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QUEST FOR CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE MIDST OF  
PATRIARCHAL FAMILY IN MANJU KAPUR'S  
NOVEL 'HOME'

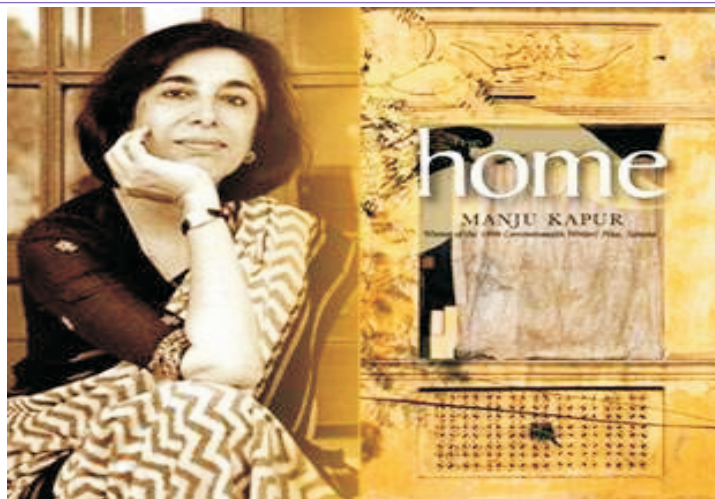


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**ABSTRACT**

Manju Kapur has created vital contribution to Post-Independence Indian English fiction. Her fiction isn't solely a story that is to entertain the reader however additionally to coach. every of her novel reflects the various styles of girls United Nations agency struggle in cultural conflict, patricentric domination, mental state, migrant expertise etc. One such novel is 'Home'. It tells however the ladies suffer in patricentric family. It



narrates however the ladies break ancient boundaries and practise the trail of success in their life. this paper aims to indicate however the heroine Nisha searches for cultural identity within the thick of her patricentric family

**KEYWORDS** :Patriarchal, cultural identity and post-colonialism.

**INTRODUCTION :**

Manju Kapur, a great woman novelist in English was born in 1948 in Amritsar. She has five novels to her credit. 'Difficult Daughters', 'A Married Woman', 'Home', 'The Immigrant' and 'Custody'. Her novel 'Difficult Daughters' won Common Wealth Writer's Prize in 1998 and her third novel 'Home' was short listed for Hutch Crossword Book Award in 2006. Manju Kapur is one of the greatest Post-colonial women writers in English Literature. Her novels deal with the theme of Post-Colonial Literature.

A major aspect of post-colonialism is the rather violent-like, unbuffered contact or clash of cultures as an inevitable result of former colonial times; the relationship of the colonial power to the (formerly) colonised country, its population and culture and vice versa seems extremely ambiguous and contradictory. This contradiction of two clashing cultures and the wide scale of problems resulting from it must be regarded as a major theme in post colonialism (Sinha 216).

The novel "Home" deals with Nisha's challenges in cultural identity and her struggle against patriarch. It also exhibits the theme of Post-colonial Literature.

Postcolonial literature tends to answer the following question; should there be an attempt to restore the original culture, conformity to the culture presented by the settlers or the creation of a new culture which combines both? If a novel answers and explores any of the above questions it may be considered post colonial literature (Sinha 226).

Though the story centres on the two sisters Sona and Rupa, the real heroine of this novel is Nisha, the daughter of Sona. Nisha suffers greatly from her childhood till the end of the novel which is heart rendering. Sona is the daughter-in-law of Banwari Lal family. She marries his first son Yashpal. Banwari Lal is the patriarch of the family. After many years of Sona's married life she gives birth to a girl child Nisha. But unfortunately, Nisha's horoscope says something negative about her. "The baby's horoscope was cast the configuration of the planets at her birth made her a Mangli. This was not good news; Mangli's were horribly difficult to marry off" (Home 39). Later, her mother gives birth to a boy.

As Nisha grows, she faces a tragic incident in her life through Vicky, son of Banwari Lal's daughter. One day when Vicky and Nisha are alone in the terrace, "Her dress rose higher as she fidgeted, her legs banging up and down on the durrie next to Vicky's nose, Entranced he put his hand on the inside of her beckoning thigh and whispered, 'How soft you are, Nisha'" (Home 56). Nisha is only a child and the behaviour of Vicky is a huge shock to her. He does not pay heed to the warning she gives.

An intent look came on his face, his gentle fingers kept up a steady stroking. He began to trace the elastic of her panties all around the leg. 'What are you doing? Chee, that's dirty, take your hand away,' she cried, but Vicky was in no state to hear her (Home 56).

Nisha is warned by Vicky not to tell the incident to anyone as they might beat her. Being a small kid she is guilty of the happening. She does not even realize that she is prone to child abuse in her own house by her trusted playmate.

"He gasped and out spurted white liquid on to the snakes and ladders, then trickled down her fist. The thing shrank, his face shrivelled. 'It is our secret. If you tell anyone, they will beat you and me.' He gripped her arm. 'No one must ever know. No one. You understand' (Home 58).

Vicky again gets the opportunity to molest her at home. This is her second tragic incident in her life. As her mother gives importance to her boy child Raju, she does not pay attention to Nisha. After this incident, Nisha starts screaming at the night time and also starts refusing to take her food regularly.

As it is a large family, the women in the family are always busy to take care of them and they do not have time to notice Nisha's condition. Only Rupa, sister of Sona understands the problem of Nisha and suspects Vicky. So Nisha's parents send her to her Masi's house. But she returns after Banwari Lal's death.

When she joins in college, she falls in love with Suresh. But the family refuses her wish to marry Suresh as he belongs to other community. Though she loves him deeply, she could not marry him because of her patriarchal family. All her aspirations, decision and her choice depends on men in her family. This incident frustrates her deeply and she does not have any interest in her life. In the mean time, she suffers with skin disease.

After Raju's marriage, she feels lonely at home. Even Pooja, wife of Raju treats her like an enemy. For few months, she works as a teacher in a nearby school. But she does not get job satisfaction in it. Somehow she wants to come out of the monotony of her life and prove her identity. With the help of her father, she starts business. In business too she faces many problems.

She had to go to wholesale dealers in Sadar Bazaar to keep her margins low... Her mother refused to let her go to these places alone; the first time she took Raju, the second time a salesperson from the shop, the third time she went by herself without telling anyone (Home 292).

Within a short period of time, she proves herself. Though she faces cultural conflict to run a business, she overcomes from everything and proves herself.

Then her family gets a proposal from Arvind, a widower who is thirty six years of age. Sooner she becomes pregnant. Now she is in the state of dilemma between her future child and business. Her family insists her to give preference to her health and future child. Nisha too accepts their advice.

However, she is married to a thirty six year old widower who can hardly respond to her passions. It is in marriage and childbearing that, she is forced to find ultimate happiness and fulfilment as the society refuses to give her achievement in profession, recognition and identity (Janbandhu101).

Though Nisha proves herself to overcome from identity crisis in her patriarch family, she does not disrespect her traditional Indian culture. When she conceives, she gives preference to her child and accepts her husband's idea to start her business nearby her mother-in-law's place. Though she has some disadvantages in her patriarch family, it is only through them she succeeds in her business as well as her personal life.

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