

How to Cite:

Manimozhi, R. (2022). Narrative techniques employed by Githa Hariharan in *In Times of Siege*. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S4), 12100–12103.

<https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS4.11807>

Narrative techniques employed by Githa Hariharan in *In Times of Siege*

Dr. R. Manimozhi

Assistant Professor of English, A.D.M. College for Women (Autonomous)
Nagapattinam - 611 001, Tamil Nadu, (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University,
Tiruchirappalli)

Abstract---Githa Hariharan uses a variety of techniques in her novels to depict the themes of alienation, betrayal, and disloyalty. Narrative tools like the stream of consciousness technique, flashback technique, and storytelling elements, which have clear morals for society. The crisis of identity plays a pivotal role in *In Times of Siege*. Her stories are complete with recounting of various kinds of inequalities and power struggles. The paradox of desire for change and the status in the mind of secular intellectual is shown in this novel. *In Times of Siege*, the title's military metaphor outlines the film's vehemently polemical and ultimately uncompromising stance on religious extremism. Fiction depicts the glory of our culture; learners will be able to understand the structure of a sentence, word order and vocabulary. Cultural information is disseminated by Githa Hariharan through her fiction. Her work is a clear representation of Indian culture, literature, and oral traditions. This article examines the author's use of various Narrative Techniques and Tools to investigate the theme of the novel, as well as the characters' state of mind, attitude, and responses.

Keywords---stream consciousness technique, flash back technique, storytelling aspects, religious extremism.

Introduction

A story can be told in a variety of ways, including films, lyrics, poems, lectures, novels and Science fiction. The adjective 'narrative' means 'characterized by or related to story telling.' The word "technique" comes from the Greek "techniko techno," which means "art." Everything the novelist does to tell the storey is referred to as technique. The way or story telling method is known as narrative technique, and it is primarily an aesthetic endeavour. Githa Hariharan is fascinated by the life of a single person, her problems, dilemmas, and struggles to face life's harsh realities. She is neither a social reformer nor a satirist. In order to

construct novels with clear morals for society, she has used a number of narrative methods in her novels to transmit the theme, including the narrative techniques such as stream of consciousness, flashback and aspects like storytelling to depict the themes of her novels. The novel *In Times of Siege* is about the ruling political parties' attempts to rewrite history and Hinduism the educational system. Fundamentalism, hate, mistrust and censorship have become increasingly prevalent in Indian society, as reflected in the story. The crisis of identity plays a pivotal part in *In Times of Siege*. Her stories are complete with recounting of various kinds of inequalities and power struggles. They all in some way or the other emphasize the individual's assertion of identity. The novel unfolds many layers of the human psyche as an individual along ethnic and nationalistic dimensions.

The central meaning of the novel seems to be the ambiguous predicament of a secular academician subjected to the wrath of a fanatical group over a history lesson. The novel *In Times of Siege* is divided into twelve chapters and the story takes place during 31 August, 2000 - 15th October of the same year. The journalistic experience and style made her to write in a captivating, precise, and picturesque style.

The paradox of desire for change and the status quo in the mind of secular intellectual is shown in this novel. The historical ambiguity of mind is the result of the clash between faith and secularism. The secular intellectual's predicament is unenviable as he has to believe in his disbelief. A.S.Dasan says in relation to *In Times of Siege* as:

“The novel can be read as a contesting narrative that foregrounds ‘historiography as a site of conflict’ with contemporary relevance...The point implied is that humanity cannot be defrauded by age-old historiography of caste hegemony, and preserving culture and civilization cannot be left into the hands of zealots who behave like fanatics and thugs in the name of religion, morality and caste hegemony” (1)

The narrative articulates conversation on what constitutes secularism, and even faith itself, on a formal novelistic and ideological level. The atmosphere in *In Times of Siege* is hazy and fails to convey the sense of impending doom that the title implies, nor does it feel ominous. From one event to the next, the storey progresses. Shiv's office has been ransacked and shredded. For his safety, a guard is stationed outside his home. Despite being so engrossing, it is impossible to reach any kind of conclusion. Shiv's paper observation is brushed aside by the university, which is concerned about the "implications" (ITS 67). Shiv's idea is as follows:

“...a flash of surprised recognition. This must be how a man feels when he has leapt out of an open window. The last image he sees before his picture making machine hits the pavement and breaks in a message flashed in telegraphic language” (ITS 73)

The novel also points out the relationship of memory with history. The memory of historical is intertwined with the memory of personal. Shiv remembers his father

whom he has seen only he was thirteen years old at the time. "He has had to stretch memory fill in blanks spaces and obliterates stubborn question marks, to fashion his father's life into a viable narrative" (ITS 82). Any memory includes blank spaces to be filled in, to fashion one's experience into a viable narrative. Shiv's father was weighed down by memory and tells him "You must know the past with all its riches and terrors, draw on the lessons of both in equal measure" (ITS 82).

