you food.' When the Bhutas were thus dismissed, Mahakali, Virabhadra and mischievous Mari rose and with reddened eyes addressed Shiva: 'Show us, too, a way.' They were directed to Bhuta Dhumavati on earth in Mudabidri in the Tululand."

have been collected in Kerala; there may be many more. Some of the Bhutas and Teyyams are of purely local importance, others are of regional or district wise importance. Those that correspond to Hindu gods and goddesses are more wide spread.

A legend about the origin of Bhutas is an attempt to integrate the pre-existing concept of Bhutas into the fold of Hindu gods and to subordinate them to Shiva, one of whose names is Bhutanatha, Lord of Bhutas.¹⁸

The legends of the Bhutas and Teyyams have been handed down orally from generation to generation in invocatory hymns. These were not committed to writing and were sung only during the annual festival. These invocatory hymns are called paddana in Tulu, tottam in the Malayalam speaking areas. It has been observed that the tottams of the more ancient Teyyams use aschaic, obsolete Malayalam words, whereas those praising heroes of more recent times use modern words.¹⁹ Since these rongs were handed down orally and were seldom sung, they vary from region to region. The paddana or tottam of the same spirit may show variations from village to village. Invocations and narrative passages alternate in these hymns, and some of them resemble popular ballads²⁰. These invocatory hymns contain references to local events, social customs and practises and legends associated with places. They do not form a common heritage shared equally by all. However, the legends or tales they narrate are widely known, especially among the elderly rural people.²¹

Bhuta worshippers in South Kanara have a niche in the walls of their huts for the family Bhuta. A plank on a wooden leg or a small stone may also represent a Bhuta. If one or more Bhutas are given accomodation in a household that particular area is called Bhuta Kotya. Families of aristocratic or noble lineage have a seperate structure in their courtyard or near by for the family spirits.

The shrines dedicated to Bhutas or Daivas are called Bhuta- or Daivasthanas. In Kerala the Teyyam shrines are known as Kavus. In the Northern parts of South Kanara one may find wooden idols in the Bhutasthanas. Bhutas and Teyyams may be represented by swords, spears or arrows

Teyyam Shrine



Palattu Kavu
- Dia PL 2 -
Seitruvakkal



Two Bhuta figures
from Mekekattii

Negative



by metallic idols in animal or human form, or by cots. The plan of the shrines is usually rectangular and the roof slopes steeply on all sides. Very often two pillars at the entrance form a sort of portico. In Kerala, the gables are sometimes more ornamental with the figure of a mask (Kirtimukha) or small representations of Teyyams carved on them. The temples of the popular Bhutas may be of considerable size.

A Bhutasthanas of a particular type is found in Mekekattu in Udupi Taluk.²² There were about 150 wooden idols of various Bhutas in the Nandikeshvara shrine. Some of these were shown as humans, others as human beings with animal heads or as animals, either with one or with several heads. These wooden figures have a strange appeal.

Quite often, the Bhuta's paraphernalia, the crowns, ornaments and weapons are kept in a special treasure house. Some Bhutas of importance may have palanquins or wooden carts, or wooden animals with wheels. The impersonators may be pulled about in the carts or ride on the carved wooden animals. At Bennekudru, Udupi Taluk, the Bhutas go on a raft on the river during the annual festival.

The Bhutasthanas and Kavus are generally found at a distance from the villages. Generally, a pipal or banyan tree is found near the shrine with one or several snake stones underneath. There is a definite link between serpent worship and the cult of Bhutas and Teyyams. Serpents are often propitiated along with the spirits. Carvings of serpents are found on most of the shrines, and most of the Bhutas and Teyyams have serpents on their costumes or on their crowns.

The daily worship at home or in most of the shrines consists of offering water in a goblet. Oil lamps may be lit and incense and flowers may be placed before the idol or the symbol of the spirit. Prayers are muttered with folded hands and end by the person bowing or prostrating himself before the shrine. In the bigger temples, worship is conducted in a more elaborate manner. Sankramana days, when the sun moves from one constellation to another are important days for Bhuta worship.

In addition to the ordinary worship there are periodical festivals known under different names. Kola is a name of



Dikshiti - Dia 437 -
Temple officials
Make-up of Vishnumurti



"Vishnumurti" - Dia -
TP 5



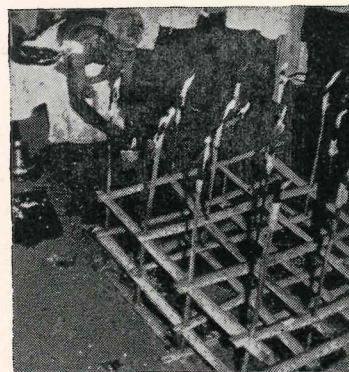
TG 6

these festivals commonly used in South Kanara, Teyyattam and Kaliyattam or Thirayattam (attam=dance) in regions of North Malabar. These festivals generally last several days and nights and are prepared well in advance. When the date is not fixed, it will be decided upon by an astrologer. The village households will contribute towards the expenses according to their means. The organisers will appoint people to impersonate the spirits. These people will have to undergo a period of fasting from 7 upto 41 days. The impersonators belong to the Malayan, Velan, and Vannan caste in Malabar and to the Pombada, Paravar, and Nalke caste in South Kanara, where the priests are either Billavas (toddy tappers), Mundalas, or Mogaveeras (fishermen). The Naga and Naga Brahma shrines and those of Durga have Brahmin priests.

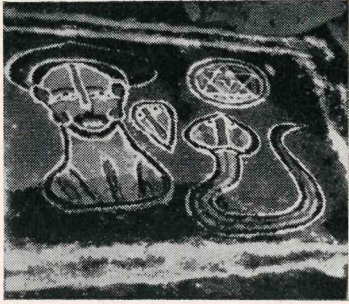
In addition to the priest, there are one or more people who act as oracles. They are known as Patri in the Kannada speaking area, as Manya in Tulunad, and as Velachappad in Malabar. The office of priest or impersonator usually runs in particular families from generation to generation, though the hereditary principle is not followed strictly. The invocatory songs — paddana or tottam — will be sung in front of the shrine to the accompaniment of drums. The oracles, in a state of trance, will be approached by the devotees. They tell the oracles about their problems, about stolen or lost property, illnesses, law suits, or personal worries, and the oracles will suggest remedies and receive offerings.

