

Sailing Between Two Worlds: Multicultural Currents and Blue Humanities in the Faith-Based Narratives of Lloyd C. Douglas, John Newton, Amitav Ghosh, and Bapsi Sidhwa

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Abstract

A combination of both Blue Humanities and Multiculturalism literary theory and criticism explores vital meaning through literature. The traditions and customs contrast in every religion, and exploring their importance is essential. Loving the oceans of blue water and the multiculturalism that is infused in every heart of the people. God has created a wonderful world for us to admire and to maintain, but not to exploit under any circumstances. The chosen works are Floyd Douglas's *The Big Fisherman*, John Newton's *The Pool of Bethesda*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, and Bapsi Sidhwa's *Water*. The first discussion is on divine perspectives highlighted in the selected works. The second discussion is about protecting seawater from superstitious-minded people and exploring the values of spirituality. We must protect the environment while respecting religious values. It is essential to adhere to the concerned scripture and the wisdom of God's words, while steering clear of unnecessary traditions and customs for a more authentic practice.

Keywords: Blue Humanities, Multiculturalism, Religion, Superstitious Beliefs, and Spirituality

Introduction

Spirituality is important in every human life. Spirituality means holiness, righteousness, respect, obedience, and truthfulness. Deep perspectives on spirituality suggest that humans should have a strong relationship with God. When people have a bond with God, they can give more fruit to God until they have nothing left. In the book of the amplified bible, John's book says, "Dwell in Me, and I will dwell in you. [Live in Me, and I will live in you.] Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (being vitally united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me" (*The Amplified Bible*, 1987). Every person should know and learn the values of spirituality. We should respect the worthiness of divinity instead of pursuing unnecessary traditions and customs of any religion. The unnecessary traditions and customs are destroying the creation of God. God never expects unnecessary spiritual activities from us, but instead the holy hearts of human beings.

The researcher is eager to express the worthiness of spirituality through various works, such as Floyd Douglas's *The Big Fisherman*, John Newton's *The Pool of Bethesda*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, and Bapsi Sidhwa's *Water*. We have the responsibility to protect the environment for future generations. Due to a false belief, the creation of God destroys the environment and its resources. In the Bhagavad Gita, specifically the chapter 18, verse 47 mentions that "It is better to do one's own dharma, even though imperfectly, than to

do another's dharma, even though perfectly. By doing one's innate duties, a person does not incur sin" (BG 18:47). God stresses both terms 'Dharma and Artha', which refer to the significance of duty and righteousness. We should obey God's commandments as much as possible. The research objectives are on heavenly perspectives highlighted in the selected works. The second objective of the research is to safeguard the seawater from irrational folk and to explore the values of spirituality. Every human being should know the right path of spirituality.

The interdisciplinary concepts are multiculturalism and blue humanities. This comparison is based on faith-based narratives. People are stressed themselves and believe in certain things and attitudes that satisfy God for their illegal activities. Everyone should learn about God and his expectations. The purpose and destination of God is different from Him and us. In the book of Isaiah, God says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the Lord" (*The Amplified Bible* 1987). Faith in God is right, but destroying ourselves with folk beliefs and exploiting precious water gifted by God.

Literature Review:

McAnally analysed the three religious cultures, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, based on water. Human activities and cultural practices lead to the pollution of rivers due to irrational behaviours and customs (McAnally, 2019). Singh asserts that water bodies possess purifying qualities and symbolise the divine, facilitating a connection between the mind, soul, and God. Although Hinduism promotes respect for nature, certain superstitions have resulted in ecological damage (Singh, 2020).

Patel highlights that Nature's pollution shows the damage to human values. Roy connects environmental harm with emotional suffering. (Patel, 2025). Nandita Singh and Prakash Singh discuss the disruption of the traditional relationship between water, religion, and society in India, caused by modern issues such as pollution and over-exploitation, particularly affecting the Yamuna River. This degradation has led to reduced water levels and pollution, undermining the river's spiritual importance during festivals. Similarly, the Ganga River's sacred value has decreased, as it is increasingly viewed as a resource for exploitation rather than a holy entity (Nandita Singh and Prakash Singh, 2017). According to Sonia, "Destruction of nature means destruction of mankind" (Sonia, 2019).

Methodology:

The researcher used the qualitative method. The researcher analyses the three scripture books, *The Amplified Bible*, *The Holy Quran*, and *The Bhagavad Gita*. The critical analysis of the texts is Floyd Douglas's *The Big Fisherman*, John Newton's *The Pool of Bethesda*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, and Bapsi Sidhwa's *Water*. A study of analysing several diverse articles, books, and websites reveals a profound concern with divinity. An interdisciplinary analysis of these texts reveals themes of multiculturalism and the Blue Humanities.

