



**Annamalai University
Department of English**

Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor
Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective

**Select Papers from the National Seminar on Subaltern Literature:
Resistance and Reconstruction**

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Greetings from the Vice Chancellor ...

Prof. P. S. Manian

Greetings from Registrar ...

Dr. K. Arumugam

Greetings from the Dean of Arts ...

Dr. E. Selvarajan

Greetings from the Head of the Department of English ...

Dr. K. Rajaraman

Editor's Note ...

Dr. T. Deivasigamani

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<u>Patriarchy in Chetan Bhagat's <i>Revolution 2020</i> ...</u>	
Albertine Shobana, Ph.D. Scholar and Dr. R. Palanivel	1-7
<u>Subjection of Dalit Women in Bama's <i>Sangati</i> ...</u>	
K. Angel Vinoliya	8-11
<u>The Image of New Woman ...</u>	
K. Annapurany and M. Anita	12-15
<u>Transforming the Tradition towards Transgender – Understanding <i>I am Vidya</i> ...</u>	
K. Anne Pon Malini	16-19
<u>Gyno-topias of Power in Anita Diamant's <i>The Red Tent</i> ...</u>	
Anuja Jose	20-27
<u>Change of Mind – A Study of <i>The Taste of an Hilsa and Other Stories</i>, Akademi Award-Winning Manipuri Short Stories ...</u>	
Dr. Anuradha Nongmaithem	28-32
<u><i>Jasmine:</i> Re-Discovering and Re-Inventing Self ...</u>	
Anureet Gill	33-37
<u>Domestic Violence in Sudha Murthy's <i>Mahashweta</i> ...</u>	
Dr. G. Aruna Devi and K. Vijaya Lakshmi, Ph.D. Research Scholar	38-42
<u>New Image of Woman in the Novels of Shoba De ...</u>	
A. Arun and Dr. B. Karthikeyan	43-50
<u>New Image of Nirmala in Anita Rau Badami's <i>The Hero's Walk</i> ...</u>	
Dr. N. Asharudeen	51-55
<u>Reinventing the Self in Chudamani's <i>Two Women on an Evening</i> ...</u>	
S. Arunkumar	56-58

<u>New Image of Women:</u> <u>A Comparison between the Heroines and other Female Characters of Amish Tripathi and Jaishree Misra ...</u>	
P. Anjanamol, M.Phil. Research Scholar	59-63
<u>Reading Indian Woman Through the Writings of K. R. Meera ...</u>	
M. Athira, Ph.D. Research Scholar	64-70
<u>Emancipation of Humanity and Annihilation of Caste:</u> <u>An Examination of Ambedkarite Influence on the Subaltern Discourse ...</u>	
Bhagya Lakshmi Vijayan, Ph.D. Research Scholar	71-77
<u>Subjugation of Women in Githa Hariharan's</u> <u>The Thousand Faces of Night ...</u>	
V. Chellammal, M.Phil. Scholar	78-82
<u>Rough Passage from Motherland to Other Land:</u> <u>A Study on Shiv K Kumar's Select Poems ...</u>	
P. Dharani, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. G. Arunadevi	83-87
<u>Identity Crisis in Jasmine ...</u>	
K. Annapurany and S. Gayathri	88-91
<u>Social Imbalance in Chetan Bhagat's</u> <u>Revolution 2020 and One Night @ the Call Center ...</u>	
A. Gayathridevi and Dr. T. Deivasigamani	92-98
<u>Portrayal of Subaltern Literary Concept in Rohinton Mistry's</u> <u>A Fine Balance ...</u>	
Ms. K. Geetha, Dr. R. Vijaya and Dr. S. Thirunavukkarasu	99-102
<u>Treatment of Women in Meena Kandasamy's Touch ...</u>	
Dr. A. Glory	103-110
<u>Social Structure and Inequality of Dalits in Dalit Literature:</u> <u>An Overview ...</u>	
Dr. S. Gopinath	111-116

<u>Exploring Self-realization of Modern Women in Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters ...</u>	Imtiyaz Ahmad Mir and Dr. V. K. Saravanan	117-123
<u>Hegemonic Advertising and Silenced Street Vendors: Branding and Marginalizing ...</u>	Ms. Indumathi Deivasigamani	124-128
<u>Negotiating Identities: A Representation of Contemporary India in the Novels of Sarnath Banerjee ...</u>	G. Jerusha Angelene Christabel, Research Scholar	129-135
<u>Women Identity Crisis in Anitha Desai's <i>Cry, the Peacock</i> ...</u>	J. Judi Punitha Elavarasi	136-139
<u>Exposing the Social Alienation of Untouchables – A Subaltern Study in Rohinton Mistry's <i>A Fine Balance</i> ...</u>	Dr. B. Karthikeyan	140-145
<u>Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction Difference of Comparative Literature...</u>	A. Logesh and Mrs. Sridevi	146-151
<u>Silence as a Tool of Resistance in Acquiring Knowledge in Amitabh Ghosh's <i>The Calcutta Chromosome</i> ...</u>	Madhurima Nargis, Ph.D. Scholar	152-157
<u>Identity Crisis of Shashi Deshpande's <i>That Long Silence</i> ...</u>	K. Mahalakshmi, M.Phil. Scholar	158-161
<u>Cosmic - Multiculturalism in the Novel of Kiran Desai's <i>The Inheritance of Loss</i> ...</u>	K. Manisekaran	162-166
<u>The Divergent Shades of Domestic Violence in the Indian Narrative ...</u>	Mila Michael	167-171

<u>Retelling Myths: A Study of Kavita Kane's <i>Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen</i> ...</u>	172-175
D. Monisha and Dr. SP. Shanthi	
<u>Lakshmi Kannan as a Feminist: A Reading of Her Novel <i>Going Home</i> ...</u>	176-179
K. Mugeshpillai and Dr. M. Soundhararajan	
<u>Short Stories in English Classroom at Tertiary Level: An Analytical Study ...</u>	180-184
M. Murali and Dr. R. Narayanan	
<u>Collective Transform and Cost-Effective Maturity in Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Vision of India ...</u>	185-193
Dr. B. Nainar	
<u>The Doom of a Generation: A Reading of Ambikasutan Mangad's <i>Swarga</i> ...</u>	194-199
Namratha Manoharan	
<u>Ambedkar's Views on Caste: Justice and National Unity ...</u>	200-204
P. Parthasarathy and S. Jeyanthi	
<u>Exploring the Exploitation of the Young Adult in Mulik Raj Anand's <i>Untouchable</i> ...</u>	205-208
S. Prabu, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. B. Karthikeyan	
<u>Identification: An Analysis in Jhumpa Lahiri's <i>The Lowland</i> ...</u>	209-212
M. Pradeepa	
<u>Marginality in Mahasweta Devi's <i>Rudali</i> ...</u>	213-215
S. Pragadhipriya, M.Phil. Research Scholar	
<u>The Lost Cultural and Traditional Identity of Indian Lore in Third World & Subaltern Literature: A Study of Sujatha Vijayaraghavan's <i>Hundred Tamil Folk and Tribal Tales</i> ...</u>	216-222
Raghavi Priya. J. and Dr. Laxmi Dhar Dwivedi	

[Dalit Literature and Dalit Movements Continued Dr. Ambedkar's Ideology and Strategy ...](#)

P. Ranjith Kumar 223-230

[Emancipation of Woman in Anita Desai's
Where Shall We Go This Summer? ...](#)

P. Sakthivel, Ph.D. Research Scholar 231-235

[Literature of Diaspora -
Amitav Ghosh Selected Novels ...](#)

K. Annapurany and R. Sathyapriya, Research Scholar 236-239

[Feminist Perspectives in Bharathi Mukherjee's *Wife* ...](#)

S. S. Joseph Sebastian and K. Manisekaran 240-243

[The Sad Songs of the Subaltern Subordinates ...](#)

Shanmathi. S. and Ms. J. Sridevi 244-248

[The Power of Gaze –
An Analysis of Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* ...](#)

S. B. Shanmuga Priya 249-253

[New Image of Woman in Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* ...](#)

R. Sharadha 254-256

[Indian Ethos and Milieu in
Lakshmi Kannan's Short Story *Muniyakka* ...](#)

Dr. M. Soundhararajan 257-261

[Exile and Cultural Alienation in
Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird* ...](#)

E. Tharunika Vaishaale, M.Phil. Research Scholar 262-267

[The Concept of Untouchability in
Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* ...](#)

Dr. T. Deivasigamani and G. Thibiga Lakshmi, Ph.D. Research Scholar 268-272

<u>Indian Female Gothic Narratives and Resistance: A Study of Anita Desai's <i>Cry, the Peacock</i> ..</u>	273-278
K. T. Unais, Ph.D. Research Scholar	
<u>Domestic Violence in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal ...</u>	279-284
Dr. S. Veeramani and P. Ramesh, Ph.D. Research Scholar	
<u>The Metamorphism of Women in Indian Society: A Study of Mahesweta Devi's <i>Rudali</i> ...</u>	285-290
Dr. K. Ananthajothi and Dr. (Mrs.) R. Santhi	
<u>Dr. Ambedkar - The Lion at the Round Table Conferences ...</u>	291-294
R. Anthony Raj, Ph.D. Research Scholar	
<u>Re-Birthing: Women Translating Women ...</u>	295-300
Elizabeth Mathew and Keerthana K. S.	
<u>Gender Discrimination Against Women in Workplace ...</u>	301-305
Dr. A. Vidhyarathi	
<u>Sufferings of Dalit in Bama's <i>Karukku</i> ...</u>	306-309
R. Janani and Mrs. Sridevi	
<u>Dalit Literature: An Overview ...</u>	310-315
K. Karthiga, Ph.D. Research Scholar	
<u>An Analysis of Dalit Women's Distress in Bama's <i>Sangati</i> ...</u>	316-321
Dr. J. Michael Raj and Dr. M. Suresh Babu	
<u>Remnants of Caste within Catholic Church in India ...</u>	322-326
Navya Dennis, II M.A. English	
<u>Rising of Dalits: We Will Rebuild Worlds ...</u>	327-330
G. Raveena, II M.A. English Literature	

<u>From Heaven to Earth:Rewriting Myth – An analysis of Ki Longfellow's Secret Magdalene and Amish's Shiva Trilogy ...</u>	331-338
S. Sivaranjini, M.A. English	
<u>Imperialization of Female Body through Sexual Encroachment: An Analysis of Arnold Itwaru's <i>Shanti</i> ...</u>	339-343
Soumy Syamchand and Dr. A. Selvaraj	
<u>Protagonist of Anita Nair's <i>Ladies Coupé</i> as a New Image of Woman ...</u>	344-350
P. Tamil Selvi	
<u>Emotional Estrangement in Arun Joshi's <i>The Foreigner</i> ...</u>	351-356
Dr. S. Bhuvanewari	
<u>Women as Doubly Subaltern: An Analysis of Mahasweta Devi's <i>Rudali</i> ...</u>	357-361
Dr. P. Dinakaran	
<u>Protest Against Male in Shobha De's <i>Socialite Evening</i> ...</u>	362-367
Mrs. A. Jayabharathi, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. G. Arputhavel Raja	
<u>Conquering Toxic Masculinity through Words: A Critical Study of Meena Kandasamy's <i>When I Hit You</i> ...</u>	368-374
Ms. V. Koguilavardhini	
<u>Struggle for Empowerment: A Critical Study of Bama's <i>Vanmam</i> ...</u>	375-380
Dr. M. Vijiya Priya	
<u>Victimization of Women in Shashi Deshpande's Novels ...</u>	381-386
Dr. K. Ashok Kumar and A. Selvananthan	

<u>Echoing the Repressive Power of the Marginalized Women in Mahasweta Devi's <i>Draupadi</i> ...</u>	
P. Ananthi and Dr. K. Ganeshram	387-392
<u>Domestic Viciousness in Kiranjit Ahluwalia's <i>Provoked</i> ...</u>	
A. Evangeline	393-397
<u>The Voices of the Voiceless: A Study of Ibis Trilogy by Amitav Ghosh ...</u>	
S. Sreehas, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. C. Santhosh Kumar	398-403
<u>The Center within Margins: A Study of Transgressed Boundaries in Sarah Kane's <i>Cleansed</i> ...</u>	
Abhijith M.S.	404-411
<u>Feminine Existence in the Novel of <i>Ladies Coupé</i> by Anita Nair ...</u>	
Dr. V. Gnanaprakasam	412-417
<u>Portrayal of a Dalit Woman – A Study of Urmila Pawar's <i>The Weave of My Life</i> ...</u>	
N. Pavithra	418-421
<u>Identity Crisis in Bharathi Mukherjee's Novels <i>Jasmine and Desirable Daughters</i> ...</u>	
P. Preethi, M.Phil. Research Scholar	422-426
<u>A Study of Enslavement and Liberation in Taslima Nasreen's Selected Poems ...</u>	
M. Pushpavalli, M.Phil. Research Scholar	427-431
<u>Treatment of Death in Namita Gokhale's <i>Gods, Graves and Grandmother</i> ...</u>	
Dr. J. Rajalakshmi	432-437

<u>Women's Dilemma and Confrontation in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's <i>Sister of My Heart</i> ...</u>	438-444
A. Rameshkumar and Dr. S. Bhuvaneshwari	
<u>An Analysis of Identity Crisis of Arjun and Roohi: A Study of the Novel <i>Custody</i> ...</u>	445-448
A. Sankara Priya	
<u>The Tragedy of Immigrants in Anitha Rau Badami's <i>The Hero's Walk</i> ...</u>	449-452
K. Sathishkumar and Dr. V. K. Saravanan	
<u>The Protagonist Balrama, a Subaltern in Aravind Adiga's Novel <i>The White Tiger</i> ...</u>	453-458
M. Evanjaline Nightingale	
<u>Demarcation in Bama's <i>Sangati</i> ...</u>	459-462
R. Thanga Rashma, II M.A. English Literature	
<u>A Study on Caste Clashes Among Dalits in Bama's <i>Vanmam</i></u>	463-467
Dr. Ch. Radhika	
<u>Dual State of Migrants in Jhumpa Lahiri's <i>The Namesake</i></u>	468-472
Radha Devi. K. and Dr. G. Arputhavel Raja	



அண்ணாமலைப்
ANNAMALAI



பல்கலைக்கழகம்
UNIVERSITY

(State University-Accredited with 'A' Grade by NAAC)

ANNAMALAINAGAR - 608 002, CHIDAMBARAM, TAMIL NADU, INDIA.

Prof. S. Manian M.Sc., Ph.D.

Vice-Chancellor

Message

As a commendable initiative, the Department of English organized a three-day National Seminar on "Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction" from 23 to 25 January 2018, and the selected research papers are published in the UGC approved journal *Language in India*. Publication of research papers is indeed a good academic endower and these research articles on Subaltern writings will definitely help the young researchers and faculties to conduct further research in this thrust area.

Subaltern literature as an academic discipline designates the writings of populations who are socially, politically, and geographically marginalized. It is described as "history told from below." In other words, it gives voice to the "voiceless" sections of the society. It is a mark of civilization to welcome and respect alternative view point though one need not agree with it. Moreover, India is a nation of diverse cultures, languages, religions and geographical conditions. Our tradition has always welcomed and respected differences and celebrated unity in diversity.

The publication of two volumes of articles (*Subaltern Indian Writings in English* and *Subaltern Black Writings*) in the reputed journal *Language in India* is a rare academic achievement by the Organising Secretary Dr. T. Deivasigamani of the Department of English. The articles by creative writers, critics, and academicians across the country explore all the issues of subalternity as represented in the writings of the marginalized of all sorts – social, geographical, economic, cultural, etc., and pave way for the integration of all as human beings and citizens of our great nation.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Editor of the two volumes Dr.T.Deivasigamani, and the other members of the faculty of the Department of English for their efforts to publish the research papers presented during the seminar.

(S. MANIAN)



(A State University – Accredited with 'A' Grade by NAAC)

ANNAMALAINAGAR – 608 002, CHIDAMBARAM, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

Date : 16-03-2018



Dr.K.ARUMUGAM, M.Sc., Ph.D.
Registrar i/c

MESSAGE

I am glad that the Department of English organized a three-day National Seminar on “Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction” from 23rd to 25th January 2018 and the select articles presented during the seminar are brought out as two volumes in the reputed Journal *Language in India*. The objective of this publication is to provide an opportunity to budding teachers and researchers to become familiar with research in subaltern literature.

The two volumes of the journal consist of articles by creative writers, academicians, and researchers who have dealt with various issues of the marginalized sections of the society. It is a welcome initiative by the Seminar Director-Cum-Editor Dr. T. Deivasigamani, and the other teachers of the Department of English for having taken efforts to publish research papers on a topic of current importance. I learn that the theme of this book is interdisciplinary in nature and will pave way for scholars from different disciplines to share and exchange their ideas.

I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to the publisher of the two volumes Subaltern Indian writing in English and Subaltern Black Writings, and I am sure that this journal will adorn every library in the country.

(K. Arumugam)

ANNAMALAI  **UNIVERSITY**
OFFICE OF THE DEAN, FACULTY OF ARTS

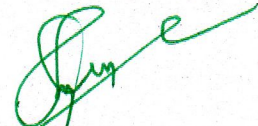
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I am happy to know that the three-day National Seminar on “**Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction**” organized by the Department of English from 23-25 January, 2018 was a great success and was attended by creative writers, delegates, researchers, students and participants from far and wide. I am also happy to know that the selected articles of the seminar are published in volumes entitled, *Subaltern Indian Writings in English* and *Subaltern Black Writings* in the UGC approved journal, *Language in India*. I congratulate the faculty members of the Department of English and the editor of this Journal, Dr.T.Deivasigamani for their laudable effort in bringing out the two volumes. I wish them success in all their future academic endeavors.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr.E.Selvarajan)
Dean, Faculty of Arts

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Message

I was very much delighted in associating myself with my colleagues of the Department of English in organizing a three-day National Seminar on “**Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction**” from 23 – 25 January, 2018. There was an overwhelming response to the seminar from the creative writers, teaching fraternity, researchers and students. The selected papers are published in the form of two volumes of articles titled, *Indian Writings in English: A Subaltern Perspective* and *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective* in the UGC approved journal, *Language in India*.

I congratulate **Dr. T. Deivasigamani**, the Director of the three-day National Seminar for his laudable efforts in making it a big success. I am equally happy over the fact that he has taken much pain in bringing out these two volumes of articles, which shows his commitment and devotion to his profession and the Department. I wish him success in his academic endeavors.


(K. Rajaraman)

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Editor's Preface

The Department of English, Annamalai University Organized the **Third ICSSR Sponsored National Seminar on *Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction*** from 23rd to 25th January 2018. The aim of the Seminar was to provide the participants as well as experts with a platform to exchange and enhance their innovative ideas and experiences in Subaltern literature. The three-day seminar was attended by a large number of enthusiastic scholars and budding teachers from various colleges and universities in India. More than 300 papers were read by participants from different parts of India.

The selected papers presented in the **ICSSR Sponsored Three-day National Seminar on *Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction*** are divided into two categories, namely, **Volume I: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*** and **Volume II: *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective***. These volumes reflect the literary response on contemporary Subaltern literature evoked amongst scholars in India.

The present socio-cultural and literary scenario calls for a relocation in the conception and construction of the terms “Resistance” and “Reconstruction.” These do not refer merely to the everyday experiences and expressions of a particular group but have become resources to be utilized across nationalities. Subaltern literature constitute the most significant development in World literature in the last three decades and the genre has received massive attention among academics, literary critics and creative writers within India and abroad. It is an explicit

corrective agenda and preoccupation with the binaries of nation and fragments, men and women, elites and peasants, urban and rural, haves and have-nots, and the majority and minority. Unfortunately, even the Subaltern School seems to have not greatly focused on the position of the Dalits and Tribes in India. It is a historical fact that the Dalit literature received undue criticism from some leading Indian English in Writing and Indian languages writers in past, questioning the need for such a specialization.

The terms *Subaltern* and *Subaltern Studies* entered post-colonial studies through the works of the Subaltern Studies Group, a collection of South Asian historians. The *subaltern* refers to any specific marginalized situation in any given cultural or social context. Subaltern consciousness is one of the characteristics of subalternity. Antonio Gramsci emphasized the significance of the word in terms of class, gender, caste, marginalization, race, and culture of the society. The term *Subaltern literature* covers themes such as the masses, Dalits, the deprived, oppressed, marginalized, neglected, and Indigenous sections of the society.

Subaltern discourse highlights the conceivable political achievements of the collective in their radical endeavour to recover the histories of peasant rebellions and resistance before and after India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South American's independence from the British. The post-colonial period is an important one for the subalterns because both the nation and the people have just been relieved from the terrible clutches of colonial rule. This period sets out a determined effort to reproduce the colonial experience of the subalterns in literary works.

All the colonized nations of the world have a subaltern identity. The subaltern identity is the identity of difference and the subaltern “celebrates hybridist and cultural polyvalence.” The main motivation of this transaction is to centralize subaltern's marginal position in society in terms of social and political, both of which is the outcome of systematic and structural marginalization. Subaltern writings are narratives of trauma, pain, resistance, protest, and the social change. These writings have a profound social obligation wherein majority of the writers try to create a classless society. Subaltern literatures—Dalit, Tribal, African, and Aboriginal document the sufferings and atrocities committed upon a large section of the population.

Today, Dalit, Tribal, African American, and Aboriginal literatures have been accepted as an integral part of subaltern literature. All are marginalized literature- one arising out of the ‘literature of slaves’ and the other from the ‘literature of untouchables.’ Similarity, it is extended to the Black American and Aboriginal Writings for which the history of slavery is not illusionary or unreal. Indigenous people are struggling to gain their own identity as people Indigenous of the land or country. The liveliness and authenticity of their expressions are

captured all over their writings. Shame, anger, sorrow, and indomitable hope are the trademarks of these marginalized people and the literature created by them. As the world moves toward becoming a global village, some past experiences and lessons learnt become precious and crucial to understand the common sensitivity and sensibility.

From its very inception, Annamalai University has focused on social oppression based on various factors including caste divisions and has encouraged its administrators, faculty members, and students to develop social consciousness to fight against social, economic, and cultural discriminations. Thus, as the organizer of the **ICSSR Sponsored Three-day National Seminar on Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction**, I feel happy that this National Seminar becomes an integral part of the history of Annamalai University.

These two volumes offer a modest survey of the trends of recent studies in Subaltern writings and literature. I owe a debt of gratitude to all contributors for their kind cooperation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all renowned participants of the seminar who in spite of their commitments and engagements elsewhere, helped us to successfully complete the national seminar and bring out these two volumes. I am indebted to the authorities of the ICSSR, New Delhi and the **Vice-Chancellor** and the **Registrar, Dean, Faculty of Arts, and Head, Department of English**, Annamalai University, for the opportunity and the facilities they provided me to organize this three-day national seminar. I am indebted to my colleagues for their cooperation. It is my pious duty to put on record my gratefulness to the authorities of the ICSSR, New Delhi for sponsoring this seminar.

Finally, I thank the UGC approved Journal *Language in India* for publishing the reviewed and selected papers of this seminar.

Dr. T. Deivasigamani

Editor

Patriarchy in Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*

Albertine Shobana, Ph.D. Scholar and Dr. Palanivel



Abstract

Patriarchal system in an Indian society means that the family unit is based on the household structure, where a single male is the head of house. Usually this role does belong to the father or the male earning member. He does make choice in terms of marriage alliance, both daughters and sons, decision about buying and selling properties, and maintaining family property day-to-day life. In addition, a patriarchal character of the Indian family is that a girl has to leave her father's house to live with her in-laws for the rest of her life, meaning she is under the continuous protection of a male. And because an inheritance in India is usually traced through man, not a woman, the whole family sets are related to males who live together and share a property or even in case of tribal groups, a wife. As a consequence of a male dominated role in a family and kinship system women are treated as a less important tool in kinship and often an easy a disposable member, simply replaceable by new brides. This idea of patriarchy is still persistent in the novels of the male writers of India. The major Indian writers' themes are analysed with extra reference to Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*, a contemporary novelist of pop literature, portraying modernised India and youth in a patriarchal attitude.

What is Patriarchy?

Historically speaking, the term patriarchy was used to refer to autocratic rule by the male head of a family. However, in modern times, it more generally refers to social systems in which power is primarily held by adult men. According to Sylvia Walby patriarchy is "A system of interrelated social structures which allow men to exploit women." According to April A. Gordon, Walby's definition allows for the variability and changes in women's roles and in the order of their priority under different patriarchal systems. It also recognizes that it is the institutionalized subordination and exploitation of women by men that is the crux of patriarchy; this can take many forms. It is even theoretically possible that patriarchy could express itself through a de-emphasis on motherhood in favour of women as wage earners or some other role.

History and Origin of Patriarchy

Anthropological evidence suggests that most prehistoric hunter gatherer societies were egalitarian, and that patriarchal social structures did not develop until many years after the end of the ice age, following social and technological developments such as agriculture and domestication. Marxist theory states, patriarchy arose out of a primeval division of labour in which women took care of the home and men were occupied with agriculture. As capitalism developed the realm of production became monetized and valued and the realm of the home was never monetized and became devalued, and the perception and power of men and women changed accordingly. Aristotle portrayed women as morally, intellectually, and physically inferior to men; saw women as the property of men; claimed that women's role in society was to reproduce and serve men in the household; and saw male domination of women as natural and virtuous. Though this notion of the supremacy of the male gender has deteriorated with the development of civilisation, it still continues to prevail as a clandestine factor, which subtly erodes the female space.

Patriarchy in India

It was during the freedom movement that the need for an egalitarian society was sensed. But it resulted in a patriarchal one. Women are still subjected to violence and discrimination even in modern India. The denial of basic rights and facilities to women even in the 21st century and significant high cases of female foeticide, honour killing, dowry death, etc. is a thing to ponder upon how the patriarchy is deeply rooted in the very foundation of the society.

Though there is considerable change in the status of women in the modern Indian society with women population almost half of the population of the country and Indian laws being implemented for the protection of rights of women, women still undergo a mental trauma, which is a result of the patriarchal influence that controls the women indirectly, forcing her to live the life a man wants.

Patriarchal Review of the Novels of Male Indian Writers – Post Independence

Male writers depicted the traditional societal set up of India, showcasing not only the nostalgia and dissent of certain cultural activities but also the success stories of patriots and common men. The novels predominantly covered the success stories of Indian men and women, both in India as well as abroad and their utter failures too. Each novel depicted the multi ethnic and multicultural backdrop that portrayed the importance of men in the society with subtle reference to women, which provided something for the reader. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's

Rajmohan's Wife is the first Indian novel in English. Anandmath is the second novel. Then came Krishna Pant's Bay of Bengal, Kandan, Filler, Toru Dutt's Bianca, Jogendra Singh's Nur Jahan and Madhusudhan Dutt's Kamarupa and Kamalata. These authors comprised of the first-generation writers in Indian English fiction.

The second-generation trio Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayan's fictions were society based. They discussed the plights of the subjugated lower classes and the plight of the middle class. They also satirised the bourgeois, their tendency of imitating the British. These novelists took to their own styles in bringing forth the traditional setup of the country. Mulk Raj Anand can be aptly compared to Charles Dickens, the prominent novelist of the Victorian age, famous for his exact portrayal of the vices of the society. Likewise, Mulk Raj Anand too is notable for his projection of the poorer classes of India, propagating a new literature called protest literature. In *The Sword and the Sickle* Anand focussed his attention on the sufferings, misery and wretchedness of the poor as a result of exploitation of the downtrodden class of the Indian society. His other novels focus on religious hypocrisy, feudal system, East West encounter, the place of women in the society, superstitions, poverty, hunger and exploitation are his common themes.

R.K. Narayan was the lucid South Indian writer. His writing technique was unpretentious with a natural element of humour about it. It focussed on ordinary people. He was able to write about the intricacies of Indian society without having to modify his characteristic simplicity to conform to trends and fashions in fiction writing. Raja Rao's works are deeply rooted in metaphysics. *The Serpent and the Rope*, a semi-autobiographical novel recounting a search for spiritual truth in Europe and India, established him as one of the finest Indian prose stylists. His first and best-known novel *Kanthapura* is narrated in the form of a purana by an old woman of the village. The novel advocates Gandhian philosophy through its protagonist Moorthy, a young Brahmin who works for the upliftment of the Pariahs.

The British rule had its high impact on these second-generation writers. Disillusioned by the failure of the British rulers to ameliorate the plight of the suffering Indians, there grew an atmosphere of earthly realism. Literature has now become a convenient tool to dramatise and popularize the national cause. They produced novels of social realism. The freedom struggle caught the imagination of the entire nation and these significant writers could not escape the impact of the mighty movement which was then sweeping the country. The next generation of miscellaneous fiction writers were political and satirical writers like Kushwant Singh, Balachandra Rajan. Kushwant Singh's prominent stories *Train to Pakistan* and *I Shall Not Hear The Nightingale* basically deal with the partition, post-independence and the latter about the tension between the British and Sikhs. His stories are replenished with vivid chanting of conversations, revolutionary speeches, meetings and such. His novels also throw light on the Sikhs and Muslims and their internal conflict with the British. They examine varied group of people and increases the understanding of society and culture of that time and place.

