

Cultural Invasion to Submerge Kalasha Culture: An Ethnomethodological Study

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Abstract : The largest minority group over Pakistan lives in the farthest region of KPK, Chitral, which enclosed all its people in one closet despite their diversity. Chitral is considered a tourist hub and piece of paradise on earth. The major attraction of Chitral is the Kalash valley, which is also known as the homeland of kafir or 'weavers of the black robes'. Kalash people are counted as the primitive pagan tribe who practice culture, beliefs, and a lifestyle which dated beyond and distinct from the rest of the region. Their religious belief is known to be as 'animism', which means that objects, places, and creatures all possess a distinct spiritual essence. They also believe that nature plays a highly significant and spiritual role in their daily life. As they have their different festivals like (a) Chilam Josh: celebrated in May to welcome spring, (b) Uchaw: which is observed in late August to ensure good crops of wheat, (c) Chanmos: which is being observed in December for more than two weeks, grand festival and is celebrated to welcome New Year. Their concept of purity and impurity is also very traditional and part of their religious belief as well. They used to call the man as pure 'Oshniru' (pure, holy) and woman as impure 'Chetu' (dirty, polluted, or contaminated). This study is based on ethnomethodology, which focuses on the way people make sense of their daily life. Their unique belief system connects them with the descendants of the armies of Alexander the Great, who called the Hindu Kush 'Parapamisus', meaning mountains over which eagles can fly. With time, their cultural system was molded into many ways, and the same is going on with the true beauty of Chitral in the form of conversion to Islam and adaptation of modern lifestyle. Ethnomethodology also supports this, that people are always good in their original form so they can be called the true representatives of their origin and cultural identity. It also argues that human society is based on the method of achieving and displaying not on the imposition of others' order and laws. So, everybody is obliged to respect and not to harm the beliefs and culture of all other human fellows. Some historians believe that these Kalash people are from Afghanistan and their origin is Saim which is known as Thailand, but those Kalash tribe from Afghanistan were forced to embrace Islam and only Pakistan keeps these people who own unique cultural values, ornaments and entire culture. Kalasha culture has been listed by UNESCO for consideration as World Heritage. It is necessary to save these people from the cultural invasion caused by modernity, forced religious conversion to maintain the pluralistic diversity of our country.

Keywords : Chitral, cultural identity, ethnomethodology, Kalasha culture

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