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Social Customs of Kattunaikkars in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract :

The presence of several tribes in the state enhances its anthropological importance. Kattunayakar is a primitive tribal group of the southern states of India. They are, settled mainly in the states of Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. This, community is believed to be the modern representatives of the ancient Pallavas. The population claims that they belong to kattunaiker. At local level the state community is referred by different name like Raja of Kammbala Naicker. Thosia Naicker, Kambalathu Naicker, Kollavai Naicker, Kuluva Naicker, Etc. the community, as data reveals, has migrated to its present habitat. The community perceives its distribution at local level in a few Taluks of Coimbatore district, but having kinship relations with their people living in Madurai, Dindigul districts. The community people were nomads gradually become semi nomads by settling in the villages, which are located on plateau and plains retain they speak Telugu languages within family and kinship group and speak Tamil language with others. A few of them know the languages of Kannada and Malayalam. They used, Tamil script know writing letters or other documents this community identification marks are male and female tattooing female ornaments and male head gear during nomadic profession, long size iron oil lamp and flat bronze plate, with wood stick, which prudence's bell sound are also become a part of community identification. It such relationships may be characterized both in terms of the individuals and groups from a network, which we can call the social structure of the organizations or configurationally aspects of society, institutions are take of both aspects; they are composed of individuals organized by a social structure, while a set of attributes and behavior patterns, which the structure is exemplified and the institutional ends achieved thus the study of social organization of the Kattunayakars was one of the earliest emphasis of rarely tribal life styles. The Kattunaickar live mostly in nuclear families. An avoidance of relationship exists between mother in-law. A jacking relationship is allowed with ones sister in-law, with wife's younger brother, with elder brothers wife and between grandparents and grandchildren. They, follow rule of exogamy in regulating marriage alliance. They have, exogamous divisions called "inteperulu(family names) literally means the house names. The intrepid is attached as prefix of one personal name and a person's identity is often referred to by his family names. Since this community part lineal.

1. Social Customs of Kattunaikkars in Tamil Nadu

The Tribal study forms an integral part of human geography. A human geographer will look at a tribe in its geographical milieu. The people and their habitat to be considered together. Otherwise it makes no sense; his approach is rather, holistic. The evaluation of tribal society and culture in a particular environment is really a pocking subject. There is a close relationship between man and his environment. In some areas the relationship is direct and very simple whereas in the cases it is very complex and indirect. Human geography studies man responses to geographical surrounding it sums up, ways distribution of human activities and equalities is influenced by natural environment. Four classes of human responses are recognized. Among these four classes of human responses the first class is material needs which include food, clothing, shelter and tools and a spot. The tribal people of the state have been changing. The significant changes in the life styles make the earlier accounts out dated, at least to some extent, very quickly. Any account, on such a fast changing subject is therefore, bound to like a still photograph, catching only the scene of a particular moment, while the episode of human life is an ever changing phenomenon. Although the non tribal population is in majority and the tribal populations are in minority, the state is known for its geographical specialties tribal inhabitants. The presence of several tribes in the state enhances its anthropological importance. Kattunayakar is a primitive tribal group of the southern states of India. They are, settled mainly in the states of Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. This, community is believed to be the modern representatives of the ancient Pallavas. The Kattunayakan are widely distributed in almost all the district of Tamilnadu. They are, mainly concentrated in the district of Thiruchirapalli, Thanjavur, Madurai and Dindigul. They compromise a nomadic or semi nomadic people who receive alms from rural urban residents.

1.1. *Ethnography Profile of the Kattunayakar*

The population claims that they belong to kattunaicker. At local level the state community is referred by different name like Raja of Kammbala Naicker, Thosia Naicker, Kambalathu Naicker, Kollavai Naicker, Kuluva Naicker, Etc. the community, as data reveals, has migrated to its present habitat. About 40 years back from Thalan kadu region which is a border land between Coimbatore district and Kerala. The community perceives its distribution at local level in a few Taluks of Coimbatore district, but having kinship relations with their people living in Madurai, Dindigul districts. The community people were nomads gradually become semi nomads by settling in the villages, which are located on plateau and plains retain, they speak Telugu languages within family and kinship group and speak Tamil language with others. A few of them know the languages of Kannada and Malayalam. They used, Tamil script know writing letters or other documents this community identification marks are male and female tattooing female ornaments and male head gear during nomadic profession, long size iron oil lamp and flat bronze plate, with wood stick, which prudence's bell sound are also become a part of community identification. These are first hand information collected afresh and directly obtained from the community sources, and some of the sources obtained from Govt Records, provided by the political, social and economic departments and administrative reports and Madras proceedings of the TamilNadu government and collected from SC/ST welfare officers at collector office.