Balachandra Rajan was a follower of John Milton, wrote two novels, *The Dark Dancer* which deals with the partition, and *Too Long in the West*, a more light-hearted satire of a girl's return to her home village. *The Dark Dancer*, a novel of modern India centers around national and

personal conflicts in its story of V. S. Krishnan, a Brahmin, who, returned after ten years of schooling in England, finds that his country's strife over partition and the English evacuation is reflected in his own struggle to find a meaning and a definition of his life. His career arranged, his marriage predetermined, he escapes disgrace in a civil demonstration and settles into his government service post. Although Kamala is the perfect Hindu wife, personifying non-violence in which resignation can be translated into resistance, when Cynthia Bainbridge turns up their friendship, begun in England, becomes a passionate affair but it is ended when Krishna realizes that his religion is no longer open to him. Joining Kamala in riot-torn Shantihpur, he is confronted by the vicious hatred of the Muslims and the threat of cholera and is the witness of Kamala's murder when she attempts to protect a Moslem girl. After the traditional rites of her burial, he returns to Delhi and Government Service knowing that Kamala's final profession of faith has effected a change in him even if it has gone for nothing in larger terms. The parallel struggles of individual and state for freedom, the symbols, fundamentals, rituals and practices of different Indian groups, are overlaid with heavy textured prose that is exhaustive in its exploration of contemporary Indian thinking.

Chaman Nahal too is one of the best exponents of Indian English fiction. His novels, *My true faces*, *Into another dawn*, *Azadi* talk of the pre Independence era. He discusses family relationships, sexual intimacies on par with the backdrop of political scenario. His quartets on Gandhiji profoundly describe the life of Gandhi, exhibiting a close study of the Mahatma. Arun Joshi's novels bear contemporary who are urban, English speaking and disturbed for some reason. His stories often explore philosophical dimensions of an individual's yearning to decipher the meaning of life and the throe of materialistic existence. The strange case of Billy Biswas, *The Apprentice* and *The Last Labyrinth* are some of his notable novels. Billy Biswas tells the story of a US returned Indian name Billy. He gets fed up of the materialistic life that revolves around him and being an anthropologist often visiting tribes in India, one day suddenly disappears in such a visit. His novels clearly depict the pangs of mankind, may be the after effects of the Second World War and man's failing faith in God. Joshi's male characters are mentally disturbed, cut off from all aspects of society. They are forlorn and regard themselves as strangers in the physical world.

V.S. Naipaul is known for his early comic novels set in Trinidad and Tobago, his bleaker later novels of the underworld and his autobiographical chronicles of life and travels. Ahmed Salman Rushdie is a British Indian novelist and essayist. Much of his fiction is set on the Indian subcontinent. He combines magical realism with historical fiction. His work is concerned with the many connections, disruptions and migrations between and eastern and western civilizations. His first novel *Grimes* is a part science fiction tale. It's his next novel acclaimed literary notability for the author. *Midnight's Children* follows the life a child born at the stroke of midnight, the time when India gained its independence. The protagonist Saleem has been compared to Rushdie himself, though the author denies the idea. His next novel *Shame* depicts the political turmoil in Pakistan. The characters are based on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Muhammed Zia ul Haq. *Satanic Verses* consists of a frame narrative. He once again implements magical realism. The story is about two protagonists Gilrul Farishta and Saladin Chamcha compared to Amitabh Bacchan and N.T. Rama Rao, and the ensuing tangle between the two.

Shashi Tharoor is regarded more of a politician and journalist than an author. He started writing at the age of six. His World War II adventure novel *Operations Below*, inspired by the Biggles books was serialized. His first novel *The Great Indian Novel* is a comparison of the epic Mahabharata to the Indian democracy post-independence. *Pax Indica* is a nonfiction book about India's foreign policy. His other novels namely *The Elephant*, *the Tiger* and *the Cellphone*, *India from Midnight to the Millennium* trace the history and the politics of the nation. *The White Tiger* is the debut novel by Indian author Aravind Adiga. The novel provides a darkly humorous perspective of India's class struggle in a globalized world as told through a retrospective narration from Balram Halwai, a village boy. In detailing Balram's journey first to Delhi, where he works as a chauffeur to a rich landlord, and then to Bangalore, the place to which he flees after killing his master and stealing his money, the novel examines issues of religion, caste, loyalty, corruption and poverty in India. Ultimately, Balram transcends his sweet-maker caste and becomes a successful entrepreneur, establishing his own taxi service. In a nation proudly shedding a history of poverty and underdevelopment, he represents, as he himself says, tomorrow.

Davidar published short stories and poems in newspapers and literary magazines, before publishing his debut novel, *The House of Blue Mangoes* in 2002. The novel, which was based on Davidar's own family, and covered fifty years of South Indian history, had been twelve years in the writing. Davidar's second novel, *The Solitude of Emperors*, which was based on his experiences as a journalist, and the outrage he felt at the communal riots that took place in India in the 1990s. His third novel, *Ithaca*, set in the world of international publishing.

Chetan Bhagat

Chetan Bhagat is an Indian author, columnist, screenwriter, television personality and motivational speaker, known for his English-language dramedy novels about young urban middle-class Indians. Bhagat is the author of bestselling novels *Five Point Someone* (2004), *One Night @ the Call Centre* (2005), *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* (2008), *2 States* (2009), *Revolution 2020* (2011), *What Young India Wants* (2012) (speeches and columns), *Half Girlfriend* (2014), *Making India Awesome* (2015) and *One Indian Girl* (2016).

A close review of the novels manifests the common ideas that were the need of the then post independent society. These male writers were predominantly patriarchal in their approach giving little emphasis on female identity. Their novels describe the plight of women supported and pacified by the alpha male, without whose protection and support the mere survival is a question. Even in the patriotic novels the protagonist is always the male. Hence, he is the deciding factor of the family, society and polity. The novel taken up for study is Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*, since he is a contemporary writer depicting modern society which is still deemed to be patriarchal.

Revolution 2020

This book follows the story of two friends separated by their ambitions and passions yet connected by their love for the same girl. While Gopal, who has experienced the harsh realities of life due to poverty, aspires to become rich, his friend Raghav is a boy from a well-off family who desires to "revolutionize" India by fighting corruption. Aarti and Gopal have been child deep but platonic in relationship. As teenagers, Gopal pushes Aarti for more, but she later reveals

that she was not ready for anything. Gopal gets a low ranking in the AIEEE exams while Raghav is among the toppers. Gopal moves to another city (Kota), to join reputed coaching classes to help with his ranking. Raghav becomes a celebrity in the town after he passes the Indian Institute of Technology entrance exam. Aarti falls for Raghav during Gopal's absence. Aarti and Gopal chat online, and Aarti reveals her relationship to Gopal, who is heartbroken. He studies hard but gets a low ranking in the AIEEE exam for the second time. His father dies shortly after. Raghav decides to become a journalist and pursue a career in a newspaper publishing house.

Meanwhile, Gopal is contacted by a politician who wishes to build an engineering college on the highly valuable land that Gopal's family owns. Gopal agrees to the deal and joins the system of corruption in India in order to build the college with the politician's black money. He is tired of "giving white envelopes" to officials but has no other choice. Raghav, now a journalist, exposes the corruption-funded college and is eventually fired from the news-house. Raghav starts his own newspaper, *Revolution 2020*, to "change the world" and expose the corrupt system in India. After another expose, Raghav's newspaper is shut down by politicians and thugs, and he loses almost everything.

Raghav is still passionate about his activism and forgets about Aarti. They are still unmarried. Aarti and Gopal reconnect and often meet after work in coffee shops and other places, without Raghav's knowledge. Gopal books a hotel room in the same hotel that Aarti works. Gopal seduces Aarti who returns his love, giving in to years of suppressed feelings. Aarti falls in love with Gopal and begins to cheat on Raghav. Gopal then decides to disclose to Raghav that he and Aarti are into a relationship. Gopal goes to Raghav's office but by chance encounters a poor farmer and his kid who had come to Raghav for help shakes him up and he realizes the folly of money, power and wealth. He decides to let go of Aarti perhaps realizing they were never meant to be together and Raghav would always remain Aarti's love. He invites two prostitutes as a part of his birthday surprise and ensures Aarti witnesses it, provoking her hate him forever. He anonymously helps Raghav get a job, and suggests he become a politician (MLA) to bring about the "revolution" he desired. Aarti and Raghav get married.

Gopal becomes a rich and successful businessman but is still heartbroken over Aarti. Despite sacrificing his lifelong love to bring about the "revolution", Gopal still doubts whether he is a "good man".

Patriarchal View of *Revolution 2020*

The two dominant male figures, Gopal and Raghav exhibit two polarised views of patriarchy. Gopal who is in love with Aarti since his childhood tries in vain to woo her. His efforts materialise only after he becomes successful in his life. Chetan Bhagat tries to bring into the picture that women are lured by power and money, expressing the menial attitude of women which could be compared to women being gifted with precious jewels when a paramour is in need of her. The only difference here is the modernised attitude of status. When Gopal decides to forsake his lover girl for his friend Raghav, he gets two prostitutes to make Aarti hate him, but before that affirms that he sexually enjoys Aarti exploiting and luring the women sex with his power and money. He uses two women prostitutes as a tool to bring forth the effect he wants.

While Gopal and Raghav settle for jobs which help in moulding of the society, Aarti works as a receptionist in a hotel, though being the daughter of a renowned man in the town. Her aspiration of becoming an air hostess is not treated with much importance compared to that of her male counterparts, thus expressing that the profession of a woman is not of much importance. Gopal who is vexed about his failures in love life and economical status goes to the point of forsaking his life, if not for the politician who happens to come by, but the life and likes of Aarti are not given that much prominence. She seeks favouritism with her boyfriends, meaning that she is weaker and is in need of an emotional support from some male counterpart. When Raghav is absorbed in his profession, he fails to pay attention to Aarti, thus forcing her to turn towards Gopal. Thus, it could be concluded that the Indian society is still patriarchal in its view but in a very subtle manner. The society continues to be in its same form failing to recognise women as an equal counterpart.

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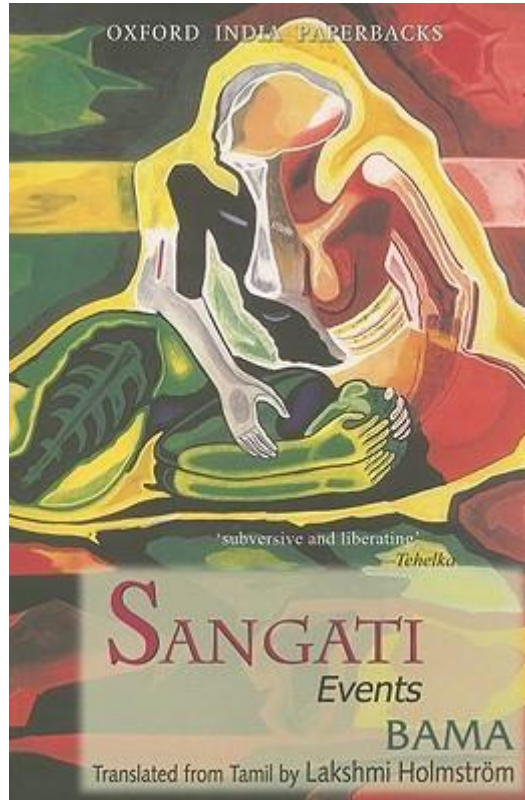
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Subjection of Dalit Women in Bama's *Sangati*
K. Angel Vinoliya



Dalit Movement and Dalit Literature

The prime aim of the Dalit Movement is to battle against the caste conflict that lies in the forms of exclusion from common civic responsibilities, discrimination between upper and lower caste people, inequalities based on economic status, oppression of selfhood etc., Dalit through literature especially. In the words of Mishra, women too hold strong position and play active role in the movement through direct participation and as “independent thinkers and writers in the literary world” (23) questioning the existing dogmas and theories on life advocated by the upper caste people.

Subjection always happens for the weaker by the stronger. Dalit literature is a rebel against the higher-class people by the lower caste people. Dalit people are crushed at every part of their life; they were also treated as untouchables. If a woman belongs to Dalit community she faces two types of suppression in her life: first being a woman, second belong to the lower community, they are ‘doubly abused’.

Sangati

Sangati doesn't have a definite plot like other novels, but it is a collection of incidents told to the narrator in different situations. The plot covers the span of three generations starting from Vellaiyamma Kizhavi to Bama. The characters are either relatives or people the narrator saw. The collection of such events is appropriately titled as *Sangati* – Events. Bama has brought out many things that happen to Dalit women. Among the often-repeated characters of Bama, Vellaiyamma Kizhavi (grandmother) connects the past with the present situation.

From Infancy

The suffering of Dalit women starts from their infancy. They live 'hard lives' as Bama recalls. Even from children's game to the serious issue of marriage, education, labour, the double standard of patriarchal society is visible. In their community boy babies are considered as a gift and girl babies as a burden, boy babies are breastfed for longer hours than the girl babies and they were taken good care when they fell ill. Girls suffering starts even from their birth. The case is different for boys, "if a boy baby cries, he is instantly picked up and given milk. It is not so with the girls." (*Sangati* 7) She continues saying that the case doesn't change even after they have grown old, "boys are given more respect. They'll eat as much as they wish and run off to play. As for the girls, they must stay at home and keep on working all the time..." (7)

Eating the Left Over

Bama recalls how she ate the "leftover skin" of the mangoes her grandmother brought. If she brought anything home when she returned from work, it was always the grandsons she called first. If she brought cucumbers, she scooped out all the seeds with her fingernails, since she had no teeth, and gave them the remaining fruit. If she brought mangoes, we only got the skin, the stones and such; she gave the best pieces of fruit to the boys. Because we had no other way out, we picked up and ate the leftover skins. (8).

The young Dalit girls hardly enjoy their childhood. She recalls how a young Dalit girl's life starts.

In our streets the girls hardly ever enjoy a period of childhood. Before they can sprout three tender leaves, so to speak, they are required to behave like young women, looking after the house work, taking care of babies, going out to work for daily wages. Yet, in spite of all their suffering and pain one cannot but be delighted by their sparkling words, their firm tread, and their bubbling laughter. (75)

Caste Dynamics

Bama records that when she heard that, she had a strange sensation. It was then that she was slowly initiated into the knowledge of caste dynamics. "When I was studying in the third class, I hadn't yet heard people speak openly of untouchability. But I had already seen, felt, experienced and been humiliated by what it is"(11). She then witnessed some upper caste women give water to her grandmother: "The Naicker women would pour out the water from a height of four feet, while paatti and the other received and drank it with cupped hands held to their mouths. I always felt terrible when I watched this" (14).

Velliamma Patti

The women characters who we see through the protagonist, Velliamma Patti, lead an inferior and a horrible family life that could be unimagined by women of upper caste. Already the society has segregated, as low caste people, meek and vulnerable to become easy prey to the insensible wrath and in satiable sexual desire of upper caste men. Mariamma, Velliamma Patti's grand-daughter was about to be raped in pump set shed by upper caste man, Kumarasamy Ayya. Mariamma had a narrow escape from him. The irritated man cruelly narrated a story and the blame fell on her and village court fined her for no fault of her. This injustice evoked a hot discussion among other women. Sexual harassment happens to be a common and inveterate event casually, discussed by women of Dalit community, compelling them to bear the brunt silently:

After this, the crowd broke up and everyone went home. And we were walking home, Arokkyam said, Look how unfair these fines are. Even last week, when my granddaughter Paralokam went to pull up grass for the cow, the owner of the field said he would help her lift the bundle on to her head. That was his excuse for squeezing her breasts, the barbarian. He's supposed to be the mudalali's son.... the poor child came and told me and wept. But say we dared to tell anyone else about it. It's my granddaughter who is to be called a whore and punished... (26)

Woman in Dalit Community

A woman in Dalit community, as depicted in Bama's novel is not to be dissuaded by these happenings however cruel they are. She has learnt the art of surviving at any cost, they fight against cruelties to make a living. Though the biased social system demands her to be silent she is not always. She is courageous and hardworking, ceaselessly at home and also outside to take care of the household single-headedly, enduring the enormous violence and physical assaults of her husband and she equips herself with cleverness to tackle the situations using dissenting stratagem.

Most of the Dalit Feminists including Bama talk about Dalit woman facing violent in some form or the other at the workplace, in public arena and at home. Being raped or sexually assaulted by men of superior caste or by the starved fatty men of their clan is a routine one happening in Dalit community. Hence in all Tamil Dalit literature sexuality of a Dalit woman is a common theme coarsely handled by them to accentuate on women's subjugation to sexual assault even at tender age. But the Dalit writing makes one difference from others. Unlike other women writers they never project their characters as women, always whining and wailing with tears filled in eyes. Instead they compile them mouthful; a seaming art though, it is a talent they are gifted with to use as an armour expiating the lost egalitarian privileges in the caste-prone patriarchal society. Talking about women's tactics to confront husband's assault, Aditi Swamy says, sometimes "sharp tongue and obscene words are a woman's only way of shaming men and escaping extreme physical violence" (47). The Dalit woman wags the nerveless bastion to put her husband to shame with added accentuation through vulgar gestures- unimaginable by a timid woman of upper caste. What may seem to be obscenity and ill-mannered are the means to escape from being bashed by or even killed by her husband. Rakkama is not a "quite creature" (Sangati 61) as assumed to be at the beginning of the novel. She uses abusive terms to curse and makes obscene and ill-mannered gesticulations to stoop her husband tormenting her physically.

Representative of the Experience

Bama's depiction need to be understood as representative of the experience. It is indicative of the ill-fated situation bequeathed in a greater degree of self-awareness and quest for achieving high and nobler things in the lives of Dalit women. As Simon de Beauvoir has pointed out in *The Second sex*, "there are women who are mad and there are women of sound method: none has that madness in her method that we call genius" (Beauvoir 717).

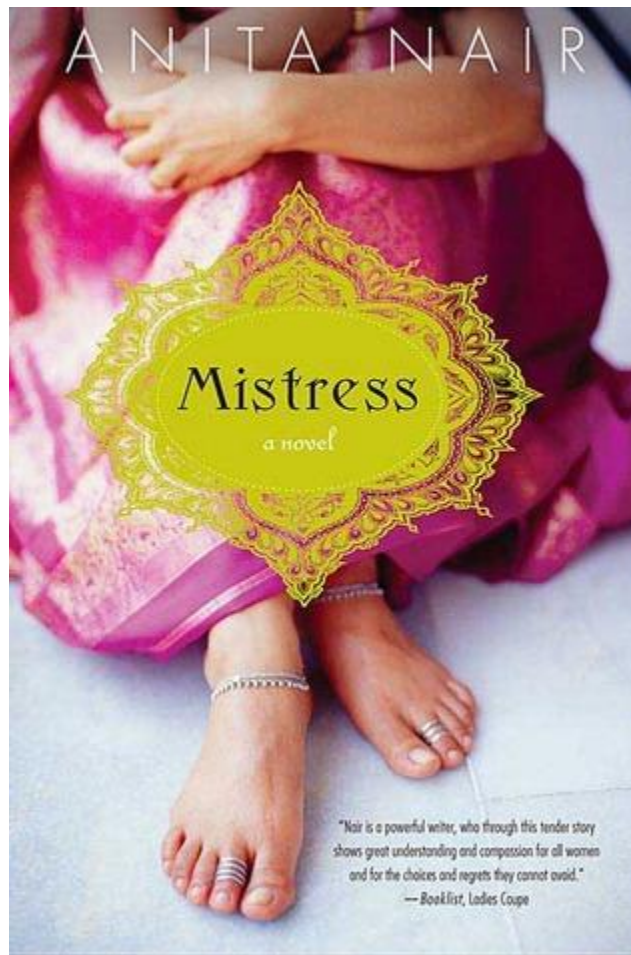
Bama defines Dalit women as: Everywhere you look, you see blows and beatings; shame and humiliation. If we had a little schooling at least, we could live with more awareness. When they humiliate us we do get furious and frustrated... because we haven't been to school or learnt anything, we go about like slave all our lives, from the day we are born till the day we die. As if we are blind, even though we have eyes (Sangati 118). After describing all troubles and difficulties she suggests something for the welfare of women. We must bring up our girls alike, showing no difference between them as they grow into adults. We should give our girls the freedom we give our boys. If we rear our children like this from the time they are babies, women will reveal their strength. Then there will come a day when men and women will live one, with no difference between them; with equal rights. Then injustice, violence, and inequalities will come to an end, and the saying will come true that 'women can make and women can break' (123). Bama in her *Sangati* describes autobiographical elements in a very bold and realistic way, which she saw in her life by using colloquial language, abuses used by women in their daily life. She ends her novel with an optimistic point of view. At the end of the novel Bama says that she has a hope; "I am hopeful that such a time will come soon" (123).

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The Image of New Woman K. Annapurany and M. Anita



Abstract

The new women pushed the limits set by “male dominated society.” More women were winning the right to attend the university or college; some were professionals and becoming Lawyers, Doctors, Journalist, and Professors. New women in the United States were participating in post-secondary education in larger numbers by the turn of the 20th century. The women’s liberation movement opened the door for women in literature. New women fiction dealt frankly with sex and marriage as well as women’s desire for independence and fulfillment.

Keywords: image of new woman, dreams and desire of a women, relationship between husband and wife in the society.

Introduction

Gender equality and women empowerment are the issues which picked up momentum in India in the last three decades. There has been a shift, not only in the policy approaches but also in the image of women themselves. This 'new woman' is self-reliant, emancipated and happy individual, who is sexually uninhibited, intelligent, confident and assertive. She lives with a heightened sense of dignity. This 'new being' has been projected in the context of contemporary world as an individual with freedom of choices in the fictional works of many post-modern Indian Writers. Through their novel, they have successfully projected the urges, dreams and desire of a woman, in particular -- the middle-class housewife, who refuses to be bounded and suffocated by her surroundings. Indian writers like Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Namita Gokhale, Anita Nair, through this novel, have successfully and skillfully brought to the surface, these new women issues like dilution in relationships, pre-marital and extra-marital affairs, and sterility of life, man-woman relationship, their inner fears, oppression and suppression faced in and outside home. Literature is in fact the most explicit record of the human spirit. It is a medium through which essence of our living is made paramount by linking it to imaginative experiences. A creative writer must have the perception and analytical mind of a sociologist who provides a record of human life, society and social systems existing at that point of time. In *mistress*, Anita Nair depicts the changing relationship between husband and wife in the society. Husband – wife alienation resulting from lack of communication and temperamental compatibility forms the theme of *mistress*.

The Image of New Woman in Anita Nair's *Mistress*

Anita Nair is one of India's popular female writers. She depicts through her expression, the present condition of women in society, with wit and humour. Story telling is an art and she does it exceptionally well. She delves deep into human psyche and allows the reader to enjoy a wonderful journey by presenting absorbing stories that have Colourful and unique characters. She evokes experiences that are drawn from day-to-day life and her approach often enables the readers to suspect the character to be one of their neighbour's or of a friend. Anita Nair, an eminent, leading Indian women writer, writing in English, holds revolutionary ideas about marriage and man – woman relationship. In her opinion, social consciousness of today, is leading us to the point where conditions for better growth of two complementary components, man and woman, would be ensured by their separate and individual development. Her main stress is on development of personality and genius, which is quite difficult to achieve. Economic independence is incidental and not important in man – women relationship, what matters most is the importance of surroundings and environment. In *mistress*, Anita Nair depicts the changing relationships of husband and wife in society. Her concept of a free woman transcends the limits of economic or social freedom but relates to her mental and emotional attitude and wellbeing. *Mistress* is a grand saga of relationships. The novel deals with several themes like art and adultery, excitement of new found love, ennui in conventional relationships, squalor and ugliness of love, abuse, dashed hopes and dark family secrets what holds the novel *mistress*, on pre-marital, non-marital and extra-marital sex is the way, the author binds it with Kathakali, a popular and rigorous dance form of Kerala. The principal protagonist is a Kathakali artiste of international repute. The different cases of interplay between the characters are expressed through *Navarasas* - the nine phases of human emotion.

A Story of Radha: Dreams and Desire of Woman

In a way this is the story it tells. Of a tumultuous journey to achieve peace. The journey taken by Shyam, the rejected husband, Radha, the longing-for-something-else wife and even Koman, Radha's uncle – the master of Kathakali - an art form that's a difficult mistress. It takes years of excruciating practice to perfect, but the final product can only be appreciated by a knowledgeable few. 'mistress' is also about what it means to be an artist and how an artist can find peace without losing the fire that adds the edge to their art. This story is utterly beautiful and i urge you to read it. It offers so much more than its 'romance-in-exotic-setting' sort of cover would have you think. She has researched and put on all the superficial technical aspects about kathakali and life here, but even a small child would be able to make out that she has not gone deep into the life and hearts of the people here. It is rather an evaluation of a metro-brought-up mind about our lives and surroundings. And any attempt to portray life without going deep into it avoiding the inevitable misery and filth associated with it would be a failure. Live life like our great writers, let life experiences be source to pass on lasting impressions to our minds and hearts using heartfelt imagery, instead of using pages just to fill with words. Write with your heart and not with your head would be my humble message to the author.

Navarasas: Relationship Between Husband and Wife

The novel is based on the Navarasas (expressions) of Kathakali. The Navarasas being Sringaram (love, beauty), hasyam (mirth, laughter), raudram (anger, fury), karunyam (compassion), Bhibatsam (disgust, aversion), Bhayanakam (fear, dread), viram (strenght, heroism), Adbhutam (wonder, amazement), Shantam (peace).Nair has weaved a story around the characters in the mistress as they go through these varied emotions. One of the characters is a kathakali artist. He stays near a resort that is managed by the husband of his niece. A foreigner comes to meet him, allegedly to write a novel and in which he wishes to feature the kathakali artiste as one of the characters. The kathakali artiste speaks about his life starting with the life of his father. The niece who is not happy with living under the thumb of her husband is drawn towards the foreigner and they end up having an affair behind her husband's back. The kathakali artiste is aware of it, but lets his niece have her way. Not a bad read. Read the novel for its presentation. But it seems a trifle too artificial to read that everybody in the mistress is involved in some kind of illicit relationship sometime or the other. It appears the lifestyle akin to the high society rather than the middle class. The novel explores the depth of relationship between Shyam and Radha. In their relationship we find that Radha's role as a wife blocks her freedom. Nair, who is a sensitive writer, can delve deep into people's personalities and take the reader on a wonderful journey of relationship. Radha rejects her husband's oppressive environment and she rebels against the false materialism and vulgarity of society. She even virtually rejects her marriage. She distrusts love as a form of male possessiveness and does not want love to be an aspect of male domination. In the process of knowing her past, she is transformed into a new being. This transformation gives her the inner strength to submit to Shaym's wish to take her back to home. Mysteries are an indictment against men who believe in holding their women in their grip

Conclusion

The image of new woman in Anita Nair's mistress uses Kathakali as her metaphor for life; the novel is sectioned into nine parts, each named after one of the navrasas, the nine emotions or the nine faces of the heart...love, contempt, sorrow, fury, valour, fear, disgust, wonder and

attachment...their traditional names, of course, are used. Each section begins with a wonderful piece on that particular rasa, in the voice of the teacher, giving examples from nature to teach his students how to bring the expressions onto their faces. The images are full of twists, and the novel is powered by the colourful complexities of many characters. Through all the incidents, nair searches for deeper meanings in art and life. Thought-provoking and absorbing, this a brilliant novel mistress from a writer who does not hesitate to challenge herself, a mistress original in both structure and content. A must-read for any lover of literature.

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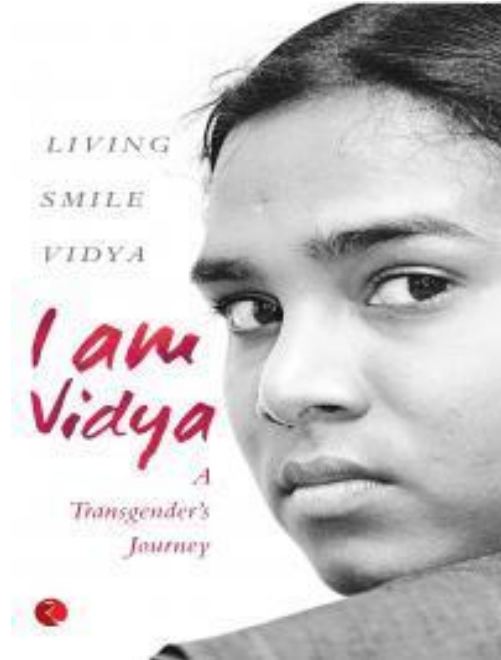
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Transforming the Tradition towards Transgender – Understanding *I am Vidya*

K. Anne Pon Malini



Subaltern literature always lay bare the covered face of humans who are all presumed to be untouchable or unacceptable and it attempts a kind of inclusion of these people who deserve rights and respect in the society which is totally numb and dumb to their cries. Transgender studies in the recent past paved a way for both research and exploration of identity disorder which creates a threat to the accepted gender norms of the society and pose questions about the social assemblage. The auto-biographical account by Living Smile Vidya in her *I am Vidya* narrates her journey as a boy Saravanan to her identified inner self Vidya.

Addressing the Problems of Gender

The novel addresses the problems of the transgender in simple language. The critical analysis of the literary production by one of its members provides a mean to redefine the existing concepts and practices of the contemporary society. It also expresses the difference between sex and the gender chosen by a small section of people who can be categorized into various groups under gender identity disorder.

Sex and Gender

Sex is a term that describes people born with physical characteristics which fit the notions regarding male and female bodies, chromosomes, hormones and both internal and external sex

organs. Gender is what the society delineates as masculine and feminine characteristics. Every society conditions its men and women to identify themselves with their self as man or woman and relate that with gender role or responsibility assigned to them without any choice. When this association creates a sense of inappropriateness in the gender role of their biological sex and when this discomfort persists it results in cross-gender identification.

