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## **REVISITING THE PAST: A STUDY OF PETER CAREY’S NED KELLY AS A NATIONAL ICON**

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**Abstract:**

*The myths associated with outlaws or ‘social bandits’ are important elements of national identity in many developed countries. The myths surrounding ‘social bandits’ and rural outlaws such as Robin Hood, Jesse James and Ned Kelly are important expressions of cultural identity in urban and industrialized nations. One such myth which remained alive in the collective memory of the people is the myth of Ned Kelly. Even after his death, the outlaw Ned Kelly lives on in Australian culture through various media, ensuring his position as a symbol of Australian identity. The present paper focuses on the myth of Ned Kelly, a mytho-historical character of Peter Carey’s novel True History of the Kelly Gang and presents how he has challenged the hegemonic power structure of the time and has proved himself as a national icon. Revisiting the past is an attempt to restore dignity to the historically marginalized and misrepresented groups. The paper analyses how a writer revisits the past and presents the marginalized masses who are subject to tyranny, from a dignified and elevated point of view. This paper also aims to study how Peter Carey, an Australian writer rewrites through fiction the history of marginalized aboriginal and provides him the deserved statues.*

**Keywords:** Australia, bushrangers, national identity, revisiting past, Ned Kelly, outlaw, culture.

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