Discussion:

God and his commandments are essential in spiritual life. We must praise His name, thank Him in any situation, comprehend His words, and pursue His words. He expects respect, obedience, righteousness (dharma) and responsibility (aartha) from us; never reject or avoid His words and bow ourselves in His presence. Surrender towards God and honour Him, who really satisfies and glorifies Him. He expects holiness from every person. He desires that every person should be responsible for maintaining His creation, which includes water, milk, and especially an aquatic ecosystem.

Water bodies are considered holy in the sight of religious rituals. Water symbolises purification and washing away sin. In the book Mathew, Jesus and his disciples were baptised in the River Jordan, but in the Hindu ritual, the worshippers wash themselves in the River Ganga. When individuals emerge from bodies of water, they often experience a sense of

rejuvenation, tranquillity in their hearts, and a contemplation of spiritual renewal and connection with God. Why did disciples of God use the rivers? Because the river waters purify them. In Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, the Ganga River emerges as a revered, nurturing presence, embodying the qualities of a mother while sustaining communities through fishing, agriculture, and transport. The lord Krishna declares His divine manifestations "Of rivers, I am the Ganga" (BG, 10:31). Water bodies are believed to purify sins and restore balance, reinforcing a spiritual relationship rather than an exploitative one. The Forest Goddess is not available in the real world; only a single precious God is there truthfully, according to the believers in their religion.

Pakistani novelist Bapsi Sidwa explores the Hindu culture of the river Ganga. In the novel, *Water*, one of the Characters, Chaurya, is interested in worshipping the Ganga goddess with various practices repeatedly for purification. Certain traditions and customs within Hinduism, such as ritual bathing, idol immersion during Ganesh Chaturthi, the offering of flowers, lamps, and ashes, as well as large gatherings like the Kumbh Mela pilgrimages and funeral practices involving the immersion of ashes, play a significant role in religious life. These practices exploited water bodies. These practices led to unintentional ecological stress. Nandita Singh and Prakash Singh emphasise the need to prevent pollution in rivers, particularly the Yamuna River, as it adversely affects the surrounding population and contributes to various diseases (Nandita Singh and Prakash Singh, 2017).

John Newton's poem, *The Pool of Bethesda*, explores the miraculous healing powers of water, emphasising its ability to cure diseases and disabilities. *The Pool of Bethesda* emerges as an inclusive sacred space where people across social and cultural divisions seek healing and hope. Water functions as a spiritually active force, mediating between human suffering and natural renewal. It ultimately symbolises universal grace, linking personal repentance with multicultural, humanitarian, and ecological consciousness (Baert, 2005).

Floyd Douglas's *The Big Fisherman* is about a great angler, Peter. Jesus instigates inner change, notably within Simon Peter. A key theme is Christ's message of unconditional love and forgiveness, emphasising that true spiritual life is rooted in compassion, sacrifice, and trust in God, providing redemption even to the flawed. Spirituality offers strength in suffering and confusion with faith. Water symbolises spiritual purification and transformation.

Findings:

God's words are like a weapon against evil forces. Word of God heals us, comforts us, makes us holy, and even brings harmony to our minds. Every person should read, understand, and follow the word of God through actions. God expects us to respect His word and hold it in our hearts. It helps us to stand against and be aware of evil forces. Some individuals strive to mislead God and His followers by adhering to superfluous traditions and customs. Such customs and traditions do not yield blessings. Customs and traditions are passed from generation to generation.

All religious scriptures promote reverence, not exploitation. But traditions and customs exploit a precious gift from God. People should avoid unnecessary traditions that affect them physically and mentally, as well as other beings and nature.

There are many cultures, traditions, and rituals in all religions; they can satisfy a person's mind and soul, but they will not satisfy God. God's expectations, desires, thinking, and way of living are different from those of living beings. So, we should be aware of God's expectations and will.

In the Quran, Prophet Mohammad advised avoiding water wastage. Allah says, "Do not waste water even if you are at a flowing river" (*The Quran*, 200). Both Christian and Islamic rituals explicitly oppose wastage and do not exploit water bodies. They respect water bodies through purity, discipline, and restraint.

In the book of Psalms, we must praise God's creations that glorify God; likewise, the Vedas and Bhagavad Gita stress the importance of respecting nature. God stresses restoring the relationship with nature. Humans thirst for spiritual guidance from God, which gives permanent blessings and harmony.

The relationships between ecology, humanity, and the divine are deteriorating, and restoration requires an understanding of spirituality and a strong connection with God. We have the responsibility of protecting nature.

Conclusion:

We can utilise the creations of God, but we do not have the power to exploit or misuse any of God's creations. We must praise God for His creation, which is essential in our daily lives. We must give preference to God and His words. Lack of environmental awareness in some of the religions' traditions and customs has a great impact on the environment and its resources. Scriptures are against the false beliefs of some of the believers who want to exploit the aquatic ecosystem and other natural resources. We should provide advice regarding environmental awareness.

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