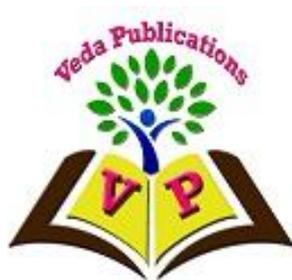


**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS IN R.K.NARAYAN'S NOVELS.**

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ABSTRACT

Language is the dress of thought woven with words. Its primary objective is communication. While teaching English, Structure and communication becomes the skeleton of a language. Literature is a special form of communication that represents the culture of a particular nation. Culture reflects the history of the people, their way of living, the geographical trends and their day to day ways of life. Culture is a contact with that has been said and thought in the world. It mirrors up the nature. The presenter presents in his presentation the variegated beauties of culture related to repression of woman in Indian society, concerns of love and marriage, woman and family, the Vedas and Scriptures, the beliefs and superstition that shape the characters are well defined in the novels of R.K. Narayan, which offers an opportunity for the English reading people to know about the Indian Culture.

Keywords: *English, Inter Culture, Vedas and Scriptures.*



INTRODUCTION

If you wish to be a man of **culture**, you should try to forget your own self and keep others always in mind. "ego" should dis-appear from one's mind. The word 'culture' originates from "cultura" which means cherish or practice i.e. Practise of customs, ideas, values etc., of a particular civilization or a social group especially at a particular point of time. It is a kind of inter-denominational i.e. happening between religious denomination or culture which is mirrored in literature.

Then what is the significance of **inter- culture**? It is something that occurs between people of difference cultures including different religious groups of people or different national origins.

This leads to the question that **what is the difference between religion and culture?** Religion is made up of "Don't's". But culture is made up of "Do's" which is a positive conceptions. "Don't" can be uniform to all people, but "Do's" must differ from people to people, place to place, country to country. The culture of people is what has grown among them to be recognized as contributing to the joy and happiness as a whole, bestowing positive attitudes and governed by any law. But the consummation of culture is the compassion not criticism but its culmination is joy and happiness at both ends as Portia portrays "the quality of mercy is not strain'd It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." The same conception is called "oppuravu" by our Great Tamil sage Thiruvalluvar here: "Be like a fruit-bearing tree in the middle of the village so that all the people sans caste and creed taste the sweet fruits.

THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

"The intercultural communication offers the ability to deal across culture which is increasingly important, as the world is getting smaller and smaller does not mean the world is becoming identical. It means having more and more contact with people who are culturally different. Being able to deal with its cultural difference peacefully, never mind creatively and innovatively is becoming a survival issue to thrive in a global world as a global leader." says Dr. Milton Bennett.

THE UNIFICATION OF CULTURE

Western culture is different from the Eastern culture. Semitic culture differs from Siamese culture. A Persian carpet with its multiple hues and chequered pattern is more beautiful and causes more impression than a single coloured 'dthurrie'. "A hundred flowers may bloom and all of them are separately beautiful; and the garden in which they bloom is also as a whole, beautiful. That is why a host of golden daffodils more than ten thousand in numbers impressed Wordsworth to create a poem "The Daffodils."

'Inter-culturalism' describes in, communities in which there is a deep understanding and respect for all cultures. It focuses on the mutual exchange of ideas and cultural norms and the development of deeprelationship. In an intercultural society, no one is left unchanged because everyone learns from others and grow together.

The presenter here delineates certain novels of R.K. Narayan, a myth-maker in Indian -Anglican novels , presents the culture of love and marriage, woman and family, Vedas and Scriptures in the culturalism between the East and the West.

EAST AND THE WEST

The emergence of the image woman in literature is a phenomenon of the 20th century which has coincided with the growing period of Indo-Anglican fiction. i.e. from 1930. The problems and predicaments of real woman could not be ignored for a long by the writers, when reform was in the air. Thus the novelists portray the images of woman struggle to co-ordinate the divergent cultures of the East and the West. Even in Jane Austen, we see in her novels the main theme is the problems of marriage making to lasses. Even R.K.Narayan says "I was somehow obsessed with a philosophy of Woman as opposed to man, her constant oppressor. This must have been an early testament of the "Woman's Lib" Movement. Man assigned her as a secondary place and kept her there with such subtlety and cunning that she herself began to lose all notions of her independence, her individuality, stature and strength. A wife in an orthodox milieu of Indian society was an ideal victim of such circumstances. My novel dealt with her, with this philosophy broadly in the background " [22 Walsh].



In his novel "The Dark Room", the traditionally Indian R.K.Narayan himself a product of Hindu middle class shares the beliefs, superstitions perhaps the prejudice of his class. The dominant theme is that of women's conditions in the society. It is a kaleidoscopic view of contemporary middle class woman. It is an instance of patriarchal power such as a woman's psyche. Here the woman is the victim and the man is the constant dictator. But in "The Painter of Signs" the heroine Daisy, a Missionary educated lady dominates Raman, the Protagonist and one can see he is helpless before her. This reminds the character of Macbeth in Shakespeare, is dominated by Lady Macbeth during the murder scene of King Duncan.

