List of Documentaries

Since initiating our collaboration with the Mannan tribal community of Idukki, we have produced a compelling series of documentaries on the cultural heritage of these two communities. These films are a key component of our ongoing Earthlore Documentation Project, supported by the Samāgata Foundation.

Here are the documentaries we have published to date:

1. **MANNAN Tribe: The Last Forest Kingdom of Kerala | Part 1: The Origin**

This video traces the origins of the Mannan tribe, a unique community that has preserved its identity in the forests of Kerala's Western Ghats. We explore different historical narratives about their migration, the establishment of their king-led governance, and the rituals and art forms that define their culture. Watch to understand a way of life shaped by the forest, tradition, and resilience. Stay tuned for the next parts of this series.

2. **Payayil Iruthal: A Ritual of Grief, Memory, and Healing in the Mannan Community**

Among the many rich and diverse traditions of Mannan community of Kerala, Payayil Iruthal (also Payel Iruthal) stands out as a deeply humane and spiritually resonant mourning ritual. This unique practice honours the memory of a deceased spouse and provides the surviving partner a sacred space for remembrance, grief, and eventual healing.

3. **Kalaavoottu: Annual Festival of Dance, Tribute & Atonement**

Kalaavoottu (Kalayoottu), the annual festival of the Mannan tribal community, is a vibrant gathering marked by dance, music and rituals. The community comes together to offer prayers and annual tributes to their Gods, perform the traditional dance Mannan Koothu and seeks forgiveness & blessings for the year ahead. The celebrations are preceded by a solemn seven-day mourning ritual, Payel Iruthal, which paves the way for the festivities by fostering healing and togetherness through the act of honouring the memories of loved ones they lost.

4. **Mannan Koothu : The Living Tradition of a Tribal Dance in Kerala**

Among the Mannan tribal community of Kerala, a rich cultural tradition continues to beat to the rhythms of drums and the chants of ancient tales. This is *Mannan Koothu*, a traditional dance-drama that weaves storytelling, music, and ritual into a unique form of cultural expression. At its heart lies the retelling of the legendary Kannaki - Kovalan saga, a story rooted in Tamil Sangam literature but uniquely adapted by the Mannan people into their own version of the epic.

5. **Meenoottu: Fish, Prophecy & The Mannan King**

A centuries-old Mannan ritual of prayer, prophecy, and community, Meenoottu reminds us of a world where people once listened closely to rivers, fish, and the stories carried in their flow. This episode offers a window into Meenoottu, where culture, nature, and beliefs come together shaped by ancestral wisdom and collective prayer. Witness a ritual that continues to hold a community together—even as time and change test its resilience.

6. **Pongal : Celebrating the Mannan Deities**

Pongal is a significant annual festival of the Mannan community in Kerala, centred around offerings and prayers made to honour the regional deities of the community. Held at sacred sites across their settlements, Pongal is a time when the community comes together to celebrate their ancestral social bond and their system of co-dependence. This episode explores the living tradition of Pongal, examining its cultural roots and celebrations.

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