Anatomically male and female sex organs and the hormones like estrogen, progesterone and testosterone differentiate the sex of a human. The biological differences based on genitals are called primary sex characteristics and hormonal differences make the secondary sex characteristics. Here the hormones play a crucial role to fit any individual into the gender spectrum. Genetically women have chromosomes of X and men have chromosomes of XY. But sometimes men are born with two or three X chromosomes and women with Y chromosomes. Secondly a child may be born with a mix between male and female genitalia. Here the predominant biological sex is assigned. Similarly, when the production of estrogen and progesterone predominates in a human body, feminine characteristics predominate.

In gender differences, each society has its own norms and roles adhered to its individuals. It varies from society to society and can be changed accordingly. For instance, Saudi women are not allowed to drive which is allowed in all other societies. So, gender stereotypes are highly fluid and can change over time. In every society an individual's view about his or her gender depends on their personal sense of being a woman or man. When the internal gender identity does not match with the external manifestations of gender assigned to them biologically, gender disorder arises.

Transgender Studies

Transgender studies pave a way for innovative research in cultural analysis which explores gender diversity, gender identity, sex and sexuality. In this vital ground we can discuss how a transgender find it difficult to view sex in traditional terms as they feel different from their physiological sex. It also creates an arena to show the society how the transgender society can be categorized into the existing society as they have become an undeniable threat to the gender norms of the conservative society.

I am Vidya

In this novel *I am Vidya* written by one of the members of transgender community, a critical portrait has been shown about transgender biopolitics, economy crisis and difficulties in changing the view of the gender biased society. Saravanan was born to middle class parents in Trichy. He was best education by his father out of all his difficulties. Petted and pampered by his two sisters and mother he had a life of a cozy child in the settings of poor background.

From the age of five he started feeling a change in his attitude towards the opposite sex and liked to wear girls attire. He slowly understands his desire to associate himself with women but not with men. Saravanan was thrashed many times by his father whenever he failed to come first in the class but was accepted as he was by his mother and sisters. There is no love or lust for any woman but only an inner urge to assert him that he is not a man but a woman. He finished his B.Sc. in computer science and joined M.A. Linguistics in Tanjore University. In his school

and college days also, he felt comfortable with women folks and received unutterable insults from his male class and playmates.

Community of Transgenders

He started his journey to fulfill his inner hunger. He met many Kothis, transgenders, NGO to aid him in his journey and joined one of the parivaars of transgender in Pune. These parivaars have their own hierarchy of amma, nani, dadi, etc., and each transgender is bound to their rigid rules.

Saravanan was sent to shop begging along with other transgenders. She begged in the streets and in the trains to earn money. A transgender will not be given any job anywhere and she is looked upon as a stigma to the family and to the society. Wherever they go they have to accept the indignities and insults afflicted on them by the society without any protest. When Vidya along with her friends started selling commodities in the train, the people who are ready to give them alms are even not ready to buy anything from them. They closed their business without selling a single item. They were beaten up very cruelly by men in three occasions for having opened their mouth in retaliation. So, a transgender saves money to keep herself dignified in her old age without expecting other transgenders to provide her decent livelihood.

Vidya

Vidya earned money to attain nirvana i.e to get rid of the male protuberance in Pune. It was done in a local hospital in Pune in completely unhygienic and illegal procedure. The surgery to remove his unfortunate identity was mere a castration, while she was watching and screaming under poor anesthesia. Her struggles didn't end there. She lacked social approval even after that. But determined to fight the fate of a transgender either live as by begging or as a prostitute, she knocked the doors of so many broad-minded individuals. She got an employment in micro-credit institution in Madurai and a busy blog writer now.

Thousand years of belief has left unthinkable horrors upon the life and unutterable injuries on the psyche of the transgender. So, they subject themselves to survive on the mercy of Hindu traditions as a transgender's blessing is most desired in upper part of India. But the cruelty and tyranny perpetrated on them in the name of sex and gender perpetuate the ostracism exercised on them. We are touched with pity at the plight of them as they are segregated and discriminated against the rest of the society. Vidya is pragmatic and realistic in raising her voice her against this discrimination and there is no quixoticism in her demand.

Difficulties Faced

The life of Vidya proves how difficult it is for a transgender to feel genuine about their physical appearance and enforce their psychological identity to the society. Though the sex reassignment surgery had taken place medically the individual is not assigned the protection coverage from the atrocities of the society legally. The conditions of depravity lead to possible circumstances for transexuality but not for transgender. The book asserts that gender identity is one's personal sense of being identified as male or female.

But in society the wider gap between the sexual orientation and gender identity is not properly understood and accepted and always portrays the gender-variant people as

homosexuals. Whether a Homosexual or heterosexual, bisexual or asexual does not have any role or problem in gender identity as the transgender faces.

Gender Dysphoria

If the concerned transgender does not face any discomfort or distress regarding their sex it can't be considered as mental sickness. When they have depression or inability to work or have good relationship with others, then this situation is called gender dysphoria. Recent researches found out that this can be cured in children. When a person suffers any inner frustration impairment in functioning owing to the biased and negative behaviours of others also do not indicate gender disorder. The solution for this is to restore functionality and alleviate suffering through counseling, through medicine or even if it requires sex reassignment.

In reassignment laser treatment can be used to remove hairs, vocal cord surgery can be done and all the implementation required by the individual can be met. But in India these things are impossible even to think. Clinical training and mental healthcare counseling training lack adequate information and practices to help transgender clients. Believing that transition from one sex to another is the only solution available is also leads to so many social complications. But choosing a 'nirvana' or not is totally up to the individual but after proper counseling.

Conclusion

I am Vidya is the story of a woman trapped inside the body of a man and struggled to define her identity woman. Though her identity and aspirations limit her reach and relationship with other men, her determination to assert her consciousness which suffered the agony of not having any means to express the suppressed femininity and the indignities she was forced to endure in her attempt to become a complete woman. She lost her manhood not in the excruciating surgery but when the realization dawned on her. It is a journey of perseverance to achieve her desired identity.

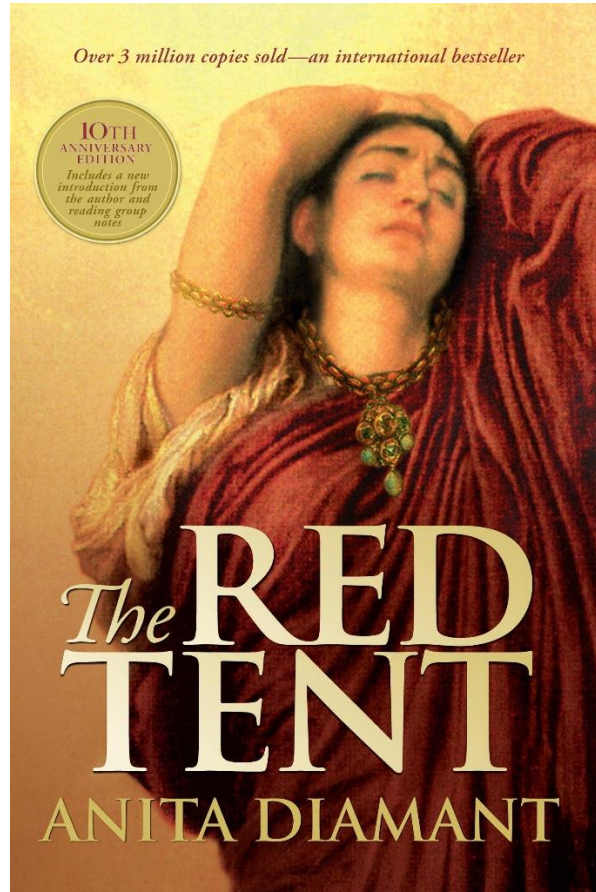
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Gyno-topias of Power in Anita Diamant's *The Red Tent*

Anuja Jose



The Body

The swerve in feminist discourse had taken place when Helene Cixous affirmed that the body could be construed through writing. If 'writing' and 'the body' are considered as the imaginary and the real space respectively, then in "The Laugh of the Medusa", Cixous bridges them; yet in praxis, it was undiscovered. Though 'Women and Literature' has been fairly explored and contended, since *A Room of One's Own*, the identity of the female writer remained a silhouette, far removed from the substance- the body. This lack of a 'totalizing representation' disturbed Patricia Stubbs and Elaine Showalter who sought feminist writers "to give a 'truthful picture of a woman', a picture that would include equal emphasis on the private and the public" (Moi 7). By reclaiming the body through writing, a political space is created for subversion, thereby helping women to emerge from the cages of ghost living.

Complex Space

The body, however, is a complex space. Setha M. Low in her “Embodied Space(s): Anthropological Theories of Body, Space and Culture” corroborates the idea of Bryan Turner and states that human beings “have bodies” and “are bodies”. She discusses how the human body has got an intrinsic social and cultural character whereby the body, mind and emotions are simultaneously trained so that the social status and class position become embodied in everyday life. (Low 12). This shows that the body cannot be considered as a single entity instead it is inevitably linked to external facets. This will also convert the body into an objective and a subjective space where every space is determined and distinguished by/through power.

The manifestation of power through the reflection of the self/body in writing may seem utopian¹ (slipping into the confines of the imaginary; beyond the real, if not surreal). By calling such feminist writing as utopian will negate the already existent powerful feminist writing that reveal the self through writing. In that sense, the signified ‘self’ in feminist writing could be considered as heterotopian; a place that is segregated from the main place but palpably identifiable through its dynamics of power.

Heterotopia

The term ‘heterotopia’ had been introduced by Foucault in “Of Other Space: Utopias and Heterotopias” where he describes the same as:

...[existing] probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places- places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society- which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. (3)

The Red Tent

On looking at the novel, *The Red Tent*, at prima facie, is a reworking of a particular episode in the Old Testament of the Bible/ The Torah namely the violation of Dinah; its objective being to redeem the autonomy of the female space. By turning the text into a political statement, Anita Diamant is also challenging the impeccable righteousness of the men in contrast to the treachery and vice of the women depicted in the scripture. ‘The Rape of Dinah’ as the Old Testament records, is an episode where Dinah (the daughter of Jacob and Leah) is ravished by Shechem, son of Hamor, who is the Chief, but is later asked in marriage with a handsome bride price. In return, the sons of Jacob demand the circumcision of all the men of Hamor’s region, including the chief and the son. After the act is done, Simeon and Levi barge into Hamor’s land and slaughter all the men. Though Jacob is disturbed that the surrounding tribes would attack them, Simeon and Levi reassure him saying “We cannot let our sister be treated like a common whore.” (Gen 34.31). Nothing is mentioned of Dinah after the incident and Dinah is forgotten or rather removed from the subsequent narration.



Anita Diamant

Courtesy: <http://anitadiamant.com/>

Anita Diamant

Anita Diamant rescues Dinah from oblivion by granting her a past, present and future through her fictive narration in *The Red Tent*. In doing so, the defendant is also allowed to speak in order to give the readers a variant, a possibility, a ‘truth’. However, in close inspection, it is seen that, the novel does not distort the fundamental mores of the period. Diamant retains Jacob as the patriarchal head who succeeds Laban through hard work and persistence. In this sense, Jacob controls the main space of the novel while the women who are associated with him namely Leah, Rachael, Bilhah, Zilpah and Dinah are pushed to the periphery. Nevertheless, they are major contributors to the prosperity of Jacob. This transforms the women into the ‘other space’ which is simultaneously connected and distanced from the main space thereby transforming them into a heterotopia. Correspondingly, there are other qualities that the women manifest that correlate with the six principles that Foucault elucidates in “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias”. In order to study the women depicted in the novel as a heterotopia, it is necessary to inspect their subversive qualities and the counter spaces that they create through these qualities.

Women Who Occupy a Central Position in The Plot

The major women who occupy a central position in the plot of the novel are Leah, Rachael, Zilpah, Bilhah and Dinah. Besides their subservience that is perceptible, these women have carved a ‘self’ that is independent of their relationship to men, which in turn correlates to the principles of Foucault. In the novel, the red tent (which could be seen as a crisis heterotopia, as discussed by Foucault) is only considered as a structure of privacy. Within the red tent, the women honour their bodies for cleansing the last month’s death, “preparing the body to retrieve the new month’s life... for repose and restoration, for the knowledge that life comes from between the legs, and that life costs blood” (*The Red Tent* 188). Within this space, the women see themselves as the spring of life. It is not the space that is segregated instead it is their bodies that is segregated from the main space during the period of menstruation. Therefore, the body itself could be considered as the crisis heterotopia.

Within the red tent, the women gather to menstruate and deliver and become ‘whole’ beings, each with a quality that is distinctive of the other. The first woman who is introduced by Dinah in the novel is her mother Leah, the daughter of Laban and Adah. The authority of Leah is seen when she is visibly displeased with Rachael for having a flirtatious conversation with Jacob at the couple’s first encounter at the well. This establishes Leah as a woman who prefers to be sought after more than the other women in the tent. Leah is also conscious of her bodily needs. She syncs her identity with that of the function of the womb which is evident when she revels in Zilpah’s prophecy that Leah would have eight healthy children. The awareness of her bodily need to bear fruit trails her constantly that she becomes mindful of Jacob’s worth to father her children. She is also perceptive enough to understand that she can have a soft control over Jacob if she shows that she can manage the activities of the tent as well as if she bears him sons.

Leah

Nonetheless, Leah is not engrossed in servitude. She tends to her body at the right time when it becomes weak by taking fennel seeds to prevent conception and abandons them when she feels she is ready to reproduce. This shows that, for Leah, motherhood is not an obligation, on the other hand, a willing choice that she makes to fulfill her desires. Leah, thus sees her body not as a public place but rather as a heterotopian space where, “either the entry is compulsory, as in the case of entering a barracks or a prison, or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications.” (Foucault 7)

Rachael

In the case of Rachael, she also has a unique reverence for the body which, despite being unable (for a long period) to utilize for procreation, she uses its course to help other women experience fulfillment. “Rachael’s presence was powerful as the moon, and just as beautiful. Nobody could deny her beauty” (*The Red Tent* 9). Though she is capable of stimulating Jacob far greater than Leah, she is unable to bear a child for a long time. The desire to experience the miracles of the body, magnified after seeing the consecutive births of Leah, torments her that she goes to Inna, the midwife, to learn the secrets of the body.

From Inna, Rachael understands the design of the female-self, the sanctity of the monthly birth and death within the body and the phenomenon of creation. She becomes Inna’s apprentice and devotes herself to the knowledge of procreation. Her knowledge is not only linked to the birthing process of women, rather she explores herbalism too. She also teaches the value of these herbs to the women of her tent along with the various stories that she learnt during her travel. Gradually, “Rachael became their link to the larger world” (*The Red Tent* 57). Rachael sees the body as a chronicler of time since it holds creation and destruction within itself along with the past and the future. While speaking of heterotopias, Foucault also discusses how these counter places are often linked to slices in time. Rachael shows how the female body can also be considered as a heterotopian space that embodies the qualities of the past generation and contain the seed of the future generation.

Spirituality Plays a Crucial Role

While inspecting the other characters of the novel, it is seen that spirituality also plays a very important role in how some women perceive their bodies. “From the age of her first blood, Zilpah thought of herself as a kind of priestess, the keeper of the mysteries of the red tent, the daughter of Asherah the sister-Siduri who counsels women” (*The Red Tent* 15). As

far as Zilpah was concerned, women had no use of men except to impregnate women and to carry heavy loads. Zilpah embraced the nurturing, preservative and protective quality of the female body associated with spirituality and not the demanding and condemning aspect of it.

Every thought of Zilpah displays that she fuses the material and the spiritual. She dreams of Dinah when she is in Leah's womb: "...she saw me weeping a river of blood that gave rise to flat monsters that opened mouths filled with rows of sharp teeth... You walked their backs and tamed their ugliness and disappeared into the sun" (*The Red Tent* 80). The "monster", "the river of blood" and "the sun" indicates that Zilpah combines the real and the ethereal world within her mind/body. Although mutually exclusive, Zilpah treats her body as a spiritual as well as a material entity. Thus, Zilpah is "justapoxing in a single real space several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible" (Foucault 6). Therefore, Zilpah's perception of the body is also that of a heterotopia.

A magnified version of Zilpah's spirituality is seen in Rebecca who is considered as the Oracle of Mamre. She celebrates the nurturing aspect of her spiritual body, yet she also creates a cold and powerful expanse around her that makes the pilgrims bow down in fear and submission. Her behavior, although disapproved by Dinah, helps in celebrating the 'spiritual woman'. Rebecca's assertion of her inner spiritual self is also indicative of her need to revert the discrimination that women face in terms of their spiritual superiority. According to Tumanov, Diamant consciously turns the tables to female spirituality to show how the androcentric narration of the life of Jacob inadvertently converts the female deities into pagan gods. Therefore, this justifies Rebecca's anger when she realizes that Tabea's mother had not initiated the young girl into the ways of a woman after she sheds her first blood. Rebecca's motive becomes explicit when Leah explains to Dinah, "She was defending the ways of our mothers and their mothers, and the great mother, who goes by many names, but who is in danger of being forgotten." (*The Red Tent* 186)

Bilhah's Femininity

Among the four sisters, Bilhah's femininity is extenuated to a great proportion. Dinah remembers Bilhah as a woman who listened and saw clearly. Bilhah is receptive enough to understand the minuscule changes in the environment. Most often, her detection relates to the internal rather than the external changes of the body. Even when Bilhah goes into Jacob's tent, she is only conscious of the reactions of her own body. "...it was as though I had fallen into a pool of water, it was as though the moon were singing my name. It was all I hoped for" (*The Red Tent* 63). The serenity that engulfs Bilhah is characteristic of the impenetrability of her body. She is simultaneously distant yet powerful through her senses and she moulds her body to recognize every other space that is connected to her. Thus, Bilhah has a "function in relation to all the space that remains" (Foucault 8).

Attentive to Principles of Their Bodies

Leah, Rachael, Bilhah and Zilpah's attentiveness to the principles of their body is infused in their daughter Dinah in whom they ease their burdens. However, Dinah's evolution and recognition of her body principle does not happen impetuously. It is interesting to note that the novel follows a deliberate trajectory in the mental and physical space. Just as how the women travel from Haran to Canaan through Edom, Succoth and Mamre (Egypt, in the case of Dinah) and undergo a physical alteration, they also experience a shift in their conception of womanhood. This gradual course is also seen in Dinah who matures intuitively.

As a young girl, in the first section of the novel, Dinah is fervent to ameliorate her position in the tent which is seen when she does not surrender to her mother's reprimands. She tries to excel at the loom and even takes pride in being in-charge of the chores when her mothers are menstruating. Soon after understanding that her father has a control over her mothers, she shifts her focus to self-exploration. It is commendable that even before attaining her puberty, Dinah becomes accustomed to the ways of men and women and learns to look beyond the rudimentary customs. Dinah is never deluded regarding her individuality. As she grows, she is also able to see through her mothers' imperfections. Thus Dinah sets a very contemplative and pragmatic image in the first phase of her life.

In the second phase, Dinah shows a similar attentiveness when she meets Shalem for the first time. She understands that she is experiencing an emotion that had been discussed extensively by her mother-aunties within the quiet intimate corners of the red tent. Even during the nights spent with Shalem, Dinah is assertive of her needs and claims. "You know, my lord, that women only submit to the caresses of their husbands-they do not enjoy the rough use of their bodies" (*The Red Tent* 239). It is highly unlikely that Leah or the "lovely" Rachael would have 'demanded' tenderness from Jacob.

When Shalem is murdered by her brothers Simeon and Levi, Dinah does not tarry to curse her father; the patriarchal head whom even the headstrong Leah would have dared to question. "Jacob shall never know peace again. He will lose what he treasures and repudiate those he should embrace. He will never again find rest, and his prayers will not find the favor of his father's god" (*The Red Tent* 245-246). Dinah immediately detaches all her relationship with her family including her mothers, who surprisingly did not utter a word in favour of their cherished daughter.

Dinah

However, Dinah is unable to exercise her free will after reaching Egypt primarily because she has taken up a new role of motherhood that she was unprepared for. Nevertheless, she tries to imbibe the experience of being a mother. Gradually, Dinah learns to embrace motherhood, often recalling the love and the care her own mothers had given her when she was a child. But, this experience is short lived for Dinah as she is forced to forego her son, Re-mose and become detached to him. As Re-mose grows, Dinah becomes accustomed to the distancing that her son forms towards her. After the death of Re-nefer, Dinah undergoes a resurrection within herself as she breaks free from her accountability to Re-nefer and her duty towards her son.

Dinah's cyclical return happens through the restoration of her female dominion. She reinstates her passion in midwifery and help Meryt to deliver babies in Egypt. Later, when she meets Benia, she is completely prepared to take up a new life with another man. At the end of the novel, it is established that her body as a heterotopia "function in a very different fashion; for each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within a society and the same heterotopias can, according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs, have one function or another" (Foucault 5).

There are also other women in the novel like Adah, Ruti, Tabea, Werenro, Esau's wives and Meryt's kin who have in some way explored their counter sites but whose stories

have not been sufficiently elaborated in the novel to gain a better understanding of their perception. Nevertheless, all the female characters in Diamant's design show why it is necessary to keep the memories alive so that women learn to get acquainted to their subversive spaces and instill them in their daughters.

Excavating the Female Subject from the Past

By excavating the female subject from the past, Anita Diamant is also offering a space for re-visioning the 'functions' of the female. By reducing the iconic figures of the Bible into ordinary human beings and by connecting to the world of the other characters in the Bible who were not brought to the forefront, Diamant is exposing the fallacy of hegemonic texts which have survived through interpretations and which have continued to dictate the position and function of the female subject. By questioning the cogency of the canon, Diamant is initiating a discourse where the sub-stream literature on/by women can contest.

The female characters of Anita Diamant's novels *The Red Tent* can thus be considered as heterotopias, however, concluding the study within the margins of the literary plane does not enhance the scope of extending the imaginary to the real. The understanding of the female-self as heterotopias in literature needs to expand into praxis. It is highly plausible that if the aforementioned understanding of the female-self as a heterotopia is maintained, then, the possibility of extending 'writing' to the 'body' can be achieved.

Conclusion

However, this study has only attempted to consider the female characters of the novels as individual heterotopias and has not probed into the politics of female heterotopias /gyno-topias in collectivity. Nevertheless, from Anita Diamant's recognition of being a Jewish American woman in contestation with the receding religious past and the vanishing Jewish female literary voice departs an exclusive novel that combine and extend the real and imaginary, experience and memory, private and public, truth and interpretation, and also the self and the other. In doing so, the author is also creating a field through her novels where women of all times can become capable of giving alternate signification for the 'center' through counter spaces of the female heterotopian self.

¹ Foucault, in "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" states "Utopias are sites with no real place. They are sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society. They present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but, in any case these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces. (1)

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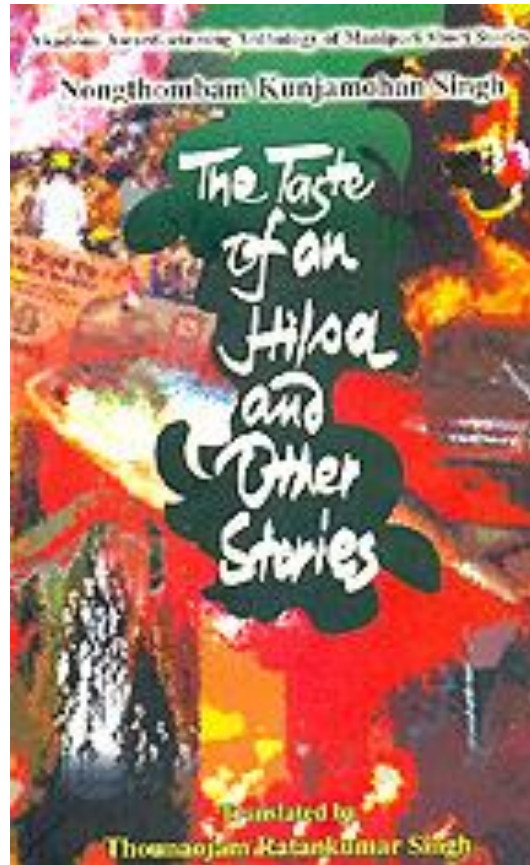
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ⁱ Foucault, in "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" states "Utopias are sites with no real place. They are sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society. They present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but, in any case, these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces. (1)

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**Change of Mind –
A Study of *The Taste of an Hilsa and Other Stories*
Akademi Award-Winning Manipuri Short Stories**

Dr. Anuradha Nongmaithem



Abstract

The paper is the study of “The Change of Mind” from Akademi award-winning anthology of Manipuri Short Stories *The Taste of an Hilsa and Other Stories* (2009) written in Manipuri by Nongthombam Kunjamohan Singh and translated into English version by Thounajam Ratankumar Singh. The present study is from the translated version. It depicts how poor people in Manipur are triply exploited by the landlord, the political scenario and lack of opportunities. The short story depicts the helplessness condition of a poor farmer giving in to do illegal work in order to feed his family. The locale of the story is a small village in Manipur. It is a story of a man named Tomba and his predicament situation. Manipur has been deprived of

opportunity from the rest of the mainland due to its geographical location. Lack of proper connectivity with the rest of the nation is one major drawback.

Keywords: Manipur, Subaltern, Exploitation, Corruption, Relationship

Manipuri Society at a Glance

Manipur is one of the beautiful northeastern states of India with rich culture and mixture of ancient traditions and modern ways of life. Many Manipuris follow Hinduism but not based on the Indian caste system. Manipuri society is divided into the Meiteis, the Bamons, Pangans and lois (social outcasts). Manipuri society is organized form by neighborhoods, called leikei. All activities from birth to death ceremony, like birth and ear-piercing ceremonies, to festivals and cremations involved people of leikei. Manipuri society is closely knitted. The ceremonies are not completed without the involvement of leikei people. Manipur is best represented by the classical Manipuri style of dance, the Raas Lila, the love story of Radha and Krishna. Lai Haroba, Pung Cholem (Mridanga dance), Mao Naga dance, the Priestess dance of Maibe Jagoi, etc.also reflect the vibrant culture of the 29 different tribes of Manipur expressing their ways of life. Its dance, culture and tradition reflect the way of living in harmony with each other as well as with the environment, until the external forces of disturbances like AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Power Acts), insurgencies, bad road connectivity, geographical, ethnics' clashes, identity issues as well as step motherly treatment from the center. All these issues have disturbed the centuries old peaceful land after it has merged with the independent India in 21st September,1949.

Manipuri Women

Like any other places in the world, women do faces some amount of discrimination and Manipur is no exceptional to that. Though comparatively is less strict then the rest part of India. It does have its own share of atrocity. Among the many facets of social exclusions prevailing in Manipur, the most commonly encountered is the gender-based exclusion of women within the family structure. For an instant, a woman, who prepares food for the family, always feed the men first in the family. When the men finish their food, then women in the family have their shares. Thus putting forward the idea that male in the family are more important than the women. Though it may sound petty thing but I do believe the root cause of the discrimination starts from there. Things are changing but still this kind of behavior is still prevalent in many typical orthodox household of Manipur society. Society always demands women to be passive and submissive. It gives an impression that women have no value even in their own house.

Most of the Manipuri women face hardships in earning, feeding and serving their families. Many women are still living under the cruelty of their husbands. Women are always at the receiving end. When women are empowered economically, politically and socially to meet the hardships of gender biases, the mindset of the people – both men and women will change to make Manipur a better society to live in. Thus, Tomba is not exceptional hero in the story. He is having a typical chauvinistic attitude man blaming his wife Anoubi for poverty as well as her fertility.

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Dr. Anuradha Nongmaithem

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The Relationship of Tomba and Anoubi

Husband and wife is a core component member of any society. The role play by both differs but to make a beautiful home both needs to sacrifice and give their full love and cooperation to the family. The protagonist of the short story is not from a high class of the society but from a very poor family, a farmer. Tomba, father of five children at other circumstances would have been a loving and understanding husband as well as a good father. But the poor financial circumstances had made him a bitter person.

The story opens with Tomba's wife in the advanced stage of pregnancy and there is no rice to cook in the house. When asked by her husband to go and borrow some rice from others she replied that: "we had not paid back what we borrowed from Tomal, so she felt shy of going to them and request again" (26). These words were enough for Tomba to wrath against his wife. Tomba is also in a tight situation. He could understand his wife situation, yet he was not in the proper frame of mind to understand her. He feels ashamed of beating his wife in such a situation, but hunger and frustration made him raised his hand. Without delaying further, he went to one of his uncle from his leikei to borrow some rice for his family. The act that he went out looking for some arrangement of food shows that he is a loving husband and a father. He tries to do things in whatever he can, to the extent of doing illegal work in order to provide food for the family. "Again, when he saw the five children lying on a torn mat, in front of the bed and wallowing in the midst of mosquitoes, he did not know whether he should weep or be angry" (29). He is at the receiving end, a helpless father totally shattered by poverty.