These sources are based on research reports abstracts; review of books the secondary sources is helpful to construct this paper along with the skeleton materials. Status of Tribal's in India by Amar Skumar Singh and M.K.Jabbi Castes and Tribes of Southern India by Edgar thruston and K.Rangachari, Kudukuduppaikarar Valvial by N.Murugesu Pandiayn , Tamilnathil Nadodihal Sangakalam Muthal Samakalam Varai by Bhaktavalasla Bharathi, Gazetteers of India; Tamilnadu state by M.Gopalakrishnan, People of India-Tamilnadu by K.S. Singh. Thus the secondary sources gives an development of KatuNayakkar communities the comparative and analytical study from these above mentioned books was helpful to study the subject.

1.2. *Social Life of Kattunayakars*

The study highlights the social organization of the Katunayakars of Tamilnadu. Social organization, designates the institutions the determined the position of men and women in the society and thus channel their personal. It such relationships may be characterized both in terms of the individuals and groups from a network, which we can call the social structure of the organizations or configurationally aspects of society, institutions are take of both aspects; they are composed of individuals organized by a social structure, while a set of attributes and behavior patterns, which the structure is exemplified and the institutional ends achieved thus the study of social organization of the Kattunayakars was one of the earliest emphasis of rarely tribal life styles. The term social organization is the systematic ordering of social actions by acts of choice and decisions. In this view social organization is the dynamic phase of social structure, the continuity principle of society. Social organization is summarily studied in terms of two broad clans of institutions those that grow rout of kingship and those that result from the free association of individuals. Kinship structures include the family and its extension into broader relationship goings such as the clan. The association of individuals, who are not taken, gives rise to a wide range of forms they are from blood brotherhood and institutionalized friendship to secret and non secret. Society of various kinds' of age groupings, though more often than not informal in character, can play important role in society where they hold the formal position of age, political character based on local status. The educational function of various social institutions, especially the family is also of signal importance. Kattunayakas as an ethnic group led their lives institutionalized ways. The Kattunayaks remained as an ethnic and unique endogamous tribe. At the same time these Kattunayakar have differences, on the basis of hierarchy of age groups, economical levels, and religious levels of south India. About broad social divisions among the Kattuanayakar. It's considered the Jenu Kurumba and Kattunaika as a single ethnic endogamous group amongst Kadu kurumba. The socio-economic survey stated that there are three broad social divisions among the Kattunayakas in Southern apart of Tamil nadu.

1.3. *Family Structure*

The Kattunaickar live mostly in nuclear families. An avoidance of relationship exists between mother in-law. A jacking relationship is allowed with ones sister in-law, with wife's younger brother, with elder brothers wife and between grandparents and grandchildren. They, follow rule of exogamy in regulating marriage alliance. They have, exogamous divisions called "inteperulu(family names) literally means the house names.

The intrepid is attached as prefix of one personal name and a person's identity is often referred to by his family names. Since this community part lineal. The intrepid of boy remains the same throughout his life, but a girl changes her family name. When she married it becomes that of her husband's family name few name of the intiprelu founding the community are mentioned below.

1. Galivandu 2. Koruvuvandu 3. Pasalodi 4. Kolavodu 5. Matungodu
6. Pasimodu 7. Pillodu 8. Bandamodu 9. Thannerodu 10. Seeralodu
11. Naidodu 12. Kavittodu 13. Alantlodu 14. Pandodu 15. Muanhalodu
16. Gorantaludu 17. Gongamodu 18. Chinatomodu 19. Mosamodu 20. Ollivotodu
21. Matunga 22. Korivi 23. Kavari

The Katu nayakkar has the social divisions a clan level with affiliated deities. They have, brotherly clans based on their language, which indicates descents. The clans regulate the marital alliances. There, has been no change in their clan names and titles. The communities self perception, in terms foods social status at the regional level is middle. Others perceive it as low. The differences of these groups are at occupational level intra- marriage alliances of these groups are traditionally not permitted, but because of small population, marriages are happening between these groups. Communities self perception at local level is low with higher. Hindu communities, but high with scheduled castes groups. They follow rules of exogamy in regulating marriage alliances.

