



**EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF TRADITION AND CHANGE: CHARACTER
ANALYSIS OF RANGAN, JOGI, AND KRISHNAN IN "WHEN THE KURINJI
BLOOMS"**

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Abstract

The characters Rangan, Jogi, and Krishnan in the novel "When the Kurinji Blooms" by Rajam Krishnan are compared in this article. The research examines the individual growth and dynamic relationships of the three characters within the socio-cultural setting. Through an analysis of their connections, desires, and conflicts, the study delves into how each character navigates personal objectives, society expectations and historical influences. This enhances the story's thematic depth. This analysis seeks to illuminate the novel's overarching themes of love, loyalty, and cultural transformation by closely scrutinizing the novel's representations of interpersonal relationships and identities.

Key words: Interpersonal Relationships, Character Dynamics, Comparative Analysis,
Sociocultural Context, and Identity Creation

The Badaga hamlet in the Nilgiri Hills, where tradition and modernity intersect in complex ways, Rajam Krishnan's novel "When the Kurinji Blooms" presents a compelling picture of daily life. The tale revolves around the interwoven lives of three characters: Rangan, Jogi, and Krishnan. These characters represent different viewpoints on the difficulties of conserving cultural legacy while accepting societal change. The book explores identity, aspiration, and resilience through their interactions and experiences, allowing readers to consider the ongoing conflicts between tradition and advancement in a society that is changing quickly.

Rangan: Manifesting Ambition and Aspiration

Twelve-year-old Rangan harbors strong ambitions to move to the nearby town of Othai. He saw the town as having plenty of employment options and attractive employment, both of which were lacking in the hills. Young people are frequently drawn to the town's harmful and superficial lifestyles. Rangan is no different. He steals money from his uncles bag and flees to the town, only to disappear from the tribe for an extended period of time. The residents of Hatti or the village lament Rangan's death, believing him to have been slain by the tiger that was prowling the area. Rangan stands in for the tribe members who are seduced by the towns with fictitious claims of wealth, employment, and pleasure.

Rangan represents those who reject nature's urge for a quiet existence in favor of a glittering world or ill pleasures. Additionally, he stands for the tribal people that despise nature and fail to recognize its significance. Conversely, it is paradoxical that the residents of the town frequently journey to Nature to replenish their depleted energy and vigor. Rangan becomes a pivotal character who symbolizes the hopes and aspirations of the younger generation living in the Badaga neighborhood. Rangan is shown as a young man who is ready to leave the limits of traditional village life and explore opportunities outside the limited scope of his upbringing from the very beginning. As he tries to make a name for himself in a world that is changing quickly, his quest for knowledge and adventure mirrors the universal need for personal development and self-discovery.

Rangan's character develops significantly throughout the novel as he works through the difficulties of belonging and identification. As he balances the competing needs of tradition and development, his path is replete with both triumphant and challenging moments. Rangan embodies the tenacity and resolve of youth in the face of social restraints because he persists in his pursuit of education and self-improvement despite opposition from his family and community.

Rangan's awareness of the difficulties of tradition and change within the Badaga community is deepened by his encounters with other characters, especially Jogi and Krishnan. Rangan gains important insight into the value of conserving cultural heritage while simultaneously seizing the opportunities presented by modernity through these partnerships. In the end, his character arc resolves these conflicts in a subtle way as he finds a way to be true to his heritage while paving the way for a brighter future.

Jogi: Guardian of Customs and Conservator of Cultural Legacies

In contrast to Rangan's youthful optimism, Jogi embodies the firmly established values and rituals of the Badaga community, serving as a guardian of tradition amidst the pressures of modernization. Jogi is a revered village elder who personifies the cultural heritage, wisdom, and knowledge that have been passed down through the ages. His existence is intricately entwined with the land's rhythms and his ancestors' rituals, offering a connection to the rich history and traditions of the community.

At the age of nine, Lingayya's son Jogi is taken to the village temple to take Rangan's place as a priest, as Rangan was selected by the Badaga clan. For twelve years, he has been a priest. Jogi is horrified to see how run-down his family is when he gets home. Since Lingayya was unwell and confined to his bed, he was unable to work and had to rely on the generosity of his village mates to provide him with food grains. Jogi finds that "here and there the landscape was dotted with tea bushes" (96). He discovers that the hills' natural beauty has been replaced by estates growing tea, coffee, and other crops.

Jogi acts as a voice of caution and opposition against the forces of change that the village is experiencing throughout the entire book. He worries that the quick speed of modernization will permanently change the foundation of their way of life and that cultural identity is being lost. As he works to preserve the principles that have supported their society for many centuries, Jogi's interactions with Rangan and other characters reveal the conflicts between tradition and progress. Jogi, with all his conservative views, is not a one-dimensional figure. He struggles with his own concerns and misgivings about the future, divided as he is between upholding tradition and looking out for the next generation. A moving examination of the nuances of intergenerational dynamics and the difficulties of balancing conflicting priorities in a society that is changing quickly may be found in Jogi's character arc.

Krishnan: Harmonizing Modernity and Tradition

In "When the Kurinji Blooms," Krishnan plays a crucial role as the Badaga community's embodiment of the fragile balance between tradition and modernity. Krishnan, an esteemed village elder and respected member, embodies the enduring legacy of their cultural history and the principles that shape their way of life. With a life rooted in tradition, he mentors and guides newer generations, providing them with an understanding of the practices, ceremonies, and beliefs that make up their identity.

Throughout the novel, Krishnan's character is outlined by a profound sense of duty and accountability to his family and community. He is profoundly committed to preserving cultural heritage and ensuring that the traditions of the past are passed down to future generations. But even with his resistance to modernity, Krishnan struggles with his own anxieties and doubts about the future.

The way Krishnan interacts with Rangan and Jogi illustrates how difficult it is to manage change in a traditional community. He advocates for a reasonable strategy that respects the past while seizing the chances of the present, acting as a voice of reason and moderation in the process. Krishnan's journey to balance the conflicting forces of development and tradition within his own society and himself serves as a reminder of the value of flexibility and resilience in the face of social change.

Comparative Analysis and Reflections

Within the Badaga community, the characters of Rangan, Jogi, and Krishnan present a variety of viewpoints on the difficulties of upholding cultural legacy while accepting social change. Readers are encouraged to consider the nuances of resilience, aspiration, and identity in the context of a society that is changing quickly via their interactions and experiences. As he traverses the conflicts between tradition and advancement in search of personal development and self-discovery, Rangan's journey symbolizes the spirit of young ambition and desire. Jogi stands for opposition to modernity and tradition, protecting cultural legacy in the face of its demands. Krishnan emerges as a guardian of customs and cultural legacy, mentoring the next generation and upholding the principles that characterize their way of life.

Collectively, Rangan, Jogi, and Krishnan's personas provide a sophisticated examination of the relationships between tradition and change in the Badaga society. Readers are encouraged to consider the ongoing conflicts between tradition and advancement in their own lives and communities as a result of their contacts and experiences, which offer insightful perspectives on the intricacies of identity, aspiration, and resilience within a varied and changing society.

Conclusion

Rajam Krishnan creates a wonderful tapestry of individuals in "When the Kurinji Blooms," whose lives cross and diverge in intriguing ways. Readers are encouraged to consider the conflicts between tradition and development, as well as the difficulties of identification and belonging in a society that is changing quickly, via the experiences of Rangan, Jogi, and Krishnan. These characters provide important insights into the lasting themes that define human experience and resilience in the face of social changes as they negotiate the difficulties of upholding cultural heritage while accepting change.

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