The novelist writes that it's not easy to separate fact and fiction, memory and fact, through Shiv's imagination of the mysterious end of Basavanna in the twelfth century and his own father in the twentieth century. It causes the prevalence of speculative narratives. It has been expressed as, "Speculative narratives, Narratives of love or faith or revolution. But is all narrative doomed to be inconclusive?" (ITS 105) Historical truth is also a small point of meeting of two rivers flowing, allowing the third river which is invisible to come to the fore. "Truth that large map of abstraction so many men fight over, die for, is the size of a pinpoint--- just a glimmer in a drop of water, part of the flowing stream" (ITS 107).

The truth that Basava sees is that cross currents can co-exist and it's possible to break free from "gold-crusted temples, customs and prejudices made of petrified stone, aspiring to stand like monuments for all time to come" (ITS 107). The characters are satirical in nature. Meena bursts out laughing and tells Shiv:

"... how close some of these mythical explanations are to the small print on the sarkari documents? I mean, you can really see the government Walla in these convoluted myths, bending over backwards to do some damage control" (ITS 117) But disruption and change are on the way: an outspoken young woman came into Shiv's life. Instead of merely relating the story of extremism taking its toll on academic freedom, the novelist blends the story of Shiv's saga of understanding women in his life in a better manner. It has been presented by the novelist as:

"He has the sense that they have given each other something that is , for all its namelessness, more solid and memorable than actual physical love... A promise to stand firm, to resist giving up. A promise bigger than both of them; a promise he has made though it may change his life" (ITS 179)

Shiv understands that the past is going to be with him whether he looks at it critically or adoringly. Meena's brief stay with him helps him to realize the value of curiosity, speculation, debate and dissent and "the right to know a thing in all the ways possible" (ITS 194). The young people such as Meena and Amar who appear confident and innocent by turns teach him the nature of life.

The military metaphor of the film's title, Times of Siege, encapsulates the film's vehemently polemical and ultimately uncompromising stance on religious extremism. Murthy's effort to give a valued educational and spiritual soul such as Basavanna as a great poet saint is commendable, and it must be defended as a fundamental right that would portray him solely as a poet not mentioning the research of his reformist, Shiv Murthy entirely under the control of his father's memory of idealism, made him to take risk for the first time in his profession. He

is ditched his crutches and is now free to "be curious, to speculate, to debate, to dissent in the present" (ITS 194). However, knowledge-making ethics, which ignores fundamentalism's insecurities. Githa Hariharan distinguishes the reader's interest in choosing the novel's subject and goes beyond her works. The influence of such understanding gives her the language and technique she needs to communicate the full scope to the readers, the vision and the full force of love. Fiction depicts the glory of our culture; learners will be able to understand the structure of the sentence, order of the word and language.

Githa Hariharan has disseminated the cultural information through her fiction. Her work is a clear representation of Indian culture, literature, and oral traditions. To learn more about the psychological condition of a person, mind-set and reaction of the characters, the novelist employs a variety of narrative techniques. She has used narrative devices to establish a link between the past and the present, as well as the present and the future. Readers can get a sense of the characters' thoughts and feelings through her straightforward and simple narration.

References

- Chakraverty, Lalima. *Gender and Culture in the Works of Indian Subcontinent's Select Women Novelists*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publisher & Distributors, 2012. Print
- Chowdhary B. Dinesh. "Recritiquing Women's Writing in English, ed. M.F.Patel, Vol. 1 & 2, Jaipur: Sunrise Publishers and Distributors, 2009. Print
- Dominic, K.V. *Critical Studies on Contemporary Indian English Women Writers*. New Delhi: Sarup Book Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 2010. Print
- Gaijan, M.B. & Prasad, Amar Nath, *Indian Women Writers A Critical Reinterpretation*, New Delhi: Sarup Book Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 2009.
- Hariharan, Githa. *In Times of Siege*, New Delhi: Penguin Books India (p) Ltd., 2003.
- Iyengar, K.R. Srinivasa. *Indian Writing in English*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1983. Print.
- Mitra, Madhuparna. "Whose History is it Anyway? The politics of Hindu Nationalism in Githa Hariharan's *In Times of Siege*." *South Asia Review* 30.2 (Oct-Nov 2009): 133-152.
- Palma, C. A. M., Pérez, A. V., Gamez, M. R., & Torres, L. T. M. (2018). A house a small company. *International Journal of Physical Sciences and Engineering*, 2(1), 26–34. <https://doi.org/10.29332/ijpse.v2n1.85>
- Riyanti, R., Haris, D. M. N., & Nurmala, N. (2022). Best practice for character education for millennial generation: The correlation between Pancasila values and Indonesian Muslim families. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences*, 9(3), 294-304. <https://doi.org/10.21744/irjmis.v9n3.2071>
- Suryasa, I. W., Rodríguez-Gámez, M., & Koldoris, T. (2021). Get vaccinated when it is your turn and follow the local guidelines. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 5(3), x-xv. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.2938>
- Verghese, C. Paul. *Problems of Indian Creative Writers in English*. Bombay: Somaiya Publications, 1971. Print.