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## ETHNICITY, GENDER AND CULTURAL INEQUALITY IN RK NARAYAN'S RAJAM AND MANI- SHORT STORY: AFFIRMATIVE PROSECUTION

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### Abstract

India has developed in many fields including Education, Economics, Science, Agriculture, Technology, Engineering, etc. Society has modified their food additions, manner of dressing, lifestyle, work nature, etc. These are done by the education system. Education is the grand entrance to equipping the perception of the actual motive. Education can lead us to expand our proficiency and give us a good opportunity. With the help of education, easily everyone can get offers in their career. But people are facing some troubles due to their caste, gender, and cultural inequality. First, Casteism is still a very prevalent force in Indian society, which is expressed in several directions. A particular group of people made themselves high-class casters - these are all based on their, working style, food habits, color, etc. Second, the several feminist portraits of women's equality but research shows gender discrimination mostly in favor of men in much realism including the workplace. The third gender is often strict by many problems, they are not getting proper education as well and they are separated from families, due to this they are not able to get a proper education. So they are not competent to get an employment. This circumstance does not favor them, which leads them to beg and prostitution. Some positive differences happen in society. The education system and Government have made several changes that direct people to get opportunities in all fields. RK Narayan, short story "Rajam and Mani", portrays the conflict, jealousy, fear, friendship, and loyalty in it. It was taken from his Swami and Friends collection.

This study tries to focus on how ethnicity, gender, and cultural inequality are influencing society, and how to overcome with a positive vibe and achieve their goal applying through conflict theory.

**Keywords:** Conflict Theory, Ethnicity Hallucinations, Gender Optimistic Trust, Attitude Found Cultural, Philosophy of Life in Ancient India- Education System.

## INTRODUCTION

Indian Writing in English (IWE) refers to the body of literary works written by Indian authors in the English language. Indian Writing in English emerged during the period of British colonization in India and has since developed into a rich and diverse tradition. This essay explores the origins, themes, and significant contributions of Indian Writing in English. It delves into the challenges faced by Indian authors in adopting a foreign language for creative expression, examines the cultural and social contexts in which these works are situated, and highlights the impact of IWE on the global literary landscape. Indian Writing in English has emerged as a dynamic literary genre that embodies the complexities of a multicultural and diverse society. This essay explores the evolution, significance, and impact of IWE in capturing the intricacies of Indian culture, society, and identity. It delves into the historical context, major themes, and prominent authors within IWE, while highlighting its role as a mirror to societal transformations, a bridge between cultures, and a vehicle for social commentary. By examining the diverse narratives and innovative expressions within IWE, this essay emphasizes its contribution to the global literary landscape and its ability to inspire cross-cultural conversations. The essay also discusses the influence of prominent Indian authors such as Arundhati Roy, and Salman Rushdie,

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami (10 October 1906 – 13 May 2001),<sup>[1]</sup> better known as R. K. Narayan, was an Indian writer and novelist known for his work set in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. He was a leading author of early Indian literature in English along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and

Narayan's mentor and friend Graham Greene was instrumental in getting publishers for Narayan's first four books including the semi-autobiographical trilogy of *Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher*. The fictional town of Malgudi was first introduced in *Swami and Friends*. The Financial Expert was hailed as one of the most original works of 1951 and Sahitya Academy Award

winner *The Guide* was adapted for the film (winning a Filmfare Award for Best Film) and for Broadway. Narayan highlights the social context and everyday life of his characters. He has been compared to William Faulkner who created a similar fictional town and likewise explored with humor and compassion the energy of ordinary life. Narayan's short stories have been compared with those of Guy de Maupassant because of his ability to compress a narrative. In a career that spanned over sixty years Narayan received many awards and honours including the AC Benson Medal from the Royal Society of Literature, the Padma Vibhushan and the Padma Bhushan, India's second and third highest civilian awards, and in 1994 the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship, the highest honor of India's National Academy of Letters. He was also nominated to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament.