The persons who impersonate the spirits will get ready in a small green room or in a corner of the courtyard of the shrine. Red is the dominating colour of their costumes, next come black and white. They wear either tiered and gathered red skirts, or dhoties, or palm leaf skirts. They have heavy anklets on their legs and many of them have a large halo-like arch fixed to their back. This arch is called ani in Tulu and muthi in Malayalam. It is made of coconut splice or bamboo and decorated in many ways with red cloth, silver ornaments, or flowers. In some instances Bhutas or Teyyams wear masks. Ullaldi of Kannanduru has a mask of pure gold with a long tongue protruding. Gulligan has a painted wooden mask. Quite often, the Bhutas' or Teyyams' faces are painted. Charcoal is ground

for black, turmeric is used for yellow and turmeric mixed with lime is used for red colour. The powders are mixed with oil and applied to the face with a small stick either by the impersonator himself, or more often by an assistant. Two of the facial designs from Kerala are shown in this exhibition. One is the design applied to the face of Vishnumurthi. Its name is Kozhipoovu Kodumpiriyavum. Kozhipoovu means "cock's comb" and Kodumpiriyavum means "sharply curved eyebrow." Raktachamundi's make-up is called Shangum Valum (conch and sword). In both cases black designs are painted on an orange background that is first applied to the face. When the Bhuta or Teyyam is ready, fully dressed wearing all the ornaments and the high crown, he looks a beautiful creature, inspiring awe and admiration. The Bhutas and Teyyams often carry a sword and shield, and in some cases their costume is adorned with burning torches. The impersonator will go to the temple, where he will be blessed by the priest. Offerings of blood might be made, and the blood may be sprinkled onto the kalam, a square made out of plantain stems consisting of four, nine or more compartments. The making of a "kalam" was a ritual already in the Sangam period, and the commentaries tell us that it was made of cane splices with 64 equal compartments, and sacrificial offerings were spread over them.²³ The spirits in the higher order of their hierarchy are satisfied with rice coconuts and flowers as offerings. The Bhuta or Teyyam will walk around the temple courtyard giving his blessings and receiving cash and other offerings. While impersonating a spirit and being possessed by this spirit a man from the lower castes will be venerated by members of the upper castes who formerly would not let him come near them in everyday life. The above description gives only the barest outline of the rituals connected with spirit worship, a few of the features that are common to most festivals. There are many elements of worship particular to one region or to one individual shrine. A life time of research would probably not suffice to study all of the rituals. A few only can be mentioned here. In Karnataka a ritual called Dakke Bali is often conducted during a festival in honour of Berme (Brahma).



A kalam
Vayalile Kotam
-Dia -
Vy 42



Serpent design

Hiriyadke
- Dia HIR M -

A picture of Brahma's head together with a cobra and a cakra (wheel) are made on the ground with coloured powder. Songs to propitiate the serpents will be sung and the priest will dance around the picture on the ground. The powder will later be swept up and distributed among the devotees as prasadam (gift from the temple) when the ceremony is over.²⁴ A similar ceremony is known in Kerala too. In this ritual a nagamandala, a serpent design, is drawn on the ground. Intricate designs of serpents are shown with coloured powder resembling an alpana or rangoli. Serpents are invoked in songs accompanied by drums and cymbals. A performer will get into a trance and start dancing in slow and measured steps first, with a very lively rhythm later on. He will dance around the Nagamandala and start destroying the pattern on the floor from outside to inside till nothing is left but a heap of coloured powder mixed with dust. There are many variations of this ritual, which appears to be a very ancient one. It has been explained according to Hindu mythology as Krishna destroying the serpent Kaliya. In Karnataka, buffalo races are often held at the time of a Bhuta's kola. Cockfights are arranged mainly in the Tulu speaking areas.²⁵ These cock fights are a kind of blood offering to the spirits.

Nagamandala and dancer



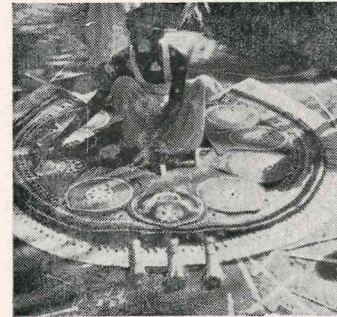
Siri, grandmother of Abbage and Dharake, two Bhtas of Hiriadka, Udupi Taluk, and of Kavatharu, Mangalore Taluk in South Kanara, induces a state of mass trance among women votaries during the annual festival. As many as 300 ladies may be seen, holding areca flowers in their hands and swaying backwards and forwards in a trance. Hook swinging is another form of offering blood to the spirits. In former times, an iron hook was fastened into the backs of people, who were then hoisted up and swung around on a pole. A swing is substituted nowadays at some places, e.g., at Barkur, Udupi Taluk.²⁶ Ucchabali, a ritual performed by the Malayans in Kerala, symbolizes the human sacrifice that must have been performed in days gone by. Such sacrifices are occasionally referred to in the invocatory hymns. One arm of the performer is tied tightly above and below the elbow and a nail is then stuck into the vein so that the blood comes



Fire jumping

Payangadi :
Thee Chamundi
- Dia Pg 37 -

Preparing a muthi



Vayalike Kodan
- Dia -
Vy 68

gushing forth. The person then lies down and is covered with a white cloth as if he were a corpse.²⁷

One item common to both South Kanara and North Malabar is fire walking or fire jumping.²⁸ The trees cut in order to obtain firewood are carefully selected and cut according to prescribed rituals. A fire is lit in the evening, and in the early morning hours the priests will run through a pit or a small heap of glowing cinders. In some cases, devotees who have made a vow to do so will also run through the fire. In Kerala, Thee Chamundi will throw herself into a heap of glowing cinders that may be a meter or so high. Thee Chamundi and Vishnumurthi, the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu, have the same costume and make-up. The upper portion of the costume is like a coat of mail made from coconut leaves. It leaves only the head of the performer sticking out. A rope will be tied round the waist of the performer of Thee Chamundi and he will throw himself into the heap of glowing embers. Two men will drag him out by means of the rope. The performer gets to his feet and repeats this several times. Later, his palm leaf coat of mail will be taken off and he will throw himself into the embers with bare torso from the waist upwards. After doing this several times, he will look exhausted and worn out, but not a burn or blister will be on his body.

