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**CONTENTS**

- 1. Home as Nation: Urdu Writing by Women..... 11**  
*Prof. Baran Farooqi*
- 2. Recasting Scheherazade: Reading  
The Arabian Nights in Our Mutual Friend.....29**  
*Dr. Javaid Iqbal Bhat*
- 3. New Voices from the Periphery:  
Reading Contemporary Manipuri Poetry .....48**  
*Dr. Thongam Dhanajit Singh*
- 4. Peculiarities and Oddities: Breaking Down  
of Public Persona in Mrinal Sen's Bhuvan Shome.....63**  
*Dr. Manmeet Sodhi*
- 5. Lacanian Concept of Image Formation  
and the Japanese American Subaltern:  
A Study of the Representation of the  
Japanese American Subject in Post War  
Japanese American Fiction .....77**  
*Nitusmita Bhattacharyya*
- 6. Dark Portrayal of Gender: A Post- Colonial  
Feminist Reflection of Bapsi Sidhwa's  
The Pakistani Bride and Ice- Candy Man.....96**  
*Sayan Mukherjee*
- 7. 'Looking through Glass': History and  
Nationalism in Amitav Ghosh ..... 109**  
*Vaibhav Iype Parel*
- 8. Making Films, Breaking Stereotypes:  
Questioning Vulnerability through Village  
Rockstars (2017) ..... 124**

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1 of 12

IMPACT FACTOR - 4.23

ISSN 2349-5189

**LangLit**

An International Peer-Reviewed Open Access Journal

UGC Approved Journal - Arts & Humanities - Sr. No. 49124

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**CULTURAL SPACE AND THE IDENTITY OF A JAPANESE AMERICAN SHASHIN KENNON/PICTURE BRIDE: A CRITICAL STUDY OF POST WAR JAPANESE AMERICAN FICTION**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This paper undertakes the analysis of the plight of the Japanese American picture brides during War. It studies the ritual of proxy weddings prevalent in Japan during that period and its impact on the women. The subjection of women and the loss of her dignity within and outside her native cultural space leading her to a state of 'identitylessness' is the issue that this paper endeavours to delve into. The Isseis (the first generation Japanese migrants in the U S) had started as labourers working under the American plantation owners in Hawaii. They gradually moved to the mainland with the intention of becoming permanent settlers. They had pitted themselves against direst of circumstances with the hope of attaining prosperity. However, reality had a different story to tell. The employers or rather the exploiters prospered at the cost of these poor labourers. The Isseis took time to realise this. They didn't want their progenies to carry on a legacy of sufferings. They want their successors to create a new legacy. They decided to proliferate themselves in the mainland and earn a status of equality. The women were hence called for. They were the means to serve the end. They became picture brides and went to*

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IMPACT FACTOR - 4.23 **LangLit** ISSN 2349-5189  
*An International Peer-Reviewed Open Access Journal*  
UGC Approved Journal - Arts & Humanities - Sr. No. 6067



**CULTURAL SPACE, EXISTENTIAL CONFLICT AND IDENTITY:  
A CRITICAL STUDY OF POST WAR JAPANESE AMERICAN FICTION**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The Research Paper tends to analyse the critical situation of the Japanese American citizens struggling against the trauma of 'identitylessness' during the second World War. The Japanese Americans during the War had not only to bear excruciating physical hardship but also had to undergo the pain and humiliation of social exclusion, of being turned into social pariahs. The Japanese people who, in the course of time, had become indispensable part of the American population, contributing towards the nation's socio economic prosperity with unflinching dedication and efforts preferred to call themselves Americans more than Japanese Americans. However, the Second World War changed the scenario. Americans suddenly felt the need to test the loyalty of the Japanese Americans to their nation. The Japanese Americans found themselves on a no man's land. They were neither Japanese nor Americans. Their existence as individuals with a distinctive identity was questioned. They didn't exist. The psychological trauma which thus followed is the subject of study in this paper.*



Article Type: Research Article  
Article Ref. No.: 200524167N1ENNR  
<https://doi.org/10.37948/ensemble-2020-0202-a006>



### Existential Crisis of the Japanese American Woman: A Study of Post War Japanese American Fiction

Nitusmita Bhattacharyya<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:**

The Japanese American women, during the Second World War, suffered from subjugation at different levels of their existence. They had been subjected to marginalization based on their sexual identity within their native community. They were further made to experience discrimination on the basis of their racial status while living as a member of the Japanese diaspora in the United States during the War. The objectification and marginalization of the women had led them to the realization of their existence as a non-entity within and outside their community. However, the internment of Japanese Americans followed by the declaration of Executive Order 9066 by President Roosevelt and the consequent experience of living behind the barbed wire fences left them to struggle with questions raised on their claim to existence and their identity within a space where race and gender contested each other. In my research paper, I have made a humble attempt at studying the existential crisis of the Japanese American women in America during the War.

**Article History:** Submitted on 24 May 2020 | Accepted on 13 Feb 2021 | Published online on \_\_\_\_\_  
**Keywords:** Existentialism, Identity Crisis, Subjection of Women, Second World War, Internment, War Prisoners.

"It is generally for characterizing subjectivity that the word existence is

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This is to certify that  
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Second World War  
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during the 2-Day International Conference on "Narratives, Self, and Identities: Traditions