The acute poverty became a source of anger and means of fighting with his wife. "You too have become too fertile. Every year you give birth. You are too desirous of getting children. You should have been born a cattle instead of a human. The cows and buffalos increase their values when they are fertile. But when a human becomes fertile, it is suffering." (30)

The above statement was uttered by Tomba to his wife who was at the verge of giving birth to their child. Any human who read that statement would condemn Tomba. He is comparing his wife with a cow, or cattle knowing the fact that he is equally responsible for the pregnancy. In utter frustration he has said that statement. They already have five beautiful children. A child is a joy for any parents but if you are not in the condition to look after them it becomes a burden. Throughout the story, we witness that Anoubi his wife is calmly taking all the rebuke and frustration of her husband.

Colonizer vs. Colonized

The concept of colonizer and colonized is brought into the study just to highlight the fact that British has left the country long back, but the residue still lingers within our society. Subaltern according to the Antonio Gramsci is of 'inferior ranks that are at the receiving end from their ruling masters'. Since the protagonist of the story is also a poor farmer and is at the mercy of the people and basically excluded from the society. His voices are not heard by the society or policy makers of the state or country. Ahanjao plays the role of colonizer and Tomba

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is the colonized victim. When Tomba was in desperate need of some rice he went to Ahanjao to borrow some rice:

Ahanjao was at home sitting on an easy chair, on the southern side of the courtyard and was relaxing. He had been smoking a hookah. But he was lost in thought or had fallen asleep that he forgot to smoke through the pipe of the hookah even though he was holding the pipe. (26)

He requested his uncle Ahanjao stating that he will do whatever he says provided he helped him with a bag of rice since he is in acute need of rice at that moment. Ahanjao took the opportunity to used Tomba and told him that he is ready to help him provided he smuggled out “five or six *mounds* (forty kilos in Manipuri language) of tea’ (27). Tomba was little apprehensive since he was already caught once, and the case is still continuing in the court. He requested him to give some other job but Ahanjao was not ready to listen to him and sent him off saying that he should think properly and meet him again the next day. Tomba knew he cannot back off knowing the fact that if he is caught this time, he might stay in jail for the rest of his life, but he has to give in to the temptation of Ahanjao helplessly for the sake of his family. There is no way out for the poor farmer like Tomba, they are victimized like the subaltern without a voice of their own. They fall easily to the trap of the greedy landlord like Ahanjao.

Corrupt Society of Manipur

The corrupt society of Manipur is ambiguously depicted in the short story through Tomba, when he was offered to smuggle 40 kilos of tea bags at night. Tomba was a bit hesitated to do so and pleaded him to give another job. Ahanjao said smiling:

“Man, you think properly and say. What I am saying is not to create problems for you. When the whole country is suffering so much, a sum of twenty or thirty rupees is a sizable amount. When so many people do not have sufficient food for themselves, who will engage other labourers to work for them? Now –a-days, it is better not to pray for others. Are you not a man? The police is there only for man; the jail is there only for man. Be a man. Man. is there any rules that a man once caught, should be caught repeatedly? (27-28)

The lines above clearly depict the role of the so called ‘big shot’ in the society trying to bully the poor section of the society. Black market is all connected from top to bottom and they trap the poor people to do all the illegal business. The poor are in need of money and there is no alternate for them. Ahanjao later tries to explain Tomba that “black market is done not only by the people like you and me but also by the big people like kings and ministers. All the big bureaucrat officers are dreaming of beautiful cars and buildings at the cost of lakhs and lakhs of rupees. They are all from black money” (28). The so called ‘big shot’ of Manipur indulge in black market they are filling up their own bank balance at the cost of public’s properties. The center is also giving a silent treatment towards the problem of Northeast states like the Manipur government who are dumb and deaf towards the under-privileged section of the society. The main focus of the short story is how ultimately Tomba fall the victim of the corrupt society, making him to do the illegal things for survival. There are many places in village of Manipur,

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where they have not seen the light of education. Education is one important factor to bring changes. Corruption is deeply rooted in Manipuri society. This cancerous alignment is spread throughout Manipur attacking more on the under-privileged section of the society. The mindset of the bureaucrats needs to change. They should work for the betterment of the poor lot rather than filling up their pockets.

Conclusion

The story is simple, with a strong message to the corrupt people of Manipur. Had the situation been different Tomba would also have a pleasant life like any other people. Children would not have been an issue between husband and wife if they have abundant of money. Tomba was exploited only because of money. The people of Manipur need to realize the intensity of this cancerous alignment and stand up to fight for it. Or else the huge gap between the poor and the rich will widen tremendously. We should try to free our society from oppressing the poor lot, helping them for their development. Participation of women in the development of a society is crucial. Here, in the story Anoubi is a passive receiver, though she tried her best to look after the family. If she had worked together with her husband and had knowledge regarding family planning the predicament of her husband's lot would have been in a better situation. Women also should stand up walk hand in hand with their counterpart in order to bring about changes.

Women should equally take up responsibility along with their partners. Women those who are not educated should actively participate in the entrepreneurial activities which will help in improving the economic conditions of the family and makes them independent. Becoming economically independent will give them confidence and self-esteem. Change is not far from us, if individual actively participate in the development of a society and fight against corruption and exploitation of the poor people.

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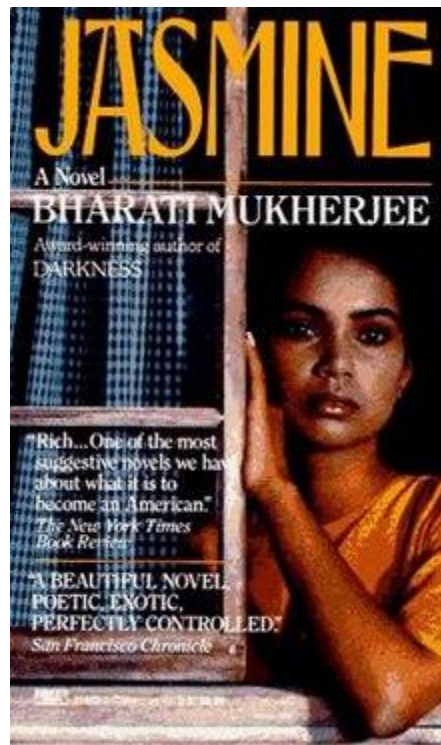
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Jasmine: Re-Discovering and Re-Inventing Self
Anureet Gill



Abstract

Diasporic writing as a post- colonial perspective deals with concepts like marginalization, cultural insularity, social disparity racism and also creating a transnational space that is neither at home nor outside. The notion of space time and identity are integral components of culture which becomes problematic when the orient moves to a new country either to be assimilated into one or to create a separate ghetto as in trying to balance the ‘world of origin’ and the ‘world of adoption’ they keep oscillating between Indian ethos and American value system leading to dilemma as they realize that they are neither Indian, nor American. Bharati Mukherjee is one such diasporic writer who adopts the processes of assimilation as the only possible remedy to break the shackles of conventionalism in order to obliterate the past. The insulation of the expatriates from their own native culture leads to the distortion of the notion of identity. The research seeks to examine how Jasmine, the main protagonist of the novel *Jasmine*, re- invents her identity as an American, the conflict arising from the clash of native and foreign cultures, the extent to which Jasmine conforms to roles and identities imposed upon her by the patriarchal and American society and how she had to let go of her past in order to assimilate in a new culture, and the psychological trauma she endures in the process by using Homi Bhabha’s theory of

liminal space or in betweenness as it favours a dynamic identity that is always in a state of flux and refutes the notion of a singular monolithic identity.

Keywords: Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*, moral conflict, cultural conflict, dilemma, acculturation

Today's contemporary world is marked by globalization and transnationalism that has led to mass migration of people, information and goods across world which Spivak defines as the 'new diaspora'. Bharati Mukherjee is one such Indian novelist whose works talk about these phenomena and her work revolves around women who leave India in order to settle in North America. Transnationalism has led to change in the notion of cultural identity from being homogenized concepts to being heterogeneous. Brah proposes that cultures should be understood as processes rather than as a fixed category, and that cultural difference should be comprehended without essentialism.

Bharati Mukherjee's novels are interwoven with reinvention and entanglement of time and place both in plot as well as in the character development. *Jasmine* not only talks about women's ideological liminality because of the patriarchal society, but also talks about the psychological transformation of Jasmine as the hybrid space she inhabits enables her to choose which elements of culture to retain or adopt by rejecting the notion of nostalgia.

Jasmine

Jasmine (1989) is a novel that illustrates her cross-cultural experiences and her growth as a person in America as she tries to assimilate into American culture by assuming multiple identities and her dilemma of following the conservative Indian values and traditions that she had left behind. Having been born in a small conservative village in Hasnapur, Punjab, the novel traverses her journey from being a conformist small town girl to being free and modern women capable of taking her own decisions. The different names that she adorns in the process of assimilating in America, reflect her identity transformation. Mukherjee has presented a tale of two hybrid cultures where two divergent cultures of East and the West meet by interweaving the themes of class, quest for identity, history and psychological transformation.

Space and Time

The notion of space and time, the integral components of cultural politics becomes problematic when the orient moves to assimilate into a new country. The journey of assimilating in a new culture can be violent as the native has to forget his culture and tradition in order to assimilate in a new country, but is unable to do so completely as their past keeps influencing their present. In *Jasmine*, Mukherjee examines the tension immigrants feel in the liminal space, caught between two cultures as well as the agency this betweenness affords them. The first chapter introduces the conflict between the Hindu "cultural sanction to multiple reinscriptions of self. For instance, when the astrologer told Jasmine that the mark on her face would bring nothing but destruction on the way and that her husband was destined to die due to her fate, she did not believe in his predictions as she felt that the future was unpredictable and bound to change. Jasmine's growth through the course of the story was not easy, she had to face a lot of obstacles in the way of her transformation. "We murder who we were so we can rebirth ourselves in the image of dreams" (*Jasmine* 25). This line clearly depicts that the process of

transformation was a violent one. Not only did she have to speak a new language and acquire new names and identities, but she also had to completely erase her violent past of murdering Half-Face Man, who raped her. Jasmine's rebirths as Jyoti, Jasmine, Kali, Jazzy, Jase and Jane represent stages in Jasmine's ever-changing process of self-identification and cultural influences she endures at each stage. After Prakash's death, Swamiji told Jasmine that "a person's highest mission is to create new life", She later realizes that her identity as Jasmine and her husband's dream of owning a shop called 'Vijh and Wife' were her versions of this "new life". It is through this redefinition of "new life" that Jasmine gains the agency to transform herself into a maximalist immigrant in true sense.

Struggle to Assimilate

The novel also talks about Jasmine's struggle to assimilate into American culture, problems in defining gender boundaries and the implications of expatriatism. It also depicts her dilemma of following the conservative Indian values and traditions that she had left behind and the liberal American culture. This dichotomy is brought out in the novel as Jasmine Indian values keeps hindering with her present life. For instance, Jasmine's marriage to an Indian named Prakash is in contrast to her staying in a live-in relationship with Bud Ripple Mayor as *Jane* in Iowa. She is caught between the native culture and immigrant culture. Jasmine constantly shuffles in search of a concrete identity and debate whether to act according to the desire for freedom which the American life offers her or to be dutiful. The Indian consciousness in which she was raised, embodied by her grandmother, supports duty while the western consciousness embodied by her Manhattan employers Taylor and Wylie Hayes encouraged fulfilling ones dreams and desire.

Although her initial experience in America was traumatic as she was raped and robbed off her identity by a man named 'Half Face', it later helped her to grow as an individual she killed the man who had raped her and became a caretaker of Duff. In the process of assimilation, she realises the pitfalls of American culture where everything is evanescent. She could identify more with her adopted homeland than with their country of birth. Through the novel, Bharati Mukherjee also brings out the message that change, transformation, fluid identity, adaptability and finally assimilation are key to survival for immigrants." Jasmine speaks about fusion between two or more cultures which paves way for assimilate. Despite of her husband's death she moved to USA in hope for a better future and she also defied the Hindu tradition of marrying a boy after checking his horoscope, by not marrying a groom of her father's choice. When her husband Prakash died her grandmother blamed her as she did not marry the man that they had chosen for her: "If you had married a widower in Ludhiana that was all arranged. If you had checked the boy's horoscope and married like a Christian in some government office...if you had waited for a man I picked none of this would have happened...God was displeased. God send that Sardarji boy to do that terrible act (Mukherjee, 98). She refused this orthodox notion and took charge of her own life and decisions. *Dida, I said, if God send Sukhi to kill my husband and then I renounce God, I spit on him*(Mukherjee,89). After her husband's death, she was at cross roads as she was expected to commit sati or lead the life of a widower like her mother. But she did not adhere to it instead she left for America in hope of a better future and to fulfil her husband's dying wish. Even when she was raped by half faced man, she fought back by killing him, thus taking her revenge. Bharati Mukherjee uses the image of goddess Kali (goddess of

strength and destruction) and burning her old clothes as a sign of renouncing her earlier life in a hope for better future.

Dialectics of Culture

In the article ‘Dialectics of Culture / Acculturation in Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine and Anita Desai’s Journey to Ithaca the author O.P Budholia, talks about how ‘Jasmine’ as a novel, deals with the concept of otherness and assimilation through the dialectics of culture and the socio psychological traumas relating to life of an expatriate. Jyoti marriage with Prakash Vih helped her to become modern women. Jyoti as Jasmine fought the feudal laws in India and then in America so as to assimilate into their culture. Jasmine in the process of assimilation becomes symbolic of the duality of cultures the east and the west.

In the article Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine: Breaking the silence and weaving the web by Beena Agarwal , the author talks about how Jasmine in spite of being born in a conservative small village in Hasnapur challenges the patriarchal norms which did not allow women to speak for themselves. In spite of her traditional upbringing she nourishes her own dream of life but yet she faced cultural dilemma because of her upbringing. Prakash, her husband wanted her to take independent decisions and join his business, but the cultural restraints that constitute her psyche did not let her dissolve her identity in the unconventional progressive way of Prakash. He wanted her to call him by his first name, but Jasmine’s cultural code did not promote her to do so. Jasmine does not give up to the situations but offers a frontal challenge to the patriarchal thought, social organization and control mechanism in order to assimilate in the dynamic and progressive society of America where sexual moral codes are not so stringent, but yet she faced a cultural and moral dilemma. On one hand she had a dream “I wanted to distance myself from everything Indian, Jyoti like”, but at the same time she contemplated if her culture would allow her to do so being a widow.

Two Identities

Bharati Mukherjee’s characters are enforced between two identities as they find it difficult to move away from their native culture but at the same time it’s not easy for them to identify with the dominant culture. Although Jasmine breaks the myth of single identity by trying to balance the ‘world of origin’ and the ‘world of adoption’ through the process of assimilation, she is unable to desert her native identity, and keeps oscillating between Indian ethos and American value system thus causing dilemma as they realize that they are neither Indian, nor an American. Their outer self is American, but inner self is Indian.

Multicentric Issues

A lot of research has been done on singular concepts like gender bias, identity crisis, alienation and loneliness, migrants search for roots, racism, violence (both physical and psychological), un-housement, re-housement, and notions like conformity and non –conformity, that the protagonists face. However, my analysis of ‘Jasmine’ aims at discussing multicentric issues that the women protagonists face as expatriates like striving to create an American identity which lets to demolition of their native identity, how this predicament leads to psychological trauma as they are unable to let go of their native identity which is an inherent part of their ‘self’. Thus, my research encompasses aspects like identity crisis, psychological trauma, gender

relations and how they try to break free from the stereotypes of their native country as well as their acquired country. Although there are a lot of articles that provide insightful arguments which support my own claims, they either do not focus on all the aspects that I am dealing with in my work or their approach is different.

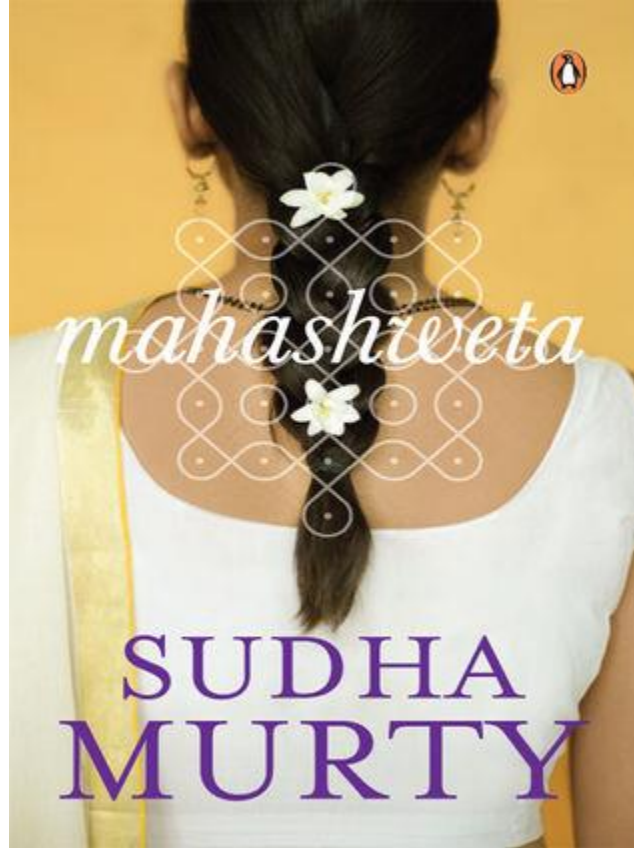
The research confines itself to study only a few aspects like identity crisis, psychological trauma, gender relations and how they try to break free from the stereotypes of their native country, amidst the myriad issues faced by the migrants.

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Domestic Violence in Sudha Murthy's *Mahashweta*
Dr. G. Aruna Devi and K. Vijaya Lakshmi, Ph.D. Research Scholar



Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to study the presence of domestic violence in Sudha Murthy's *Mahaswetha*. Her novels deal with the themes of Courage, Education, Social Evils, Feminisms, Social status and Family Relationship is more important than Money and silent suppression of woman and how they overcome their problems in society. She gives more important to spiritual love. Spiritual love more valuable than Physical love. She focuses on the main theme of a marriage. Marriage is life-long commitment for better or worse, still death do us part. Sudha Muthy who is prolific fiction author in Kannada and English has published several books that her views on feminism, charity, hospitality and self-realization through fictional work. She is recipient of Padma Shree and the R.K Narayan awards for her contribution to literature. In *Mahashweta* Anupama suffered with "Leukoderma" so Anand and his family left her alone. She overcomes all her problems with moral courage.

Indian Novel

Indian writers in English have made the most significant contribution to the field of the novel. Ever since the publication of Bakimchandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife*, Indian novel has grown considerably in bulk, variety and maturity and it has marked difference from Raja Rao to still the 20th century writers many issues in their writings such as political, racial, social, economic, sexual, communal and gender issues domestic violence and gender problem still their subject. Today men's life is dominated by Economical, money constrain everything. Home is the place of love, affection, sacrifice and sharing with the members of family but now its turn to the place of fulfilling unworthy expectations of other's it leads to misunderstanding, suppression, depressions and violence in their relationship.

Sudha Murthy

In the same way Sudha Murthy, as one of the leading and successful women writer of contemporary period, her works are a realistic picture of the socio-economic and psychological issues faced by Indian women. She has depict inner voice of women and role of women in law's house in her works. In her novels, the reader can understand the legitimate longings, dreams, hopes, fear, disappointments and psychological experience that have been faced by a lot of women. The portrayal of the dependency and struggling to survive independently has been elaborated in her works.

Role of Women

The role of women in India from the pre-Independence period to be dependent on their family members especially their men, before their marriage they depend father or brother after their marriage they depend husband or son. This tradition cowed down their position just to continue family line. Women are denied from grabbing the opportunities of education and refinement. Only few women of the nobility, the life of general women is not worth living. Child marriage to infanticide and dowry deaths are some of the evils that have been caused to pull down the position of women in Indian society. After the Independence, women position increased in many fields. But all these are one side of women's life. If we keenly observe status of women in domestic life, it is still dependent and deplorable. They are powerless and ill-treated inside and outside of the home. In Modern India women are empowered by acquiring education but it is not true to the fullest at all if sensed with reality. One of the most harrowing oppressions is marriage for many women. It empowers men and disempowers women. Traditionally women are confined to homes to discharge their household duties such as courteous of their husbands, brought up child, obeying in-law's commands and shouldering different burdens. As a result they have been relegating the position accepting, dedicating themselves for the upliftment of the family.

Mahashweta

Sudha Murthy's Novel *Mahashweta* is one of the best examples for domestic violence. She ingeniously focuses on realistic problems faced by women in the society and family relationship and how they encounter with the problems. This paper reflects on the educated woman's role as a wife in love marriage, her submission life to her husband, mother-in-law and step-mother in the novel *Mahashweta*. Anupama who is protagonist in the novel *Mahashweta* becomes subject of domestic violence. From Vedic period to Digital period women undergoes a

series of humiliations, betrayals. The very beginning of the novel start with:

"Even though the female child is stronger than male child at birth as adults it is the man who become oppressor, and woman who suffers".(Mahashweta,1)

Life on earth is not a paradise, especially to women like Anupama. She moves heaven and earth to succeed in life, had many stumbling blocks. She was in the form of poverty, missing her mother when she was a one-year old baby, problems posed by her step-mother, poor father who was a school teacher, domineering aristocratic mother-in-law and sister-in-law and educated but insensitive husband. Anupama, as the meaning suggests was a woman who could not be compared to others either in beauty or attitude. She is well educated, beautiful, wonderful dramatist and fine stage actress but draw from poor socio-economical background. Dr. Anand a genius falls in love with Anupama. She organizes and acts a drama for raising money to a charity. She sells the tickets to Dr. Anand. He hails from a wealthy family, gives much importance to the physical appearance than the inner beauty. He is successful throughout his education and career and also expects his wife to be something special from other. He finds Anupama, who is rich physically and internally but poor in economical. Anand makes his mother Radhakka agree to the proposal. Radhakka, a widow of a contractor agreed to the alliance, with her own calculations in mind. She knew her son might marry an English woman as he was planning to do his advanced courses in England. If she agrees to the desire of Anand, People may think of her large heart by accepting a poor girl into the family. Money and material pleasures made them more compatible to degrade Anupama. Anupama's father is happy on hearing of Anand proposal. Sudha Murthy shows the pathetic economical condition of poor father in front of a such mother-in-law, "Looking at Radhakka's ornaments, and Anand's Mercedes-symbol of world totally alien to him-shamanna had grow so painfully aware of his limitations that he had not spoken at all" (37). Anupama was happy for the next few months of her marriage. Radhakka compelled Anupama to stay back to join the Lakshmi Puja, which would be after two months. When Anupama find out the illicit behaviour of Girija, she never revealed to her mother-in-law due to the fear and poor relationship between them. Anupama's problems started from the day of Lakshmi Puja she discovered the white patch on her leg and found it was Leukoderma or vitiligo from the dermatologist. She missed all her freedom as she was allowed to go out only in the car. She had to lie to Avva to make visits to the skin doctor. She was caught by her mother-in-law. They treated her like untouchable; A feeling of misery engulfed Anupama. She realized that her position had become lower than that of a servant in just one day. "The servant could go home and sleep after finishing the day's work, but where she go? To her father's house? Where would she find kindness and trust? To her husband? but he is not here now"(55). She send out to her father's house.

Social Stigma of the Married Woman

The social stigma of the married woman living with her parents her stepmother's continual barbs and the ostracism that accompanies her skin condition force her to contemplate suicide. "Marriage is a gamble. The result cannot be predicted beforehand. Finding the right match is matter of chance. I was unlucky in this. (66) A small white patch had ruined her career has well as her marriage. Sudha Murthy beautifully expresses the traumatic experience. Anand is a doctor. He knew more about the disease but he is not ready to understand the feelings of Anupama. Anupama writes many letters to Anand but he never replied to her letter. Anupama

expecting soothing words from Anand. He didn't pacify her nor met her when he came to India for his sister's marriage. He forgets his promises, when he made at the time of their marriage before the sacred Agni. Anand is oppressor because he is attracted by physical beauty of Anu. He knows his mother character and also Anu's family background, but he keeps calm, As a doctor knows about the disease he gives courage to Anu, he did not treat Anu as his wife like patient. He is successful doctor but he failed in husband. He blindly believes her mother words. They treated Anupama as a beautiful object but forget giving importance to her feelings. Before Marriage Anu was caught by her step mother, the only reason is she is more beautiful than her step-sister. "Let us not educate her further, it might become difficult to find a husband for her Besides, she will not support us. She has to marry and go to somebody else's house" (23).

Poor Anupama worried for three years, suffering the humiliation of her step-mother, Sabakka as her daughter were not married because of her. She moves to Sumitra's house and stays for a year, she find the real man in Hari and moves to Dolly's house. Anupama met with an accident and was treated by Dr. Vasant, a good humanitarian and his friend Satya. Meanwhile Anand, even in the west, were divorce was easy Anand's patient who did not give up his crippled wife because of his commitment to the marriage and inner love between them but Anand left Anupama alone in the hands of loneliness and poverty, at last Anand realizes his mistake and remember his words before the sacred fire during the wedding ceremony. He searches Anupam, after a long battle he finds her but Anupama rejects him. Anand's mental changness had no way melted Anupama. "you knew that i didn't have this disease before our marriage, you could have told your mother..... but you didn't. Your mother and sister disliked me because i was from poor family" (146).

Even household pets are treated with love and cared for when they are unwell. Anupama totally dependent Anand after the marriage, she wants to hear a few words from him which have been strength her both physically and mentally, but he never bothered to console her. Anand worried about his unborn daughter's future, but he failed to realize Anupama also somebody's daughter, he never worried about Anupama's present situation. "*you never treated me as a human being. I was only a beautiful object that you wished to possess and flaunt*" (146).

To Conclude

Marriage is life-long commitment for better or worse, till the death do part. No more she was the Mahashweta struggling for her Pundarika, the play which brought them together. She wiped away her dream "Like Rohini to Chandra, like Lakshmi to Narayana am I to him; Just as the creeper depends on a tree emotionally I depends on him" (126). The real success of marriage not on superficial matters such as those, but on love and mutual understanding between husband and wife.

Sudha Murthy clearly expressed by her work that the present age women have realized that they are not helpless and are not dependent. A woman is an equal competent just like a man. Today a woman has also become a direct money earner and she is not only confined to household works. The character Anand and Anupama reflecting the mood and temperament of present day couple. The Novel *Mahashweta* projects post-Independence sentiments and attitudes crystal clearly making the readers to think that life after marriage is not to live individual life but

to life together with right understanding to lead a clean and healthy life.

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New Image of Woman in the Novels of Shoba De
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Shobha De

Courtesy: <http://www.indiaonline.in/about/Personalities/WritersandPoets/Shobha-De.html>

Abstract

Shobha De is the most popular Indian Woman writer in English. Her novels are a slice of urban life. In her novels she realistically presents an intimate side of urban woman's life and also reveals her plight in the present-day society. It is a fact that woman is victimized and subjugated by the male community everywhere. She has been the subordinate sex and has to conform to male standards. In most of her novels, Shobha De has focused on the marginalization of women

in Indian society. She draws our attention to women's exploitation, discrimination and commodification. Shobha De rejects compulsory heterosexuality and suggests woman to woman relation or lesbianism is better than man to women relationship, which she has depicted in her novels. Reason being a woman can work up another woman better than a man; another reason can be the revolt of the women against the society and its norms which underrate women. Female homosexuality has several names namely lesbianism, sapphism, and tribadism.

Need to Study Shobha De

In spite of the substantial contribution of Shobha De to Indian Novel in English, her novels have not been fully explored. Yet no elaborate work is carried out on her novels. In terms of research she has remained completely neglected. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to fill in the lacuna and also to highlight how De differs from the other Indian novelists writing in English. The following novels of Shobha De are analysed in the thesis, which are thematically classified into three groups: firstly, *Socialite Evenings* (1989) and *Second Thoughts* (1996) are the novels that deal with the themes such as Family, Marriage, Patriarchy, Quest for Identity, Struggle for Survival and Marginality. Secondly, *Starry Nights* (1992), *Sisters* (1992) and *Strange Obsession* (1992) move around the life in film industry, Bollywood and concentrate basically on lust and sex. And finally, the novels *Sultry Days* (1994) and *Snapshots* (1995) present the emancipation of women and project the ultra-

Indian Novel in English: Past and Present

A modest attempt has been made to trace the development and value of Indian Novel in English, taking into consideration the substantial contribution made by the male as well as female writers to the development of Indian Novel in English. This chapter also highlights the shaping influences that contributed in the making of Shobha De as one of the famous writers of the modern era. From the historical perspective, Indian English Literature has passed through several phases such as Indo-Anglian, Indo-English, Indian Writing in English and recently Indian English Literature. Nowadays, the process of canonization of Indian English literature is completed and there is a bright prospect to it in the days of globalization. The intellectuals in India before Independence concentrated on the national awakening and the society in a realistic manner. It was a challenge for them to express distinctly an Indian sensibility in an acquired language. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's only novel in English *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864) laid down the foundation for the first-generation novelists to record the rich heritage and social transformation in India. Both the male and female novelists followed him. Further, the year 1930's, with the emergence of Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao on the literary scene, marked the real beginning of Indian Novel in English. In the post-Independence phase Indian Novel in English has been termed as the modern novel. Though Modernism came late to India, it has played an important role in shaping the second-generation novelists such as Bhabhani Bhattacharya, B. Rajan, Manohar Malgonkar, Khushwant Singh, Chaman Nahal, Arun Joshi, Kamala Markandaya, R. P. Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande and a few others who have made a tremendous contribution to novel in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

1980s and Beyond

Unlike 1930s and 1950s, the years of 1980s mark the significant stage in the growth and development of Indian Novel in English. Salman Rushdie's Booker Prize –winner *Midnight's Children* (1981) received an international acclaim and has become a major force in world literature. It has created the Indian tradition of fiction to which belong "Rushdie's Children" (The New York Times, 16 December, 1991), viz. Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Allen Sealy, Upamanya Chatterjee, Shashi Tharoor, Farukh Dhondy, Rohinton Mistry and Firadaus Kanga. The Indian Novel in English in the pre-Independence period mostly remained male-dominated for a very few women novelists such as Toru Dutt, Raj Lakshmi Debi, Krupabai Sathinadhan, Swarnkumari Ghosal and Cornelia Sorabji emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. But during the post-Independence period there appeared a number of women writers on the literary scene like Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande as well as younger generation of Githa Hariharan, Nina Sibal, Namita Gokhale, Shobha De, Suniti Namjoshi, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai (winner of Booker Prize for *The Inheritance of Loss*, 2006), who contributed significantly to Indian English Novel and helped its development.

