



Ghosts of Yesterday: Exploring the Intersections of Memory and Trauma in Select Children's Writings of Sudha Murty

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Abstract

The intergenerational transmission between memory and trauma celebrates the richness of human experience and the interconnectedness of the past, present, and future. This intended study explores the profound thematic elements of memory and trauma in the literary works of Sudha Murty, a celebrated Indian author. Key works in this field, such as Maurice Halbwachs' *On Collective Memory* (1925), Aleida Assmann's *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization* (2011), Pierre Nora's concept of "sites of memory" (1984), and Alison Landsberg's *Prosthetic Memory* (2004), provide foundational insights. These works illustrate how collective and cultural memories are constructed and represented in literature. Halbwachs emphasizes the social construction of memory, Assmann distinguishes between communicative and cultural memory, Nora explores how physical spaces embody collective memories, and Landsberg introduces the concept of prosthetic memory, formed through mediated representations. Trauma theory further enriches this exploration, with Cathy Caruth's *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995), Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1992), Dominick LaCapra's *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2001), and Viet Thanh Nguyen's *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War* (2016) contributing significantly. Sudha Murty's narratives, particularly *The Mother I Never Knew* (2014) and stories from *Three Thousand Stitches* (2017) and *Wise & Otherwise: A Salute to Life* (2006), serve as case studies. Her works explore themes of memory and trauma through the lenses of collective and cultural memory, sites of memory, and prosthetic memory. Murty's stories highlight how historical and familial traumas reverberate across generations, influencing characters' identities and relationships.

Keywords: Collective Memory, Intergenerational Trauma, Societal Stigma, Resilience in Literature.