

Myth and History in the Works of K. Madavane

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Abstract. The writing of Madavane, a Francophone Indian writer from Pondicherry, challenges and undoes the process that sociologist Partho Chatterjee has defined as the construction of national icons. Historians like Sudipta Kaviraj and Chatterjee encourage postcolonial artists and writers to reinvent history through reactionary artistic creations against the invasion of British culture during the colonial period. The plays and short stories chosen for this study interrogate Sanskrit epics and interweave the structures and themes of the great tradition with local folklore and myth. The little things in the ordinary life of the villagers and the abject elements, often linked to the lower castes in India, are revalorised. Through intertextuality, the author brings together seemingly antithetical subjects such as death and reincarnation, and the dialectic between lies and truth. A back-and-forth between the real and the imaginary humanises the characters of the great tradition and confers political power on marginalised beings. The stratagem of creating a 'Third-Space' allows for the mixing of ideologies, social values and artistic forms.

Keywords: History, folklore, post-colonialism, great tradition, abject, intertextuality, '*Third-Space*'.