

Regained Oral Tradition and Identity Construction in House Made of Dawn

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Abstract : House Made of Dawn is famous novelist N. Scott Momaday's Pulitzer-winning novel in 1968. The novel tells a story of the struggling life of an Indian named Abel, following the pattern of leaving home, coming home, leaving again, and returning home at the closure of the story. It touches upon the theme of the relationship between Indianness, identity, and tradition. Abel's confusion over his identity and his constant struggle and exploration of his identity are pivoted on the tradition of oral literature in the form of story-telling. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze the important role of oral tradition in constructing Abel's Indian cultural identity. The significance of the research lies in two aspects: first of all, the research aims to provide an enlightening perspective for Momaday's House Made of Dawn in order to gain a better understanding of the novel. Secondly, by emphasizing the importance of traditional culture in identity construction, the research hopes to provide some referential value for people who suffer from identity predicament in modern society. Finally, the paper draws a conclusion that alienation from traditional tribal culture will result in a serious physical and psychological crisis for Indian people. Indian people should adhere to their traditional culture in order to construct their unique cultural identity.

Keywords : House Made of Dawn, identity, N.Scott.Momaday, oral tradition

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