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BEYOND WESTERN CRITICAL PARADIGMS: INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN READING *LOVE MARRIAGE* AND *THE SOUND OF LANGUAGE*

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Abstract

This paper studies the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) as a meaningful and culturally rooted way of reading South Asian diasporic women's narratives. It focuses on the women protagonists in Monica Ali's *Love Marriage* and Amulya Malladi's *The Sound of Language*. The protagonists negotiate life between two cultures and experience emotional stress, cultural conflict, and identity crises. Western theories such as postcolonialism and feminism help us understand social and gender issues, but they often do not fully explain the inner emotional and ethical struggles of these women.

The paper applies concepts from Indian literary theory such as *Rasa*, *Dhvani*, *Puruṣārthas*, and *Karma* to understand the inner feelings of the protagonists. *Rasa* helps to explain emotions like fear, sadness, confusion, and inner tension. *Dhvani* shows the hidden meanings, silence, and unspoken pain present in the stories. The idea of *Puruṣārthas* i.e. *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma*, and *Mokṣa*, helps to understand the conflict between personal desire, family duty, material needs, and the search for peace. *Karma* explains how past actions, cultural values, and upbringing influence the present choices of the women.

The paper argues that Indian Knowledge System concepts offer a deeper and more balanced way of understanding diasporic women's writing. This approach helps us better understand their emotional pain, moral struggles, and divided identity, and it reinforces the need to include Indian perspectives in literary studies.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System, Diasporic Women's Writing, *Rasa*, *Dhvani*, *Puruṣārthas*, *Karma*

I. Introduction

South Asian diasporic women's writing has become an important part of English literature today. These narratives talk about migration, cultural difference, family pressure, and identity problems. Women characters often live between two cultures—the culture of their homeland and the culture of the host country. Because of this, they experience emotional pain, confusion, and a sense of divided identity.

Most scholars study diasporic women's writing using Western theories such as postcolonialism and feminism. These theories help us understand social inequality, gender issues, and cultural conflict. However, they mainly focus on external problems like society, politics, and power. They do not fully explain the inner emotional struggle, moral conflict, and silent suffering of diasporic women.

In this situation, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) provides a meaningful alternative. Indian literary ideas such as *Rasa*, *Dhvani*, *Puruṣārthas*, and *Karma* help us understand emotions, silence, duty, desire, and inner conflict. These concepts allow us to understand diasporic women's narratives from their own cultural background.

This paper studies women characters in Monica Ali's *Love Marriage* and Amulya Malladi's *The Sound of Language*. It argues that IKS concepts offer a deeper and more balanced understanding of their emotional pain, moral struggle, and identity crisis.

II. Western Critical Approaches: Strengths and Limits

Western theories have played an important role in the study of diasporic literature. Postcolonial theory explains migration, cultural conflict, and identity formation in foreign lands. Feminist criticism focuses on women's oppression, patriarchal control, and gender inequality. These approaches help us understand the social conditions faced by diasporic women.

However, these theories have some limitations. They mainly see identity crisis as a social or political problem. They do not give much attention to emotions, ethical duty, and cultural values. Silence, patience, and emotions are often seen as weakness, not as meaningful cultural responses.

South Asian women carry strong cultural values related to family, duty, and morality. Their suffering is often silent and internal. Therefore, Indian Knowledge System ideas are useful because they connect emotion, ethics, and culture.

III. Indian Knowledge System: Key Ideas Used

The Indian Knowledge System offers a holistic view of human life. It connects emotion, duty, desire, and inner peace. This paper employs four important IKS concepts.

3.1 *Rasa*

Rasa explains how emotions work in literature. Instead of focusing on personal psychology, it shows shared human feelings. In diasporic women's writing, emotions like sadness (*Karuṇa*) and fear (*Bhayānaka*) are very strong. These emotions help us understand inner pain and loneliness.

3.2 *Dhvani*

Dhvani means suggestion or hidden meaning. Many women characters do not openly express their pain. Their silence, hesitation, and indirect speech carry deep meaning. *Dhvani* helps us understand what is not directly said.