## CONFLICT THEORY

Conflict theory, first developed by Karl Marx, is a theory that society is in a state of perpetual conflict because of competition for limited resources. Sociologists use conflict theory to explain conflict and inequality between groups, including: Social classes, Genders, Races, Professions, Religions, Political groups, Cultures.

## ETHNICITY HALLICINATION

Some argue that ethnicity is as ancient as humanity. The Hittites, the Luvians, the Minoans, the Canaanites, the Amorites, and the Elamites are just a few of the ethnic groups identified by Anthony D. Smith (1986) as important in political life in the Near East from 2200 BC to 1700 BC. Smith argues that ethnic groups have played a major role in the rise and decline of political power throughout the history of Europe (and the Near East) for millennia.

In contrast, Glazer (2006) and Moynihan (2007) argue that ethnicity is an emergent phenomenon in the political system of contemporary multicultural societies. Perhaps the difference between the two perspectives is that they focus on different types of ethnicity. Glazer sees ethnicity as geopolitical groups. He notes the long history of frequently violent ethnic conflicts related

to group memberships and ways of belonging. Moynihan and Glazer focus on the group formation processes of modern multicultural societies. Reflecting on the historical aspects of ethnicity Randall Collins argues:

Ethnicity is an intrinsically messy topic because the historical processes that produce it are intrinsically messy. Our analytical problems stem from the fact that ethnicity is always a distorted concept, an attempt to impose a pure category on a social reality that is not at all pure. (Collins, 1999: p. 78)

People tend to see themselves as part of a group and view others as part of that group, with their own group being the center of their lives. This is called clan ethnocentrism, and it is a widespread prejudice. Ethnicity can be seen as a social-psychosocial reality, or a way of perceiving "us" and "them" as opposed to "them."

It is one of the many social factors that give an individual an identity. Ethnic identity is defined as the way in which a person, based on their ethnic background, perceives themselves psychologically and perceives others in relation to those social systems. By ethnic origin, a person can mean either that they have been socialized as part of an ethnic group, or that their ancestors, both real and symbolic, were members of an ethnic group. These social systems can be one's ethnic community, or society as a whole, or other social systems (such as Isajiw, 1990).

The extent of ethnic internal limits will establish the distinction between ethnic and regional groups, as in the case of the Calabresi and the Italians. It's possible to consider a group of people from a particular area to have a culture. However, the regional group's identity is a subculture and sub identity of a larger ethnic identity and culture to the extent that it is seen as one of several identities that make up a bigger group.

In RK Ramanujan's short story Rajam and Mani, the teacher and student argue, illustrating the ethnic notion while also making it easy to identify each other by name. Hinduism and Christianity are expressed in this way. The opening of the short story

features characters who work as oil mongers and in Nallappa's Mango Grove. This kind of ethnicity is depicted in this short story.

Swami's life is first exposed to an oppressive colonizing force in the form of Ebenezer's fanaticism in the novel. Ebenezer's adamant rejection of Hinduism offends Swami and his principles, even though he is unaware of the movement for Indian independence from England. An early illustration of how the violence of colonialism shows up in every aspect of even an apparently carefree Indian life is when Swami gets physically punished for speaking up. Mr. Ebenezer, he is a devout Christian. The headmaster of Mission Institution receives a letter from Swami's father, who is offended by his teacher's contempt for Hinduism and expresses his dissatisfaction that the school does not accept boys who are not Christians.

#### **GENDER OPTIMISTIC TRUST**

Gender inequality is not exclusively caused by or justified by culture. Studies have indicated that other variables, such as the political or economic climate in a locality, may have a more direct influence on the roles and opportunities available to men and women (World Bank, 2012). Discriminatory family codes can be found in both official and informal legal systems. These codes can serve as a reflection of set cultural practices and societal conventions that restrict the power of women in the home and in society at large.