The cult of Bhtas and Teyyams plays an important role in village life on the West coast. Bhuta worship at family level is a unifying force which strengthens kinship bonds. At village level functionaries of each caste have certain duties to perform at these festivals. Many of the personal and village problems are solved by invoking divine guidance of the spirits to be propitiated. It is to be hoped that these colourful festivals will continue to be performed in future.

Notes

- 1 K.K.N. Kurup, The Cult of Teyyam and Hero Worship in Kerala, Calcutta 1973, p. 18.
- 2 *ibid*, p. 30.
- 3 K.K.N. Kurup, Kannaki Tradition in Folklore of Kerala; in Aspects of Kerala History and Culture, Trivandrum 1977, p. 21 ff.
- 4 *ibid*, p. 24.
- 5 K.N. Subramanyam, The Anklet Story, Delhi 1977, p. VII
- 6 South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. IX, pt. II, No. 620; Vol. VII, No. 366.
- 7 P. Gururaja Bhat, Studies in Tuluva History and Culture, Manipal 1975, p. 360.
- 8 K.K.N. Kurup, The Cult of Smallpox Goddesses in Kerala; in Religion and Society, VI, 1977.
- 9 A.E. Burnell, The Devil Worship of the Tuluvas; in Indian Antiquary XXIV, 1894, p. 29 ff.
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- 12 K.K.N. Kurup, The Cult of Teyyam . . . p. 53 ff.
- 13 A.K. Coomaraswamy, Yaksas, Washington 1971.
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- 15 P. Gururaja Bhat, Studies . . . p. 355.
- 16 Census of India 1971 . . . p. 38 49, 63.
- 17 Census of India 1971 . . . p. 24 ff.
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- 20 H.J. Klimkeit, Die Teufelstaenze von Suedindien; in Anthropos 71/1976, 3/4, p. 570.
- 21 Census of India 1971 . . . , p. 143.
- 22 P. Gururaja Bhat, Studies . . . p. 364.
- 23 K.K.N. Kurup, The Cult of Teyyam . . . , p. 27.
- 24 Information due to Dr. Martha Ashton, Berkeley, California.
- 25 E. Thurston, Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Vol. I, New Delhi 1975, p. 156.
- 26 Census of India 1971 . . . , p. 94. On Hook-Swinging in general see E. Thurston, Ethnographic Notes in Southern India, Delhi 1975, pt. II, pp. 487-501.
- 27 M.V. Vishnunarayanan Nambudiri, Some Differences in the Rituals of Teyyam and their Relevance, paper read at the Teyyam Seminar in Cherukunnu, Cannanore District, in 1977, translated by M. Pushpajan.
- 28 E. Thurston, Ethnographic Notes . . . pt. II, p. 471—486 describes several fire-walking ceremonies in South India.
- 29 Quoted from V. William, Devil Dances . . . , p. 9.

CATALOGUE

- 1 **Manikantan, the Red Bhuta**
- 2 **Ayyappa, the White Bhuta**
- 3 **Shasta, the Black Bhuta**
- 4 **Shasta and Manikantan**

Performed by Peru Vannans; Valia Mathilakam Temple, Pattuvam near Taliparamba, Cannanore District



The Red, the White and the Black Bhuta appear together. The Red Bhuta is Manikantan, Ayyappa as a boy, the White Bhuta is Ayyappa as an adult, and the Black one is Shasta, *i.e.*, Ayyappa as an old man. These three Bhtas therefore represent three stages in the life of Ayyappa. Ayyappa is a deity greatly venerated in Kerala. Once a year, in December, a pilgrimage is undertaken to his shrine at Sabarimalai. Ayyappa is the son of Shiva and Vishnu, who took the form of a beautiful lady, Mohini, and seduced Shiva. The son born to them is known as Shasta or Ayyappa.

5

- 5 **Manjali**

Performed by Peru Vannans; Pallindam Valia Mathilakam Temple, Pattuvam near Taliparamba, Cannanore District



According to the legend of the Teyyam, the seven mother goddesses were unable to kill the demon Daruka. Manjali, who is identified with Mahakali, appeared from the third eye of Shiva and killed the demon. This Teyyam's function is to purify peoples' minds and to destroy evil thoughts.

"Portraits" - Dec - TP2

6 Raktachamundi being made up

7 Raktachamundi

8 Raktachamundi blesses devotees

Performed by Malayans; Pallindam Valia Mathilakam Temple, Pattuvam near Taliparamba, Cannanore District

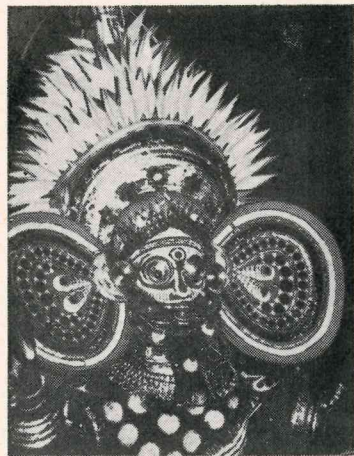


Di. TP 4

The term Rakta (blood) denotes that this is one of the ferocious deities. She killed several demons, among them Chanda and Munda. According to the tottam song she was born from the third eye of Shiva to fight the demon Daruka. A tradition in Pattuvam says that Raktachamundi fought the demon Raktabijasura. He had been granted the boon that drops of his blood falling on the ground would turn into demons. Raktachamundi was able to overcome him inspite of this.