3.3 *Puruṣārthas*

The four *Puruṣārthas*—*Dharma* (duty), *Artha* (material needs), *Kāma* (desire), and *Mokṣa* (peace)—represent the goals of human life. Diasporic women often face conflict among these goals. This imbalance leads to emotional stress and identity crisis.

3.4 *Karma*

Karma explains how past actions, upbringing, and cultural values influence present choices. Even in foreign countries, women are guided by values learned in childhood. This creates tension between past culture and present life.

IV. Monica Ali's *Love Marriage*

In *Love Marriage*, Monica Ali presents women who struggle between tradition and modern life. Living in a foreign country increases their emotional and moral conflict.

4.1 *Rasa* in *Love Marriage*

The main emotion in the novel is *Karuṇa Rasa*. Women characters feel sadness because they cannot freely express their feelings. *Bhayānaka Rasa* is also present in the form of fear—fear of family, society, and cultural judgment. The absence of inner peace (*Śānta Rasa*) can be easily seen in the novel.

4.2 *Dhvani* and Silence

Silence plays an important role in the novel. Women often hide their pain to protect family relationships. Through *Dhvani*, the novel shows emotional suffering without loud expression. Silence becomes a powerful form of communication.

4.3 *Puruṣārthas* and Inner Conflict

The women struggle to balance *Dharma* and *Kāma*. Personal desires clash with family duty. *Artha*, such as social respect and security, adds pressure. *Mokṣa*, or inner peace, remains distant.

4.4 *Karma* and Cultural Values

The women's choices are influenced by their cultural upbringing. Even when living abroad, past values shape their decisions. *Karma* works through memory and habit.

V. Amulya Malladi's *The Sound of Language*

This novel focuses on language as a major part of identity. The protagonist Raihana suffers because she cannot fully express herself in a foreign language.

Rasa in *The Sound of Language*

The dominant emotion is *Karuṇa Rasa*, showing loneliness and emotional pain. *Bhayānaka Rasa* appears as fear of misunderstanding and rejection.

5.1 *Dhvani* and Linguistic Silence

The inability to speak freely creates silence. This silence is not empty; it carries emotional depth. *Dhvani* helps us understand the pain hidden behind hesitation and broken communication.

5.2 *Puruṣārthas* and Language

Language affects all life goals. *Dharma* becomes difficult in an unfamiliar culture. *Artha* is linked to survival and work. *Kāma* is limited by emotional isolation. *Mokṣa* remains unreachable.

5.3 *Karma* and Memory

Past cultural and linguistic experiences influence the protagonist's present life. *Karma* creates a struggle between old identity and new environment.

VI. Comparative Discussion

Both novels show women suffering from identity crisis, but in different ways.

In *Love Marriage*, the conflict is mainly emotional and ethical.

In *The Sound of Language*, the conflict is linguistic and cultural.

Indian Knowledge System concepts help us understand both experiences deeply. *Rasa* explains shared emotional pain. *Dhvani* highlights silence. *Puruṣārthas* explain inner imbalance. *Karma* connects past culture with present life.

Indian Knowledge System as an Alternative

Indian Knowledge System does not replace Western theories but complements them. It focuses on inner life, ethics, and emotion. It helps us understand diasporic women's writing from their own cultural background.

This approach supports the need to include Indian perspectives in English literary studies.

VII. Conclusion

This paper has shown that the Indian Knowledge System offers a strong and meaningful way to read South Asian diasporic women's narratives. Concepts like *Rasa*, *Dhvani*, *Puruṣārthas*, and *Raihana* and *Yasmin* illustrate how migration intensifies challenges related to gender, culture, family expectations, and selfhood. They suffer more not simply because they migrate, but because they must negotiate gender, culture, family obligations, and identity simultaneously. Their internal pain and suffering which is perhaps due to double or triple displacement, making their diasporic experience more complex and often more painful than that of men.

Diasporic women's identity crisis is not only social or psychological. It is also emotional and ethical. Indian Knowledge System perspectives allow a deeper and more balanced reading and contribute to the decolonization of literary studies. IKS thus provide a more comprehensive and humane framework for understanding diasporic women's experiences. They not only examine external structures of oppression but also the inner, spiritual, ethical, and emotional dimensions of human life.

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