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The thesis entitled **Postmodern Perception in Githa Hariharan's Select Novels** proposes to analyse the postmodern techniques and themes to highlight the postmodern condition. The novels taken for the study are *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992), *The Ghosts of Vasu Master* (1994), *When Dreams Travel* (1999), *In Times of Siege* (2003) and *Fugitive Histories* (2009). The objective of the research is to prove Githa Hariharan as a postmodern novelist.

Chapter I –The introduction states the significance and objective of the research. Githa Hariharan is one of the most influential women novelists in postmodern Indian literature. The chapter provides a brief overview of the novelist's life and works. Theoretical framework of postmodernism is explained. Various postmodern techniques and the general themes of postmodern literature are discussed. Githa Hariharan proves herself as a writer of social concern as she discusses the socio-cultural ethos of the country by analysing the predicament of women who are still victims of patriarchy and champions secularism by highlighting raising fundamentalist ideology and communal prejudice. The research establishes Githa Hariharan as a postmodern writer by applying the postmodern narrative techniques and themes to her fiction.

Chapter II entitled '*The Thousand Faces of Night*– Revision of Metanarratives' examines the technique of revisioning myth. Githa Hariharan has reflected a spectrum Indian society in the novel *The Thousand Faces of Night* by interweaving myth to reflect the status of women in Indian society at various time spans. The novel discusses the issue of subjugation of women by depicting women belonging to three generations. The novelist associates the predicament women face in real life situation with incidents from myth and

folklore. The novel reinterprets the mythical stories from a feminist perspective. She presents feminist sensibility in the postmodern context in her novels by reinterpreting myths.

Chapter III entitled 'Magical Realism in *The Ghosts of Vasu Master*' analyses the elements of fantasy such as dreams and supernatural elements included in the stories narrated by Vasu Master, a retired teacher who attempts to teach Mani, a slow learner. He transports Mani into the magical world of fables steeped in supernatural settings similar to Panchathantra stories. Magical realism yokes reality with fantastic and fabulous unimaginable elements. Vasu Master used stories as a remedy to heal Mani who suffered from learning disability. Initially, there is no sign of understanding, Vasu Master felt his attempt was an absolute failure. However, later, there was a sudden change in the little boy as he started sketching the characters in the story thus Vasu Master bridged the silence between them. The stories narrated to Mani expose the themes of corruption, nepotism and loss of moral values in society, thereby the novelist asserts her social concern.

Chapter IV entitled '*When Dreams Travel* as Pastiche' highlights the suppression of women in various cultural representations. Patriarchal power which was adhered from ancient times is proved wrong through the technique of pastiche. Githa Hariharan has used the Arabic folklore collections, *The Thousand and One Nights* well known as *The Arabian Nights* as an element of pastiche in *When Dreams Travel*. Shahrzad and Dunyazad were minor characters in *The Arabian Nights* are recast as the protagonist in *When Dreams Travel* which is an attempt to revise the existing text from a feminist perspective. Indian folklore and myth are used as pastiche through the character Dilshad and Satyasama. By revising these myths, Githa Hariharan has attempted to subvert the principles of patriarchy which were entrenched in the male centred narratives of the past. The novel

brings out an obvious solution for the oppression that was imposed on women by deconstructing the meaning of ancient narratives with a new vision.

Chapter V entitled '*In Times of Siege as Historiographic Metafiction*' revisions history to assert the authentic sense of reality. The Veerashaiva Movement initiated by Basavanna in medieval India becomes the base of the controversy and the plot revolves around this historical event. The novel discuss raising fundamentalism which sabotages secularism which is the bed rock of democracy. Githa Hariharan upholds the importance of the history of the medieval India which has been long forgotten by the present generation. The history of Basava is revived by Shiv Murthy, Professor of History in Kamala Nehru University through the course material he prepared for one of his B.A. History course. Basavapropagated egalitarian ideas that threatened the order of the day, especially the caste system, which did not appeal to the fundamentalists belonging to the Manch. The Manch demanded withdrawal of the lesson and conducted strike and social unrest. Githa Hariharan uses the technique of historiographic metafiction to assert the fundamental rights of a citizen and the duties of a historian. This novel presents history in a new aura as it awakens secular tenets which form the pedestal of democracy.

Chapter VI entitled '*Analysis of Fragmented Identities in Fugitive Histories*' presents the plight of the minorities in the background of post-Godhra riots. The postmodern condition of fragmentation is analysed to portray the chaotic state of the individuals as they stand alienated from the mainstream society. The characters are shattered and stand divided by the communal clashes. The characters carry with them the deep imprints of violence and hatred of the riots. These factors that divide them make them to search for their roots. There begins the problem of identity crisis in the troubled sea of violence and

religious hatred. The novel throws light on the trauma of riot-affected women and the struggle they undertake to restructure their lives. The novelist discusses the concept of secularism as the country stands divided due to rising fundamentalism and communal riots. The novel employs multiple narrators and temporal distortion happens as the narrative shifts from the past to the present and vice versa.

Chapter VII – The Summation discusses the postmodern technique and themes applied in the novels taken for study. Githa Hariharan has used nonlinear narrative technique, she has employed multiple narrators. Her novels are replete with intertextual references. Githa Hariharan has employed storytelling as a narrative technique to present the myth and folklore in a new perspective. With respect to storytelling, she has used the Panchatantra, the Mahabharata and the Puranas as narrative archetype. Memory has been employed as a narrative technique in most of her novels. The author interrogates the age-old traditional wisdom contained in the metanarratives to throw light on the oppressive condition of women in all ages. Githa Hariharan's language is lucid, clear and simple. Githa Hariharan's fiction is a critique of contemporary Indian life. She has given voice to the sensibility of the marginalized groups like women, differently-able people, and people from minority communities and the underprivileged people.