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Cultural and Religious Customs Representation of James Kirkpatrick in the Novel of White Mughals

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Abstract: ***William Dalrymple is that rarity, a scholar of history who can really write. His White Mughals represent a full account of life and times of the 18th century court of Hyderabad. White Mughals is a historical love story of James Kirkpatrick and Khair un Nissa, she is the 'Most Excellent Among Women'- in 1800, William Dalrymple's James Achilles Kirkpatrick was a Lieutenant Colonel in The British Resident. Dalrymple represents Hyderabadi culture marriage ceremony, baptsim , way of eating and dinner in the court of Nizams of Hyderabad. The celebration of Hyderabadi religious festivals and customs in India shows the importance of Indian Hyderabadi culture.***
Keywords: Hyderabadi Culture, Religious Celebrations, Customs, Nizam.

I. INTRODUCTION

William Dalrymple was born in Scotland in 1965 and brought up on the shores of Firth of Forth. He received fame at the young age of 22 with his highly acclaimed best seller book In *Xanadu.* He is the writer of five best seller books of history and travel, including the highly acclaimed bestseller *City of Djinns*. This book won The Thomas Cook travel Book Award and the Sunday Times Young British Writer of the year Award. His *White Mughals* won a range of prizes. Including the prestigious Wolfson Prize for History 2003 and the Scotties Book of the Year Prize. It was also shortlisted for the Pen History Award, the Kiryama Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. He has written some important books . These are *White Mughals, City of Djinns, Age of Kali* and the *Last Mughal*. *White Mughals* published in 2003. In Times Literary Supplement wrote," Moving wide ranging and richly textured… Through massive research blessed with serendipity, and through imagination and empathy, Dalrymple has evoked the world of the British in 18th century India as no one has before… a wonderful book" Many writers and magazines wrote to praise of the book on the front cover page , as The Scotsman says "A spell bounding story with massive scholarship, captivating flair and obvious empathy. This is history at its very best at its most engaging and relevant…A superlative, groundbreaking story that fully justifies all the effort, all the costs, all the risks[it took to write]… At a time when Islamophobia is rising to danger levels in the West we need this reminder more than ever that once, however briefly, East and West met in tolerance and paece - and love'--. The culture and costumes of the Hyderabadi Nizam's were dynamic as well as static.

II. JAMES KIRKPATRICK'S LOVE

White Mughal is a love story of James Kirkpatrick and Begum Khair-un -Nissa . James Kirkpatrick is the colonial in The Residency Hyderabad. The detailed study of the book reveals the Indian culture of the 18th century. Dalrymple's *White Mughal* represents the pure Indian culture of the 18th century. According to Rebeca Dargelo ,in the publicity material Dalrymple's status in *White Mughal* as concurrently a groundbreaking piece of historical research and a mindful return to what he represents as the unfairly overlooked genre of narrative history, invoking a tradition of writer such as Stephen Runciman.(139) .Though the book is supposed to be about a "tragic love story"(xxxix), it actually gives us an account of the times of the Nizams and the relationship the British had with the rulers and the people of the princely state of Hyderabad during the 18th century and the early part of the 19th century.

There is a general perception that the native rulers and the British engaged in confrontation with each other. But Dalrymple through the book , seeks to prove that they shared a very warm relationship. He seeks to bust the stereotype image of the Englishman in India. Film and most TV dramas have tended to present the Englishman as an 'Imperialist Incarnate: the narrow-minded,ramrod-backed sahib in a sola topee and bristling moustache, dressing for dinner despite the heat, while raising a disdainful nose at both the people and the culture of India'(10). He does through the portrayal of the character of James Kirkpatrick, the Resident of the British East India Company. Kirkpatrick and somr other British Officials lived more like Mughals than British Residents, justifying the title of the book- *White Mughal.*

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III. BRITISH AND MUGHAL CULTURE