Feminism, free-sex, alienation, identity crisis or an individual's struggle for freedom are some of the thematic concerns of these women writers. In their novels, the appearance of the new, fully awakened woman, ready to fight against the patriarchal norms in order to live a meaningful life, is a recent phenomenon. The female characters created by these novelists do not accept the low secondary status in a male-dominated Indian society, that is conservative. The central theme, therefore, is the emergence of 'new woman' in the fast-changing social milieu.

Image of Subjugated and Marginalized Woman

The Image of Subjugated and Marginalized Woman is devoted to the portrayal of the image of subjugated and marginalized women in Shobha De's novels with an emphasis on men's pride, incompatible marriages, traditional norms of behaviour and patriarchal social system as the real forces of the oppression and exploitation of women. Shobha De's novels are a slice of urban life. In her novels she realistically presents an intimate side of urban woman's life and also reveals her plight in the present-day society. It is a fact that woman is victimized and subjugated by the male community everywhere. She has been the subordinate sex and has to conform to male standards.

Shoba De's Focus

In most of her novels, Shobha De has focused on the marginalization of women in Indian society. She draws our attention to women's exploitation, discrimination and commodification. The women are treated with double standard. Subjugation and marginalization are the vital factors in their lives. They are never regarded as autonomous beings.

Karuna, the protagonist of *Socialite Evenings*, is the perfect example of the misery of women in India. She suffers due to the callous and non-responsive attitude of her husband. Her husband treats her as a mere object subjected to his will as a result there is a complete loss of her identity. Similarly, Anjali, a young socialite, also suffers much because of her incompatible marriage and her husband's oppressive attitude. Here, in presenting the picture of subordination

and marginalization of Indian women, Shobha De's attack is not against the individuals, it is against the system that favours men and causes women's subjugation and marginalization.

In *Starry Nights* Shobha De has projected the shattering of human values in this glittering world of Mumbai cinema through the realistic portrayal of Aasha Rani, Geetha Devi, Malini and Rita. The other important aspect which Shobha De highlights in this and other novels is a woman's role in the oppression and suffering of her fellow woman. In our society, women ill-treat and exploit women instead of showing love, respect and understanding for their own sex. As a matter of fact, Shobha De brings out the universal psychological truth that the woman is the enemy of the woman.

In *Sisters* Mikki Hiralal is oppressed, subjugated and exploited by Binny Malhotra, a true representative of patriarchal system. The novel *Strange Obsession* revolves around the lesbian relationship between Meenakshi Iyengar called 'Minx' and Amrita, the model from Delhi. This novel deals more with how one woman subjugates the other woman than the subjugation of women by men. *Sultry Days* has a male protagonist, God who says to Nisha that "one bitch is as good as another" (252). His attitude towards girls is- "use them and leave them" (8). Such attitude of men towards women clearly shows the miserable plight and marginalization of women in our society.

In *Snapshots* the women turn into useful plaything for men in patriarchal society. The ruling ideology that favours men prompts these women to fall prey to the designs of men. All the men presented in the novel are tyrants whereas the women – Aparna, Rashmi, Swati and Noor are all victims of male tyranny. Finally, the novel *Second Thoughts* is a sad tale of Maya, an oppressed wife. She suffers from marital disharmony because her husband Ranjan considers woman as a mere object. Though an engineer, Maya is not allowed to take up even a part-time job. Instead, her husband again and again reminds her of 'tradition'. It is due to Ranjan's traditional attitude and feeling of superiority, Maya feels herself trapped in a neglected and meaningless life.

Image of Rebellious Woman

The Image of Rebellious Woman deals with the image of rebellious women and their varied ways of protest against their oppression and marginalization. As a result of their exploitation and subjugation, to assert their identity, these women turn rebellious. There is a transformation on their part. Now they are aware of their rights and hence revolt against the traditional norms and fight for equality in the male-dominated Indian society.

As a feminist writer, Shobha De's novels raise a strong protest against the male-dominated Indian society where women are denied the freedom to act and live according to their will. In this fast-changing world, the role of women in the society too, has been changing fast, affecting greatly the sexual mores and social norms prevalent in the society. Shobha de reacts against the male culture and strongly detests the marginalization of women. She is the first to explore the world of urban women of higher social strata. In urban area male hegemony is no longer acceptable as women have started thinking for themselves. De's novels reveal her protest

against the image of woman as an auxiliary. She destroys this distorted image of woman and therefore, the female characters in her novels appear more powerful than men.

The journey of Karuna in *Socialite Evenings* is a journey from a middle-class girl to a self-sufficient woman. Her entry in the glamorous world of modelling and friendship with Bunty, are the acts of rebellion. After marriage she establishes extra-marital relationship with Krish, revolts against her insensitive husband and finally divorces him. She also rejects the ideas of her second marriage. She does not want to conform to the traditional image of woman anymore.

The women such as Karuna, Anjali and Ritu attempt to destroy the gender discrimination – the real source of women’s oppression. The women in *Starry Nights*, in one way or the other, are related to the world of films. Aasha Rani, ‘Sweetheart of the millions’, breaks all sexual mores and social norms by her unusual and deviant behaviour. Nothing controls her desire to live a life of her own. Her sexual encounters with different men point out her sexual aggression. She defeats men at their own game and demolishes the mythical image of woman imposed by patriarchy. According to De ‘sex is the bedrock of all relationships’. Her women: Aasha Rani, Rita, Linda, Shonali and others frankly discuss and practice sex. They are bold and rebellious who protest against their exploitation and strive to assert their identity. The concept of morality arising out of love for one and the same person is out-dated. This is well illustrated by Shobha De’s *Sisters*.

The protagonist Mikki in her journey from a silent sufferer to a hard rebel, breaks all the age-old moral codes of the male-dominated world. She does not appear emotional or sentimental even on the death of her parents like the traditional Indian woman. Both Mikki and Alisha are not weak ladies of manners. On the contrary, they are pragmatic and as strong and efficient as man. The modern Indian woman who is at the centre of Shobha De’s novels is not passive in nature. She protests strongly against the forces in male-dominated world, which threaten her very individuality. Next, *Strange Obsession* is Shobha De’s rebellious novel. It highlights the lesbian relationship between Meenakshi Iyengar (Minx) and Amrita Aggarwal. Lesbianism itself is a threat to heterosexuality. In *Sultry Days*, the novelist presents a group of modern women who, when ill-treated, turn rebellious and protest. Nisha’s mother protests against her husband’s affair with his Sindhi Secretary. Sujata is another woman who does not lead a life which is defined by her husband. She makes her own rules. She has both male and female lovers. Further, the get-together of six former school friends at Reema’s house in *Snapshots* also reveals how the women are obsessed with sex and sensual enjoyment. They express their grievances against men in general and husbands in particular. They break the social norms and moral codes. Most of the women in the novel, bored with their husbands, seek new relationships outside marriage and challenge the patriarchal system.

In fact, *Snapshots* is the world of Shobha De’s Women where men stand on periphery and women fight for power and supremacy. Finally, it is through the story of love and betrayal in *Second Thoughts* that Shobha De exposes the hollowness and hypocrisy of Indian marriage system. Maya, the central character is so depressed and frustrated by the traditional attitude of her husband Ranjan that soon she establishes an extra-marital relationship with Nikhil and at last breaks the long silence.

In this article, **The Image of Liberated and Emancipated New Woman**, a modest attempt has been made to depict the image of liberated and emancipated women in Shobha De's novels. The chapter also throws a significant light on how the subjugated and marginalized women, through their rebellion, achieve liberation and emancipation. In fact, the fictional world of Shobha De is dominated by the women characters whereas the male characters are pushed into the margin. It is the woman in Shobha De's works who holds all the trump cards. She is a manipulator whose clever strategy looks beyond the male comprehension. In this respect Shobha De's woman is New Indian Woman. In 1960s, with the rise of feminism, there emerged the New Woman, who is completely different from her traditional counterpart. This New Woman is conscious, confident and sometimes even aggressive. She occupies the centre and has got rid of her position of the "other". She is now aware of her destination, that is, to liberate herself from the clutches of unjust taboos and customs imposed on her by the male-dominated society.

The modern women depicted by Shobha De do not depend, for their survival, on their fathers, husbands or sons. They are financially independent and have the required strength to face life with all its ups and downs. They are assertive, practical and strong. They fall into the category of New woman who solves her problems herself. As a writer of the woman-centred fiction De has worked for the complete emancipation of woman. She projects the ideas of liberating woman through self-realization. As a self-realized person, Karuna in *Socialite Evenings* opts for singlehood as a way of life. She refuses the offer of Girish and Ranbir and gets ready to live her life on her own terms by rejecting the idea of getting married second time. She is emancipated against the orthodox role of women and dominates her male counterparts. Karuna is the modern New Woman, who is independent in every way. She breaks out of the bonds of marriage and lands her feet firm into the profession of her choice that is modelling. Anjali and Ritu are also presented as liberated and emancipated New Women.

In fields such as familial, social, sexual and business, De's women revolt against the traditional image of Indian woman. They are sexually liberated and free-thinking women. Similarly, Aasha Rani of *Starry Nights* is a liberated woman who lives for her own pleasures and knows no moral codes and value system. Her lesbian experience with friend Linda implies independence from man. Shobha De also reinforces her plea for liberation through the example of Sudha, Aasha Rani's sister. Sudha lives with Amar without marriage. Here cohabitation, and not marriage seems to be the watchword for her. In the Indian tradition marriage is glorified as a holy union of man and woman. It is the turning point and the beginning of a new way of life.

However, in Shobha De's novels all these ideas regarding marriage are shattered by her modern liberated women. With marriage the other important issue that De's novels deal with is sex. Sex to her women is no longer a dreaded and despised thing. Her women enjoy a great deal of sexual freedom. In *Sisters*, through Mikki and Alisha, Shobha De shows how the concept of marriage and constancy in love has undergone a tremendous change. Mikki's encounters with different men help her to develop into an independent woman who at the cost of her individuality finally saves the Hiralal Industries.

Shobha De's women who are unmarried also appear to be expressing their need for sexual liberation. Alisha expresses the novelist's desire of liberation for women in sexual matters. Next, a middle-class working woman Taarini asserts her love for Shashi, despite her husband and children. Shobha De's women break all sorts of taboos and feel liberated. In *Strange Obsession*, an effort to free themselves completely from dependence on men, women like Meenakshi Iyengar indulge in lesbianism. Here, through the portrayal of Minx, De deconstructs the traditional concepts of love and sex. Shobha De's *Sultry Days* presents a group of modern women and throws a significant light on the change in the perspective of women. The women such as D'Lima, Lotika, Vimala, Manju, Chandni, Shona, Tanya, Zainab etc. break the established patriarchal norms by their deviant behaviour. Their action and assertions reveal that they are highly liberated young modern women. The world of *Snapshots* is a world entirely dominated by women. It is a world full of adventures of powerful, emancipated new women. The six women presented in the novel are empowered by their sexuality. They are urban, self-sufficient, economically independent and confident women who transform themselves from 'commodities' to 'identities'. Marriage can no longer hold them down. Such women are Aparna, Rashmi and Reema. The novel *Second Thoughts* depicts Maya who is caught in a dilemma between her husband's conservatism and her desire for liberation. Finally, Shobha De also breaks the shackles of linguistic discipline by boldly employing highly objectionable language, thereby liberating the language from the male hegemony.

Conclusion

Summarizes the argument and makes a list of findings deduced from the discussion of the varied world of subjugated, marginalized, rebellious, liberated and emancipated women characters in Shobha De's novels. Being a woman, De is more interested in the predicaments of women. She presents the vital reality and makes us aware of the miseries of women and injustices done to them by their counterparts in the patriarchal society. However, it is an important fact that though De's novels are crowded with female characters, the analysis of the novels reveals her focus is only on the women protagonists, and the other secondary characters are simply mentioned. Furthermore, her novels move around only the metropolitan women whereas rural women do not find place in her novels. They are totally ignored.

Shobha De, restricts her characters to the urban area, ignoring the life of ordinary, illiterate and rural Indian women. As a staunch supporter and an ardent follower of feminism there is a bold and frank depiction of fair sex and feminine attitude in her works. Her novels are the protest novels against the male-dominated Indian society where women are denied the freedom of expression and action. Everywhere they are curbed by many man-made norms and factors victimizing and subjugating them in several ways. As a result of their oppression, exploitation and marginalization, they turn rebellious. Next, through the depiction of warring pairs of women Shobha De brings out the psychological truth that woman is the enemy of the woman. Shobha De's novels represent the new Indian woman's voice. A 'New woman' is in search of self-identity, seeking liberation in all walks of life, replacing the traditional image of Indian woman. The need for women to seek their identity is the message in her novels. However, De also exposes the women's misunderstanding regarding their freedom and mocks at their way of asserting their individuality by posing to be men without concentrating on female empowerment as a whole. Her women protagonists fail to understand that their sexual freedom is

being used and abused by men. The novelist also suggests that, whenever women, whether circumstantially or ambitiously disregard morality, they cannot escape disaster and consequent suffering. Though De has presented women who indulge in free sex, live fashionable and wealthy life, she in no way seems to support the way of life adopted by these so called modern women. On the contrary, she shows her contempt and dislike for their unethical and socially unacceptable behaviour. This can be deduced from the ultimate fate her heroines are condemned to as a result of their indulgence in unusual activities and deviant behaviour. In fact, Shoba De advises her women to analyse their behaviour and stop posing to be men.

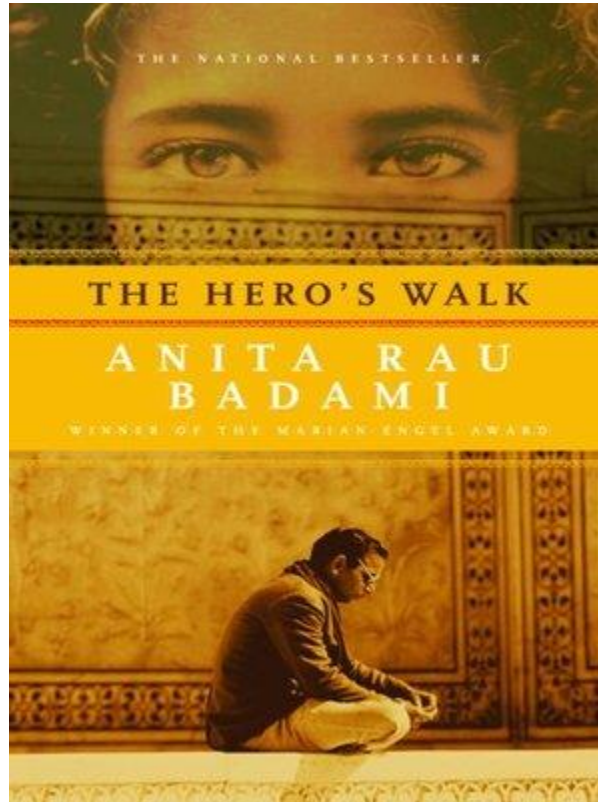
Finally, though her novels are criticized for pornographic element, De is definitely a writer with a purpose. One cannot ignore her because she is the celebrity writer and has contributed in her own distinct way to Indian Novel in English. In the present scenario of gender discrimination, a study of these novels helps to widen and direct our thoughts to relevant problems affecting women in Indian society.

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New Image of Nirmala in Anita Rau Badami's *The Hero's Walk*
Dr. N. Asharudeen



Abstract

Anita Rau Badami is considered as one of the Indian diasporic writers who have attained much acclaim and recognition. Anita Rau Badami was born in Orissa, India and she is living in Canada at present. *The Hero's Walk* is the second novel of Anita Rau Badami which was published in 2001, brought high reputation to her in writing career. This novel portrays the life of a family in a small fictitious town Toturpuram near Madras. It is about Sripathi Rao and Nirmala's family. It deals with the complex lives of an ordinary Brahmin family, social transformations and the consequential changes in their values, expectations, and lifestyles. The plot is turned around the distressed life of Sripathi Rao with his submissive wife Nirmala and his daughter Maya pursues her education in Vancouver where Maya married a Whiteman. The sudden hardship hits the family that can be understood by Sripathi, guilt-ridden as he almost abandoned Maya from the family. Thus, Nirmala's new image provides a bright future for the next women generation Nandana, her granddaughter and Putti, sister in law in the family. Finally Nirmala's confidence and endurance settles the family on successful platform. Badami ends the

novel with happy and confidence through the typical style of balancing complexities and mutual relations in Indian families.

Introduction

Indian writing in English is related with the part of the Indian Diaspora. In this connection, Anita Rau Badami is considered as one of the Indian diasporic writers who have attained much acclaim and recognition. Anita Rau Badami was born in Orissa, India and she is living in Canada at present. On account of her father's profession as a train designer on the railroads, getting frequent transfer, she had to move different places in every two to three years. Anita spent her childhood days in various urban places of India. English played a major role as a bridging language to her in childhood days.

The Hero's Walk

The Hero's Walk is the second novel of Anita Rau Badami which was published in 2001, brought high reputation to her in writing career. This novel portrays the life of a family in a small fictitious town Toturpuram near Madras. It is about Sripathi Rao and his wife Nirmala, and their family. It deals with the complex lives of an ordinary Brahmin family, social transformations and the consequential changes in their values, expectations, and lifestyles. Sripathi Rao is a copy writer in an advertising agency fraught to fulfill his social, economic and family responsibilities with great difficulty. He is living with his widowed mother Ammayya, unmarried sister Putti, Nirmala, and son Arun who is an unsuccessful and unsettled, wasting time in politics. Everyone in Sripathi's family undergoes a life change, and in the moving denouement, reconciliation grows out of tragedy, and Sripathi understands the chance, hope and loss that always accompany life. The notion of Indian women as submissive and weak is disproved with the commendable role of new woman in the novel through the characterization of Nirmala. The character has proved that even within the oppressive structures woman can undertake a few acts that help to subvert the structure to lead to a change though implemented slowly and gradually.

The plot is turned around the distressed life of Sripathi Rao with his submissive wife Nirmala and his daughter Maya pursues her education in Vancouver. Maya, who has already got engaged with a person of Sripati's choice, break off her engagement and married a Whiteman in Vancouver. This is the ultimate blow to Sripati, who could no longer tolerate her decisions because he is very cautious about the family and traditional reputations. So, he is more serious of his life and completely discarded Maya from their family lineage. Sripathi is upset about the family situation because even his son is quite irresponsible and careless about the understanding of the family situation.

Effect of Tragedy on the Family

The novel prudently examines the effect of tragedy on the family that is obligated to remain quiet and submissive due to the financial conditions and the blemish marked by the daughter. Sripathi is observed in a state of suffering and sadness from the beginning of the novel. The actual twist of the novel begins with a phone call received from Vancouver about his daughter and son in law's sudden death in a road accident. The unexpected death of the beloved daughter the whole family gets disappointed. Sripati immediately rushes to Vancouver and brings home the confused and abandoned child of Maya, Nandana who retreats into mysterious silence at the strange and odd

things happening after the sudden death of her dear parents. The emergence of family's responsibility instigated from their orphaned granddaughter Nandana, a seven year old innocent girl. Nandana's nurturing makes the family more intentional in life. The sudden hardship hits the family that can be understood by Sripathi, guilt-ridden as he almost abandoned Maya from the family. He could not endure the guilty conscious and rests in depression for a long time. Badami's portrayal of the bewildered child is quite pitiful and tear-jerking. Nandana believes and awaits the return of her parents very innocently. On the other hand, Sripathi also remains silently unable to compensate the grief and love of the child is longing for.

Badami sharply portrays the psychological trauma and torment of the family undergoes. The author is flourishing in exhibiting the values of the familial bond through this sequence. Sripathi is portrayed as a character who respects his tradition and culture besides his family reputation which is on the threshold of a great fall. But he is a family person who takes up all his responsibilities with courage and confidence, though not with proper planning. He values the sentiments of his mother and hence tolerates her peculiar behavior with patience. He tries hard to continue the standards of the family which is once prosperous, when the family name is seriously spoiled by Maya, who married a person from Vancouver revoking the engagement with a boy whom Sripathi thought of right match to her. "If you persist in doing this foolish thing, never show your face in this house again. Never" (THW, 113). Therefore, he punishes her and almost abandoned her from his family. All these show his honesty and earnestness in maintaining the family status and familial relations without any compromise. The novel reveals the understanding, concession and pardoning within a family for developing healthy bond and mutual respect made by Nirmala among the family members after the arrival of Nandana. Karthik argues,

After Nandana's arrival, Nirmala slowly learned to wing her into the modern world. She never wants to be a passive wife, no longer. Even she changed into a rebel for her survival still she maintains a peace in the home. As a woman, home is still her life and soul. In short, Badami represent Nirmala as a predictable line of a woman who while fulfilling societal expectations as a wife, a daughter-in-law, and a mother. It makes enough chutzpah in her to question such role-playing. (03)

Thus, when Nirmala tries to compensate Maya's death by the presence of Nandana, all the family members understand her psychological condition, but for the aggressive Ammayya. They all support Nirmala in the best way of possible to make a change. This is observed even when Nirmala tries to erase caste boundaries and arrange for her sister in law, Putti's marriage with Gopala who is her neighbor but different caste. However, the beliefs of caste has not vanished that can be understood from Sripathi and Ammayya look at the low caste neighbour, Munnuswamy's family, says:

This is no longer Brahmin Street. Cow-shit Street would be a better name for it ...If only we had known that the rogue was saving our money to drive us out of here, we would have drunk water instead of milk. Much safer for all of us it would have been. (20)

Marriage

Everyone in the family welcomes the marriage as they wish Putti's life to be settled which Asima states that "Nirmala thus makes ways for emancipation not only for herself but also for Putti" (143). It is only Ammayya who intentionally opposes Putti's marriage that are brought forward by Sripathi. Ammayya wants Putti to marry the man of her choice, which may not be possible till she is alive. This is the unfortunate relation that exists between Ammayya and Putti. With some silly excuses she keeps Putti unmarried to make her available to her service as long as she is alive. Putti's remarks reveal the fact very clearly. "Why can't she be happy for me? She never wanted me to get married, I know. Why should I care how she is feeling now?" (THW, 339).

Celebration of the New Image of Woman

The novel *The Hero's Walk* is totally about the celebration of the new image of woman in day-to-day heroism. In this development, Nirmala is portrayed with a new image, a female hero. It is observed that Nirmala has the courage to look at herself in the mirror, as she realizes her heroism.

Thus, Nirmala's new image provides a bright future for the next women generation Nandana and Putti in the family. Nirmala's confidence and endurance settles her on successful platform. She takes timely initiative and settles her sister-in-law's life with Gopal, their neighbour. She comforts Nandana and ensures that the people of the house take proper care of her and love her ardently. Fortunately for them, Nandana also gets adjusted to the new ambience and people gradually. Hence, it is with little difficulty, Nirmala is able to convince Sripati to sell the house and get relief from all the debts they have to clear. Thus, she brings him out of the prejudiced feelings he has in the name of his family and its glory in the past. Sripati shares the idea with Arun, who says, "I am selling this house. I have decided. Yes, that is what I shall do" (THW, 322). Finally Nirmala persuades Arun to understand the situation of their family and convinces him to work in Delhi. He is convinced and says, "It is a small job in Delhi. An environmental group - a non-governmental, so the pay is not great - but it is what I want to do. I will be able to send some money home; I don't need much for myself" (THW, 322). In this way, she makes him share family's responsibility and which provides lot of relief to both Sripati and herself. Arun also has got bad experience in the political path he wished to travel early.

Nirmala compromises her sorrow of Maya's death by nurturing Nandana in a proper and loving manner. It is realized through Nirmala's word who says, "What is gone is gone. I will always miss my Maya, but tomorrow's meal still has to be cooked, no? The child's future is more important than past sorrows" (THW, 323). The whole family comprehends that they should be able to learn lessons of realization from the experiences they have encountered. All the characters seem to attain maturity and start thinking on positive vibration.

Badami's new and fortunate image of Niramala makes the whole family starts to living in mutual love and respect with one another. The family members also understand the real family bond and the responsibility of each member. Thus, Badami ends the novel with happy and confidence through the typical style of balancing complexities and mutual relations in Indian families that are fit in the edge of patriarchal system.

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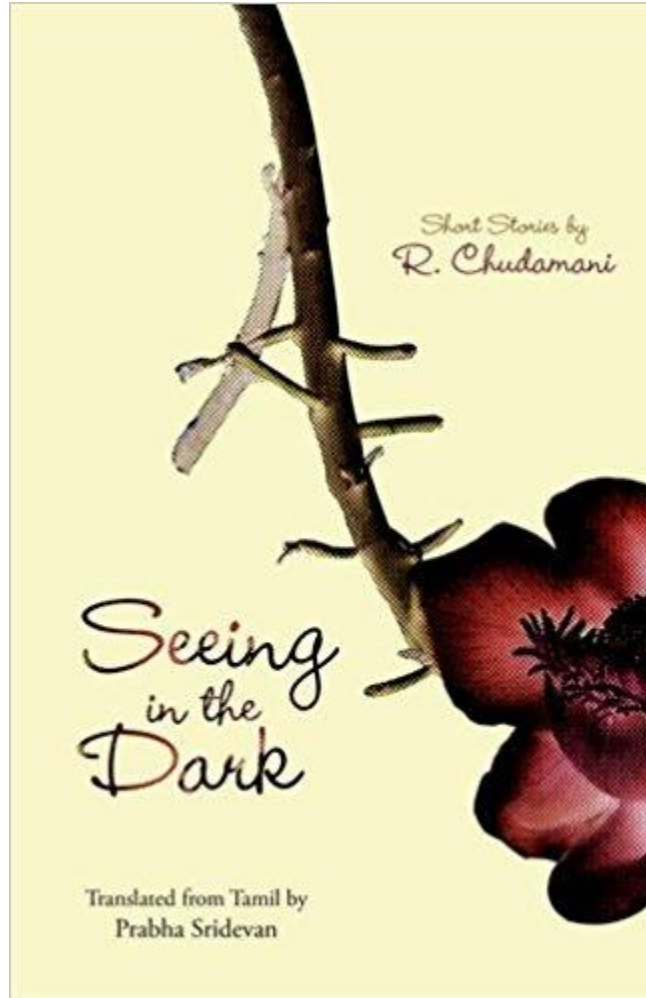
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Reinventing the Self in Chudamani's *Two Women on an Evening*
S. Arunkumar



Abstract

This paper examines Chudamani's short story titled 'Two women on an Evening'. In this story, Hema the protagonist, constructional identity and as a married women's position in her home are discussed. She breaks away the bondage and shackles of her husband and she becomes a successful journalist. In this story, Hema tries to differ from the norm and leads a life of spinster though it seems strange, but for Hema, she thinks it is a time to assert her and acquire an individual identity, there are a thousand protests that she wishes to register. First, she is against the society and its violence. The second is her personal protest against her husband and she comes out successfully as a journalist only to relieve the carefree days of her childhood.



R. Choodamani

Photo credit: S. Rajesh

Courtesy: <http://www.thehindu.com/books/books-authors/writer-par-excellence/article19593518.ece>

Two Women on an Evening

In ‘Two women on an Evening’, R. Chudamani talks of her economic liberty that women need to keep herself from the strangles of her husband. The story is about Hema, who is being an journalist is unable to tolerate the coaxing attitude of her husband and finally out of frustration divorces him and comes out as a successful journalist. Hema, the protagonist, and Tulasi her ex-husband’s sister happens to meet in a garment’s shop and is caught short of money. Tulasi comes in aid. Hema was indeed surprised for her and Tulasi, had no relationship between them. They were not sisters or related in any manner by blood. Tulasi was no friend. Neither a school nor college mate. The relationship between them came into existence only when Hema married Damodran. Their acquaintance and friendship started only from that time. They were then supposed to be ex-sisters-in-law. Tulasi herself pointed out, “Damu is my brother and so I have a bond of blood with him. But I have bond with you too, Hema! Infact a much more basic bond” and what is that? “We are both women” (144).

Hema’s Life with Damodharan

Hema’s life with Damodhran started as an ideal marriage. Initially Damodharan was quite proud of her writing, especially when she changed her maiden name of HemaNagarajan to Hema Damodharan. He felt pleased and proud when his friends at the office told him about his wife’s articles as fantastic and guests complimented her with something like “you have excelled yourself this time Mrs. Damodharan your pen is very powerful” (145)

Then, gradually, the pleasure and the pride waned and Damodharan began to lose his temper on her getting to popular, whenever she sat typing an article he would snap and ask her to

stop the tap-tap in the house to escape this comment Hema around sit down quietly at night when pen and paper and still he would shout at her from bed for burning the midnight oil. He complained about her for not performing her duties as a wife. He also held responsible position as an officer in a prosperous private firm, He had a considerable salary high status, he had them all but problem crept in because hers was a field, where appreciation for merit was long-lasting and so she was over shading him. This thought obviously fanned his jealousy. The jealousy took a diverse root, when the final onslaught came:

“A woman has got to make some charges after she is married”

“In which way have I let my writing affect you”

“No more argument will you give up your writing or not?”

