

The Repudiation Of Tradition Found In Memories Of Rain By Sunetra Gupta

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Abstract

Culture is the predominant idea that shaped human beings as civilized and refined. The fundamental design of culture stipulates us to act distinct from all other beings which lack love, self identity, and cognitive abilities. Intercultural marriage of Moni with Antony unveils the contradiction of two characters which belongs to different culture. The woman character Moni's post traumatic experience of marriage caused by betrayal and cultural alienation manifested the victimization of hegemonic masculinity. The infidelity of her white husband makes her to return Calcutta for getting curative space of nostalgic effect and deep despair. Moni's revolutionary thought of leaving husband and reaching mother land with daughter proves the advanced contemplation which overtakes cultural barriers especially made for woman to follow austerely. The author has created two distinct cultural conceptions by metaphorical language and lyrical imagery which are reflected through the disposition of personalities. Moni becomes a cultured woman with self respect and dignity however she departed from her spouse.

Keywords: Cross Culture- Identity- Displacement - Male Domination- Racial Discrimination.

Introduction

The human beings are identified as urbane, refined only after attained civilization through culture. Our thinking is properly channelized through cultural habits only. There are so many customs are followed in this world by people who were separated and identified the ways they are following. Each culture proves that there are so many ways to live a

fruitful life in this world by following nature's law of fellow beings. Humanity and respect is the base for all the culture. The people are identified as cultured by the way of how they treated and valued other cultures.

The significant subject 'Diaspora' is to be associated with the alienated, itinerant and peripatetic immigrants from their native soil. The review of cultural movement touching on a loss of mother country, a moving inhabitants from particular setting to a further. The emigrant Indian English literature is intensely entrenched in the geographical traditions and climate. The immigrant writers Amitav Ghosh, Raja Roa, Bharati Mukherjee, Kiran Desai, Citra Banerjee Divakaruni, Jhumpa Lahiri and Sunetra Gupta are involved in centring the real Indian born characters of both gender, their traditions and way of life.

Sunetra Gupta's hypnotic novel 'Memories of Rain' have won the Sahitya Academy award in India. This novel filled by literary references wrapped with rhetorical lingo and recollections discusses the life of the two youthful characters Antony and Moni belongs to different country and culture. In 1978 India, particularly Calcutta, the author unites the sharp, imaginative Anthony with a undergraduate student, deeply rooted in culture, Moni. This style remembers Virginia Woolf's the stream of consciousness narrative entwine equally reminiscences and images of human tendency and traditions.

Anthony, an English man has come to Calcutta to do research on Bengali theatre. Moni's 'Dada' brings him in the rain-swollen dark of a Calcutta flood storm. Moni was fascinated towards Anthony by the inspiration of her literary imagination and an attraction of European country.

"We talked, this afternoon, as everybody else snored away, we talked of poetry as it thundered outside. It has been raining all day, it is driving me insane..." (Gupta, 1992:26)

They roamed together in many places like 'Citizen Kane', Amirita's house, made them acquaintance well. The young couple has started their life in London. Moni experienced all new things in that alien land disappoints her expectation of fairy foreign land. There was scores of cultural conflicts in all aspects of things which are against her literary imagination. Anthony was decreased proximity with Moni as he lost desire over her virginal purity. They are

separated by all means of life when Anna interrupts their living. Though Moni has adopted Anthony's taste and habits he didn't pay any attention towards her. The author has included the sufferings of displaced mind and the quandaries of diaspora affected by geographical boundaries.

Moni expresses her tormented fervour and murky views by singing the poems of Bengali writer Tagore, represents India internationally by the Noble Prize work Geethanjali. Those songs are reflected her deep mourning and loveless life. Clash of culture and emotional dichotomy of East and West is encountered by Moni, absolutely disappointed by the real England, fortified by the literary works of Tagore, Agatha Christie and Austen. She has a diverse range of romantic books in both English and Bengali language. The novel 'Wuthering Heights' is her favourite novel, formed her sense of destined and fervent, though forthrightly angelic, love:

She had dreamt then of wandering as a spirit with her beloved upon English moors, her hot tears had spilled upon the yellowed pages, she had loved Heathcliff before she loved any man, and she had let sweet weakness grow within her, she had convinced herself... (Gupta, 1992:177)

Her deep feeling is very much influenced by the literature and the canons of romanticism and modernism. She remembers the characters and works which are incorporated with her real life like childhood days, Anthony's fondle of Moni's dark hair in loving seventh heaven, his intense love with Anna as in the poem of Tagore, 'Banalata Sen' and Sukanta Battacharya's image respectively. She couldn't express herself in exact English or by any translations of literary works prove the language is the blockade to communicate with her man. So Moni chosen silence as her speech to convey all her emotions pathetically Anthony is not properly getting her lingo code.

Moni likes to write in English and wished it to be published in journal or book. But her language is not attained that much standard of Sharmila, her friend, good at English is the only person Moni could write letters in English with Bengali lines. Moni has recorded all her experiences in writing especially with black ink. But she couldn't write her life section with Anthony since

embarrassed to show anyone or read herself. Stoppage of writing painful period of life with Anthony struck her imaginative quality and her real character. She wanted to keep away from Anthony and Anna.