9 Kuttichatan

Performed by Panans in many temples in Calicut District



~ Kuttichatan ~
- Di. -
KV 1

According to the legend, the story of this Teyyam is as follows: A Nambudiri, Kalayadar of the Kalat house had a son, Shankarnarayana, born to him after his eighth marriage. When the boy grew up, his father arranged for his marriage with the daughter of Poonjanavur. The girl's father gave some cattle and a servant girl to the boy's father, after the latter had objected that the dowry agreed upon was not paid in full. When no child was born to Shankarnarayana, his father performed a homa (sacrifice) for forty days. On the 41st day, consecrated food was given to Shankarnarayana's wife and the servant girl. The servant girl became pregnant and gave birth to Kuttichatan. The baby had matted hair, long hands, red eyes, a long beard like the hanging roots of a banyan tree and spots all over his body. Kuttichatan beat his father's wife and killed his classmates. Kuttichatan was given some bulls to look after, he killed one of them and drank its blood. Kuttichatan was punished and later set fire to the house of Kalakatta. He also killed one Kaniyan Kunhan for showing disrespect to him. Kuttichatan was finally killed and cut to pieces. These pieces were buried, but on coming home from the burial ground,

people found four hundred Kuttichatans. In order to appease Kuttichatan, he was installed in a temple and a forty-one days puja was performed to propitiate him. Part of a tottam recorded at Andalur runs as follows:

"Oh, God of Kalakatta,
Thou hast returned to thy house in Kalakatta,
Thou art the father,
Thou art the father of the house of Kalakatta,
Thou art glorious in thy new home.
Oh, thou hast outgrown hair and clusters around thy head,
Sacred fire is placed in thy basket.
Thou hast a fine caste-mark on thy forehead.
Thou hast bulls of seven villages.
Oh, God, thou hast bulls of seven villages,
He looked up to that high hill
And grazed the bulls there.
He looked down to the pool below,
From there took his bath.
Thus grazed he the bulls till noon.
Oh, when it was past noon thou didst feel very thirsty.
And the God cut the throat
Of one of the biggest bulls with red horns.
Thus has the God quenched his thirst."

10

10 Vasurimala

Performed by Panans in Panankandyvedu, Balusseri, Calicut District



~ Vasurimala ~
- Di. -

Vasurimala is a smallpox goddess. The legend concerning her origin is: When Chamundi or Kali was fighting the demon Daruka (cf. No. 6-8, 19, 43), his wife Manodari approached Shiva for help. He gave her a few drops of sweat from his body saying that the person she sprinkled them on would suffer from smallpox. They would worship Manodari and make offerings to her. Manodari returned home and met the victorious Kali who had just killed her husband. In order to take revenge, Manodari threw the drops of sweat on Kali, who thereupon developed pockmarks all over her body. Shiva then created a demon, Ghantakarna, from his ear. He licked the pockmarks from the goddess's body. Ghantakarna later killed Manodari, who is worshipped as Vasurimala (vasura = smallpox), the deity who causes and prevents smallpox.

- 11 Chamundi being got ready for the performance
- 12 Kuratti and Chamundi
- 13 Palotdaivam
- 14 Palotdaivam and Ankateyyam

Palottu Kavu, Pappinisseri, Cannanore District

For the story of Chamundi compare No. 6-8.

Kuratti is impersonated by people of the Velan caste. In one tottam song, Kuratti is said to be the daughter of Parvati. She is the goddess of an agricultural community, her main duty is to safe-guard betel cultivation.

One legend relates that Kuratti migrated from the Malnad region. She requested the chieftain of Aliyerunadu to give her some milk, which he refused to do. Thereupon his cows were turned into rocks and the cowsheds were turned into bamboo groves full of snakes. The astrologer was questioned and he revealed the cause of this misfortune. Kuratti was propitiated and worshipped, and the cows returned to their sheds.

According to a legend of Pappinisseri, Shiva and Parvati changed themselves into members of the Kurava tribe and became Kuravan and Kuratti. The Kurava tribe is known for fortune telling. Shiva and Parvati went from house to house to see how people lived. This legend shows a tribal goddess, Kuratti, being identified with Parvati. After the performance in the temple, Kuratti goes from house to house in order to collect offerings.

Palotdaivam represents Matsya Avatar, the fish incarnation of Vishnu. The shape of his crown resembles the tail of a fish. Ankateyyam is identified with Shiva.

The legend regarding these Teyyams is as follows: One day, shortly before the pralaya, the day the earth is to be submerged in water, Brahma was sleeping. He kept the Vedas in his mouth, but let them slip out through inadvertence. An Asura (demon) by name of Hayagriva noticed this and took the Vedas with him to the bottom of the sea. Vishnu made plans to save the Vedas. He changed himself into a small fish and let himself be scooped up by a saint, Satyavrata,



13

18

Palottu

-Dica-
Pl 29 (Seiten vertecht?)

who was doing penance on the banks of a river. The fish asked the saint to take him home. The fish grew very quickly and had to be transferred to bigger and bigger vessels till he finally was put into the sea. On the day of pralaya, Vishnu dived down into the ocean, killed Hayagriva and retrieved the Vedas, which were entrusted to Satyavrata. Palotdaivam goes round the temple three times. This symbolises Vishnu's search for Hayagriva. He then climbs onto a platform in the temple precincts, which represents Shiva's abode Kailasa. Ankateyyam is identified with Shiva, who rushes out to see who has dared to enter his territory. On seeing Vishnu, he showers flowers onto him.

- 15 Drummer accompanying the tottam singing
 - 16 Tottam singers accompanied by drums
 - 17 Tottam of Chamundi
 - 18 Tottam of Chamundi under a tree
 - 19 Chamundi
 - 20 Thottungara Bhagavati
 - 21 Virakali
 - 22 Puthiya Bhagavati
- Vayalile Kotam, Pappinisseri, Cannanore District*

19



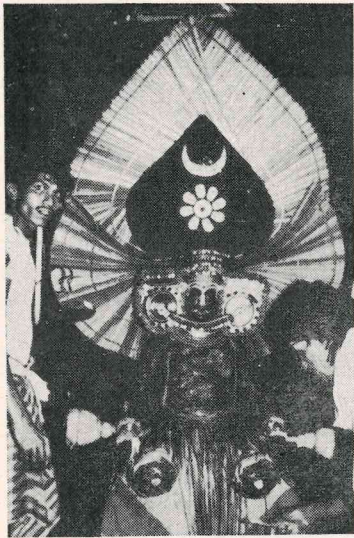
Vayalile Kotam
-Dica-
Vy 97

The tottam singer (15) wears the typical red headdress ornamented with silver. He plays on a drum, the chenda, which is used also in Kathakali dances. It is made of wood and is almost cylindrical in shape. It is suspended from the shoulder of the player, and only the upper face is beaten with a stick. A large brass oil lamp stands between the two drummers (16). The man on the right has placed his drum, a small chenda, on a fourlegged stool of a type that is common to all kavus. The man on the left plays another kind of drum, a maddala.

