
Cross Cultural and Traditional Conflicts in Anita Rau Badami's *The Hero's Walk*

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Abstract

Post Modernism is being used to describe other subjects like politics, art and architecture, philosophy and popular culture. Post modernism is essentially a philosophic and theoretically position. It privileges the local over the universal, differences rather than similarities, confrontation rather than traditionalism and hybridity rather than purity. The scope has become very wide and comprehensive. It is a social, political and aesthetic ideology which reflects the cross- currents prevailing in the social moment in which we live today. It manifests historical perspective of modernism and modernity. This has been the dominant mode of literature from the latter half of the twentieth century. The world has been converted into a global village it has become a confederation of cultures. This has been brought out in the novels of Anita Rau Badami, a diasporic writer. This paper deals with the cross- cultural and traditional inconsistencies of the migrated characters presented by Badami in The novel, The Hero's Walk.

Key Words: Post Modernism, confrontation, traditionalism, confederation, inconsistencies

Diaspora is an emerging word in literature. The literary works produced by the diasporic writers investigates tribulations and possibilities stimulated by the occurrence of migrancy and diasporic life. The diasporic writings are notorious as deportee writings chiefly confer accent to the harrowing occurrences of the writers when they are on the frame remaining to collide of two cultures or the racial favoritism they undergo. Migration establishes an amusing familiarity to a few colonizers who thrives in incorporating themselves with new geographical, cultural, social and psychological upbringing. To the most of the diasporic writers, immigration is not a delectable experience. They often find themselves sandwiched between two cultures. The feeling of nostalgia, a sense of loss and anxiety to reinvent home obsess them which find expression, consciously or unconsciously in their writings. There are many diasporic writers, scattered in various countries like Britain, America, Canada, Australia and India. The writers like V.S. Naipaul, Vikram Seth, Rohinton Mistry, Salman Rushdie, Anita Rau Badami and many other writers have left their country and settled abroad.



Indian Diaspora has global presence. There are more than twenty million people of Indian origin, spread in 136 countries. They want their children to adopt Indian values. The works of all those among the Indian diasporic writers who have taken writing exhibit their faith in hereditary cultural values. Among the Indian diaspora, Anita Rau Badami occupies a distinctive place since she refines the concept of diaspora. Her characters, in long as well as in short fiction are set against divergent ethnic and cultural background. Though they encounter cultural crisis yet they soon explore new ways of 'belonging' and 'becoming' in the country of their choice.

The passionate search for seeking and accomplishing the roots of national culture or the essence of nativism sometimes create the sense of differences and dissension. It seems that people in spite of having racial superiority, traditional wealth, the definitive geographic advantages, linguistic and ethnic heritage and territorial bounds die for the sake of native cause. The determinants of that particular cause or essence are hard to be defined; perhaps the nucleus of the essence lies in culture. The intense desire to seek and to accomplish the native values as propounded by the socio-moral psyche becomes the prime motif for solving the questions of culture. Thus, to save, to accomplish, and to explain national culture means to define the national psyche on which the pulsating nerve of the entire nation rotate.

The possessed emotion of Badami becomes symbolic of human behavior through the medium of poetic imagination for the creation of poetic qualities of the novelist so far as the range of imagination and the objectification of human emotions are concerned; it solves the question of otherness and assimilation through the logicentric dialectics of culture. The dialectics of history and it finally resects into an essence which is called historicity or the formation and re-formation of the processed identity of an individual, society and nation as a whole. The woman too shares her contribution to the processed identity of a nation. The characters of Badami's novels reveal socio-psychological traumas, relating to the life of an exile and expatriate.

The predicament of the fate of the females in cross-cultural spaces has been a major component of the literature. The consistent confrontation in the process of assimilation, stumbling against alien cultural forces with the persisting shadows of native cultural heritage, fractures the individual's self generating only a greater isolation and loneliness. Anita Rau Badami with her consciousness of dilemma of cultural crisis shares the anguish and suffering of 'Womanhood' in the order of patriarchy. Most of the protagonists of Badami, besides preserving their essential 'femininity,' endeavor to protect their womanhood and individuality in the cultural surroundings, chosen out of personal choices or thrust out of professional compulsions.

