



# “Modernism In Māori Culture : A Perspective In Patricia Grace's The Dogside Story.”

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**Abstract:** This article titled “Modernism in Māori culture: A perspective in Patricia Grace’s The dogside story” intend to bring forth the influence of modernism in the most traditional and authentic Culture of Maori people and also provides an insight of preserving the culture in modernity through the analysis of the most renowned fiction called The Dogside story written by Patricia Grace. The tradition and the modernism of maori culture is profoundly embedded in the award winning novel “The Dogside story” where the most celebrated Maori author Patricia Grace has enlarged the perspective on the rituals of indigenous culture in the time of modernism. Notably this article delineates the modification brought into the Māori cultural practice by modernism as well as the survival of Maori culture in modernity through the narrative of Patricia Grace

**Index Terms** - Modernism, Māori culture, preserving the traditions, Patricia Grace, Urbanization, Fragmentation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Culture is the strongest foundation of any Human race. The true identity of the People are seen through their culture and traditions. The most authentic culture in this world is the culture of Maori people. Māori the indigenous people of New Zealand are known for their unique traditions that holds an significance of their ancestral lands and their life. The entire world has gone through various changes in the modern era. Every nation has been impacted by modernization. Developments in society, along with urbanization, the industrial revolution, and technological advancements, have altered the traditional and old ways. In today's world, preserving culture is a central concern. The world has taken on new dimensions through modernism. Modernism is a broad term referring to the modernist movement and cultural trends emerging from the late 19th to early 20th centuries, largely driven by sweeping changes in Western society.

### MODERNISM IN MĀORI CULTURE:

Modernism is a multifaceted cultural and artistic movement that grappled with saving cultures from extinction in various ways. Modernist writing rejected traditional forms and values but sometimes connected with the past, critically or reverently. Modernism is a theoretical approach that helps explore ways to preserve culture and seeks possibilities for reinventing culture in the modern era. A key part and main theme of modernism is analyzing the modernity of people and society and how culture is preserved in modernity. In the contemporary age, Māori writer Patricia Grace has emphasized preserving her Māori culture in the modern world through her literary work. Māori culture has predominant significance for its traditions and rituals considered to be among the world's oldest. The rich culture endures through every age. Indigenous people are extremely authentic with their food and dress. They have various rituals and traditions still practiced and famous among people. Māori culture influences art, design, and festivals everywhere. The land with this wonderful culture is New Zealand, enriched by its nature and the beauty of its mountains and oceans. Every feature of its nature is striking. After Europeans arrived, New Zealand experienced different social and

economic changes. Māori culture defines modern New Zealand. Even the national anthem is sung in both English and the Māori language, Te Reo Māori.

### DEPICTION OF MĀORI MODERNISM IN “THE DOG SIDE STORY”:

Modernism is a major response to the growth of industrialization, science, technology, and urbanization, advocating a wide break from tradition. Patricia Grace symbolizes urbanization and the shift from tradition to modernity through the first part of the story. The story is set on the coast of the north side where two sisters, Ngarua and Maraenohonoho, rivaled over their deceased brother's canoe, which he had taken care of. The long-standing fight between the sisters led to a division in the Māori community. The foundation of modernization, especially urbanization, is laid by people's migration. Patricia Grace emphasizes that migration is a key factor facilitating the urbanization of the Māori community through Ngarua's settlement on the south side of the inlet. In the novel, Ngarua went to the other side of the inlet because her canoe broke, and she didn't return home. Her arrival on the other side led her husband and children to join her. After many years, the migration of North siders to the South side gradually balanced the population on both parts of the coast. Māori urbanization began with people migrating to New Zealand's urban areas after World War II.

Historical records show Māori moved into cities, greatly impacting Māori culture and the community's modernization. The main idea of Māori community modernization due to migration is allegorically conveyed through Ngarua, who led people to the other side of the coast. The division between the north and south sides distinguishes traditional Māori culture and values from the modernized and advanced Māori culture. Patricia Grace depicts the North siders in “The Dogside Story” as emblems of dogmatic traditional Māori culture and society. The North siders held no animosity toward those who crossed over but felt disdain toward the South siders, feeling privileged to stay in their ancestors' place. Grace notes that the North siders "were the stayers, the originals, those who resident in the place where the ancestors" were the stayers, the originals, those who resident in the place where the ancestors' bones were buried. They had established gardens on the fertile areas of flat land at the base of the hills and were the caretakers of the lands, sacred sites, and ancestral meeting house—all of which made them supervisors, at least in their own eyes" (pg. 11). Patricia Grace's words have an artistic touch signifying the traditional living of Māori people caring for their land and ancestral meeting houses.

