

**Cultural Transformation of Malayaraya Community in
Narayan's 'Kocharethi' - The Arya Woman**

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ABSTRACT

Culture is the way of life, however, must be distinguished from the neighbouring concept of society. In speaking of society we refer to the pattern of social interactions and relationship between individuals and groups. Often a society will occupy a territory, be capable of reproducing itself and share of culture coexist with in the society. When we are considering about the cultural changes of Malayaraya community in Narayan's "Kocharethi" it was in a varied way 'Kocharethi' is the first fictional attempt to reconstruct the history of the adivasis negotiation with the forces of modernity in India. Narayan provides a vivid account of the primal way of life of the Malayaraya and their move towards citizenship in Independent India. This study is related to how cultural transformation happened to Malayarayar in the modern society, with a special reference to the Mayayaraya tribe portrayed in Narayan's "Kocharethi".

Keywords : Culture, Changes, Education, Development and modernism.

Cultural Transformation of Malayaraya community in Narayan's "Kocharethi"

Pierre Bourdieu has proposed culture as habits allied to a network of shared meaning and practices. A social class is identified by the defining characteristics of class habitus. It is inculcated through upbringing social experiences and education and cultural communication. Adivasis are believed to be the first inhabitants of land and terms such as 'atavika' vanavasi' and 'Girijan' are used to refer them.

There are thirty two different groups of advivasis in Kerala. Narayan belongs to the group known as 'Malayarayans' 'Mala' is the Malayalam word for hill and 'arayan' may be semantically related to 'aachar' meaning 'rules'. It is possible that Malayarayrs as a clan enjoyed control over the western slopes of Ghats. Narayan's text recreates the socio-cultural milieu it existed in the early decades of the Twentieth century and tries to retrieve traces of language that was not available to the outside world. In Narayan's own words, he gives an authentic picture, the story as told by one who has lived he says. 'we wanted to tell the world that we have our own distinctive way of life, our own value system. We are not demons lacking in humanity but a strong hardworking and self-reliant community.

When Narayan emphasizes the difference between the adivasis and dalit, he is infact stressing between 'high culture' and low culture' that has paved the way for on of the ubiquitous and conventionally efficacious gulf between the "culturally knowledgable" and the "culturally unknowledgable." This stand is certainly opens to charges of cultural elitism, but interpreting the codes; contents and their appropriate relationship in past, of the process of acknowledging and individual as a member of particular culture. In actuality differences and distancing himself from dalits, Narayn is defining for himself and his community a unique cultural identity. Kocharethi is the first book length creative reconstruction of advasi community life from south india.

Narayan's novel is not just about the past or present but explores the connectedness of the past, present, and future. It depicts a society in transition, in a country which itself was going through a period of transition from colonial domination to sovereign status. The first half of the novel is ethnohistorian's delight, with particulars of believes and rituals unique to asset of people who live in close communication with nature. This novel also explain the cultural identity, transformation and the hidden poetry of marginal lives.

The key theme of cultural changes begins when kunjipennu refuses to marry her uncle's son and she marries kochuraman. Malayaraya community also witnessed the arrival of alcoholism in which Kochuraman too falls as prey. The establishment of school in the community bring another social transformation in the community.

The process of modernization also introduced as a host of other changes into the lives of Malayaraya rituals and customs are inherited in cultural heritage of tribal groups. The Malayaraya community has also a unique set of rituals, birth ceremonies, marriage customs and

funeral services etc. The arayers had their own system of treatment which was centered on religion and nature.

The Arya girls are also restricted with their rituals. When an arya girl got her first menstruation she had to send “ eettappera” and she was prohibited to entering kitchen or touching anything. These culture made some restriction to the arya girls to touch their books and go to school. But parvati flew out all the restriction and she continues her studies and attained a govt. job.

The Malayaraya community who were uncivilized and they were illiterate. This made the civilized people to exploit their land and lives. But the arrival of education made a keyfactor to change their attitude. In “ Kocharethi”the arrival of kochupillaAshan brings a revolutionary change in the lives of Malayarayar. The world of letters which wipe out darkness and bring light in the entire society. He teach everyone to write and read and also he give strength to them to fight against the exploitation.

The light of education brings them to the path of civilization. It also host so many changes in Malayarayar community. It introduced modernization and it changes the lives of Malayarayar. Now they have a close contact with the outsiders and it open the ways for new trades. Postal service also brings the connection between the outsiders of the territory. The main source of earnings of Malayaraya community were close related with agriculture. But when the Aryar began to learn, their cultural views also varied. Govt employment and wages gained slow acceptance in the community.

Education also bring some elementary principles to their lives. The principles of hygiene, social conduct, worship were introduced to the Malayaraya community, which reduced the distance from uncivilized people to civilized people. The Malayaraya community were closely binded with their rituals and customs. They have seldom knowledge about what was happening outside the world. But the light of knowledge which erase all the primitive marks from their lives. Education and modernaization deeply influenced the lives of Malayarayar, in the way of living, behaviour and knowledge. It promotes a civilized way of living. In earlier days the Malayarayar have to face a lot of discrimination, but now they were also the part of civilized society. The cultural transition reduced the length towards the civilized world.

Thus the paper based on how the Malayaraya community overcome all their struggle, cultural identity and the transformation of their culture with the modern society. Narayan says “We Arayar are children of hills. We are hardworking, close- knit community we are not parasite. Therefore we do not ask for favours but the right to live with dignity”. The tribal writers are not at all against the modernization but they only want their right to live with a dignity in this modern world.

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