A social and cultural construct that makes distinctions between the characteristics of boys and girls, men and women, and men and women's roles and responsibilities as a result. As a result, gender roles and other characteristics are dynamic and vary depending on the cultural setting. The expectations people have about the traits, skills, and expected behaviors of men and women are included in the concept of gender (femininity and masculinity). This idea is helpful in examining how widely accepted customs justify differences in sex.

The failure to recognize that the roles and responsibilities of men/boys and women/girls are given to them in specific social, cultural, economic and political contexts and backgrounds. projects,

programmes, policies and attitudes which are gender blind do not take into account these different roles and diverse needs, maintain status quo, and will not help transform the unequal structure of gender relations.

Rajam was a fresh arrival in the First A. He had sauntered into the class on the reopening day of the Second Term, walked up to the last bench, sat beside Mani, and felt very comfortable indeed till Mani gave him a jab in the ribs, which he returned. He had impressed the whole class on the very first day. He was a newcomer; he dressed very well—he was the only boy in the class who wore socks and shoes, fur cap and tie, and a wonderful coat and knickers.

The issue between Rajam and Mani is not one of gender inequality; rather, it is one of power and lack of interaction with him, a lack of support from his friends, and teachers who compliment him on Rajam's excellent English accent and attitude.

"He spoke very good English, 'Exactly like a "European"; which meant that few in the school could make out what he said."

Mani fought with Rajam in class because he was jealous and uninterested in him. Rajam received seventy percent in the class. Mani is growing more and more envious of Rajam every day.

#### **ATTITUDE FOUND CULTURAL**

The tendency to only refer to members of minority or non-Western cultural groups, when referring to "cultural practice" and "cultural tradition." Cultural practices and traditions are rarely associated with members of politically dominant or majority groups. At most, their social location and traditions may have an impact on them, but society is implied to be more adaptable and open than culture, and "social" influences are rarely believed to impair the ability to act or think for oneself. As it is used today, a hierarchy of cultures is frequently included in the language of cultural practice and tradition.

While Mani didn't have the same negative traits as Rajam, he did harbor an inferiority complex.

The jealousy and cunningness escalated after Rajam arrived; may he turn into a class clown. The situation or the social setting infuriated him enough for him to argue with Rajam. Mani feels so inferior to Rajam that an adversarial thought has grown about him. In addition, his power has been declining. This paper shows the impact of Mani's attitude immature or childish in behavior.

#### **PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE IN ANCIENT INDIA-EDUCATION SYSTEM**

One of the most notable aspects of the ancient Indian philosophy of life is its emphasis on action in this material world, even though physical existence is not placed much importance in it. The Indian philosophy of life and education greatly emphasizes the concept of Karma, or the doctrine of action. Karma or action shouldn't be used to bring about humanity's salvation. Both the ancient Indian educational system and the karma doctrine aimed to achieve this ideal. Thus, Brahma, not this world, is the ultimate object of devotion for an individual.

For self-development, an individual must undergo systematic education in the material world, which serves as the laboratory of the human soul. The moral foundation of education for personal growth is found most strongly in the simple life and lofty thinking of India's ancient Aryan culture. As a result, it is imperative that the person acquires both spiritual and materialistic knowledge.

The importance of the educational system is highlighted in this essay. When a young child realizes the power of the opposite, he or she loses the ability to speak. Because of their own complexes, the educational system and school nerve gave rise to such a crude mindset in him.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Mani and Rajam both show that they have accepted the idea that using violence to resolve conflicts is necessary by bringing weapons to a fight between kids. This is probably something they picked up from the political climate in which they were raised. But their awkward exchanges and hesitation to use the weapons reveal that they are effectively still children who don't know how to use the resources available to them in their society. An

objectively "true" identity of good or evil may be an illusion, as demonstrated by Rajam's quick change from enemy to friend, underscoring the main theme of identity fluidity.

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