Moni searched job for strengthening her will to sustain in this convoluted land, London. It is a temporary administrative job in library that she closely associated with. She had worked as 'assistant to Gayathri at the Institute Library', bring back her memories of spending much time in library, 'the summer of '76, in her school and college days. Moni used Anthony 's credit cards since her salary is scanty. She couldnot get moral support and protection from anything. Anthony is interested in Anna only. They are living a harmonious life in the presence of Moni and her daughter. Sunetra Gupta's explanation tune shifted swiftly from past to present unfolding that Moni's fresh days become adverse by cultural difficulties, rejection and infidelity of other half.

Anthony has maintained his relationship with Anna is the reflection of western culture polygamy and the life led by desire, not with any philosophy or properly channelized way of life by ancestors. Anna was attracted by his interest towards books and writings specially white skin. Anna is a gorgeous tall girl, daughter of a poet developed emotional bond with Anthony. He was the subject to many love connection with white women since early years of University College. Anthony and Anna's relationship is the only misery Moni had. She couldn't bear the infidelity and loveless state of her husband whilst no one for her support in the unknown soil. Betrayal of marital life is the focal point of the novel and the consequences lead further development. According to Anthony love and wedded life is not bounded by only girl is the reason he justifies the relationship with Anna is hamartia of Moni's life.

There are many traditions are followed in this world. Adopting new culture will develop the life style is the only hope makes Moni to attending party, wearing western fits is not a helpful ostentatious way to mingle with Anthony. She barely prefers emotional bond which was created in India before their marriage. The only problem of Moni is not to ready to share her position in the family with anyone is her mother culture reflection she imbibed with. Anna has snatched that part from Moni by creating

emotional and intellectual union with Anthony. Moni remembers Satyabati, a mythological character when she thinks about Anna's illicit relationship with her husband. She has realised Anthony's real face slowly that he is a typical western man expects same blood to have a loveable being.

Recognizing Anthony's real face of fake love prepared Moni to show her censure by gifting wedding saree to Anna and harming her daughter to make both frustrated. But her cultured mind is not ready to do these boorish actions. Finally she takes a decision to leave Anthony permanently on the day of her daughter's sixth birthday party. Anthony is not permitting her to go India even he knows her extreme nostalgic effect in her mundane life. Moni often thinks of her position in family life in an excruciating one owing to her life without love and respect. Year by year she couldn't tolerate her discourteous status rather than passionless in being. The deep explanation in the period of one week before of her daughter's birthday intensified on last three days as her sour despair and silence towards all including her pillows.

Moni's traditional way of life is supposed to be a reason of her tormented occurrences in London. Her emotions and ideologies were widened by the writings of Tagore and holy books like Mahabharata, stories of many Gods and the strict adherence of traditional ways for living. Her childhood memories with brother and friends Gayatri, Tapan, Manash and Amirta, sacred rivers like Ganges, scent of hyacinth and so on. However the character Anthony is the mouth piece of westerners who thinks that the East is a barbaric land where the women are burnt alive with their dead husband mercilessly proves their uncultured way of understanding other culture idiotically. We can appreciate the tradition by tracing out the history of Indian life style and the attack of imperial minds over Eastern countries by the writings of Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak in 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', Edward Said in 'Orientalism', Ashcroft, Griffiths, Helen Tiffin in 'The Empire Writes Back'. These works are the reflection of how the whites become dominant over the cultured Easterners and prepared to think those cultured people as subordinate made them as slave and the colonisation become a successful attempt.

The racial discrimination over Moni was enjoyed as a White Anthony. She had lost her lover in the dogma of imperialism since her situation is pathetic that there is no one to share her anguished feelings. She takes darkness as her lover as no one is there for support. The author states the confusing mind of woman who tries to emancipating herself from all the chains cuffed results dastardliness, humiliation and slavery. It is expressed that woman has assigned only for some works in the family and society, not exceeding the level of male who is believed to the leading force of entire world. Moni has decided to leave Anthony permanently will be accused as uncultured action but she is forced to take this resolution for protecting self respect and realized that there is a life without husband's support. She realized that many worthy deeds are there than living a family life.

“when she go back, she can work for a charity, expunge her sins of having lived in a land of plenty by devoting her life to the poor, the diseased, the hungry, she can see herself, clothed in dull white, soothing a sick child, a new energy seizes her...(Gupta 1992:108)

The act of return to India, home country for Moni, has empowering her identity and self-esteem. She wants to restore her closeness with her own home Calcutta. Once her thought over the life of India makes her happy and gives a sense of wholeness. She depart from England with her daughter is an act of getting freedom and liberation from all the mental and physical sufferings of a disloyal husband who failed to recognize her personal agony of dislocation and rootlessness by leaving the relationships and people of mother country. The female identity and the suppression over feminine qualities are deeply discussed by many writers and activists like Simone de Beauvoir, Eleanor Roosevelt, Virginia woolf, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker and so on. They are advocating the basic rights and freedom of woman is not in the hands of any other in this world but with them. The women are having a right to live their own life which cannot be controlled by any religion, culture and creed, are created by the opposite sex of female who made them as ‘the second sex’. Moni has decided to have a good life with self respect and love of kith and kin and friends in the mother country.

Culture and character is intertwined one another. We are chiefly identified by the culture we follow and custom we engrossed. When the people undertake a travel across the world makes them as dislocated by means of missing the culture. Moni's pronouncement of returning own country means that the woman is not chained until she realized her spirit of womanhood. The humans are giving the meaning to life by living properly with great dogmas or simple principles, are not mean any slavery, subjugation, discrimination etc. The author tried to prove the actual significance of woman's life is to live a cultured life significantly not corrupting their nature.

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