“I won’t it”

“Then you will have to give up your marriage”

“As you wish.” (146)

Damodharan Marrying Second Time

The story come to an end when where Tulasi informs Hema that Damodharan is getting married the second time. Hema with magnanimity wishes her ex-husband a good life. Hema tells Tulasi she is turning 34. The following month and marriage is not necessary for her. She tells Tulasi that she has to support her parents and has no intention to getting married. Tulasi replies that in her case she has to get named for it would demonstrated a basic justice. She also concludes her talk saying thus “If a divorced man can find re-marriage so easy, why not divorced women as well?” (Chudamani 147)

To Conclude

The decision of Hema to stay single can be best expressed in the words of Bhatnagar, “Predictably enough the ways out suggested subtly or propagated more avowedly; some targeted from mild protest, seeking accommodation though moderation, love and persuasion to carving at of a self-sufficient exclusivist self.”

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Reinventing the Self in Chudamani’s *Two Women on an Evening*

New Image of Women: A Comparison between the Heroines and Other Female Characters of Amish Tripathi and Jaishree Misra

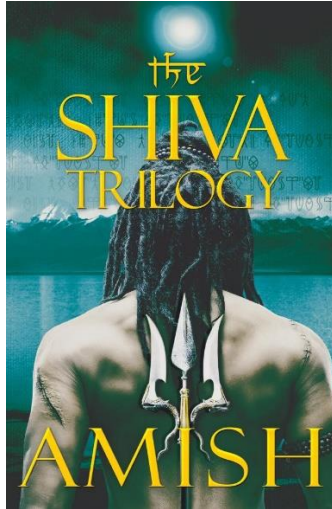
P. Anjanamol, M.Phil. Research Scholar

Feminism

The image of New Woman is one of the most deliberated topics among the social beings and in all the corners of society as well. The term emerged in nineteenth century and has flourished through twentieth century. The term 'New Woman' was coined by the writer Sarah Grand in her article *The New Aspect of the Woman Question*, published in 1984. The term was later popularized by American writer Henry James. Feminism unveils the image of the New Woman possessed with the mental strength to change the background of the male-dominated society. In the past, women were dependent on their parents, husbands or other male social beings. However, the situation began to change with the growth of educational opportunities and career developments. Women's position in society also began to change through the new legal rights to property, suffragette movement, marital and sexual freedom etc.

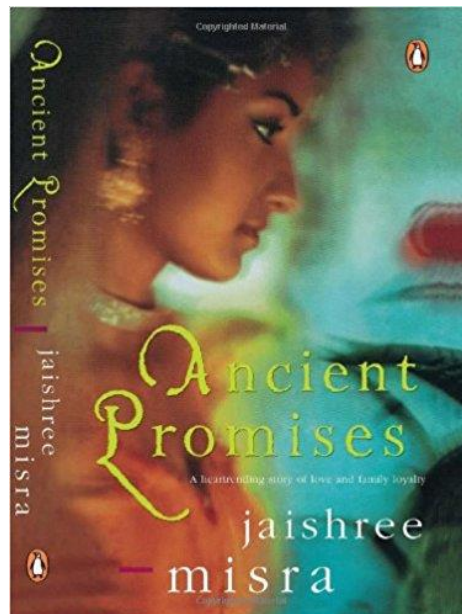
New Woman in Literature

The image of New Woman was vividly revealed in arts, especially in literature. Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen's plays revealed the new faces of women exceptionally. Nora in *A Doll's House* (1879) is a strong woman and she is depicted as the New Woman herself in the play. Isabella Archer and Daisy Miller are the two other examples of New Women concept of Henry James in his works *Portrait of a Lady* and *Daisy Miller* respectively. The New Woman is the nickname given to Ella Hepworth Dixon whose famous novel is named *The Story of a Modern Woman*. A reader can see other examples of the image of New Woman in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), Henry Arthur Jones's play *The Case of Rebellious Susan* (1894), George Bertrand Shaw's sensational plays *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1873) and *Candida* (1898), Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary* (1856) and H.G. Wells' *Ann Veronica* (1909). There are two strong women faces in Bram Stoker's great gothic romance *Dracula*; Mina Harker and Lucy. These two female characters discuss the varying modes of women in life as well as society and they reflect the light of New Women.



When the reader comes to contemporary Indian English literature, he or she can catch the feminist ideals of writings from the works of Amish Tripathi and Jaishree Misra. They are the two famous writers of present time India. Amish's three books in *Shiva Trilogy* and two books in *Ram Chandra Series* are celebrated works in the contemporary world of literature. Simple, but powerful style of writing, undeniably great characterization, the notion of interlinking of myths with modern scientific facts and marvelous, subtle and unforgettable background settings are the specialty of this writer. However, it can be said that, the strong characterization is the most beautiful fact which made him a best seller writer. He can vividly portray the difficulties and subtleties of each character in his works. His concept of woman is exceptional. He gives a strong impact of New Woman in his works such as *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas*, *The Oath of Vayuputras*, *Scion of Ikshvaku* and *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*.

Jaishree Misra



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New Image of Women: A Comparison between the Heroines and Other Female Characters of Amish Tripathi and Jaishree Misra

Jaishree Misra is another great writer in the present era of Indian – English writings who gained the love of readers with her debut novel *Ancient Promises*. The novel is considered as her semi-autobiographical work in which she tells the story of Janaki. Not only Janaki, but Misra's all other women characters are different in their nature and behaviour. In the presentation of each character, Misra holds subtle notions and strong viewpoints depicting women characters in different perspectives of feminism.

Amish Tripathi

Amish Tripathi became the well-known and best seller writer of India by making Lord Shiva, the Hindu deity, from an ordinary tribal head to a super hero and the prophesied evil destroyer – Neelkanth. It is the one sentence definition of *Shiva Trilogy*. However, Tripathi presents the female characters with a keen observation of their behaviour, thoughts and all other activities. The female characters in *Shiva Trilogy* are Sati, Queen Kali, Krittika, Anandmayi etc. They all are presented as powerful persons with marvelously strong words and actions. Sometimes, even the protagonist Shiva may turn to be immobile before the intense stare and determined will of Sati, his wife.

Amish Tripathi presents Sati as a warrior and the real suit of Shiva in all aspects. Sati is the precise label of love, sincerity, loyalty, courage and integrity. She is courageous and is ready to fight to the last breath of hers, but she is the true follower of her custom and tradition. She does not try to change the civilization of her land, even if she is affected with the unfair law of that custom. At first, she belongs to the group of 'Vikarma' people - the untouchables, who lead the life of an outcast. Sati becomes a Vikarma, because she gives birth to a stillborn child. However, when Shiva offers to save the Vikarma people from leading the life of an outcast, Sati replies him infuriately that she does not need his protection and she cannot be saved. Sati's fury shows that she does not like to be compassionated by others. At the same time, when Sati comes to know that her own child and her twin sister are Nagas (the Naga people is also outcast by the rule) she courageously brings them to the palace where she and her family lives.

Sati's love towards her husband is strong and polite. Nevertheless, she is not under the shades of her husband's or other male characters. She has her own opinions and decisions, but always makes sure that her decisions are true and not harmful to others. Sati is a real warrior, because she fights with the enemies even to her last breath. She dies after a long fight between the Egyptian, Swuth who had no respect towards women. However, he exclaims at the courage of Sati and her powerful defense against him. Finally, he says that the killing of Sati will be his life's honour.

Not only Sati, but all other female characters like Veerini, Queen Kali, Anandmayi, Krittika also have their own will and they possess great personality. Queen Kali is also a good fighter and compassionate ruler. She is a Naga and takes the responsibility of caring Ganesh, the Naga child of Sati. Veerini is Sati's mother who loves her family most. She makes the decision to stay with her husband, even though he is wrong, at the time of her own death.

In *Ram Chandra Series*, Tripathi presents Sita, the princess of Mithila, as a powerful and strong-willed woman. She is not only the warrior princess but also the prime minister of Mithila.

Jaishree Misra – Hard Realities of Human Life

Amish Tripathi's stories and characters are related to myths and the background of the story belongs to ancient times. He has created a world of divinity through his novels. On the other hand, Jaishree Misra writes about the harsh realities of human life and her heroines are the true ones who suffer under the male dominated milieu. A reader can find that, in Jaishree Misra's novels depict the female surroundings in their marriages mostly. Her famous novels are *Ancient Promises*, *Rani*, *Afterwards*, *Secrets and Lies* etc. The only historical novel of Misra is *Rani* in which she portrays the life of Rani Lakshmi Bai, the freedom fighter.

The semi – autobiographical novel *Ancient Promises* deals with the life of Janaki; may be the writer's own self. Janaki's sufferings as a dutiful daughter, an obedient wife and a responsible mother are vividly represented. In *Afterwards*, Misra presents the character Maya and her mental agonies in her marriage. Maya is rejected by her father also.

In *Secrets and Lies*, there are four main female characters who suffer at many reasons. Samira and Bubbles suffer with their loveless husbands and unhappy married life. They adjust with their married life, without any complaints, due to the well beings of their children and the present social status where they live. Zeba Khan is Bollywood actress who is always busy, but sometimes she feels loneliness. Anita is also an unmarried woman, who later engaged with a man Hugh, her colleague.

A Scandalous Secret is Misra's novel in which she portrays the life of Neha. *A Love Story for My Sister* is an investigative novel by Jaishree Misra in the terms of feminism and female sufferings. *Secrets and Sins*, *Rani* etc are her other notable novels in which she presents the mental agonies and sufferings of women in differently set background and great characterization.

In all the novels of Jaishree Misra depict the courageous women with big deal of sufferings. These sufferings often caused by their own faulty doings or mistakes. However, these sufferings are implemented by their patriarchal surroundings. The female characters of Misra are sometimes weak, but gradually gain courage and confidence to face the harsh realities of life. Janaki, Samira, Bubbles, Neha, Zeba, Anita, Lily, Sonya, Tara etc are fine examples of Jaishree Misra's creative talent. All these females are entirely different in their nature and their viewpoints. They represent the various parts of human lives. Their circumstances and living milieu are pictured in high contrast. However, it is clearly said that the writer gives the vivid image of New Woman through these astonishing characters.

Even if the background, plot and other settings are different, the two writers Amish Tripathi and Jaishree Misra present their heroines and other female characters with great respect and place them in the high extremes. The New Woman concept is fabulously used in their works. Once a reader goes through their works, it will be an unforgettable experience and the heroines acquire a fixed place in the reader's heart.

Woman empowerment is one of the major discussions in the contemporary society. The position of women in the society is much better than that of past times. Now, the women have their own identity and great opportunities for showing their abilities in the society. In the field of literature, there are many writers who have written about the rights of women. Feminists are really grateful towards the writers, because the writers are the main contributors who have raised the position of women in the society, from a very low level to almost an equal level of men, through their writings. Writers like Amish Tripathi and Jaishree Misra are the two fantastic examples who obviously present the image of New Woman.

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Reading Indian Woman Through the Writings of K. R. Meera
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K. R. Meera

Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K. R. Meera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K._R._Meera)

Abstract

“If women’s bodies and those of men and women who transgress their gender roles have been historically regarded as territories to be conquered, they are also territories to be liberated. Feminism has taught us this. The nationalism that I seek is one that decolonizes the brown and female body as it decolonizes the brown and female earth.” - Cherrie Moraga (150)

Post-colonialism and Feminism are both movements that concern themselves with the study and defence of the marginalised and have followed a similar theoretical trajectory. “Feminist and postcolonial theory alike began with an attempt to simply invert prevailing hierarchies of gender, culture, race, and they have each progressively welcomed the poststructuralist invitation to refuse the binary oppositions upon which patriarchal/ colonial authority constructs itself” (Gandhi 1998). Postcolonial feminist theory, like any other postcolonial discourse, begins with a gendered critical viewpoint of colonialism, particularly within a framework of power and knowledge, developed by Foucault. But what makes the movement different is a critical examination of the aftermath of colonialism, particularly in the light of “double colonialism.”

Possible Differences between Two Women

Excerpting from Cherrie Moraga's *The Hungry Woman*, the exchange between two-woman characters goes like this:
"Mama-Sal: We were content for a while-
Savannah: Sort of. Until the revolutionaries told the women, put down your guns and pick up the babies... And into the kitchen."

Postcolonial Feminist Theory

This happens to be a perfect example for how women in postcolonial nations, get reduced to the sites for cultural/ biological reproduction alone. All regional and national struggles for freedom are known for powerful female presences as well. But when the struggles are done, spaces are nothing but domestic for the women. "Postcolonial feminist theory's project can be described as one of interrupting the discourses of postcolonial theory and of liberal western feminism, while simultaneously refusing the singular third world woman as the object of study", says Rosemary Marangoly George (George, 2016). It is thus a complex discourse by which the writers of postcolonial nations "write back", creating a niche of their own.

Focus of This Paper

My paper deals with the works of Malayalam author K. R. Meera, particularly her works of short fiction, and how she excels in portraying the third world woman protagonist of Kerala, draped in all her myriad colours. She explores the postcolonial woman's condition in its raw, naked forms, comprising all the major postcolonial feminist themes. The woman of her narratives is often unabashed and strong, refusing to abide by societal norms. One observes the presence of almost all relevant postcolonial feminist themes in the works of K. R. Meera, including the "re- working of old identities and identity markers and erosion of stereotypes and myths, questioning the role of family in controlling women, the possibilities of egalitarian society, and the use of religious doctrine in oppressing women" (Nayar, 2008).

Gender Themes

Gender themes in postcolonial writing include identity (sexual, ethnic, national, socio-political, cultural), marriage, sexuality, desire and the body, subalterns, role of 'mothers'-motherhood and motherland, women and spirituality in postcolonial societies, women and nation, etc.

Women and Nation & Identity

"The nation and gender are interlinked social phenomena. Women are involved in, or rather relegated the responsibility for the biological and cultural reproduction of the nation." (Yuval-devis 2002). Gender has been intrinsic to national imagining, says Elleke Boehmer (Boehmer, 2005) Most national movements have men in active roles, women being side lined to minor roles. Very often, nations and kingdoms engage in struggles for freedom, honour and wealth accumulation, but it is interesting to see the roles consigned to women in the same. In many instances, women are given accolades for their timely deaths, protection of honour, etc. There are resemblances between how the man lusts for and colonises land, and how he conquers and colonizes the woman. Woman is rather objectified as a piece of wealth and honour that has to be colonized.

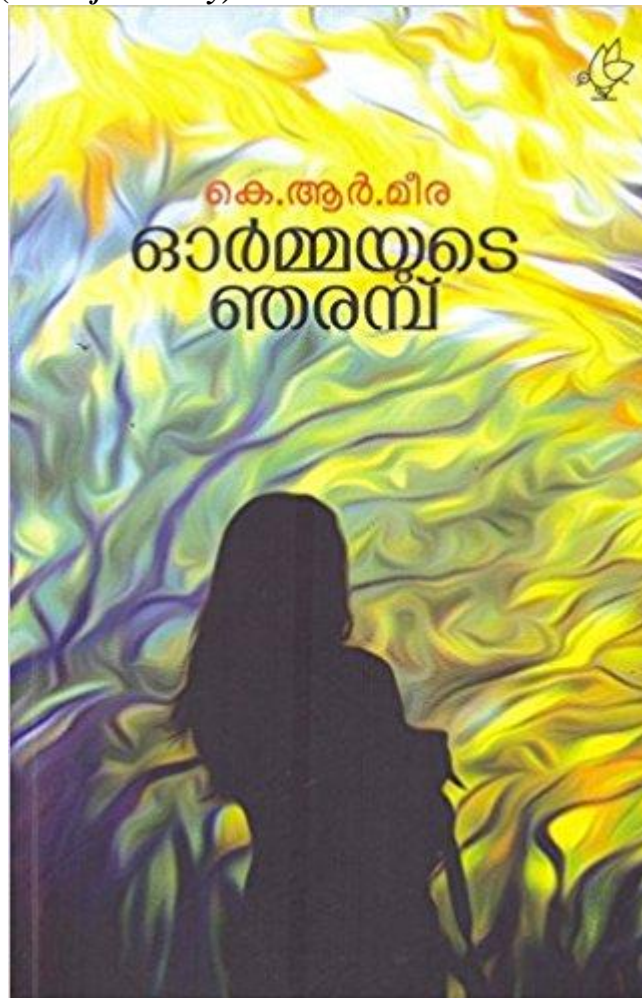
George Mosse opines that nationalism evolved parallel to modern masculinity. Terms such as 'honour', 'patriotism' and duty' are masculinized (Nagel, 2003).

Kumari Jayawardane argues that third world women share three features with the anti-colonial struggles- the desire for internal social reforms, the destruction of religious orthodoxies and pre-capitalist structures that prevent reform, and the assertion of a national identity. (Nayar, 2008)

Post-Independence

After independence, women in India were pushed to the domestic realms. 'Mother India', is a coinage of independent India, and that is something that imagines woman in terms of symbols like birth, hearth, home, roots etc. In mythology as well, woman is the supreme protector and nourisher.

Ormayude Njarambu (Vein of Memory)



K.R. Meera has penned the short story *Ormayude Njarambu (Vein of Memory)* that recounts the story of an aged woman who was a freedom fighter and writer. She marries a fellow nationalist who grows up to be a politician in independent India. She is pushed to the domestic

space, forced to take care of home and children. She nurses a dream of visiting Delhi, where her husband is, a dream she cannot fulfil. (Meera, 2016)

Most women postcolonial writers see cultural identity as evolving rather than fixed, plural rather than singular, adapted rather than inherited. (Nayar, 2008). Postcolonial women might have the most complex and fluid identities, as in most postcolonial nations, women identities are tied to that of their husbands or father figures.

Cultural identities, as Stuart Hall informs us, “have histories... But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation... are subject to continuous play of history, culture and power” (Hall, 1997).

Marriage and Family

Rich says “to have borne and reared a child is to have done that thing which patriarchy joins with physiology to render into the definition of femaleness” (Rich, 1995). Marriage, particularly in the Indian context, is seen as an erasure of a woman’s hitherto identity and preferences. She is surrounded by a rigid code of ‘appropriateness’ that expects her to function in particular ways. Self- sacrifice is not only expected, but is cleverly glorified by our culture, which is nothing but a cruel ploy to push the woman to never ending slavery.



In most of her narratives, a married woman is often trapped in an unhappy marriage, denied sexual, emotional or humane rights. Very often, her heroines scandalize the so-called norms of the society by putting their physical urges before the needs of their children. In her novella *Karineela*, the protagonist is a married woman who is in a search for her man from the previous births. The desire for her man is so strong that she forsakes everything to be with him, to lure him.

In *Soorpanakha*, the protagonist, when expressing her desire for a live-in relationship, is asked by her lover, for her 'rate', implying that she is a sex worker. Her heroines are not brave or

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Reading Indian Woman Through the Writings of K. R. Meera

bold according to the conventional standards, but they very often rise above the expected patterns of behaviour in subtle ways. Motherhood plays a key role in her stories, be it the way it strangles the identity of a woman, or how the society uses it as a trope to do so. In most of her stories, breast milk is found to be an important image, often used with a purpose of de-familiarization. In her story *Aattukattil*, the protagonist is a woman who develops a strong aversion to milk, which sprang from a childhood memory when she saw blood, instead of milk trickling from the udders of a cow. She juxtaposes the memory with the tale of baby Krishna, who drank lifeblood from the breasts of Poothana, the demoness. In *Soorpanakha*, the title so politically employed to allude to that epic character whose nose and breasts were unfairly chopped off by the Rama Lakshmana duo, the protagonist is a feminist who was also a social worker. She is told by her husband that for a woman, there is no other social duty higher than breast feeding. Ironically, in course of time, she removes her breasts, due to breast cancer.

In *Meerasadhu*, Thulasi, the protagonist kills her child, out of angst for her life wrecked by her licentious husband. Nietzsche had been vehemently criticized in literary circles for a statement of his, which had evoked quite an uproar. He opined that a woman's true source of power is her capacity to bear offspring, and that is the motivation that guides a woman in her relationship with a man. The author has prescribed to this thought in some of her works. Especially in her works like *Karineela*, the protagonist has a strong urge to bear a child that has the features of her lover. In a way, she goes back to the natural feminine instincts without prescribing to the societal norms and notions. Motherhood is a powerful and is employed efficiently by the postcolonial feminist writers. The themes of Mother, motherland and motherhood have combined to form a new movement in many African countries called motherism.

Body, Desire and Sexuality

Bessie Head and African American poets look at how the woman's body becomes the site of patriarchal and colonial oppression:

An important mechanism of regulating women's sexuality is through discourses of morality. In most post-colonial nations, sexuality is coded as morality- to be moral is to be monogamous, reticent about one's sexual preferences or even being asexual. (Nayar 2008)

In her narratives women with sexual appetite are often frowned upon, or are called prostitutes. Men, when they realize they fail to satisfy their partners find an easy way out in dubbing them immoral. In one of her short stories, *Vaanibham* (Sale), the protagonist Sukanya when confronted with the question of "rate", subtly asks the man his "rate". The possibility that a woman can also pay for sexual benefits, thus reducing the status of man to the commodity, is hitherto not thought of. Sidonie Smith suggests that women are represented as possessing an 'embodied subjectivity', rooted in their bodies. (Smith, 1993) Woman's destiny is determined and limited to her body, which she can escape only through selfless service that paradoxically denies her sexuality and body. That is, while her social role is determined by her being biologically female, her biological needs or features are what getting marginalized in a society where the man's biology becomes important.

Spirituality

Critics have observed that spirituality is often a trope by which patriarchy circumscribes the woman. But as an afterthought, women writers across many post-colonial nations have begun to include spiritual themes in their writings, as a mode of reacting, or 'writing back', especially as it goes against the 'global feminist' discourses:

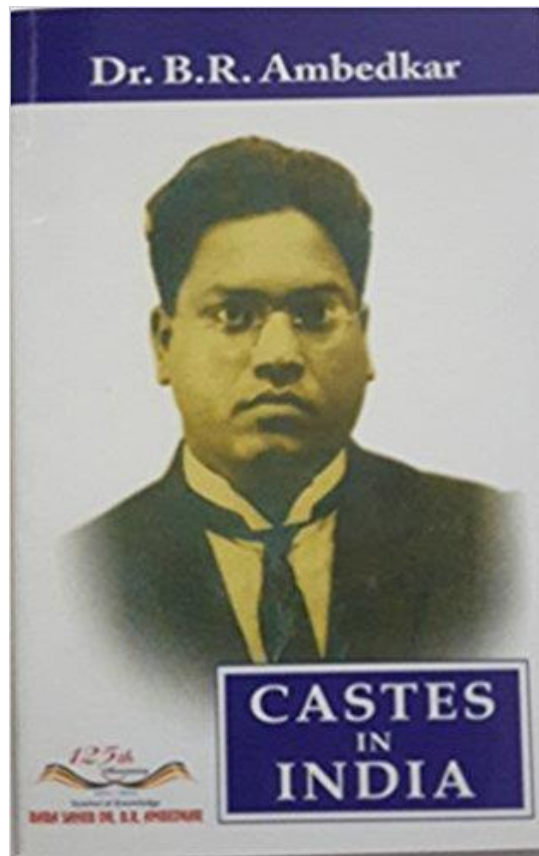
They locate within the spiritual-which they clearly distinguish from the religious-possibilities of a more emancipated society. This kind of feminism often emphasizes a retrieval of pre-colonial, local and native forms of the sacral. It becomes a truly post-colonial condition because it seeks inspirations and sources within local traditions while also seeking a transformation of the tradition.
(Nayar,2008)

Spirituality being a theme specifically related to the lore and legends of the Indian subcontinent, it abounds in K. R. Meera's writings, especially the dark and dense colours of her homeland, Kerala. Lord Krishna features in many of her writings, usually carrying the role of a romantic prospect, or in some cases, that of a son. In her novella *Meerasadhu*, the woman protagonist falls in love with Madhavan, a man true to his name, has many relationships. Interestingly, the author shatters the romanticized aspects about the image as the protagonist finally realizes the bitterness of having had to live with a person who neglects his wife. She kills her child and leaves for Mathura, where she spends rest of her life as a sadhu, serving Lord Krishna. Ironically, she realizes the fraudulent ways the place is run, bursting the romanticized bubble yet again. She goes back to the pre-colonial form of the sacral through constant usage of images like Black Magic and snake gods. Women who act and think different are often thought to be under the spell of black magic and are treated with the help of magicians. This alludes to the witch hunting practices that existed worldwide, which can be traced back to years. Snakes are another constant presence in her narratives. They are not represented beasts of potential danger but as benevolent gods, or symbols of passion and lust. It plays the latter role in *Karineela*, where the narrator considers herself to be a highly poisonous snake. In *Sarpayajnam*, a snake rescues the protagonist from the clutches of her evil husband.

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**Emancipation of Humanity and Annihilation of Caste:
An Examination of Ambedkarite Influence on
the Subaltern Discourse**

Bhagya Lakshmi Vijayan, Ph.D. Research Scholar



Introduction

The ‘subaltern’ constitutes the section of the society which was obscured in the socio-political history of the world. The term subaltern owes its origin to Antoni Gramsci. Gramsci identifies the subaltern as the group that is excluded from the society’s established institutions. As Gayathri Spivak observes, the subaltern is a largely muted group, they are able to speak however, the society is not ready to listen to them. Hence their grievances often become cries in wilderness. Being a land of diversities, the Indian subaltern constitutes a variety of groups. The women, the dalits, the tribals, etc. can be said to constitute the subalterns in India. The

emancipation of the downtrodden was one of the major motives of the Indian leaders immediately after the independence. Ambedkar stands out as a luminary who fought for the cause the downtrodden and the under privileged. The paper attempts to make an analysis of the influence of Ambedkar on the subaltern discourse

Caste based subalternity is the major matter of concern in this paper. Caste may be defined as a stratified system of categorization based on a status conferred at birth (ascribed status) due to a person's descent from a particular lineage. As D N Mujumdar and T N Madan observes, caste is a closed system in India. Caste has been a unique feature of India which divides humans on the basis of birth alone. Though caste system is glorified as the hall mark of Indian culture, the evils of the system has crept into our social lives.

Ambedkarism and Caste in India

There are different theories about the origin of caste system in India. According to the political theory on caste by Nibey Dubais, caste was a system created by the Brahmins to maintain their superiority over others. This theory was also supported by the Indian thinkers like Dr. Ghurey. The occupational theory observes that caste originated on the basis of occupations. Irrespective of the numerous theories about the origin of caste system, the caste has become a striking aspect of Indian social life today. It has become a way to maintain the 'superiority' of certain classes over the others. There have been numerous attempts to revive the social system from its evils. Some of the significant movements which fought against conventional caste system in India were the Bhakthi movement, Lingayatism, Periyar's Self-respect movement, Prarthana Samaj, Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha, Vaikam Sathyagraha, Namanta Antholan, etc.

Ambedkarism, based on the thoughts and ideologies of Dr. B R Ambedkar, is a movement which continues its fight against casteism in India. Dr. Baba sahib Ambedkar was a revolutionary who wanted to bring about total revolution in India, which includes the social, political, economic, cultural, intellectual aspects of Indian society.

The earliest works which depicts Ambekarian ideology on casteism was his paper, 'Caste in India: Their mechanism, Genesis and Development' which was presented at an Anthropology seminar at Columbia university. Several of his major ideas on caste is evident in this paper.

Ambedkar reveals his opposition to the ideas proposed by Manu, the law giver. He observes, "Manu, the law giver of India, if he did really exist, was certainly an audacious person, if the story that he gave the law of caste is credited, then Manu must have been a dare devil fellow" Ambedkar also observes that caste have existed much before Manu, He was only an upholder of it. "His job ended with the codification of these laws and the preaching of caste dharma". Ambedkar also expresses his negation of Brahmanism in this paper. He speaks about the role of Brahmins in perpetuating this unjust social system.

Annihilation of Caste

Ambedkar's prominent speech 'Annihilation of caste' is indeed a revolution in Indian intellectualism. The text offers an unparalleled critique of Hinduism and its manifold evils.

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Annihilation of caste was literally an affirmation of humanity and severe negation of caste. It was a speech which was supposed to be delivered at the annual conference of Jat-Pat-todak Mandal. Mandal, which was a radical faction of Hindu reformist Arya Samaj, was founded in 1922 by in Hindus who mostly belonged to the privileged groups. Many portions of the text were found highly objectionable to the so called 'radical organization' and hence they suggested Ambedkar to make certain amendments. It was criticized that Ambedkar has unnecessarily attacked the morality, and reasonableness of the Vedas and other religious books of the Hindus. Ambedkar was not ready to make any amendments and hence the speech was never delivered before the audience. However, Ambedkar published the work on his own expense and the work has provided an excellent critique of casteism which has influenced generations.