1.4. Position of Women

The Kattu nayakkars women have a low status compared to that of their man. Before men leave the house, they instruct the women on the type of work they have to undertake for the day. The women go about the streets, beg of food, cloths, and earn some money and grain from reading palms and forecasting the future. They take part in social and religious functions. The women undergo the Seemantham ritual in the seventh month of the first pregnancy. The mother of the pregnant women gives her new bangles, a new sari and blouse. The woman then goes to her natal home of delivery. This, is attended on baby a midwife from their own community. The new born is washed in tepid water and its forehead is marked with a Namam. The midwife then heats a needle and cauterizes the forehead and abdomen of the baby. It is believed that this will do away with some of the diseases associated with infancy. The mid wife feeds the child with sugar water. In the third day, the prrudutheerchandaru ceremony ends pollution away from the house. The midwife gives hot water bath to both the mother and child. The good for the days function is cooked. After preparing the food, the father of that child brings a dog, which is treated as viaravan or kattudevi, the deity presiding. Over the days function. He paints its forehead with a Namam, the midwife offers a morsel to the dog, another to the mother and distributes the rest among children congregated there. Towards, the evening of the same day, the child is named. After, performing this ritual, the midwife plait a with of human hair into indicate bands and ties one band around the neck of the baby. And the two legs of the child on the 22nd day after child birth, the mother is given a purificatory bath. Invitees to the functions are given a non vegetarian feast, accompanied by liquor. Children are tonsured and have their as bored. The forest deity is worshipped on the occasion. When a boy turns 15 he undergoes the bag wearing ceremony known as Sancheyadam or Joliveradam. His maternal grandfather gives him a bag (sanchi or job) to signify his entry into the ranks of adult alms seekers. This is, also prerequisite for acquiring a spouse. With the onset of puberty of the girls maternal uncle constructs a small hut outside her house. Pollution last for 9-12 days. Her maternal uncle guards the hut during this period. The girl receives eggs, gingili oil and boiled rice as per special diet every day. On the last day, the Samara kalyanam is celebrated the girls is given a puificationary bath, and then led to the pots and vessels which contains the different dishes prepared for the feast. The girl bows before the pots. After this the girl's maternal uncle cauterizes the trip father tongue with a hot gold piece and gives her a new sari (cheera) and blouse. The guests are entertained to a non vegetarian feast.

1.5. Child Birth

Pregnancy is considered to be a signification path of the cultural heritage of the Kattu nayakars and is equally a happy event. The pregnant woman is given special care and it's not allowed to go alone to the jungle or any other place. She continues to do all household chores until she deliver the child. It is commonly believed by the Katu nayakars that there is every possibility is miscarriage if the pregnant woman is not properly protected from the influence of evil spirit, just before the time of delivery. After the birth of the child, the mother is declaring to be in the condition of chute or untouchable. She cannot enter the main houses nor do household work. The husband in equally declared on in condition of chute. He lives with his wife and new bon babe in the kuria but cooks the meals and sleeps outside the Kuria. In Kudukuduppai nayakars this period continues for ten to fifteen days. After this period is over, the patents and the child go to the Jharana or spring where the mother boils the cloths cheers them and had a bath, she also peas of her nails. The husband also shaves his beard and has hair. The hair of the newly born baby is shaved, but a barber, this ritual is known as randajagu. Then they put new cloths and return to the main house.

The mother is now asked to live in a corner of the house. She cannot cook food for the family. Her husband is also not allowed to attend any religious or social ceremonies in the village for a period of three months. Sometimes this period extend to six months. After three months her husband gives a feast called handipoda of boiled rice, a goat, two chickens and Pochai or country, liquor of the entire village with this feast the period the chute finally ends. Girls children have their ears rings and war palm –leaf ear- studs are observed when a girl attains menarche. The girl is kept in seclusion (gidisai kuthirudu –sitting in her hut) for about nine month. The maternal uncle erects the hut and presents gifts to the girl. The weddings take place at ht bride's residence. The Karnavar, of the elders, conduct the marriage rituals. They, worship the tribal deities on the occasions. The maternal uncle (mama) has a vital role in marriage celebrations. The marriage fest is given by the bride's parents. The consumption ceremony takes place at the bridegroom's residence.