SIMILARITY BETWEEN HINDU AND GREEK MYTHOLOGY

In "The Dark Room" Savitri is the protagonist. The name itself from Hindu mythology, where one 'SatyavanSavitri' had retrieved her husband from Yama, the God of Death. We can find the similarity in Greek Mythology where, Orpheus, a musician and poet who could move inanimate objects by the power of his music on lyre. Once when he was playing on his lyre, all animals and creatures were under the spell of his music. When he stopped the music a snake which was nearby relieved from the trance of music Orpheus's wife Eurydice and she died at once. Orpheus wanted to get back the life of his wife. With the power of his music he met Pluto, the God of Underworld, Hades. Pluto gave life to Eurydice with certain conditions, when Orpheus broke the conditions he could not get back his wife to the earth. From thereby we have the idiom 'half-regained Eurydice. It is a remarkable similarity of culture between Hindu mythology or in Greek as losing one's own wife or husband is a spiritual and eternal holy bond.

SIMILARITY IN DOMESTIC DISHARMONY IN THE DARK ROOM AND OTHELLO

When Ramani, Savitri's husband keeps away from home, enjoying his night escapades with Shanta Bai results in completion alienation between Savitri and Ramani. When this illicit intimacy is confirmed by Gangu her neighbour's information. When her husband tries to come near for an amorous affair, she retaliates "For you we are play things when you

feel like hugging and slaves at other times. Don't think that you can fondle us when you like and kick us when you choose". This reminds us Emilia's comment on man to Desdemona. "'Tis not a year or two shows us to man/ They are all but stomachs, we are all but food/ They eat us hungerly/ When they are full/ They belch us".

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN INDIAN AND WESTERN CULTURES

A comparison between "The Guide" and "English Lessons and other Stories" by S.Singh Baldwin may be seen as The Guide focuses on Narayan's protagonist Raju who alternates between a career as a holy man and his account to Velan the villager of his previous career as a tour guide and lover. Where as Baldwin's collection of 15 short stories talks about Indian women trying to come to grips with their situation of cultural displacement in North America. Both creations share a common theme that is based on the conflict between Indian and western culture which leads to cultural displacement and adaptability to more than one role in different societies. 'The Guide' focuses the transformation of Raju from his tour guide and similarly to that of English Lessons and other stories focus on Indian women's courage and adaptability necessary to maintain as Indian identity while living in an English speaking country.

THE BELIEF OF "KARMA"

In 'The Guide', the theme is Indian culture which implies the beliefs in Hinduism specifically the theory Karma. This theory is enunciated in the life of Raju, the hero. According to Hinduism, it is a foregone conclusion that an individual life and dies in accordance with "Karma" and "Vasanas" [impressions the personality has gathered from its own thoughts and actions of the past or previous 'janma']. Desires and thoughts which spring forth from one's vasanas makes it appear inevitable. It can also be seen in the text where R.K.Narayan talks about Rosie. When she learns about the arrest of Raju, she comments "**I felt all along you were not doing right things. This is karma**[The Guide page – 193]. So Karma means 'the sum of someone's life time's actions in previous /after life. This has the similarity



with conception of heroes of Shakespeare's great tragedies .i.e. "Character is Destiny"

INTER-CULTURALISM IN "THE VENDOR OF SWEETS"

In "The Vendor of Sweets", Jagan the protagonist who carries the proud thought that he is a true follower of Gandhian principles and posing himself reading the Bhagavat Gita, Shouts "Captain, that beggar should not be seen here except on Fridays- This is not a charity home"[Page- 9] When his son Mali wants to go to America to learn how to write novels, Jagan outbursts "Going there to tell story telling! He should rather go to village granny" He says "Did Valmiki go to America or Germany in order to learn write his Ramayana"[ibid-34]

REFERENCE OF MAHABHARATA IN "THE PAINTER OF SIGNS"

Daisy's character in 'The Painter of Signs' reminds us the "karmayogi" in Bhagavat Gita. Daisy had laid down two conditions before accepting his proposal viz. [i] That they should have no children [ii] if by mischance one was born she would give the child away and keep herself free to pursue her social work [ibid 158]. Raman narrates Santhanu Maharaja from Mahabharata. She says "I have a well-defined purpose from which I will not swerve". In Bhagavat Gita during the discourse delivered by Lord Krishna to Arjuna on the battle of Kurukshetra, defines this earth which one born to carry out the call of one's duty through one's actions regardless of the desire for results or reward which lie beyond one's control. Daisy's mind is not attached with Raman though she lives very close with him. Her mind is like lotus leaf and water. Though the lotus leaf borns and breeds in the water, the water never sticks on to it. When one does his duty his mind should be detached from kith and kin.

SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS BOTH IN THE EAST AND THE WEST

In 'The Dark Room' when savitri tries to jump into the river, Mari the locksmith sees her in the dark and petrified says, "Mohini, the temptress Devil, who waylaid lonely wayfarers and suck their blood". In "Julius Caesar" the soothsayer says, "Beware the ides of March" When Caesar was proceeding to the citadel. But Caesar easily skips off

and proceeds. In "Hamlet" also the Prince says, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio than are dreamt of in your philosophy. These instances show that basic beliefs are innate and natural both in the East and West countries.

Finally the novel 'The English Teacher' is autobiographical in content, and a very little part fictional. The circumstances of Susila-Krishnan's undying relationship are reinforced through the psychic experiments which enable him to establish spiritual communion with the spirit of his dead wife. She meets her physical death but her soul and spirit live. This concept is again based on The Bhagavat Gita that when body perishes, the soul lives forever. In the West, Wordsworth's "Ode to intimations to Immortality" upholds the same view. Even in Shakespeare's "Hamlet", the appearance of apparition of Hamlet's father, and the presence of Duncan's spirit in the banquet scene proves the existence of soul even after the body is perished. So wherever we are, in whatever country we live, the basic innate cultural qualities are common and there might be some slight differences due to geographical and hereditary traits.

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