For the story of Chamundi see No. 6-8.

Before a teyyam performer is fully dressed, the deity will appear in a costume less elaborate. No. 18 shows the tottam of Chamundi under a tree, in which the idol of Panchurli has been set up. No. 19 shows the Teyyam of Chamundi with a black chicken, whose head it is about to bite off.

19



Vayalile Kobam
- Dia -
Vy 13

Thottungara Bhagavati represents a Thiyya woman said to have lived in Chirakkal. She had twelve children, all of whom died immediately after their birth. Overcome with grief, the Thiyya woman found solace in singing verses from the Bhagavata Purana. Her singing caused the rocks to burst into tears, but the Tampuran of Chirakkal charged her with being heartless and that she, a low caste woman, dared to sing verses from the Bhagavata Purana. To show the extent of her grief, the woman put some grains on her chest — and they got burned. The Tampuran punished the Thiyya woman by placing a pot with fire onto her head and making her run till she dropped down dead. She fell on the banks of a river (Thottu), hence her name Thottungara Bhagavati. This Teyyam has four torches applied to its body, which are said to represent the pot of fire the Thiyya woman was made to carry.

Puthiya Bhagavati, Virakali and Bhadrakali: The goddess Sri Kurumba inflicted smallpox on gods and men. Shiva was approached for a remedy. He performed a forty days homa, at the end of which a shining goddess appeared. She saved the gods and then descended to earth at Villapuram. The goddess engaged a demon, Kartikasura, in a fight, in the course of which her attendants were killed. In the end, however, the goddess was victorious, and the demon's head was cut off. The goddess then went to Mathoth Nallambalam Temple at Kottikulam, where Virakali was being worshipped. In order to convince Virakali of her divinity, the goddess changed midday into night. Virakali made her sit on her right side and named her Puthiya Bhagavati, the New Bhagavati. Puthiya Bhagavati later killed a brahmin in a tank (see Padarkulangara Viran, No. 50). The water in the tank turned red and there were many calamities in the neighbourhood. Shiva then sent Bhadrakali to set matters right.

In this legend one may observe the process of a probably ancient goddess thought to cure smallpox being accepted into the fold of the Hindu Pantheon as the "New Goddess." The four torches on the Teyyam of Puthiya Bhagavati symbolise her birth from the fire of her father's sacrifice. Bhadrakali is not performed by another artist; after the



Vayalile Kobam
- Dia -
Vy 30

27



- Dia Kan 72 -

torches have been removed, Puthiya Bhagavati becomes Bhadrakali.

23 Temple officials

24 Palanquin with the golden mask of Ullaldi

25 The palanquin being carried down the steps of the temple

26 Todakukinar Vaidyanathasvami

27 Ullaldi

28 Ullaldi being taken around the temple

Kannanduru, South Kanara, 18 miles South of Mangalore

The temple officials seen on No. 23 are regarded as the personification of the spirits concerned. In a state of trance, they are approached by the devotees, whom they give advice and guidance.

At Kannanduru one man impersonates both Todakukinar Vaidyanathasvami and Ullaldi. He wears the same high headdress for the male spirit at night, and for the female (Ullaldi) in the morning. However, for Ullaldi this is decorated with garlands of flowers which completely cover the silver ornaments attached to the headdress.

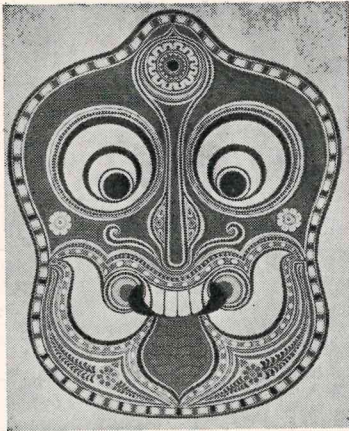
Todakukinar and Ullaldi: King Dharma was born in a palace called Kanchikadanga. When he grew up, he decided to visit the Tulu country. After shaving, bathing and getting dressed, he set out on his journey. A cattle dealer was travelling the same way with a herd of four thousand oxen. By his magic power, King Dharma took one of these oxen called Channamangala Chaluvaraya. King Dharma passed the temple of Subramanya and broke the shields the god had placed around his temple in order to protect himself. King Dharma took part in a temple festival and then marched on. The paddana describes the places he visited. The trader with his oxen stopped near a well. The Poyyedar of Kannanduru came there to buy an ox. He choose the one King Dharma was riding on, and took it home. The ox disappeared, and one of the Poyyedar's men became possessed by King Dharmaraja. He said he would return the ox on condition that a shrine would be built for him. This having been done, the ox appeared again, and the

Poyedar called the Bhuta Todakukinar, because the servant had become possessed near a watercourse (toda). Once Todakukinar wanted to bathe in the ocean and Ullaldi accompanied him. A palanquin was brought for her. They travelled to Ullal with their retinue and bathed in the sea. Ullaldi's palanquin was later set down at Uliya, and she wished to have a shrine built for her on that spot. Todakukinar had another one built for himself, as he said the people might scoff at Ullaldi if she stayed in the same shrine as he did. Ullaldi takes part in Todakukinar's festival, and Todakukinar in turn appears at Ullaldi's festival.

29 Tottam of Gulligan

30 Mask of Gulligan

Performed by Malaysans. Cf. No. 42



Gulligan is said to be a form of Kalan, a son of Shiva in his aspect as the destroyer of the universe. Kalan is identified with Yama, the god of death.

Gulligan is greatly feared, as he is believed to cause a number of illnesses like epilepsy and madness. A stone representing him is venerated in many houses. Small oil lamps are lit in front of these stones at night. In temple compounds, Gulligan's symbol will be found under a Campaka tree. Iron lamps fixed in the tree will be lit by devotees.