Ambedkar puts forward many relevant issues before the civil society through this speech. To quote him, "The path of social reform is like a path to heaven is strewn with many difficulties. Social reform in India has few friends and many critics." Conscious and ceaseless efforts need to be taken in order to eradicate the evils from Hinduism. Ambedkar's criticism points out some of the significant errors in the history of Indian social reform. He questions the nature of the progressive social reformist organizations. It is a notable fact that many of the torch bearers of Indian renaissance belonged to the upper caste and hence were Brahmanical in ideology. They fought against social evils like sati, child marriage etc... However, none of them were concerned about the abolition of caste system in India. Their aim was the betterment of their families and not the betterment of Indian society as a whole. In spite of the noble aspirations of the reformers, they were not ready to give up their caste status.

Caste-Based Oppression

Ambedkar's speech gives a picture of the brutal caste-based oppression. The fascist nature of Indian upper caste managed to prescribe the do's and don'ts for the lower caste. Ambedkar strongly affirms that as no country has the right to exert authority over any other caste on any basis. Caste is an unjust social system which cannot be justified. Ambedkar pities the critics who justifies caste system by attaching it to Indian occupational structure. Caste is said to be a system which eases the division of labor. Every civilized society needs division of labor, but the caste-based division of labor is merely based on social hierarchy and not based on merit of individuals. Here an utter dismissal of individual interest and capability takes place. This in fact leads to large scale unemployment too. Ambedkar dismisses the concept of purity of blood claimed by the upholders of caste system. He questions the racial affinity between a Punjabi Brahmin and a Brahmin from Madras. The concept of racial affinity is a mere myth. Caste system is not a racial demarcation but merely a division among people of the same race. It narrows down individual choices in significant matters like marriage Caste system doesn't have a scientific origin.

Warring Groups of Castes

Caste has completely disorganized and demoralized the Hindus. According to Ambedkar, the concept of Hindu society itself is a myth. The name was given by the Muslim invaders and the word doesn't appear in any text before the invasion of the Mohammedans. Hindu society as such does not exist. It is only a collection of castes. Each caste is conscious of its existence.

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There is no Hindu consciousness among the Hindus, their consciousness is only based on their caste. They are even conscious about their sub caste identity and maintain proper distance from people belonging to different sub castes. The primary aim of the Brahmins is to keep their interest alive always. And the interest of the non-Brahmins is to protect their interests against the Brahmins. Thus, the Hindus constitutes warring groups of castes.

Ambedkar accuse that though Hinduism has been here for a long time, the religion hasn't taken any initiatives to upgrade the situation of the fellow beings. He cites the case of the tribal groups who still lives in primitive uncivilized state. Hinduism wasn't able to bring them out of this. "Civilizing the aborigines means adopting them as your own, living in their midst, and cultivating fellow-feeling—in short, loving them. How is it possible for a Hindu to do this? His whole life is one anxious effort to preserve his caste. Caste is his precious possession which he must save at any cost". Not only has the Hindu made no effort for the humanitarian cause of civilizing the savages, the higher caste Hindus has prevented the lower caste from rising to the cultural level of the higher caste.

Hinduism failed to be a missionary religion because of the existence of casteism. The mode of life practiced by other religions like Sikhism and Islam produces a fellow feeling which is absent in Hinduism. Though the Hindus claim tolerance, this is not a tolerant religion. Ambedkar criticizes the immense power that caste has over the individuals. Caste even has unquestionable right to ex-communicate anybody who has gone against the caste rules. Caste in the hands of the orthodox has been a powerful weapon to persecute reformers and to kill reform. Caste has ethically degenerated Hinduism. It has destroyed the sense of public charity. A Hindu's public is his caste. It has made public opinion impossible. Usually Hindus accepts only leaders from their own caste except in the case of Gandhi. Their morality and ethics is the morality and ethics propagated by their caste.

Warring Groups of Castes

According to Ambedkar, an ideal society is a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity.

"In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In other words, there must be social endosmosis. This is fraternity, which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellow men."

Chaturvarnya

However, the concept of casteism is against the idea of equality and fraternity. It is a system which divides fellow human on different lines. Ambedkar criticizes the concept of Chaturvarnya which divides human on the basis of birth and not on merit and capability. Ambedkar critically examines the historical concept of chaturvarnya which divided humans into different varnnas on the basis of birth and lineage. Here, merit was not a matter of

consideration. The Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas survived by pleasing each other. But, the Sudra community was ill-treated by the rest in many ways. There were no social revolutions against this unjust system because the lower class of Indians were completely disabled for any direct action.

There cannot be a more degrading system of social organization than the caste system. It is the system which deadens, paralyses, and cripples the people, from helpful activity. This is no exaggeration. History bears ample evidence. You cannot build up anything on the foundations of caste. You cannot build up a nation, you cannot build up amorality. Anything that you build on the foundation of caste will crack and will never be a whole. The essential question to be addressed is about reforming the Hindu social order. The first step of this is to abolish sub caste. The caste status and occupations vary from one region to another. However, the abolition of sub castes may only lead to the strengthening of caste system. Another option is to encourage inter-dining. Many castes allow inter dining, but it hasn't led to the weakening of caste system. Hence, this is not a practical solution. Ambedkar is convinced that the real remedy is inter-marriage. Fusion of blood alone can create the feeling of being kith and kin and unless this feeling of kinship, of being kindred becomes paramount, the separatist feeling, the feeling of being aliens will not vanish.

According to Ambedkar,

“Caste is not a physical object like a wall of bricks or a line of barbed wire which prevents the Hindus from commingling and which has, therefore, to be pulled down. Caste is a notion; it is a state of mind. The destruction of caste does not therefore mean the destruction of a physical barrier. It means a notional change ... In order to reform the social order, it is important to deny the efficacy of the sastras ... You must take the stand that Buddha took. You must take the stand which Guru Nanak took. You must not only discard the shastras, you must deny their authority, as did Buddha and Nanak. You must have courage to tell the Hindus that what is wrong with them is their religion—the religion which has produced in them this notion of the sacredness of caste. Will you show that courage? ... The destruction of caste is a reform which falls under the third category. To ask people to give up caste is to ask them to go contrary to their fundamental religious notions. It is obvious that the first and second species of reform are easy. But the third is a stupendous task, well-nigh impossible. The Hindus hold to the sacredness of the social order. Caste has a divine basis. You must therefore destroy the sacredness and divinity with which caste has become invested. In the last analysis, this means you must destroy the authority of the shastras and the Vedas.”

The Brahmins will never be ready to undertake a social reform movement to abolish caste. Because such an act would wipe away their caste superiority. Even the so called secular Brahmins won't come up with such a reform.

Caste is an Irrational System

Caste is an irrational system. Reason has no role to play in this. A Hindu is supposed to follow 'Veda', 'sruthi' or 'sadachar'. Hindu religion is nothing but a set of principles, and a

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mass of sacrificial, social, political and sanitary rules and regulations, all mixed up. For a Hindu, dharma means commands and prohibitions is clear from the way the word dharma is used in the Vedas and Smritis and understood by the commentators. Ambedkar ends the speech with a proclamation that he will leave the fold of Hinduism as it serves him no purpose. Even though he will leave the fold, he will be around watching the movement with active sympathy and will give his assistance in whatever be worth it as this is a national cause. Though caste is based on Hinduism, it has spread over other religions in India. The reformation in Hinduism is more difficult than the other national cause, namely, *Swaraj*. In the fight for swaraj, the whole nation fights together, however the fight for social reform in Hinduism has a lot of critics.

Annihilation of Caste, the Myth and the Reality

It has been 70 years since Ambedkar published this revolutionary speech. The influence of this ideology in the contemporary society is matter that needs to be investigated. Fifty years since his revolutionary document, has caste been annihilated in India? Do we continue to judge people on the basis of caste, the ascribed status? This can be inferred by looking around the civil society today. Yes, India is a sovereign, 'socialist', 'secular', 'democratic' republic today. Yet, we continue to attach caste names in our surnames, we look for caste status while providing appointments, especially in organizations run by caste-based institutions. We look for caste when arranging marriages to our children. Honor killings takes place in this land for marrying from other communities. Yet we say we are secularists we are not casteist.

Caste is still a monolithic structure in India which continues to influence our civic life in visible and invisible ways. Is caste strengthening day by day or is it getting weakened is a question which needs to be critically analyzed. Today almost all castes have caste organizations which fights to preserve their caste identity and to protect the rights of their caste members. Caste organizations toils to preserve the caste name and to keep the system going on. Caste taboos are still observed and inter caste relationships, especially inter caste marriages are strictly dissuaded. Caste is often given priority than merit while making appointments. Another notable feature in India is new cult keeps coming up, even in the name of the reformers who fought against caste. It is ironical that the men who fought against caste becomes the reason behind fights and factions based on caste. India badly needs religion and cannot think outside caste and religion. Hence secularism remains an unrealized goal for Indian democracy.

Rebuilding Society without Caste

Yet there are attempts by the youth in India to rebuild the Indian social system by reformulating the caste. The well-educated metropolitan families are ready to move away from the caste taboos and accept liberal ideas. In a way it can be seen that caste is giving way to class. Yet, empowerment happens only among the higher class who are able to receive the benefits of education and empowerment. The inter caste marriages between high profile caste groups may not matter much, but a 'anuloma' or 'pratiloma' marriages between two individuals who belong to two different rungs of the society definitely causes a huge sound and fury. The rural India still cannot think outside their caste. The underprivileged are still not able to receive the benefits of education and empowerment.

To Conclude

Thus, it can be seen that caste has not been annihilated from India. However, there are some positive changes happening around. Conscious efforts need to be taken in order to annihilate caste from India. Caste is an unjust social system which differentiates people on the basis of their birth in a particular community. It only helps in creating unnecessary distinction among the people. It needs to be understood that humans are mere 'Homosapiens' who are equal in every sense. Humanity should be our caste. Empathy among fellow beings is very important. If we need to realize the dream of developed nation, we must be able to shatter the barriers which acts as a hindrance to the development of our nation. Annihilation of caste is very significant in attaining this.

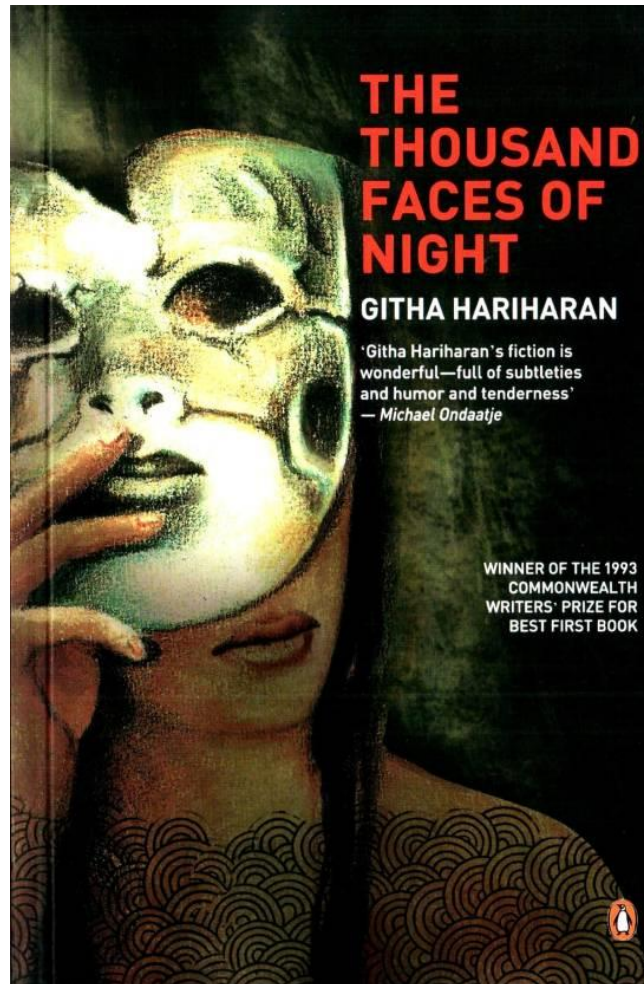
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Subjugation of Women in Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night*

V. Chellammal, M.Phil. Scholar



Abstract

Githa Hariharan, one of the notorious Indian novelists, projects the theme of marginalization of women in Indian societies through her writings. Her novels assert how women were oppressed, suppressed, repressed and silenced in the male-dominated society. The main focus of this paper is to analyze the subjugation of women in Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night* by implying the subaltern theory as emphasized by Antonio Gramsci and Gayatri Spivak. It intends to represent the voiceless women who were silenced and enforced to play the male-scripted

roles of perfect daughter, wife, daughter-in-law and mother in the patriarchal structure of society. It explores how women were treated as slaves and were enforced to serve their family. It scrutinizes how women were constructed and equipped to adjust, adapt and accept the new environment in which she endures certain sufferings. It depicts how women were subjugated as silent-sufferers who sacrifice all their talents, desires and preferences in order to render and fulfill their endeavor as perfect and ideal women. It gives a picture of women as sacrificial beings who sacrificed their identity in order to uplift their family to a higher position in the stereotypical society. It portrays how the women were made to believe and accept their roles as subordinates and were supposed to serve their superior beings through certain stereotypical and superstitious beliefs practiced in the patriarchal society during their period.

Githa Hariharan

Githa Hariharan is one of the prominent Indian women novelists. Since literature is the mirror of life, her writings reflect her own life experiences. She has won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for her best first book, *The Thousand Faces of Night*. Some of her notable contributions to Indian English literature were the collection of short stories *The Art of Dying* in 1993, *The Ghosts of Vasu Master* in 1994, *When Dreams Travel* in 1999, *In Times of Siege* in 2003 and *Fugitive Histories* in 2009. Her novels picture the real life of women who were subjugated as subordinate beings in the male-dominated society.

Women were suppressed by bearing in mind that they were inferior and secondary to men. They were enforced to play the subordinate roles as scripted by the dominant males in the patriarchal structure of society. Women were the real subalterns whose voices were unheard by the colonizers - their husbands - who colonized them. Men colonized women by making them to move to the margin and rule over them by occupying the central position through hegemony. Men were considered to be a superior being whereas women were inferior to men. Hence men were considered to be civilized and it was their work to civilize the uncivilized being - women. In order to represent themselves as superior, men subjugated women as inferior beings.

The Thousand Faces of Night

In the novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night*, Devi, the protagonist was pictured as a subaltern. Not only the protagonist of the novel was subjugated but also, each and every woman in and out of the novel was subjugated as subalterns in a way or another.

Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist was the first to manipulate the term 'subaltern' to represent the working-masses who were marginalized. The term 'subaltern' refers to the grade given to an officer who was in the subordinate position. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak who was an influential and notorious Indian writer, employed the term 'subaltern' in her significant essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" to represent the subordinate people and women who were voiceless and silenced by the dominant society. Spivak claims that "the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (32). Thus, women as subaltern were doubly marginalized and silenced. The voices of women were repressed by the male-dominated society. Spivak cites the history of Bhubaneswari Bhaduri who committed suicide because of her inability to confront the political assassination and to avoid capture by the British Colonial authorities; as she was one of the members who involved in the armed struggle for Indian

Independence. Though she made her death to speak, her voice was not heard in the dominant system of representation.

In *The Thousand Faces of Night*, Devi, the protagonist of the novel was subjugated by marrying Mahesh according to her mother's choice. Devi was like a puppet whose strings were in the hands of her mother before her marriage and 'a wooden puppet' (83) in the hands of her husband after her marriage. Simone De Beauvoir admits that marriage is the destiny that society traditionally offers women (451). Mahesh and Devi were yoked together like two different bullocks in the cart of marriage where the wife is enforced to follow the way of her husband.

Marriage

Marriage is the bond in which the husband and wife should understand each other and run their life together in a successful path. It should be the union of souls and hearts rather than bodies. It would be the foundation of a long and blissful life. But in the case of Devi and Mahesh, there is no understanding between each other. Her desires were not taken into account by her husband and he not even turns his ears to hear Devi's words. "He does not believe in talking about ifs and buts, at least not with his wife" (49). Her voice was unheard and was subjugated by her husband, Mahesh who was dominant enough to suppress all her feelings, thoughts and preferences.

Mahesh admits that marriage is a gamble in which the wife should adapt herself to the consequences and should play the roles of traditional wife and mother at home. But for Devi, "a marriage cannot be forced into suddenly being there, it must grow gradually, like a delicate but promising sapling" (49).

Though Devi was born and brought up in a traditional Hindu Brahmin family, she was educated and completed her Master's Degree in America. While she conveys her desire to learn Sanskrit to understand her father-in-law's Sanskrit lectures, her husband disregards her desire by asking, "what will you do with all this highbrow knowledge?" (52). Even though she was educated, she couldn't raise her voice in getting her desires fulfilled. He subjugated her by commenting, "This is what comes of educating a woman. Your grandmother was barely literate. Wasn't she a happier woman than you are? What is it you want?" (74)

Devi was subjugated as a subaltern woman who should sacrifice all her desires as Gandhari did in Mahabharatha by tying a piece of cloth around her eyes to make herself blind and "embraced her destiny – a blind husband – with a self-sacrifice worthy of her royal blood" (29). Devi's grandmother narrates those mythical tales to her during her childhood in order to bring her up as a typical Indian woman who should adjust, adapt, accept and endure all the sufferings and fates which she may come across in her life. After her marriage, Devi was depressed and thought of herself as "an aimless fool because I swallowed my hard-earned education, bitter and indigestible, when he tied the *thali* round my neck?" (74)

Devi's mother Sita performs the role as a slave by suppressing her own identity of being an expert in playing the veena in order to uplift her family to a respectable position in the society. She holds back her desire and talent of playing veena in order to prove her as an ideal wife and dutiful daughter-in-law in her in-laws' house. It was Sita's father-in-law who makes her to wipe

out her desire and talent of playing veena. While Sita was playing her veena after completing all her household duties, her father-in-law found that she had not plucked and kept the flowers ready for his morning prayers and he call upon her but she didn't notice his calling and she continued playing veena. He annoyed and shouted at her, "Put that veena away. Are you a wife, a daughter-in-law?" (30) It was the last and after that, the music was not heard in the house of Sita's in-laws. She was repressed to be a typical Indian housewife who should bear all her destiny in her life as taught by the stereotypical society from where she was brought up.

Though Sita was subjugated as a subaltern women in her in-laws' house, she well-played the male-scripted roles as follows: As a 'perfect daughter' she didn't spoil her parents' respectable name and fame by getting back while her desires and talents were suppressed in her in-laws' house, instead she undergoes and tolerates all her sufferings, suppressions, oppressions and repressions in order to prove herself as a perfect woman who was well brought up by her parents. As a 'dutiful daughter-in-law' she serves as a slave bearing all the miseries in her life. As an 'ideal wife' she struggles oppress herself to raise her husband's position to a higher level and to achieve his identity as a respectable man in the society. As a 'responsible mother' she brought up her daughter by inheriting the traditional values and customs in her. Though Sita was repressed as a widow by losing her husband, she completed her responsibility to make her daughter get married to Mahesh who has been chosen by Sita as a suitable match for her daughter. Thus, Sita being a subaltern woman was subjugated in the hands of the male-dominated stereotypical society and was enforced to play the male-scripted roles in the patriarchal structure of society.

Mayamma, the maidservant of Devi's husband's house was a silent-sufferer who endures all her destinies. She was married at the age of twelve. "Mayamma had been thrown into the waters of her womanhood well before she had learnt to swim" (135). She was ill-treated by her husband and her mother-in-law because of her childlessness. She tolerates all those torments and curses made by her husband and mother-in-law. She was subjugated by her mother-in-law who enforced Mayamma to do penance to clear out those misfortune that she brought to her in-laws' house being a childless woman. Mayamma was suppressed and silenced because as a subaltern she was not supposed to have a voice of her own. As her voice was unheard by her husband and mother-in-law and they muted her voice.

Devi's cousin, Uma endures all her agonies and leads a miserable life. She was battered by her husband and her drunken father-in-law abused her physically. She was depressed and lived her life in dejection as a silent-sufferer by tolerating all her destinies she met with.

Thus, every woman was subjugated as subalterns in the male-dominated stereotyped society. Women were enforced to move to the margin and the centre was occupied by men through hegemony in order to show their own identity and authority over women in the society. Women suppressed their own self-identity in order to make their husbands to achieve their identity whereas women's identity was connected with their husbands' identity. Women were represented as secondary beings by comparing with men. Thus, women were subjugated as the subordinate beings.

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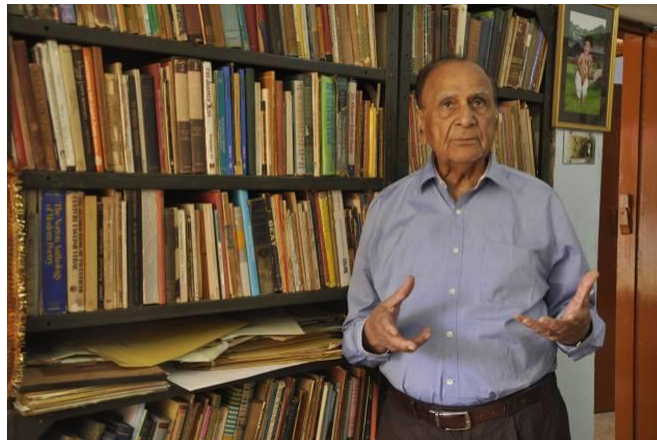
Rough Passage from Motherland to Other Land: A Study on Shiv K Kumar's Select Poems

P. Dharani, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. G. Arunadevi

Abstract

The prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award recipient, Shiv K Kumar is a *protean* writer who stamped his name in all genres of literature. Being a victim of partition between India and Pakistan in 1947, he had the first-hand knowledge of the sufferings of people who were exiled from their homeland. His well-known novel *A River with Three Banks* and some of his poems express the sufferings of the refugees and the pain of partition. After a few years of his migration from Delhi to Lahore, he went to Cambridge to pursue his doctorate under the guidance of David Daiches. He couldn't stay in the lands of Britain peacefully. He had a constant urge to return to his native soil. This paper focuses on the select poems of Shiv K Kumar that expatiates the sufferings of the refugees and his uncongenial days in Cambridge.

Key Words: Shiv K Kumar, Poems, Partition, Refugees, Suppression, Identity, Exile, Pain, Suffering



Shiv K. Kumar

Courtesy: <http://www.thehindu.com/books/one-man-many-selves/article4153800.ece>

Shiv. K Kumar, Akademi Winner

During a visit to Poland in the year 1983, Pope John Paul II stated that “I kiss the soil as if I placed a kiss on the hands of a mother, for the homeland our earth mother”. A motherland is not just a place but one's feeling, emotion and memories are intertwined with it and even Elysium cannot replace it. Shiv. K Kumar, a notable Post-Colonial Indian English writer who got

Sahitya Akademi Award for his work *Trapfalls in the Sky*, has hands-on experience of exile since he himself was an immigrant once. In an interview, while answering a question, what prompted him to write a partition novel, *River with Three Banks*, he said

The reason is very simple. I myself am a migrant from Pakistan. I was born in Lahore and I migrated to Delhi in 1947 when the communal holocaust was at its worst. You know, every Punjabi writer has to get the trauma of the partition out of his system sooner or later. (219)

Writing Is Impossible Without the Experience of Some Kind of Exile

Julia Kristeva, once an exile herself believes writing is impossible without the experience of some kind of exile (7). Shiv. K Kumar had undergone many pains and sufferings while exiling from Lahore to Delhi and he had witnessed the sufferings of other exiles too. In his novel *A River with Three Banks* and some poems like “Refugees”, “A Tibetan woman in Delhi Pavement”, “O! Delhi”, he portrayed the sufferings and pain of those refugees. In 1970s, George Steiner says, “the 20th century is the age of refugees”, thinking of last century’s huge number of exiles, refugees, immigrants and expatriate – victims of wars or dictatorships, of genocides and poverty (1). Steiner’s words are not an exaggeration, and Kumar uses literature as a medium to explore the pains and sufferings of refugees. Kumar includes two poems under the same title “Refugees”. One poem appears in the anthology *Cobwebs in the Sun* and other is included in his collection *Trapfalls in the sky*. Both the poems clearly express the physical pain and mental agony of the refugees.

Refugees

The poem “Refugees”, included in the anthology *Cobwebs in the Sun* is a pithy verse written in plangent tone, expresses the pathetic condition of the immigrants. The poem personifies the motherland of the refugees as ‘secure walls’ to exhibit the comfort and security one enjoys in one’s own country. He compares the alien land to bare skies to epitomize the vulnerable condition of the emigrants. The alien land is not going to roll out red carpet to the refugees instead it will besiege them with too many rude questions. Due to migration, the health and wealth condition of the emigrants starts to deteriorate,

From secure walls
to bare skies –
the snail’s way
through the arid zones
of aching slime to the alien
lands of rude questionings
The Hiroshima faces, skull-thin,
eat shadow at noon. (1-8)

The spring season is no more a springing season for the immigrants. The land of the refugees becomes dry which favours only the cactus and hence the fertile land becomes a futile land in which no flowers, trees or human being can subsist.

This year the spring’s miscarriage
disgorged a still-born
Only the Cactus survives -- (9-11)

The poem “Refugees” subsumed under the title *Trapfalls in the Sky* is the reiteration of the condition of immigrants. It gives an account of how they move from their homeland to other land. The migration is not a whole-souled act but they are coerced to move, so they limp throughout the way. They move slowly and unsteadily because their aching heart and mind pull down the movement of the footsteps

Between the nest’s gloved warmth
and the vision of a perch
beyond the river-bend
they limp through dark spaces (1-4)

The way they pass through is referred as dark spaces. Customarily ‘dark’ is a synonym of fear, mystic and dismal. They feel a kind of insecurity in their minds, so the poet is very particular in using the word ‘dark spaces’.

Minds of Refugees During Their Migration from Their Homelands

During their migration from their homeland the minds of the refugees are filled with nostalgia for their motherland. The term ‘ancestral memories’ refers the nostalgic mood of the emigrants. Kumar’s way of presenting the ‘milestones’ as ‘tombstones’ simply portrays the condition of the exiles.

Blinkered like yoked bulls,
burdened with ancestral memories,
they trudge on, counting the milestones
which look like maimed stones (5-8)

Forsaken Beach

The poet compares the tired faces of the exiles to a forsaken beach. The uncertain and aimless future of the refugees is represented as, “under each footfall, the sands slither / into holes- dots and dashes-” (13-14). they feel a kind of nothingness in their life. Bijay Kumar Das in his book *Shiv K. Kumar as a Post-colonial Poet* says that in “Refugees”, “Kumar reflects on the miserable condition of the refugees and bring home the plight in the changing situation”. The Poem, “A Tibetan Refugee Woman in a Delhi Pavement” explores the excruciating exile of a Tibetan refugee woman and her state of destituteness. The conflict between Tibet and China, arouse in 1959 when China wants to keep Tibet under its rule and invaded it. Even though in no way Tibet is linked with China in cultural or traditional ground, it infringes it. After 1959, with the permission of then Prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, HH Dalai lama and several Tibetans reached India as refugees.

Refugee Women

The poet begins with the description about the physical condition of the refugee woman whose body is very soft by nature, turns hard like a black stone. Kumar is very particular in using the colour ‘black’. Among many gemstones, black gemstone, Tourmaline is a high-quality stone and the hardness level of that black Tourmaline is 7 to 7.5 according to Mohs scale which is considered as one among the hardest stones and black is generally compared with mourning and sorrow, so the poet personifies the hard skin of the Tibetan refugee to black stone.

Your body has hardened

into black stone.
Lice creep through the sparse
crop of your singed hair
Looking for terrafirma. (1-5)

The poverty of the refugees is expressed by the poet as
The only thing not for sale
are the sombre beads of your eyes
and the onyx amulet
on your left arm. (9-12)

Due to migration and poverty there are a lot of wrinkles in her hands. For the sake of survival, she sells the things like jades, mongas and rubies which are as hard as black stone and her body. “A wrinkled hand caresses / tiny pyramids of Jades, mongas, / rubies ... (13-15).

A Member of the Diasporic School

Shiv. K Kumar is one of the important members of the diasporic school. Like many Indian writers like Sarojini Naidu, A. K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarathy, Khushwant Singh, and Gayathri Spivak etc., he went to overseas to pursue his studies. He did his PhD in Cambridge University, London. While his study there, he was not happy. He had a constant urge to return to his native land. In West, he witnessed a kind of suppressing attitude of the whites who still thinks themselves as leaders. In his poem “Heathrow Airport: Immigration check post”, he talks about the British officers who subdue the immigrants.

Hegemonic Attitudes

The opening lines of the poem clearly explores the hegemonic attitude of the British towards Indians and other immigrants. The condition of the immigrant check post is described by the poet as follows

The white raven, perched on a high
Stool behind his magic book
can caw off the names
of all your ancestors
like the panda of the Ganges bank. (5-9)

In the Poem “A Letter from New York” he mentions his life in New York as follows
Pardon my long silence
or blame, if you like, the thermostat
in my inverted man hole
on the ninth floor (1-4)

He states that his life in New York is an inverted life style he also says that “Here I live in a garbage can” (6). The unsatisfactory life of Kumar is revealed in this poem. All the poems of Shiv K. Kumar depicts the agonies, trauma and pain of the emigrants in the form of words. Hence the above poems written by Shiv K. Kumar are the archetypes of exile literature.

