
**CULTURE AND IDENTITY CRISIS IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF ANITA RAU
BADAMI**

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Abstract

Anita Rau Badami is a legend of South Asian descent living in Canada. She was born in Odisha of India. She is the author of *Tamarind Mem* (1997) her graduate thesis became her first novel, *The Hero's Walk* (2001) her bestselling novel and won the Regional Commonwealth Writers Prize, *Can you Hear the Night Bird Call* (2006) and *Tell it to the Trees*. The theme of her novels is complexities of Indian family life and the cultural gap when moving to the west. Badami was influenced by the books like *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie, *Cat's Eye and Surfacing* by Margaret Atwood, *A House for Mr. Biswas* by Marilynne Robinson. Therefore the researcher has pointed out some of the problems like cultural and trauma of the immigrants in Anita Rau Badami's novels. And she has received worldwide acclaim for her writing in the realm of diasporic literature.

There are some autobiographical elements in her *Tamarind Mem*. And she claims that there are not autobiographical traces in her works. *Tamarind Mem* unfolds the isolation of mother (Saroja) and daughter (Kamini). Kamini finds different cultures in Canada and suffers to adopt a new culture there. She realizes that our Indian culture is one of the richest cultures in the world. After Kamini arrives in Canada she finds difficulty in the beginning, after the reminiscences of the Indian culture she completely accepts and follows the new culture. In the *Tamarind Mem* Kamini and her mother never meets in person but in the modern world development, she could talk to her mother over the phone now and then. The whole novel deals with the memoir of Kamini about Indian tradition and culture.

Keywords: *South Asian, Commonwealth, Midnight's Children, .etc*

In *Hero's Walk*, as India is a secular country, early morning worship to god by the people of different religions is a marker of our own identity. In the western world, one cannot witness the

same pattern of worship there. For many ages, caste and religious consciousness are prevailing in India. In *Hero's Walk* when a Muslim boy Karim enters into the house of a Hindu, the foot where he stands would be cleaned by water immediately after he goes out of the place. Only an uncivilized people will do this and some educated people still follow the traditional and archetypal method of hospitality. Regarding the concept of marriage cannot be applicable to western countries.

In *Can You Hear the Night Bird Call?* some women characters like Sharan, Leela and Nimmie make the plot colorful. The researcher has pointed out the love and tragedy of the novel. *Can You Hear the Night Bird Call?* takes place at the time of partition and people received threatened to leave the country. And now we are in the present scenario that our neighbor country Pakistan threatens India regarding the terrorist attack at Pulwama in Kashmir on 14th Feb 2019. And so many criticisms are going on pertinent to the terrorist attack in India. But no good decision has been taken yet by the present BJP government. It does not mean that India should revenge Pakistan but sit together with and have come to a fine conclusion for the welfare of both countries. In the novel, Badami has portrayed the assassination of our former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in India. Then some other problems like identity crisis and cultural difficulties then the comfort we enjoy in our homeland.

Badami has spent her earlier stage of life in India. After her marriage as her husband works in Canada, she has migrated to Canada. When she enters into the new land she finds there the touch of modernity. The streets of the town were in a very good atmosphere. And River Godavari is known for the field of paddy in India. She has traveled to various countries and experienced a lot in culture and politics. *In Tell It to the Trees* as the suspenseful story unfolds from the multiple perspectives of 13-year-old Varsha, her stepmother Suman and Anu, who kept a note during her time living with Dharmas. Badami is deft at building and particularizing those characters fortunate enough to have a voice in her tale. Varsha feisty but fragile, wounded by her loss of her mother, will also abandon her, while she lives in fear of her volatile father. Longing for maternal protection, Varsha dotes on her little brother Hemant. In a paradoxical, poignant safeguard against becoming motherless, Varsha becomes a miniature mother, loving Hem more than air, water and food. This type of childcare prevails only on the Asian countries. The familial bond relationship one could enjoy and experience to the in India and not in Canada.

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