At the annual festival, Gulligan's tottam appears first without the elaborate headdress typical for the Teyyam of Gulligan. This headdress is about 7 m high, it is made of coconut leaves tied to a bamboo pole. In spite of the weight of the headdress, the Teyyam of Gulligan walks on stilts, jumps about and performs a number of feats.

31 Karuval Bhagavati

Performed by Malaysans

Karuval Bhagavati is a disease goddess who is believed to cause smallpox. If properly propitiated, she will prevent and cure the dreaded disease.

30

Da TG 13

32 Kuttiteyyam TG 11
Performed by Velans

33 Yakshi TG 10
Performed by Malaysans in the Malayankettu Ceremony

Malayankettu is a ceremony performed for pregnant women to assist in safe delivery. Several Teyyams take part in this ceremony. Two evil spirits, Kaura Kalakki (destroyer of embryos) and Pilla Thinni (child eater) are believed to cause abortions and to harm new born infants. This Yakshi and other spirits are propitiated to protect mother and child.

34 Make-up of Raktachamundi
Performed by Malaysans

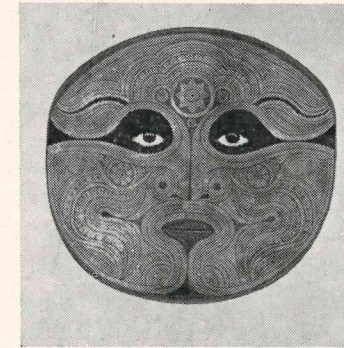
Cf. No. 6-8, 19, 43.

32



TG 11

34



35 Vedan Da TG 9
Performed by Malaysans

35



TG 16

Vedan is identified with Shiva, who took the form of a hunter (Kirata) in order to test Arjuna. This Teyyam is

performed during July and August in the houses of Malayans and Vanans. It is believed that invisible evil spirits causing poverty and disease enter the houses during the rainy season. As he comes to the houses, a mixture of charcoal and water is prepared and poured away while the Vedan chants some spells. In this way, all evil is believed to be cast out.

36 Velattan of Muthappan

Performed by Vanans and Anjuttans



Velattan is the introductory performance of male spirits in the evening without ceremonial make-up and dress. The painting of the face in this case is called Velattakuri. The performer's face is painted with yellow colour and a crescent is made on the forehead. The cheeks are marked with red spots. The chest is also painted and the performer wears a crown and a red cloth round the waist.

Muthappan is a very popular spirit and he has many shrines, the most famous one being at Parsinikadavu in Cannanore District, situated on a bend of the Valapattanam river.

Muthappan is the ancestral spirit of the Thiyya caste. There are many legends concerning his origin, all agree that he was a great hunter. According to one legend, he was found by one Thiyya woman while bathing. Another legend relates that he was born in a Brahmin family. The tottam song describes his hunter's exploits and says that he was very fond of meat, fish and toddy. He was excommunicated and left together with his brother Nambola. Once while stealing toddy, the owner of the tree, Chandan, lay in wait for Muthappan, who turned him into a stone by gazing at him. On the pleas of Chandan's wife Muthappan restored him to life. Lithographs sold to devotees at Parsinikadavu show Muthappan accompanied by his brother and his hunting dog in front of his shrine.

37 Vishnumurti or Thee Chamundi

Performed by Malayans

38 Kolipushpam or Kozhipoovu Kodumpiriyavum, a design applied to the face of Vishnumurti or Thee Chamundi (see ill. on p.10)

TG 6



37

TG 7

This Teyyam represents Narasimha, the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu. The performer wears a skirt made of coconut leaves and a kind of coat of mail made of the same material. His face is painted with a design called Kozhipoovu (cock's comb) Kodumpiriyavum (sharply curved eyebrows).

The legend of this Teyyam relates the story of the demon king Hiranyakashipu, who was an enemy of Vishnu, whereas his son Prahlada was an ardent devotee of that god. Hiranyakashipu had been granted the boon that neither man nor beast should kill him. Hiranyakashipu was angry because of his son's devotion to Vishnu and subjected him to all kinds of torture, from which he was saved by Vishnu. Finally Vishnu took the form of a man-lion, Narasimha, and killed Hiranyakashipu.

The same costume and make-up is worn by Thee Chamundi, who jumps into a heap of burning cinders (see p. 13). The performer will first wear his coat of mail made of young coconut leaves, later he will take it off. He throws himself barechested into the heap of cinders and is dragged out by two people who hold a rope attached to the performer's waist. Other people dance around the heap of cinders with burning torches in their hands. In some temples, Thee Chamundi has to jump into the fire 101 times. Apart from the annual festival, this ritual is performed at times of epidemics in order to ward off diseases.

39 Pottan, a Candala

40 Pullamarutan

Performed by Malayans in many temples of Malayans and Pulayans



39

TG 4

On the one hand, Pottan (idiot) is believed to be an evil spirit feared especially by women during pregnancy lest their children should be born as idiots. On the other hand, Pottan and Pullamarutan are supposed to be aspects of Shiva. One performer wearing different masks represents Pottan Teyyam and Pullamarutan. The legend relates that the great philosopher Shankaracharya was on his way to Benares. Shiva wanted to test him and so he and Parvati changed themselves into a Candala couple. Nandikesha and others accompanied them as their children. They met

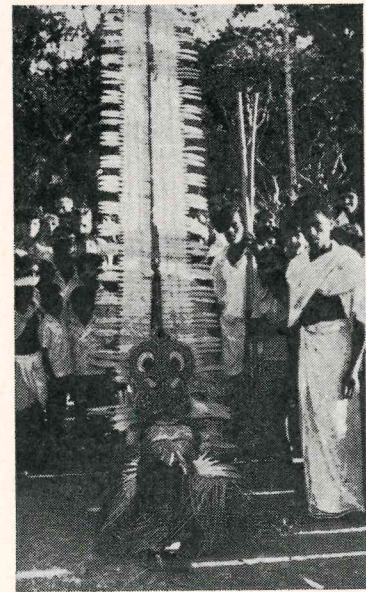
Shankaracharya on the road and he asked the untouchables to get out of his way. Pottan would not yield; he argued that basically there was no difference between Brahmins and outcastes. Shankara realised that the Candala was Shiva and worshipped him.

