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Significance of Religious Rituals portrayed In Manju

Kapur's Home

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Abstract

Indian English writing is a diverse genre that produces excellent literature. Hindu mythology has a strong influence on this literature. Indian customs, culture, norms, and religion have inspired authors from pre-independence to the present day. The religious concepts of Hinduism are promoted in a huge and extensive collection of scriptures and books, which are classified as either Sruti (revealed) or Smriti (hidden) (remembered). India's history and traditions have always been extensive. Traditional Indian ideals give it a unique and distinct presence over the world. Furthermore, because India and faith are so interwoven, literature in the Indian sense would never have been possible without the profound influence of religious and spiritual aspects.

The Vedas, Puranas, Ramayana, and Mahabharata are examples of ancient literature that transitioned from oral to written form. We have established our entire way of life—our etiquette, beliefs, and ethics—through these epics. They guided and encouraged us throughout antiquity and taught us how to live properly. The study focuses on one of Manju Kapur's most important works, in which the idea of great Indian epics through traditions has caught the protagonist's vivid imagination, which is then used to convey life experience in parts of the framework. On the one hand, there is conflict in the sense of contemporary society, where the character cannot completely defy society's traditional rules, nor can they ignore their need to build their own identity. Though Manju Kapur claims that the main characters are imprisoned between tradition and modernity, they ultimately find their roots in traditional life, which is linked to religious ceremonies directly or indirectly. Furthermore, in this modern world, the major characters saw these rites and ceremonies as the only way to resolve their problems.

Key words: Vedas, Puranas, Traditions, Religious Rituals, Contemporary Society.

Introduction

From the outset, religion and India have been inextricably linked. They are all linked to one another. In the literature written by Indian writers, the sway of their relationship is easily discernible. They've realised that religious and holy faith-based stories encapsulate universal truths. Indian writers have used myths, archetypes, and pictures from religious writings to make ancient truths more understandable to Indian readers.

Indian writers who write in English like R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Amitav Ghosh, Manju Kapur, Arundhati Rao, and many others love to quote their affinity from ancient epics and their unceasing and alluring concepts. The Brahmanas and Upanishads, canonical Hindu sacred books, were the first forms of Indian literature. In their works, first-generation Indian writers have depicted India's culture and history, which has been dubbed "the land of diversity." Religion has had such an impact on Indian literature that there is now a separate genre for Indian spiritual literature from the Vedic period.

Relationship between Literature and Religion is undoable to analogue within a period of time. No theories can exactly prove when these two were born

but it is proved that religion is the relation in which human being bears to ultimate being and literature is the relation in which humanity bears with religion.

Both literature and religion made a continual entreaty to life, whenever the mind of the man is in need of endorsement and in the state of anxiety and depression, only two things provide the source of remedy, first his/her religion and second is the literature and in both cases the receiver must have a tremendous maturity to understand its working. Through these two ways the emotions are expressed in its unique way of presentation.

Manju kapur is one of the most influential Indian writers who has been using religious myths and stories in her works. Through these religious and mythical stories the characters in Kapur;s novels seek solace at the time of despair, bleak and downbeat in the contemporary world. Manju Kapur is an Indian Novelist, born at Amritsar in 1948, graduated from the Miranda House University College for women and went on to take on M.A at Dalhousie University Halifax Nova. She was a professor where she teaches English literature at her alma mater Miranda House College, Delhi.

Her first novel *Difficult Daughters* won the 1999 Commonwealth Writers' Prize, best first book, Europe and South Asia. Her other novels *A Married Woman*(2002), *Home*(2006), *The Immigrant* (2006) *Custody* (2011), made her the leading novelist not just nationally but internationally as well. The characters in Manju Kapur's novels always go back to their roots- their religious and traditional practices in order to seek solace and peace for all their problems.

Home is a fast-paced and enthralling narrative of three generations of a commercial family led by Lala Banwari Lal, the patriarch. He owns a sari shop in Karol Bagh, Delhi, where he has made his home since the partition. He has two sons, Yashpal and Pyare Lal, as well as a daughter, Sunita, who is already married to Murli and has a son, Vicky. Banwari Lal has established himself as a successful businessman. But when he arrives in Delhi after the partition with his wife, seven-year-old son, and two-year-old daughter, all he has is a solid trust in God and religious principles, which gives him enormous strength to begin from the beginning. Banwari Lal and his family's unwavering trust in God and traditional values are repeatedly emphasised in Manju Kapur's novel *Home*.

Once settles in Karol Bagh, Lala Banwari Lal becomes a devotee of a holy man, a Baba, who lives near the house. His faith needed an anchor, and the holy man combined astrology, palmistry, spiritual guidance, and reassuring prediction about the future. Pray to Devi, everything will be right, feed the cows, feed the Brahmins, everything will be right. (kapur7)

Banwari Lal seeks the blessings and counsel of their holy man before accomplishing anything significant. After consulting Babaji, their oldest son Yashpal's marriage is also decided, and when Babaji calls Sona, the golden Banwari Lal takes on a hue omn. "Gold, Sona," says the narrator. It was the girl's name, and coming from Babaji's lips, it had the ring of a good omen. His wife should pay a visit to the address that his son had provided.

Yashpal and Sona have been married for nine years, but she has yet to have a child, which makes her feel insufficient. She has been fasting, visiting temples, and other religious practises in order to achieve this. Pyare Lal has also become the father of two kids, making the situation even more precarious. Invisibly,

she tightens up the procedures she's been following for the child.

Every Tuesday she fasted, previously she would eat fruits and milk once during this day, now she converted to a nirjla fast . . . she slept on the floor, abstained from sex, woke early in the morning, bathed before sunrise . . . in the evening, she went to the local temple, buying fruits on the way to distributes to as many Brahmins as she could. (17)

The condition of Sona is getting worse with every single day. Her husband has seen her pain, he has registered her trauma, and he too want a child of his own. He has found out where to go. So, he decides to take her to the temple of Devi which has great significance for the childless couple. The very fact that he was taking Rupa too was a sign of the faith he placed on their journey. Two months after was a sign of the faith he placed on their journey. Two months after their visit to the temple, Sona discover about her pregnancy and tells to her sister Rupa, "I feel it is because of the Devi". (20) very soon she become the mother of a girl, Nisha and a son, Raju. Sona and rest of her family members believe that it is because of their firm

belief and faith in God and all the religious practices she has been observing give her the rewards, "Two children in two years after a decade of draught" (40)

Religious rituals and values have significance in life of Sona. And she always tries her best to inculcate these values in her daughter, Nisha, as well as by inviting her to participate in all their families' pujas. Nisha is told to fast for her future husband. The karwa Chauth katha narrated by Sona derives power from the background of mythology and commands the followers to abide as a valuable practice to stand as a righteous man/woman. Failing to stand by the ideals would not only incur the wrath of gods, but also the degrading attitude of the family members. Sona draws divine inspirations from the stories she has heard in her childhood from her mother and which she intends to pass along in the young daughter of her family.

Conclusion

As a result, the research clearly analyses how literature-religious beliefs and rituals links are impossible to compare over time. The paper goes on to look at the fundamental dilemma of Indian educated middle-class women, who are caught between the traditional norms that have



been ingrained in them as the animating principle of their character and identity, and the perception that has arisen as a result of the outward world as well as their ability to contribute quickly to the world around them. Traditional ideas and the modern intellect coexist in Indian society. Whereas, in the present, modernity applies to both the conduct and manner about doing anything. This is a new and exciting way of looking at life's realities. This work also beautifully expresses the idea that life is not only acceptance or rejection, but rather a combination of both. The combination of modernity and the one's belief systems.

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