

Ethnobiology in Narayan's Novel *Kocharethi: The Araya Woman*

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Abstract :

Narayan's novel *Kocharethi: The Araya Woman* showcases the culture of the Araya hill tribe of Kerala and the negative impact of migration of West Asian farmers and Eurasian steppe pastoralists and colonialism on the ethnobiology and cultural ecology of the Araya tribe. It contrasts the deep ecological ethos of the Araya tribe with the shallow ecological concept of civilized societies and their utilitarian perception of nature. It critiques the dispossession and marginalization of the Araya and other indigenous people by the civilized world which is represented by forest officials and government contractors. The novel interrogates the civilized society's criteria of progress and development. It appropriates the negative connotation of the word 'primitive' as being subhuman in order to demonstrate how tribal culture is crucial for the long term survival of the biosphere.

Keywords: ethnobiology, cultural ecology, shallow ecology, deep ecology