41 Valia Tamburatti

Adayanur Bhagavati Temple, Cannanore District



Adayanur
- Dia -
Ad 1



The tottam of this Teyyam, which represents a Brahmin lady, is sung for three days and nights. It is known under the title Pattanum Pattathiyum (Pattan = Brahmin, pattathi = Brahmin's wife). It relates the life of one Samudra Narayana Iyer and his two wives. It is full of obsolete Malayalam words. The gist of this lengthy song is: Samudra Narayana Iyer lived a happy life with his wife at Kallakattilam. He built a ship and set out to trade with foreign countries, although his wife was pregnant and asked him not to go. The tottam describes the preparations for the voyage, the places he visited and the goods he traded with. Finally he came to Thiruvallathur. He decided to stay there and took up lodgings with a Brahmin widow, who had been tricked into accepting him as a sort of paying guest. Samudra Narayana Iyer and the Brahmin widow fell in love with each other. A beautiful girl was born to them. She grew up and showed signs of divine power. Being afraid that her father would leave her one day, she requested two Muslim rowers of her father's crew to build her a small hut on her father's ship. Finding her father gone one day, she went to the seashore and invoked the help of the goddess Ganga. The girl was able to walk across the sea and reached her father's ship. The ship started to whirl around and Samudra Narayanan Iyer found his daughter in the small hut. They reached Kallakattilan and were received by Samudra Narayanan's first wife and her son. A temple was built for the daughter and she was worshipped as a goddess. Before the Teyyam of Valia Tamburatti is performed, the same performer will represent Elamkolam, who is Valia Tamburatti as a young girl. This Teyyam performs a ritual usually performed by unmarried Brahmin girls. Valia

Tamburatti is performed the following day by the same artist. This Teyyam is accompanied by two men dressed as Muslims, who shout "La Allah ill' Allah" in front of the shrine. They are called Mappila Porat (Mappila = Malabar Muslims) and represent the two Muslim rowers who had helped Valia Tamburatti.

42 Gulligan

43 Kundor Chamundi fighting the demon Daruka

44 Kuratti

45 Tacholi Othenan

Shri Kurumba Manikka Temple, Kannookkara, Cannanore

44



- Dia Kk 48 -



45

Dia Kk 107

For the story of Gulligan see No. 29

For the story of Kuratti see No. 12

For the story of Chamundi see No. 6-8

The tree made of plantain stems decorated with burning torches represents the demon Daruka, who was killed by Chamundi. The Teyyam dances round this tree and destroys it with a sword.

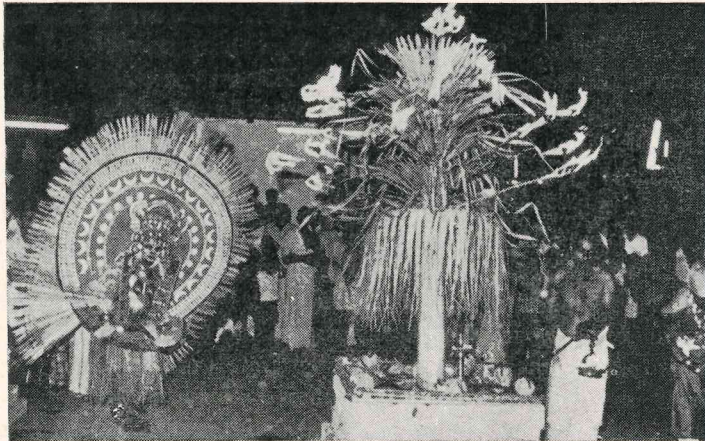
Tacholi Othenan was a Nayar warrior who lived in the 16th cent. The Teyyam is performed by Vannans. As Tacholi Othenan was in charge of a Kalari Gurukkal (a military school), the performer carries a sword and a shield. His crown resembles that of a Kathakali dancer. Othenan's main shrine is at Meppayil, where the Kalari is said to have been situated. Othenan is a popular hero, and many ballads are sung about his adventures. He fought many battles and often got into trouble, but always managed to extricate himself by his ingenuity and valour. He was killed recovering his weapon after he had won a duel. Not all of his adventures are mentioned in the tottam, which is a recent composition.

46 Puliyorukali, Vishnumurti and Pulikarimkali

visiting a Nambudiri's house at Ezhom near Pattuvan, Cannanore District

For Vishnumurti see No. 37

At one time Shiva and Parvati travelled through a forest. They enjoyed watching the animals of the jungle. They decided to change themselves into tigers. They mated, and five cubs were born to them. These Pulikidangal (tigercubs) were called Kandapuli, Marapuli, Pulimaruthan, Puliyorukannan and Puliyorukali. Shiva in the form of a tiger is known as Pulikandan, and Parvati as Pulikarimkali. The five tiger cubs grew up in a cave. When they were older, they went out hunting. One night, they killed the favourite cow of the local ruler. Enraged, he ordered his men to hunt the tigers. None came forward to obey this order, only one Karinthiri Nayar volunteered to try his luck in the tiger hunt. The following night Karinthiri Nayar lay in ambush hidden in a tree. When he caught sight of the tigers, he aimed his arrow at them. Shiva appeared just as he was about to shoot. He caught hold of Karinthiri Nayar's hand and prevented him from killing the tigers. The tigers as well as Karinthiri Nayar were deified and worshipped as Teyyams (Cf.No. 55). In some temples, life size wooden statues of tigers serve as vehicles for these Teyyams, who are dragged about riding on them.



- Dia Kk 37 -

43

47 Virakali

48 Padarkulangara Viran

Payangadi, Cannanore District



47

- Dia TP 7 -
- seiteruvelat 2 -

This photo of Virakali shows the performer's face just before he puts on his crown. Later he also wears fangs. The make-up is painted onto a yellow base, for which turmeric is used. For the story of this Teyyam see Nr. 21.

The story of Padarkulangara Viran is closely connected with that of Puthiya Bhagavati and Virakali. After having killed the demon Karthika, Puthiya Bhagavati had a bath in a tank called Padarkulam (kulam = tank). A Nambudiri passed by and saw the beautiful woman in the tank. He fell in love with her and stood gazing at her. The goddess asked him to take a bath with her, so he entered the tank. Puthiya Bhagavati unsheathed her sword and beheaded the Nambudiri. He became known as Padarkulangara Viran. The Teyyam is seen here in front of the shrine, in which the idol of Padarkulangara Viran is kept.