1.6. Marriage System

The community is following consanguinity (cross cousins –FZD) rule and junior sororities exiting but it is taboo of the community to follow senior sororate. They still practice, child marriage but appropriate adult marriage. Their modes of acquiring mates are marriage by service, marriage by elopement, marriage by symbolic capture and now a day's marriage by negotiation is common. Forms of marriage in the community, reveals that, they follow monogamy sororal polygamy and sometimes junior sororate symbols of marriage are pottu thali (Thali with broad suppression) , nose ring and now a day's toe ring. Sprinkling Tulasi water on the bride and bridegroom is an important aspect of marriage. The community is following even today's, giving bride price (Voli Rs.42.25) without this they do not allow the bridegroom to tie Thali around the neck of the bride. They do not take dowry from the bride.

The bridegroom lives with the wife's family, even after marriage. The husband continues his services to the wife's paternal marriage. The husband continues his services to the wife's paternal family till she bears two or three children. Late he is permitted to set up a separate household near his wife s family. In local parlance, a father –in-law is gudugadu(gudu=village; gadu=elde member) and a son in law is is kapu(attender).

Monogamy is the norm among them. Polygamy occurs only then the first wife fails to bear a child within six or seven years of marriage. sororal polygyny is preferred junior and senior levirate are allowed. An adulterous woman is punished with excommunication. Excommunication (veli) entails purification (upacaram and suddi) at the time of readmission (veliterpu) to the group. This involves having an oil bath, then walking to the temple where she breaks a coconut before the deity and being cauterize

don't the tongue with a heated gold piece by the head of the village council who then offers holy sater (Tulasitheertham) to her. She is then considered purified and readmitted to the group. Both husband and wife can divorce and children of divorced women are always allowed to be with the father. The charges of the divorce are paid fixed Rs. 5.25 by the applicant of divorce. Divorce on grounds of barrenness, adultery, impotency, maladjustment, chronic illness, cruelty or witchcraft is remitted. If the wife initiates divorce, her parents return the bride price and the marriage expenses to the boy's father and he return the dowry to the girl's father. Children are responsibility of the father. Widow Remarriage is permissible; widows and divorced women are allowed to remarry. They do so in a simple ceremony known as Cherakatinchadam in which the man offers a sari to the women accepts to wear it in the name of the man. The man must serve the woman's family for a period of time decreed by the village council. Family toes among them are nuclear, but a few vertically extended family types are found in the village Pilathu Vedesandur, village Pudupatti in Nilakkotai, Valichetti patti, Vedesandhur in dindigul district. Rules of succession are by the eldest son. Status of women in the community is low and women do not have any decision making powers. Women contribute more the family income. When a person dies, his body is placed in laying position 50 paisa coin is placed on the forehead. The corpse is bathed and kept on the bier later namam is painted on its forehead, a pounded mixture of betel leaves and nuts is set between its lips, and the corpse is shrouded in a new chute cloth. The Parayan beat flat drums and lead the procession. The chief mourner in shot eldest son in the case of the father and the youngest son in the case of the mother. They observe death pollution for three days. On the third day they conduct Palupoyadam or milk pouring ceremony in which the chief mourner offers milk and others items, like beedis, liquor and the favorite's food to the deceased at his grave. On the evening of the same day, the bereaved family arranges a feast for all the relatives. If the deceased at his grave. On the evening of the same, the bereaved family arranges of feast for all the relatives. If the deceased is married another ceremony called thivasam is observed in the third, seventh or ninth month. During this ceremony, the wife of the deceased is declared a widow after she removes all her marital symbols. Thereafter, the widow wears a white saree. All the guests are served a non vegetarian feast.

1.7. Foods and Drinks

The Kattunayakkar are non vegetarian, who abstain from eating rice, millets and ragi are their staple food items. They consume all kinds of pusles, vegetables, roots, tubers, and fruits. They use either ground nut oil or coconut oil for cooking; both men and women consume liquor, especially of festival and ceremonial days. They consume milk and milk products. Men smoke beedis, cigarettes and cheroot. They view betel with tobacco. Some of them inhale snuff they go for alms collation for nine months in a year and stay at home rest of the time. They go by one route, camp at different places and return to their village by another route. The village divided into small groups, each consisting of five or six families. Specific areas are converted by each group. He invokes deities such as Jakkamma, Bommakka, Mriamma, Mhamariamamma at the time of alms collection. His begging routine is to stand before each house for a few minutes and give his vaakku or stamen of the future of the inmates of the house. Then he asks for alms. After lunch, he puts on sadhuvesham or the address of a saint and starts his work again in a different locality. He reads the palms of people sometimes he may go in Murugan vesham or Krishna vesham. He usually returns home by four in the afternoon and hands over to his family all he has collected during the afternoon. Middle of women also goes for alms collection. Their male member uses the title Nayakkan to their names.

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