

## THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE IN THE MULTICULTURAL LATTICE OF KIRAN NAGARKAR'S *RAVAN AND EDDIE*

D. UMASANKAR<sup>1</sup> & P. RAJENDRA KARMARKAR<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of English and Principal (College of Arts and Commerce), Andhra University, Visakhapatnam,  
Andhra Pradesh, India

### ABSTRACT

*This paper highlights the fundamental divergence of principles, life style, language, culture and living patterns of the two seemingly cohesive communities – the Catholic Christians and the Hindus – located in the kaleidoscopic world of the Bombay 'Chawl' in Kiran Nagarkar's fascinatingly complex novel 'Ravan and Eddie'. Kiran Nagarkar, with his incisive wit and black humour, brings out the plurality and hybrid nature of identities of the migrant population in the chawls of Bombay and delineates the politics of language, identity and difference in the multicultural setting of the chawls. The paper also briefly examines Nagarkar's innovative use of 'Digressions' as an effective narrative tool to reflect on the cultural, social and political realities posited by the novel's plot and story. The paper aims to focus on Nagarkar's authentic portrayal of the staggering social, religious and cultural differences that divide the Hindus and Goan Christians inhabiting the CWD (Central Works Department) Chawl No. 17 of Mazagaon district in Bombay and how the seemingly harmonious and homogenous world of the chawl gives way to gaping chasms of irreconcilable incompatibilities between the two communities. In this process, the paper attempts to empower the readers to perceive the negotiation of identity and difference in postcolonial, multicultural societies.*

**KEYWORDS:** Language, Identity, Culture, Bombay Chawl, Digressions, Homogeneity & Plurality

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