49 Nathancheri Kavu

50 Padarkulangara Viran

51 Puthiya Bhagavati

52 Fire Walking

Nathancheri Kavu, Aroli Pappinisseri, Cannanore District

50



- Dia Ar 41 -

No. 49 shows tottam singing in the left hand corner. The singer is accompanied by drummers. The shrine is a small structure with a tiled roof. Small oil lamps have been fixed to the temple walls. A well and an altar are seen in the foreground.

Padarkulangara Viran wears a crown common to hero-Teyyams. Bits of cotton have been fixed to his chest to show he is an old man. For the story see No. 48.

For the story of Puthiya Bhagavati see No. 22
No. 52 shows a temple official holding sword and shield running through a heap of burning cinders.

29

53 **Procession of temple officials**

54 **Vishnumurti**

55 **Karinthiri Nayar**

Puliyorukali Temple, Paravur near Mathamangala, Cannanore District

No. 53 shows temple officials with umbrellas and lamps gathering for a procession around the temple.

For Vishnumurti see 37 and 38, cf. i11. p. 10

Karinthiri Nayar wears an elaborate headdress. His face and body have been painted, and he carries a long sword. Karinthiri Nayar was employed by the king of Kumbranthiri Vanavar. When tigers killed the king's cattle, Karinthiri Nayar volunteered to fight the tigers. The tigers, however, were the children of Shiva and Parvati (Cf.No. 46). When Karinthiri Nayar took up his bow and arrow, he disappeared and became a Teyyam.

56 **Koti and Channaya**

57 **Koti**

58 **Kalkuda**

59 **Hukkateri and Kallurti**

60 **Temple officials**

at Didimbiri near Karkal, South Kanara.

Koti and Channaya are performed by Paravas.

Kalkuda, Hukkateri and Kallurti are performed by Nalkes.

Koti and Channaya are two Billava heroes. They wear silver crowns and gaudy modern costumes.

The paddana of Koti and Channaya is a very lengthy one, and there are several variants. The gist of the story is as follows: The Ballala (chieftain) of Padumale was hurt in a hunting expedition. As the Vaidyas (medecine-men) were unable to cure him, Deyi Baidyati was sent for. She came, although she was in an advanced state of pregnancy. Her treatment was effective and the Ballala was cured. Deyi Baidyati gave birth to twins in the Ballala's house. She died in childbirth and the Ballala looked after her children. Koti and Channaya quarrelled with the children of the



- Dia: Did 9 -
Didimbiri



- Dia: Did 20 -

Ballala's minister, Budyanta. One day Budyanta took away a ball belonging to Koti and Channaya. They swore vengeance, and when they had grown up, they killed Budyanta and retrieved their ball. The Ballala banished them from his country. Koti and Channaya went to Edampur and took up service with Manju Pergade. Manju Pergade fought against another chieftain, whose side the foster-father of Koti and Channaya had taken. Koti was killed by his foster-father in the battle which was fought, and Channaya dashed his head against a rock. Shrines were built in commemoration of Koti and Channaya and they were worshipped, especially by the Billavas. Kanjumba Kanje, a Bant (agriculturist), is a third Bhuta who appears together with Koti and Channaya.

Kalkuda, Kallurti and Hukkateri: Kalkuda is believed to have been a famous sculptor, and Kallurti was his sister. Their father, Shambu, was asked by the chieftain of Sravana Belgola to build a temple and carve a statue of Gomata. Being totally absorbed in his work, Shambu forgot his family and did not send any message to them. Kalkuda set out one day to find his father, just as the latter was about to return home. They met on the way, and the father took his son to Sravana Belgola and showed him the work he had done. When the son pointed out some defect in a carving, the father got annoyed and committed suicide. Kalkuda continued his father's work and then proceeded to Karkal. Here he built a temple and a Gomata statue. The chief of Karkal, wishing his statue to remain unrivalled, caused Kalkuda to be mutilated. In spite of this, Kalkuda started to carve another Gomata statue at Venur. Kallurti, Kalkuda's sister, set out to look for her brother and found him at Venur. She swore vengeance for the injustice done to her brother at Karkal. Brother and sister vanished and aquired supernatural powers. They caused havoc in Karkal, which ceased when shrines were built and offerings were made for them.

Hukkateri was a woman killed by her husband who suspected her of infidelity. She was asked to follow the spirits of Kalkuda and Kallurti.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Bhuta and Teyyam cult is a veritable storehouse of folklore. In the annual festivals, one finds music and theatrical arts, dramatic impersonations and dance. The tottams and paddanas embody ancient legends and belong to the oral tradition of the people.

A number of folk musical instruments are used to accompany the performance. The chief instruments are various types of drums. The most common type of drum in Kerala is the chenda, which the drummer suspends from his neck (See-No. 15). The iddaka is another Kerala drum, shaped like an hour glass. It has two membranes, one on either side. The tonal qualities emanating from this drum are amazing and fine sound varieties can be produced by this instrument. Among the flutes, the nagasvaram is the most common. It is made of wood with a metal orifice attached to the bottom.

Generally, when a Bhuta or Teyyam first makes its appearance it will move with slow, measured steps. Gradually, as the beating of the drums becomes faster, the Teyyams or Bhutas will move more quickly, finally getting into a frenzy. It is amazing to see these movements being done with the heavy headdress which may weigh upto 50 kg.

Teyyams of the warrior-type (Viran) may perform sword dances with agile steps. At Didimbiri in S. K., Koti, Channaya and Kanjumba Kanje, who are not encumbered by heavy paraphernalia whirl around the whole night. (No. 56). Kundor Chamundi fighting the demon Daruka, who is represented by a symbol, enacts a kind of mono-drama at Kanno-kkra, by dancing around this symbol and striking it with her sword till she finally destroys it completely (No. 43).

Priests and temple oracles, painters and decorators, musicians and impersonators of Bhutas and Teyyams all combine to make the festival a grand pageantry, which leaves a lasting impression on the spectators.