

## A CULTURAL RELATION OF R.K. NARAYAN'S NOVEL "THE DARK ROOM"

**Mrs. G K Mani Gayathri**

*Research Scholar*

*Madurai Kamaraj University*

**Dr. N. Moorthy**

*Associate Professor*

*PG Research Centre, GTN College, Dindigul*

### **Abstract**

*In this study we discuss how R.K. Narayan shows the Indian cultures and its norm in the novel "Dark Room". Savitri is the protagonist of the novel. Savitri represents the culture of the Indian women. Usually, the Indian author R.K. Narayan writes about the Indian culture and how the society treats the Indian women. In every origin culture comes out from the women, the way women treats shows the culture that what society creates the norms. Culture includes the dress, the language and the food. The novel "Dark Room" indicates the kitchen. Savitri is an Indian traditional woman, who works a lot for her husband and for her three children. The most culture followed by the Indian society is a patriarchal system.*

### **Introduction**

The Dark Room was published in 1938 by R.K. Narayan explores the cultural heritage of India before independence. Narayan, who is known for portraying Indian middle-class life realistically, creates a narrative that displays the inherent contradictions and complexities of cultural norms. Malgudi, which is a fictional town in the novel, acts as a miniature representation of traditional Indian society. The objective of this paper is to analyze the cultural relationships depicted in The Dark Room, emphasizing familial roles, societal expectations, and the broader cultural milieu

### **Cultural symbolism is present in the 'Dark Room'**

In the novel, the dark room symbolizes both Savitri's emotional retreat and the wider cultural space where individuals struggle with societal constraints through its central metaphor. This is a representation of the intersection between personal despair and societal expectations, which is the cultural tendency to suppress individual desires for the greater good of the family and community.

### **The Reflection of Culture on Family Dynamics**

The Dark Room's central theme is the portrayal of family as a cultural institution. In this family dynamics ramani role represents the traditional authority and savitri represents dedicated wife and mother. In these dynamics the gender roles and power structures are exemplified. These norms are critiqued in the novel by illustrating their impact on individual agency and emotional well-being. **Tradition Versus Modernity**

The *Dark Room* frequently deals with the conflict between tradition and modernity. Ramani's betrayal and attraction to Shanta Bai, who is a modern and independent woman, demonstrate the shift towards individualism and modern values within the culture. Cultural heritage's resilience can be seen in Savitri's adherence to traditional norms, even when Savitri faced with personal turmoil. Narayan presents the conflict and coexistence of these opposing forces of Savitri and Ramani with a complex depiction within the same cultural framework.

### **The Contrast between Tradition and Modernity**

The *Dark Room* repeatedly explores the tension between tradition and modernity. The cultural shift towards individualism and modern values is highlighted by Ramani's infidelity and his attraction to Shanta Bai, a modern and independent woman. Savitri's commitment to traditional norms highlights the resilience of cultural heritage, even when faced with personal turmoil. Narayan's precise portrayal shows how these opposing forces coexist and struggle within the same cultural context.

### **Characters Play a Role in Cultural Criticism**

Cultural norms and values are critiqued by Narayan through the use of his characters. Savitri's brief reversal of her oppressive circumstances shows the difficulties that individuals face in asserting their identity in a rigid cultural context. Her return to the family highlighted the limitations imposed by cultural expectations due to social pressures and maternal instincts. These norms are enhanced in the novel's cultural narrative by the contrastive viewpoints of characters such as Poni and Shanta Bai.

### **Conclusion**

*The Dark Room* is a profound exploration of cultural relationships, capturing the intricacies of tradition, modernity, and familial dynamics within Indian society. Through its characters and narrative, the novel offers a timeless critique of cultural norms, highlighting their impact on individual agency and identity. Narayan's work stands as a testament to the richness of Indian cultural narratives, providing valuable insights for both literary and cultural studies.

### **Works Cited**

1. Kumar, Dr. Anil. "The Dark Room by R.K. Narayan: A Portrait of Indian Women." *IJAHS*, 2024(6-1-27-778).
2. Sharma, Dr. Chhavi. "R.K. Narayan's The Dark Room: A Study." *JETIR*, 2019 (JETIR1905W19).
3. Singh, Dr. Sanjay. "R.K. Narayan's The Dark Room: A Study in Feminist Perspective." *Research Review International Journal*, 2020(RRJ671565).
4. Madar, Kumar. "Images of Women in R.K. Narayan's The Dark Room." *IJAR*, 2020(6-3-26-272).

5. Hariprasanna, A. *The World of Malgudi: A Study of R. K. Narayan Novels*. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1994.
6. Narayan, R.K. *The Dark Room*. Indian Thought Publications, 2007.
7. Sharan, Nagendra Nath. *A Critical Study of the Novels of R. K. Narayan*. New Delhi: Classical Publishing Company, 1993.
8. Walsh, William. *R.K. Narayan: A Critical Appreciation*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1982.
9. Dass, Veena Noble. "Gynic Quest for Self-Identity in R.K. Narayan Novels." *Feminism and Literature*. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1995.