In the recent 'Women's Studies,' it has been pointed out that different cultures have different structures of values, recommending the distinctive code of morality for women. In spite of certain cultural distinctions of East and West, feminism still holds that there is a universal sisterhood where women, regardless of cultural disparities, have something in common. Badami's fictional world is an account of women experienced in different cultural spaces, seeking a common conclusion that the realization of being a woman and the unconditional surrender of a woman to the tributes of femininity are the integral part of feminine psyche. Different locations assign her different roles- wife, daughter, care - taker, beloved and competent professional but at every stage she is conscious to achieve an identity of her own, along with her consciousness of her being an Indian woman. The synthesis of cultural awareness, feminist sensibility and the assertion of individuality of a new dimension to the feminist consciousness scattered in the novels of Badami.

Badami's novel, *The Hero's Walk* and *Tamarind Mem* concentrated on the depiction of the women's freedom and social reality of all the times. In particular it emerges the cultural mix of times impacted by the globalization and the growth of many fields. Badami tried to write about the dilemma faced by the people in their nation, home and native. She contests the difference between the culture in both East and West. She relates the nature of the relationship to the literatures of her based country of her

origin. The novel speaks about the traditions and cultures and how the characters feel about their motherland. In The novel, *The Hero's Walk* Badami explicates the components such as disappointment, loss, circumstances of the life by not losing the dignity set in the common people but merely talks about the heroism which is needed to face the unexpected things, disasters and difficulties of life.

Nandhana, who lost her parents, was the product of Canada. But now, she has to led her life in India with the traditional family of her grandparents. At the young age she longed for motherly love which was hampered to her and besides she struggled a lot to equilibrium between the East and the West culture. The characters in the novel unearth pluckiness in some gesticulations and in their age old traditions appreciably captivating the own qualms. Nandhana thought that her parents would come back any one day. This ventures the conciliations and the considerate of vigorous affairs in a family. In this novel Badami spotlighted the sentimental accessory of Sripathi. The inconsistency between the parent and the child is exposed in this novel with Sripathi and Maya, his own daughter. Baddami poses his existence with the women and children in his family with dissimilar character follies. And she spots towards his expedition he acquires in his living and how the sagacity of splendor toiled in the human race. The novel represents the sum of diasporic identities and it is shaped by many changes with empowering process.

In this novel Badami explored two interrelated components such as, the cross-cultural and traditional conflicts and the consciousness of the women she portrayed. This novel is about the problems of emigration and also about the insecurity of the immigrated people. This is explained through the pictorial narration of the life of the chief character Sripathi. He led a traditional life along with his family. As it is an Indian drama, this novel exposes the emotional tensions present in the South Asian Diaspora. The novel contains the sudden changes, struggles, catastrophes and the eventual heroism of the protagonist, Sripathi. The novel rounds about Nandhana, seven year Canadian raised orphan who has lost her parents in an automobile accident returned to her grandparents. The young girl faced many problems as it was new place to her. She is snagged by amending to the Indian ethnicity and conventions. Maya, the mother of Nandhana, refused the marriage arranged by her parents. Even though her parents objected, she married a white man and settled in Vancouver, Canada. There they met with an accident and died. So, Nandhana was cared by her grandfather, Sripathi.

Sipathi himself had to undergo with some family problems. He had an unmarried sister at the age of forty who was to be married with someone. His wife was still disappointed with the daughter's immatured accidental death. His son too gave him troubles. Even though Nandhana was ready to accept her grandparents as her guardians wholeheartedly, the grandparents worried a

lot about her future after their lifetime. All these incidents are the own experiences faced by Badami. The characters created by Badami have an insightful and thoughtful voice which reflects the writer's own experiences in the fiction. The characters tackle the issues of the family, finance, love, motherhood and the other.

The female protagonists of Badami's novels have complex relationships with the other characters in the novel. According to Badami family rapports are more vital than love and romance. She has proved that the women in India are not improved but they remain the same as it was in the past. Even now they are treated to be subordinate to man. Women are not allowed to live their own life. They are not deduced to have any individuality of their own. She will be protected by her father, husband and son and they have no right to protect or direct her own life. Many Indian writers like Badami tried to fight against this illtreatment of women. These writers expose their visions and deliberations in their novels.

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