### MODERNISM SHIFT FROM RELIGION:

Modernism shifted the focus from religion to enlightenment humanism. The decline of religion is highlighted in “The Dogside Story”, especially among the South siders, who have moved away from religion. Patricia Grace uses intrinsic details of modernism, saying "the number of churches on the north side led to it becoming known as God side, while the number of dogs on the south side led to it becoming known as Dog side" (PG-14). These lines make clear the north side had more churches and the south side had more dogs. The story favors Dog side, which embodies elements of modernism. The title "God side" indicates tradition and premodernism where people followed rituals, beliefs, and devotion to God. The title "Dog side" represents modernity, deprived of God's love and morality. Grace describes the South siders as "rough and ungodly, loud-mouthed and without morals. Their houses were falling down, their clothes were shabby, they drove around in clapped-out cars and were always accompanied by their mongrel dogs. They were alkie and no-hopers, useless people who sent their kids to school barefoot and let them run wild. They were dog thieves too" (PG-13). These words provide an explanation of the outcome of modernity where people lacked morality due to declining religion and lost social behavior ethics. This modernism, fueled by ideas of complete consciousness, rationality, and universal self, made the modernized South siders adventure seekers living life for enjoyment.

### MODERNISM IN ARCHITECTURE :

Modernism plays an inevitable role in changing architecture and traditional buildings. Māori people are renowned for their intrinsic carving traditions and long-lasting, primitive buildings. When modernism entered their land, people blended their culture with modern materials to build ritual sites and buildings. The stunning architecture of wharekai has been modified due to modernism's strong impact. Wharekai is a traditional Māori building with a key place in the marae. Wharekai serves as a space for serving Māori cuisine at large gatherings in the marae, primarily for communal meals (also known as a dining hall). This is a crucial place during celebrations like weddings and funerals.

In ancient times, Māori built their wharekai using natural materials with traditional carving touches. Old wharekai were constructed from wood, flax, and raupo—a Māori term for a common wetland plant native to New Zealand. Modern buildings use materials like glass, concrete, and other industrial materials for a trendy ambiance. Modern Māori people also build wharekai using modern materials like brick, steel, and concrete for efficient structures. In the novel “The Dogside Story”, the Māori community in Dogside planned to construct a new wharekai using concrete and iron.

#### GLOBALIZATION:

Modernism connects with globalization. The Dogside community planned to raise funds through tourism, part of globalization. Globalization links the world through trade and cultural exchange. Tourism plays a key role in modernism and globalization, sharing cultural beliefs. New Zealand's a top tourism site as one of the first places to see sunrise. East Cape has strong Māori culture and beautiful beaches. The area's a tourism spot with peaceful bay motels like Hicks Bay Motel Lodge, known for sunrise views. Patricia Grace's “The Dogside Story” references globalization through tourism in bay motels. Patricia Grace uses the fact of tourism through the first sunrise of the new millennium in modern New Zealand as a main plot and theme in “The Dogside Story” to show New Zealand's modernized version. In the Dogside community, Wai and Arch are notable elders who took charge of raising funds for a new wharekai. Along with others, they had meetings to turn their coastal place into a tourism spot attracting outsiders for the spellbinding sunrise view in the new millennium. Rua narrates that “What he” “What he's done here is set himself as agent for the new millennium—an agency providing campsites for all these tourists who wanted to be the first in the world to put their eyeballs on the sun on the first of January 2000” (PG-108). Through these lines, Patricia Grace reveals modern New Zealand tourism exposing Māori cultural practices and coastal life.

#### FRAGMENTATION:

Modernism is an artistic attempt to capture themes of fragmentation and alienation. “The Dogside Story” embodies these themes through the Dogside people. When Ngarua, ancestor of the south side (Dogside), crossed the inlet, many people joined her, resulting in part of the community disconnecting from tradition. They estranged themselves from Godside and developed their own identity. Patricia Grace brings out the notion of disconnection from traditional values and norms through the social isolation of Dog siders. When Dog siders left their ancestral land, they lost indigenous rights. Modernism in New Zealand brought a split between traditional values and self-consciousness, as seen in \*The Dogside Story\*. They're tagged with names like “movers,” “changers,” and “seekers.”

#### CONCLUSION:

Contemporary New Zealand has both “God side” and “Dog side” attributed to their localities. Modern New Zealand cities populated with Māori are considered “Dog side,” loaded with innovation and urbanization. The villages and mountains of New Zealand are “God side,” where uncorrupted Māori tradition and culture still thrive. The chain reaction of modernization reflects real events in New Zealand over decades, initiated in the late 19th century. Patricia Grace beautifully renders these changes within the fascinating tale of \*The Dogside Story\*. The novel is a gift and outcome of the captivating narrative skill of indigenous author Patricia Grace. Grace excels at threading a fictional story with elements of modern aspects through her writing craftsmanship.

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