James Kirkpatrick is the hero of the book. In the novel British mix freely with the local . James Kirkpatrick was resident of East India Company at the court of Hyderabad. He wore 'Musselman's dress of the finest texture'(4). He even had hennaed his hand in the manner of Mughal Noble man and wore Indian mustachios'(4) According to Dalrymple , Kirkpatrick embraced Islam and became 'a practicing Muslim' for getting married to Khair un Nissa. But even before his affaire with Khair Un- Nissa, he lived like a Nizam Nawab- ' kept his own harem at the back of his house, complete with Mughal maid servants, aseels (wetnurses), midwives and harem guard'(9).Dalrymple penned Indian marriage culture of Hyderabad of the 18th century by giving different characters. Many British Residency colones married Muslim girl. Lieutenant colonial James Dalrymple the commander of the British troops in Hyderabad he was married to Mooti Begum the daughter of the Nawab of Masulipatam. William Garden who started his career in the nizams army in 1798 was married to Begum Mah Munzel ul Nisa ,the daughter of the Nawab Cambay. William Leyland Gardner converted to Islam for the sake of his marriage with Munzel ul Nissa. One of the important features of the Hyderabadi culture high lightened in the *White Mughal* is marriage between Hindus and Muslim.

Kirkpatrick's residence was an 'unlikely amalgam of Mughal and European cultures'(117) one visitor describes the ambience of Kirkpatrick's residence in the following words:

Major Kirkpatrick's grounds are laid out partly in the taste of the Islington & partly in that of the Hindostan. The Hindustani part of the Compound was defined by the remains of the ancient pleasure garden in which the Residence was built. In its centre was a large Mughal style baradari pavilion which the British had turned into ' a dining hall and a place of public entertainment' while nearby stood a Mughal- style mahal or sleeping apartments from which led a pair of mature cypress avenues. From this axis ran various runnels, fountains, pools and flowerbeds, all of which had survived from the garden's earlier incarnation as a pleasure retreat. (117)

Many Hindus converted to Islam and many Muslim converted converted to Hinduism. The book *White Mughals* shows that the British mingle freely with the locals. The protagonist of the book James Kirkpatrick is mixed in the religious customs and festivals. Dalrymiple depicts the religious culture of Muslim vividly as James Kirkpatrick

Under James the Residency also participated in the life and early cycle of season and festivals of Hyderabad to extent that it was never do again. James saw to it that the Residency gave regular donations to the Sufi shrines of the city. He also took parties to join the festivals to break the Ramadan fast by eating 'iftar' with the Nizam or Minister to travel with the durbar up to the Shi'a shine of Maula Ali during its annual ur's (festival day) and to present himself, head covered at the city's Ashur Khana during Muharram (123)

The participation of James Kirkpatrick in the social, cultural and religious life of Hyderabad not only led to 'cross- fertilisation' of ideas but also deepened the friendship between he noble of the Nizam's court and the Residency. This proved very beneficial for the British Residency.

