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The Cultural Elements in a Societal Crisis. Novels by Githa Hariharan

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Abstract

In the Indian environment, authors are given the chance to shed light on the culture of Indian society. People can only understand the cultural and social underpinnings of their culture through the writer's works. Consequently, this becomes a common practice among authors of Indian English literature. The history of their culture was also portrayed by female writers. Some feminists now believe that women's liberation should not be solely focused on the issues of male-female conflict. For true freedom, a woman must find the inner strength to challenge and overcome various societal systems and cultural norms that oppress her under patriarchal rule and domination. This research paper examines how Indian English fiction writer Githa Hariharan utilizes genre fiction as a means of conveying culture to readers by portraying Indian myths and illustrating how women persevere in the most extraordinary circumstances of their lives.

Key Words: Underpinnings, Consequently, Solely, Domination, Oppress, Patriarchal, Illustrating, persevere.

Introduction

Indian literature in English is relatively recent. An Indian author is distinguished for his literary works on India, and noted authors who experienced life abroad achieved fame due to their literary skills. An Indian novelist is a national source of pride for the country. Through their writing, Indian authors have had a significant impact on an entire generation. Over the years, Indian writers have significantly contributed to English literature. Indian novelists writing in English receive special recognition for depicting India, including its complex social heritage and cultural norms, to Western readers.

Indian authors provide a diverse, multi-faceted perspective on the vibrant nation due to their varied educational and social backgrounds. People from diverse backgrounds have been inspired by their work. Indian writers were not obliged to portray their own country in the works of foreign writers. Several prominent authors have made significant contributions to cultural

and societal debates in the past few years. Indian English novels have been taken to new levels by notable writers including Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri, and others.

Among the emerging writers, Githa Hariharan is a writer of considerable reputation. One of India's most prolific female writers is her. Born in Coimbatore in 1954, she was. She is a prominent social activist renowned for her empathy towards women. Githa Hariharan's writings encompass novels, short stories, articles, and columns, along with essays on numerous subjects that capture her interest. Her debut novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night*, was published in 1992, for which she received the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1993. This novel (1994) was followed by *The Ghost of Vasu Master*. Her third novel, *When Dreams Travel*, was published in 1999, and it was subsequently followed by *In Times of Siege* in 2003. In addition to novels, Githa Hariharan has written a collection of short tales titled *The Art of Dying* (1993) and a book of short stories called *The Winning Team* (2004).

Githa Hariharan thus holds a crucial place in the history of Indian English literature. On one hand, she is a vital component of the broader cultural legacy, but she is also a significant thread in the tradition of Indian women writers. Githa Hariharan holds a crucial place in the history of Indian English literature. On one hand, she is a crucial component of the broader cultural heritage, but she is also a significant thread in the tradition of Indian women writers. Undoubtedly, the era of Githa Hariharan's life is India's most complex cultural epoch. The television's invention and subsequent expansion of news and entertainment channels are of the most notable factors that have accelerated these transformations. No period of transition in India's cultural past has been accelerated as forcefully as the present one. Over the last two decades, the expansion of educational opportunities has been a crucial development. Education had functions beyond

just teaching people to read, and it also began to take on new roles. The development of technical education and managerial courses had a profound impact on the minds of ordinary Indians, with women significantly contributing to India's cultural heritage.

During this tumultuous era in India's socio-cultural development, all five novels that emerged on the literary landscape were penned. Her characters face a societal crisis. In her novel *The Thousand Faces of Night*, she connected the narratives of three women across three generations in Madras, India's southernmost city. The book portrays individuals caught between tradition and modernity as they strive to build their own lives. The protagonist of the novel, Devi, was brought up in a typical Hindu household. In spite of her traditional background, she overcame her obstacles and behaved like a contemporary woman. In her novel, Githa Hariharan portrays the cultural characteristics of our country. The novel explores the art of storytelling. Devi's grandmother, Baba, and Mayamma are some of the characters who share their stories throughout the narrative. Githa Hariharan reworked the stories of the Ramayana and Mahabharata. She discusses the narratives of secondary characters like Amba, Ganga, and others, with Githa Hariharan illustrating our societal culture through these female protagonists. Her characters served as role models.

Githa Hariharan's work, *In Times of Siege*, has a true, personal backstory. In 1995, she tried to open a bank account in her eleven-year-old son's name, but was informed that she could only do so with her husband's consent. The ruling was based on Hindu law, which was still applicable at the time, and stipulated that a woman has the right to guardianship over her children only upon the father's passing. She and her husband chose to take the matter to court, and she ultimately prevailed.

In 1999, an Indian court amended the constitu-

tion to support women by ruling that a mother is undoubtedly a child's natural guardian, which is now seen as a pivotal moment in India's struggle for women's rights. In *Times of Siege* is a reflection of modern Indian society, which is becoming more defined by rising extremism and hatred Lack of trust, and information suppression. The relationship between a pupil and a teacher is explored in this narrative by Githa Hariharan. Shiv is a teacher and Meena is her student. This work also reflects issues of societal culture. In this case, Meena is the daughter of Shiv's childhood friend. Meena sustained an injury to her leg and stayed with Shiv. In the past, a woman living with a man without other people present was regarded as an error. A modern and independent Meena refused to accept outdated views, instead choosing to stay with Shiv. She assisted Shiv during a difficult time. This work provides another example of cultural characteristics.

The *Ghosts of Vasu Master* is Githa Hariharan's upcoming novel. This novel, similar to the previous one, explores the connection between a teacher and a student. Vasu is the former schoolmaster, whereas Mani is the pupil. Githa Hariharan speaks here on the feelings so fare far-too-tired person who lives alone. Even after his retirement, the master does not reside with his sons. The village was inhabited by a single individual. To occupy his time, he gave lessons to students at his residence. One of the students is Mani. He stands out from the rest. Instructing Mani is a challenging task for Vasu's master. Githa Hariharan employs the storytelling technique once more. When sharing stories, Vasu master recalls his mother, grandmother, and wife. Githa Hariharan employed the narrative technique to expose her society's cultural values.

Githa Hariharan's novel is another work titled *When Dreams Travel*. The narrative focuses on the lives of two sisters and two brothers. Githa Hariharan employed the narrative style

once more in this novel. The sisters Shahrzad and Dunyazad married brave brothers to save their lives. The brothers entertained each other by telling humorous anecdotes to while away the time. Githa Hariharan portrays the behavior of a king in his era. In a similar manner, she explains how a woman would tackle these problems.

Githa Hariharan's works reveal the true nature of India's changing social hierarchy when their emotional and ideological influences are stripped away. Githa Hariharan examines societal crises and cultural aspects throughout all of her works.

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