Ethnographic Notes on Nadars of Tamil Nadu with Special Reference to Marriage Rites

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Abstract: This article focuses on the marriage rites and their significance in the social life of Catholic Nadars of Tamil Nadu. Nadars are identified into two major categories - the northern Nadars who are the residents of Virudhunagar, Madurai, Theni and other cities of Tamil Nadu; and the southern Nadars who are the inhabitants of Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Kanniyakumari districts of Southern Tamil Nadu. The marriage practices followed in various regions of Tamil Nadu underline the socio-cultural significance of marriage in life cycle ceremonies performed at the family level. In the present study ethnographic method was used in collecting data on (i) kinship terminologies among Roman Catholic, (iii) marriage alliance (preference, prescribed and practice) and (iii) practices connected with marriage. The paper also emphasizes the role of church and parish council in marriages performed in the village.

Key words: Marriage, Kinship, Catholic, Nadar, Tamil Nadu