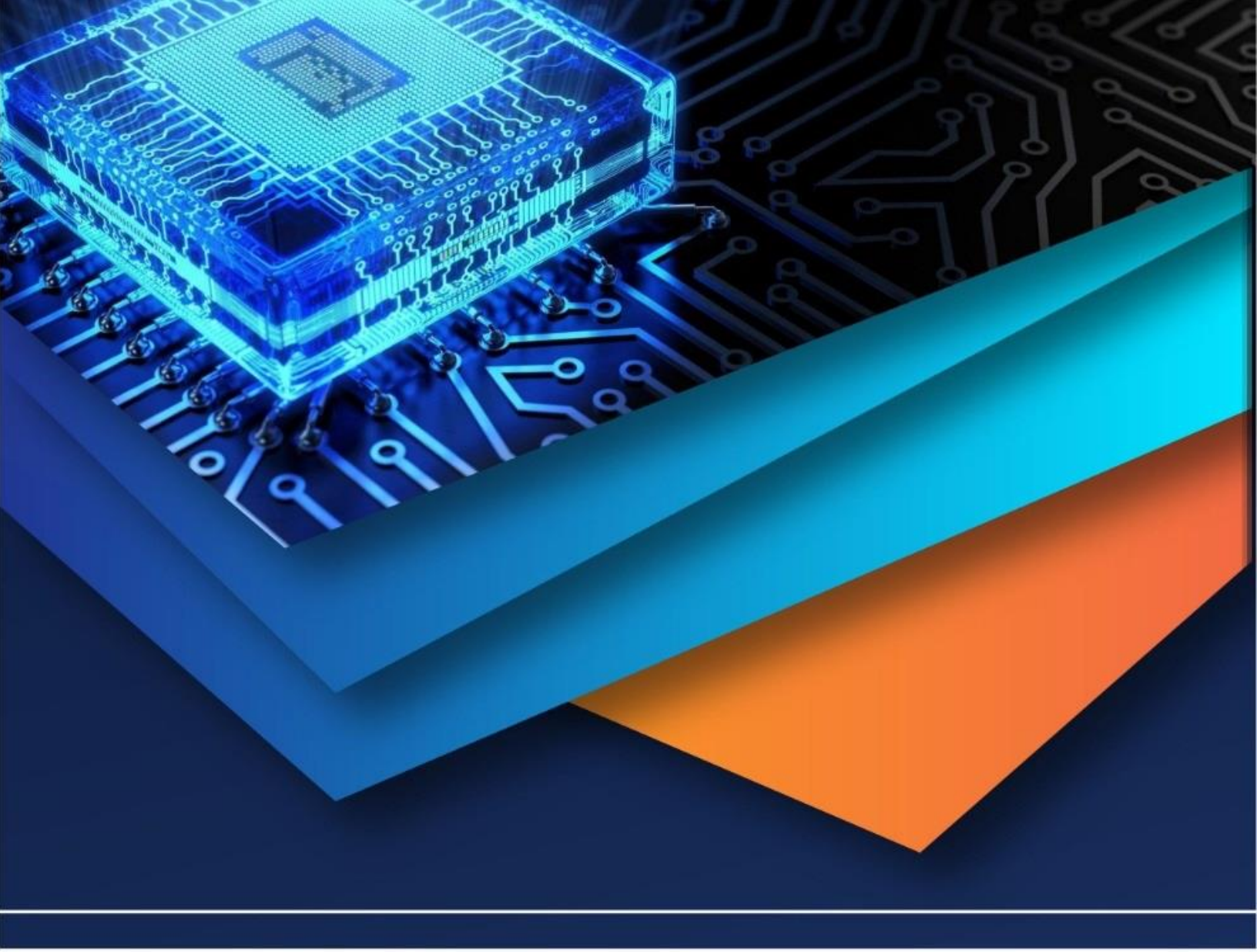
The Dalrymple depicts the mutual understanding of the two religions Muslim accepted water from the hands of Hindus they ate each other cooked food. Quoting Shushtari Dalrymple writes, " they accepted water from the hands of Hindus, use the oil they bur from, eat their cooked foods- whereas they flee from all contact with the English ,who at least in appearance are people of the book and who respect reason and law '.(167)

Dalrymple describes in the words of sushasthree that the power of women in late Mughal in India is very significant. Each religions has some features of other. Hindu-Muslim co- existence in India make much mutual exchange of ideas and customs took place between the two cohabiting culture. so that while Hinduism took on some Islamic social features such as the veil worn by upper cast Rajput women in public Indian Islam also adopted itself to its Hindu environment. A process accelerated by the frequency with which Indian Muslim ruler tended to marry Hindu brides'. (168)

James Kirkpatrick behaved like a Mughal. He was very much liked the Hyderabadi -food, architecture, clothes, poetry and costumes. He was familiar with Hyderabadi style. He had much information about Nizam's court which helped him to turned towards the Residency.

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