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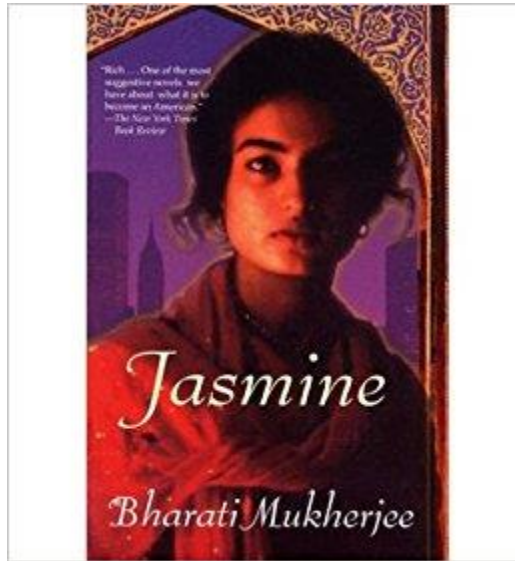
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Identity Crisis in *Jasmine*
K. Annapurany and S. Gayathri



About the Author

Bharati Mukherjee was born on 27 July 1940- 28 January 2017. Mukherjee was an American writer and professor emerita in the department of English at the University of California, Berkeley. Mukherjee received her M.F.A. from the Iowa Writer's Workshop in 1963 and Ph.D. in 1969 from the department of Comparative Literature. After more than a decade living in Montreal and Toronto in Canada, Mukherjee and her husband, Clark Blaise returned to the United States. She wrote of the decision in “An Invisible Woman”, published in a 1981 issue of *Saturday Night*. Mukherjee and Blaise co-authored *Days and Nights in Calcutta* in 1977. They also wrote the 1987 work, *The Sorrow and the Terror: The Haunting Legacy of the Air Indian Tragedy*. Mukherjee wrote many novels and some short stories.

Introduction

Bharati Mukherjee shows in this novel *Jasmine* how the female protagonist tries to tackle the problems of loss of culture and endeavors to assume a new identity in the U.S. In the novel *Jasmine* is the main protagonist of *Jasmine* searching for identity and her self began from the day she was born. *Jasmine* was born as her name is *Jyoti* in the village of *Hasnapur* in *Jullandhar* district of *Punjab* in a village eighteen years after the partition Riots. *Jyoti* was an unwanted child to the family because she was the fifth daughter and the seventh of nine children to the family. *Jyoti*'s mother wanted her to be killed when she was born because she did not want her daughter to suffer the pains of a dowry-less bride. *Jasmine* has remembered that it, “I survived the sniping, my grandmother may have named her *Jyoti* like light, but in surviving I was already *Jane*, a fighter

and adapter, but it could be seen that Jasmine had the capacity to struggles, survive and establish he tire self. She never gave up her childhoods memories. Jasmine always remembered that past days. Now Jasmine childhoods days memories have to become the instrument in her fight against fate and her search for self – identity. When she was only seven years old, Jasmine was no dismayed down by fate, “Fate is Fate”. In even in the childhood, Jasmine knew that she had the potential to fight, win all battles and establish a strong identity. Jyoti showed that she was different from in their village girls who had no minds of their own, but “village girls are like cattle, she is from expressing a small part of her dream or ambition. Now she achieved a small past of her dream by falling in love and marrying Prakash, a very young and ambitious engineering. But now Prakash wants that Jyoti to shed off her past and make a new kind of women. So that he changed her name as Jasmine and she wants to break off the past. She wants to be new women in her life. After getting a new name of new identity, Jasmine also took care of her husband driving ambition. Prakash wants to make highly his education level, so that they both wants to go U.S, for passing exam, doing better, something more of his life than fate intended. Prakash and Jasmine was looking forward to going to American with her husband Prakash to pursue his further education. But suddenly her husband Prakash was killed by the fundamentalist the Khalsa terrorists on the eve of their departure. Jasmin dreams are shatter. Now she is helpless widow at Hasnapur, but she wants to decide to go alone to American and commit sati that to study. When she left India to survive against the force of destiny but unfortunately, her American journey began on a sad note, because she missed passport. Now she started journey in ship on that time, she was raped by Half-face who had “lost an eye and ear and most of his cheek in a paddy field in Vietnam”. Half-face was the captain of the ship in which Jasmine reached American. She was reborn not by killing herself but by killing Half-face.

Jasmine Meets Lilian Gordon

Now Jasmine meet Lilian Gordon who entered into her life as a hope. It was Mrs. Gorden who educated her, made her free from her past memories and strengthened her will to survive. She makes a Jasmine to her past and be memories, and she makes a Jasmine to make physically and mentally strong and she help to meet professor. Vadhera and, now Jasmine stayed at professor. Vadhera's house. But Jasmine was disappointed when she learned that Mr. Vadhera was depended not only on his living on teaching but on trading in human hair, she was not earning by the strictly ethnicity in the house that, Jasmine was to follow as a widow. So that Jasmine decided to leave that place “with the actualization of the desire for independence the door is shut to the passive resignation extolled by her grandmother since individual effort means nothing”. Jasmine was not against Indian culture but against its retentiveness.

New Job to Jasmine

After a short time, Jasmine worked in the house of Tylor and Wylie Hayes in Manhattan as a care giver to their little daughter Duff. There her name was changed from Jasmine to change her name as Jase, while she working as a caregiver, and she took up part time job like a answering phones calls and tutoring graduate students in Punjab In the University. Now totally Jase absorbed the alien cultures rather greedily. Pulling of the between these two opposite forces, the Indian and the American did not frighten her but it made her excited. Even through if the other immigrants remained suspended between these two forces. Like Indian to American culture!. Taylor helped Jasmine to very much irrespective of what she was after his wife Would

left him. Taylor needed to show emotional support and confessed his love to Jasmine. But she wants a real loving person. In Jasmine life Taylor and Duff are left and fear and terror because of the presences of Sukhawinder the Khalsa terrorist who killed Prakash in India. Jasmine meet a Iowa bank and Jasmine got a job in Iowa's bank. She also Madera place in the heart of the banker Bud Ripplemayan. Jasmine had a peaceful life in Bud's house, she was happy for a new job and of her status as a step- mother to Du, a sixteen-years old Vietnam war victim adopted by Bud. Bud was separated from his Karin and his grown-up sons had left him. But “Jane” has to change her name has a “Jase”. Now Jase has accepted the American family, but she was waiting for real love. Then suddenly Jase got a letter from Taylor informing her that he would shortly come to take her. Taylor decided to go to California and stay with his sister and her family. She understood DJ’s condition as she herself was an exile and told the news to Bud gently. Now Jasmine is really happy, and she face American Culture. She was a clear and response to her courage. She did not feel any guilt. She only did what she thought was right for her Jasmine’s desire- ‘I want to do the right thing, I don’t want to be a terrible person’ like she is searching for real identity. At last Jasmine said that there is nothing I can do it, Time will tell if I am a tornado, rubble marker, arising from nowhere and disappearing into a could do it. It can be seen at last of Jasmine find its real identity and facing many struggling and many suffering in journey to Indian culture to American culture but she finally get its real identity. Jasmine was out of bonds and has gained her true self and she finally achieving the true identity of journey of Jasmine true identity.

Conclusion

Bharati Mukherjee is says the in this novel she explores through her fiction the meaning of the life. Issues related to women are central to the vision of Mukherjee in her novels. She deals with the problems of the Indian immigrants mainly, women, she writes about the struggles and problems faced by Indian women. The problem of cross-cultured crisis and the ultimate search for identity is also one of her important themes. Her novel also reflects the temperament and mood of the present American Society as experienced by the Indian Immigrants in American.

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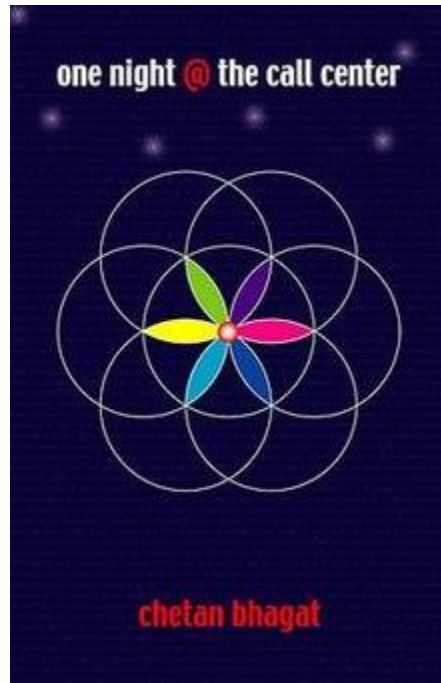
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**Social Imbalance in Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020* and
*One Night @ the Call Center***

A. Gayathridevi and Dr. T. Deivasigamani



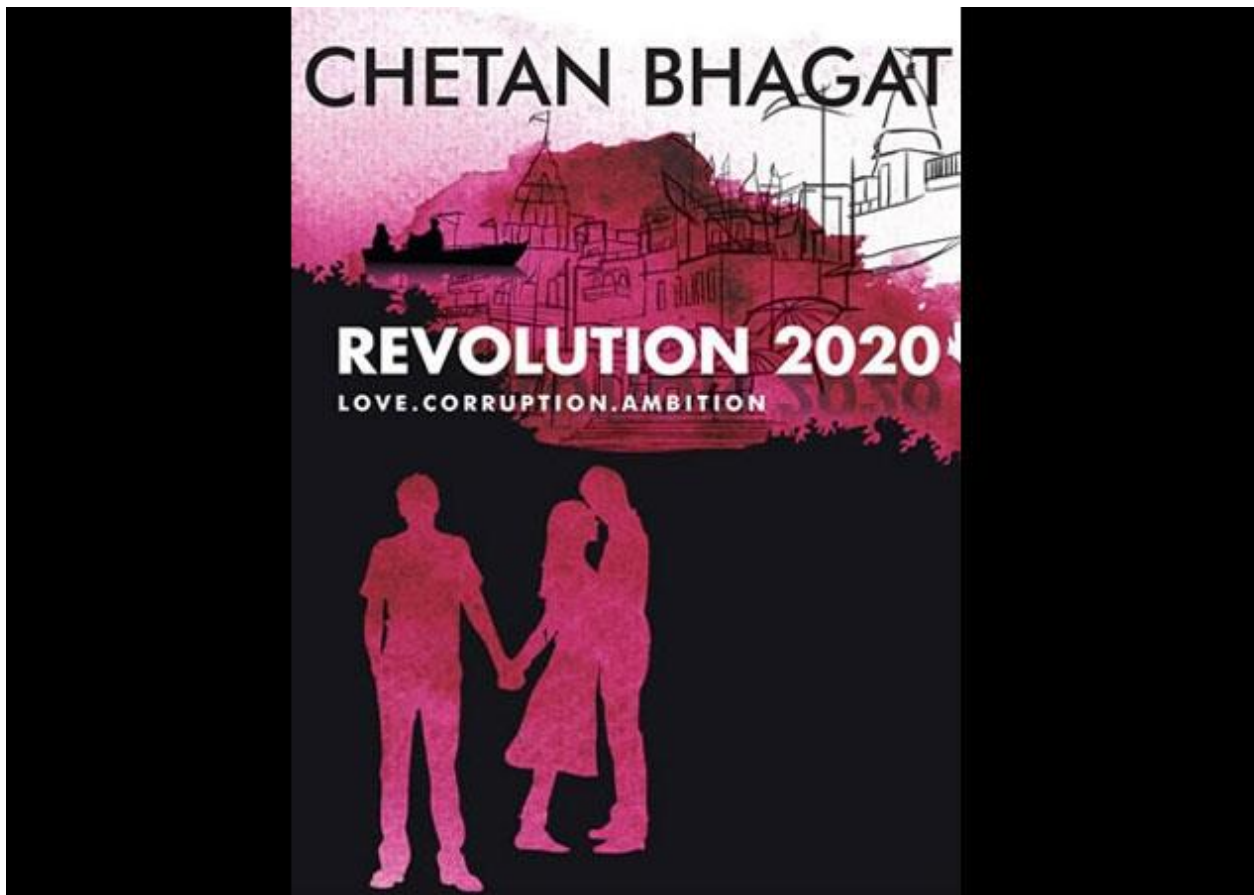
Abstract

The purpose of this article is to bring out the social imbalance in Chetan Bhagat's novels *Revolution 2020* and *One Night @ the Call Center*. Bhagat rocked the Indian sensibility with his thought-provoking ideas of human condition twisted in the web of love, corruption, and ambition. He has always been very careful and aware with most of the issues related to the society. He directly hits at issues like corporate life style, modern education system, misunderstanding, corruption, exploitation, patriarchal setup, and globalization in his novels. He has also given some ideas to solve the problems through his characters in these novels. *Revolution 2020* is a fascinating and a fast-paced story of love, betrayal, and corruption. It is set in the sacred city of Varanasi and it reveals the darker side of India's education system and the uncontrolled corruption it involves. In this novel Gopal, the protagonist of the novel is changing the traditional education system with the support of the MLA Shukla. In *One Night @ the Call Center*, Bhagat tried to explore call center world and its' culture. It is a romantic comedy set in an office where bored young Indians try to resolve the mindless inquiries of Midwestern American Technophobes at the call center. The story revolves around six friends Shyam, Priyanka, Varun, Rathika, Esha, Military uncle who are selling home appliances to the United States from a call center in India.

Keywords: Chetan Bhagat; *Revolution 2020*; *One Night @ the Call Center*; Corporate life style; Imbalance, Indian sensibility, Misunderstanding; Corruption; Exploitation; Patriarchy; Globalization.

Introduction

Chetan Bhagat is one of the of famous Indian novelists of modern English literature was born on 22 April 1974. He began his journey as a writer in 2004 with his first novel *Five Point Someone*. Bhagat is considered as a post-modern writer and he presented the youth of today in their world of luxury. His themes are wide and different. He tries to depict the ordinary normal human experiences like loneliness, strangeness, despair, and anxiety. The protagonist of his novels is suffering at the hands of modern disorganized life of disillusionment, alienation, loneliness, separation, and disorder. They all are broken off from the spiritual and normal life.



Bhagat directly hits on the social evil corruption through the character Gopal in the novel, *Revolution 2020*. It is a triangle love subject story between Gopal, Raghav, and Aarti. But, this paper highlights the corruption given by a lower middle-class family and the problems they face in the novel. He projects the issue of how a private coaching institution exploits the upcoming Engineering students. Education is considered to be the assets of all the middle-class families, by educating their son or daughter, all the parents believe that they have achieved something in their

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Social Imbalance in Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020* and *One Night @ the Call Center*

life. Therefore, they put all their life time earnings and spend them on the children's upcoming. They fully spend all money in these coaching classes so that their children can easily get into the Engineering Admission and they change the standard of the family. In the same way Gopal, the protagonist of the novel after his failure in Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) is forced by his father to join in a coaching centre at Kota. Here, Bhagat describes Kota and its' sitting as place for the preparation of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) entrance test.

Gopal's father says: "In fact, Kota now had small coaching shops to coach you to get into the top coaching classes. From there, you would be coached to get into an engineering college" (59). Gopal's father spends his retirement savings as a capital fees for the coaching centre. In Kota, Gopal tries to do his best to pass the examination but repeatedly fails because of his aimlessness. He was unable to concentrate on his studies because of the love he had for Aarti. Gopal's old father was unable to bear his son's repeated failures, dies without having fulfilled his last and keen desire. Bhagat had pictured the real middle-class family and the misunderstanding system of education through Gopal's father.

Bhagat brings out the life of Gopal after his father's death and he becomes an orphan, the money lenders and creditors pressured him for the money repayment. The debts become two lakhs rupees therefore he signs a deal with a local MLA Shukla, to start a private Engineering College on his family's disputed land. Bhagat puts the irony that an uneducated Gopal becomes the director of a new Engineering college named "Ganga Tech College." This portrays the reality in most of the private Engineering colleges in the country.

Gopal learns how to fulfill his wishes by bribing the government officials for running the college. He wants to eat whole while Raghav says: "Don't take the whole thing. It's not fair... cut it into two. Take one, leave the other" (9-10). Gopal bribes for twisting and relaxing rules; he also bribes for giving sanctions to professors for joining the college as faculty. Gopal with the support of the MLA Shukla, the most corrupt leader of Varanasi fulfills his ambition of a thirty-crore rupees under the name of Ganga Action Plan. In this novel, Bhagat pictures the mind of the pupil that everything can be done or any work can be achieved in the government office by bribes. The world is very fast; people wanted everything done without any stern. They bribe the officers and work is done without any pain or time waste. Gopal becomes skilled at handling the corrupt politicians and completes his works.

Bhagat had always been very careful and aware with most of issue related to the society, therefore he writes in his article in *The Times of India* that: "Many of us unfortunate enough to be educated and emotionally invested in our country are in pain these days. We see our nation being plundered and mismanaged by the politician in power" (3). Bhagat wanted this type of corrupt society to be changed; he therefore presented his second character Raghav who is the childhood friend of the protagonist Gopal at Varanasi. In *Revolution 2020* Gopal, Raghav, and Aarti belong to Sunbeam school in Varanasi. Raghav's aim was to create awareness in the society free from corruption. He joined Indian Institute of Technology – Banaras Hindu University (IIT- BHU), Engineering not only to earn a degree but to fulfill his ambition as a journalist. After his studies, he joins a newspaper Daily as a trainee-reporter. Bhagat answers to the question by Diksha Sahni about *Revolution 2020* that:

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

A. Gayathridevi and Dr. T. Deivasigamani

Social Imbalance in Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020* and *One Night @ the Call Center*

Revolution 2020 is foremost a love story, in fact a love triangle, as both Gopal and Raghav love the same girl. Corruption particularly in the education sector is the backdrop of the story. Like all his novels the best-selling writer tries to show the problems of the young generation and finally he also suggests the best ways to solve it. The writer tries to show the present condition of the three friends. In this novel both the characters Gopal and Raghav strive to achieve love, fame and success. (3)

Revolution 2020

Raghav begins his life as an idealist believing that everything can be changed, and he tried to achieve his aim through the power of his pen. He started a newspaper entitled *Revolution 2020* and tried to clarify the people against corruption. *Revolution 2020* suggests that the revolution is possible only by people's efforts and their inner urge. Firm determination, honesty towards themselves, dedication for work, and persuasion in the right direction can lead to desired destination and all impossible can be possible. Gopal narrating about the novel: "Revolution 2020, That's his goal. That India must have a full-blown revolution by 2020. Power will be with the youth. We will dismantle the old corrupt system and replace a new one in place" (197). Raghav intended to develop the attitude of the reincarnation in the society where the next generation can live without any social imbalance in the society.

Raghav entered a mission to root out the corruption and wants to help the poor and bring a change to rebuild the society. Through his writing, Bhagat proved Shukla MLA to be the most corrupt man; thereby Shukla had to resign his post of MLA. Aarti was behind Raghav as a moral support to his plan. Aarti is a different character who surrenders herself to Gopal for momentary pleasures and collects all the information from him and revealed it to Raghav and finally Raghav gets married to Aarti. Gopal wants to prove himself to be the most successful man in life by achieving lot of money, power, and even the love of Aarti. The innocent Raghav's words in the newspaper change the mind of Gopal and he realized that Raghav is a better human being than himself. His notion brings out a change and eye opener not only to Gopal and most of corrupt people in the society. Arvind in his article "Representing Metropolitan Youth Culture: An Assessment of Chetan Bhagat's *Five Point Someone* and *One Night @ the Call Center*" says: "Corruption is the burning problem of the world. All the countries of the world are facing the problem of corruption in some way or the other way, but today's youths are opposing the corruption in all walks of life" (3).

Raghav's newspaper created a fear in the corrupt leader and therefore they started to change. It was just a start, by the end of the novel, he succeeded in his ambition of corruption free society. At the Gopal whole-heartedly gives Aarti to Raghav, with change of heart Gopal wins the massive sympathy of the reader. He turns all the negative things into positive for the welfare of society.

One Night @ the Call Center

Bhagat's themes of socio-political as well as literary factors dominate in his works. He makes a serious attempt to expose the state of India's lucrative private education business which is the only hope for millions of people from all around the villages who are unable to pass the

entrance examination for Engineering Colleges. His novel *One Night @ the Call Center* describes the advantages and disadvantages of the society. Through this novel Bhagat portrays the life of the middle-class family in the major cities of the country. It is a story of emotion, love, sorrow, and pity.

Chetan Bhagat's *One Night@ the Call Center* moves around six people who are all working in the call center and is also describes that their problems and a call from God on one good night at their work place. Human expectations are unlimited and when it is not fulfilled they get frustrated and start to blame on God. Three male and three females working as a group in a call centre. Each character has their own problems at their background and they are fed up with their lives. Shyam is the narrator of the story, he is the main character of this novel. He is in love with Priyanka who has got engaged with Ganesh an NRI boy. Varun the friend of Shyam is not interested in the job because he and Shyam think that their boss Mr. Bakshi had cheated them. Varun stays in the job only for status. Priyanka gets engaged to Ganesh because of her mother's pressure, even though she has love for Shyam. Esha Singh runs out of her family to achieve her aim as a model. Radhika is married, even though she had a lot of love towards her husband she returns from her family life because of her mother-in-law. She finds her husband having an affair with another girl therefore she is fed up. And the final character is the military uncle the oldest person in the call centre is also upset because his grandson had stopped contacting him and he is upset in his loneliness.

In this way every character of the novel is upset in their life, they wanted something magic to happen in their life and all their problems as to be changed. Bhagat introduces God as a character who makes a call to everyone at one night. He gives idea to everyone to solve their problem through phone: "There are four things a person needs for success: a medium amount of intelligence, a bit of imagination, self-confidence and failure" (134). He motivates everyone to learn and face their problem by themselves with courage and he also say that this world is full of problem therefore everyone must learn to face it. God advised them to put their hundred-percentage effort to it, in order to achieve their aims. God said:

I think you need to understand how my system works. You see I have a contract with all human beings. you do your best, and every now and then, I will come behind to give you a bonus push. But it has to begin with you, For otherwise I can't distinguish who needs my help most. (135)

Bhagat and God

No novelist has presented God using mobile phone to guide his devotee's difficulty. God said:

For once you taste failure, you have no fear. You can take risks more easily. Then You don't want to snuggle in your comfort zone anymore-you are ready to fly. And Success is about flying, not snuggling, God said. God sighed before speaking again. I think you need to understand how my system works. You see I have a contract with all human beings. you do your best, and every now and then, I will come behind to give you a bonus push. But it has to begin with you, For otherwise I can't distinguish who needs my help most. (134)

After receiving the call from God everyone's life gets changed. They start facing their problems by themselves. As the result their problem are solved. All the characters portrayed by Bhagat face the common problem as well as personal problems. They bring out the present situation where the people face their day today problem such as work stress, love problems, night shifts, friendship, and in –laws restrictions. In spite of all problems the middle-class family tries to comfort themselves in a luxurious life, thereby they spent for pride and save less.

In *One night @ call center*, Bhagat brings out the problems of women that they face in the patriarchal society. They face a lot of problems in their work place, they work double shift one at home and the other at the office in order to earn money, status, and enjoy a luxurious life. The people work all time and they are unable to face small problem with courage. They fail to understand other's feeling, they do not watch other's problems. They do not have real friends because, they are not true and share their reality. They just work like machine in office and their only aim was to be luxurious. This results in stress and they fail to face their own problem, they want someone to solve their problems.

Bhagat gives the solution for problem through God. His advice to the modern youngster is to believe in God and have faith on the supreme. Only believing on God can change their life from all type of stress and psychological problem. He motivates the youngster to follow the path of God; that is true to everyone. Bhagat also focus on the problems of the western influence on modern society like misunderstanding between youngster which leads to the increase in divorces, breakups in love, stress, frustration, and finally leads to increase of suicide.

Life at the Call Centre

The present call centre life is portrayed by Bhagat very clearly. The boss Mr. Baxi of the call centre does not wanted to call the character with their own names; he therefore changes the name from Indian to Western. For Radhika is called as Regima Jones, Varun as Vroom and Esha Singh as Eliza throughout the novel. This show how the western culture is influenced in India and how they treat human being as resources. The corporate exploitation is brought out by Bhagat in the treatment of human being at the call center job.

Bhagat's *One Night @ the Call Center* also deals problems like the use of alcohol and smoking as a style. In spite of educated, they know the side effects of such things although they use it as a style, to enjoy and have fun: "Six irresponsible agents found dead, alcohol in body" would be the headline" (128). When they are questioned, their reply is that they wanted relief from stress. These corporate sectors give holidays to enjoy and they influence the western culture on the Indians. The youngsters work in such corporate sectors think themselves to be western and follow their culture as a fashion. They speak only foreign language; they are addicted to drugs, alcohol, and smoking and even to a higher level of living a social life without getting married. Bhagat portrays all social imbalance in the society and how the Indian tradition and culture are affected.

Conclusion

Chetan Bhagat novels bring out the social imbalance throughout these novels, *Revolution 2020* and *One Night @ the Call Center*. He points out the problems such as corporate life style,

modern education system, misunderstanding among each other, corruption, exploitation, patriarchal setup, globalization, and social as well as personal problems in these novels. Bhagat had tried to solve this problem through his character; in *Revolution 2020* its Raghav's words and *One Night @ the Call Center* its God's words.

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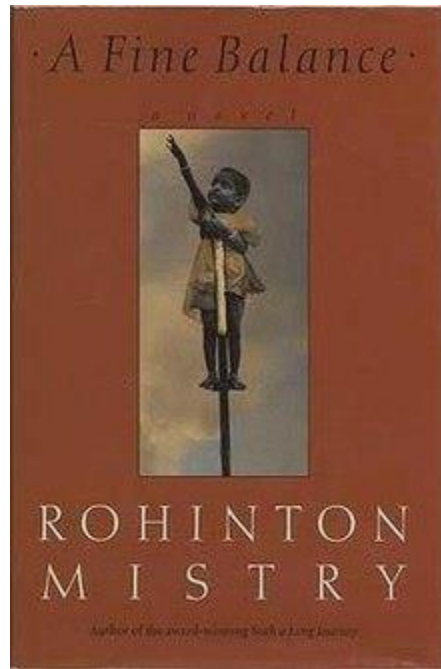
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Portrayal of Subaltern Literary Concept in Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*

Ms. K. Geetha, Dr. R. Vijaya and Dr. S. Thirunavukkarasu



Abstract

Subaltern theme has become so prominent that it is regularly used in various disciplines. The word Subaltern means inferior in rank or of secondary importance. Three outstanding thinkers have contributed to the field of 'subaltern studies'. They are: Antonio Gramsci, Ranjit Guha and Gayatri Spivak. According to Julian Wolfreys people who are marginalized, oppressed and exploited on the cultural, political, social and religious ground are grouped as 'subaltern'. Thus Subaltern literature reflects various themes such as oppression, marginalization, Gender discrimination, subjugation of lower and working classes, disregarded women, neglected sections of society, deprived classes etc. In the context of globalization, 'Third World countries' are encountering the state of poverty and oppression. 'Subaltern literature' is one of the subdivisions of post colonialism'. Antonio Gramsci says that the word 'subaltern' is drawn from the Late Latin 'subalternus'. It means any officer in the British army who is 'Lower in rank' than a captain. Its adjectival form denotes 'of inferior rank'. But Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci for the first time used it outside the non-military sense. In Latin 'sub' means 'under' and 'alter' means other. So literally it denotes to any person or group of inferior position. He

refers to any person or group of inferior rank and station, whether because of race, class, gender, ethnicity or religion. Gramsci stressed the connotation of this expression in terms of Gender, Class, Caste, Race, and culture. Gayatri Spivak includes a new dimension to the term 'subaltern'. She includes the colonized people, oppressed generations, working classes, blacks and muted women in the category of 'subaltern people'. B.K. Das opines that Gayatri Spivak has expanded the meaning of 'subaltern' to those who were treated with hardship especially those who got suppressed because of their gender. She laid the stress on gendered subaltern-that is-woman who was doubly oppressed by colonialism and particularly in the Third World countries.

Rohinton Mistry

Rohinton Mistry is one of the internationally acknowledged writers and his works have won international accolades. Canada based, Rohinton Mistry is the author of three novels and a short story-collections set amidst the closely knit and isolated Parsi community in Bombay. His writings bear a social purpose. He is one of the prominent writers of the post-colonial era. His novels deal with the theme of exploitation based on the political, economic and social aspects stressing 'the evil of untouchability'- mostly found to be in practice among the Hindus of our country. Rohinton Mistry attempted his best to voice the cruelty and oppression experienced by these muted untouchables in his novel *A Fine Balance*. The novel exposes class and caste disparities of Indian society which also mirrors a visual rendering of those who endure its inequities. This paper attempts to discuss the portrayal of subaltern concept in *A Fine Balance*

Keywords: Rohinton Mistry, Subaltern, post colonialism, marginalized, oppressed, exploited, untouchability.

Introduction

Untouchability has been practiced in India since time immemorial. This social evil is in vogue even today. Rohinton Mistry attempted his best to voice the oppression experienced by the untouchables in his novel *A Fine Balance*. In this novel he talks about "chamirs" who are born into a leather making chamirs family. The high caste people treat them in a brutal manner. The inhumanity of the upper caste people is portrayed by Mistry.

A Fine Balance

The character Sita was stoned for walking on the upper caste side of the road. Gambir had molten lead poured into his ears because he ventured within the range of the temple while prayers were on. Dayaram did not follow the agreement to plough a land lord's field and he had to face an ugly, indecent treatment. Dhiraj negotiated in advance with Pandit about the wages. Pandit got irritated and leveled a false charge against him. He accused of Dhiraj poisoning his cows and had him hanged. Untouchability is a sin, it denigrates not only Hindu religion but the entire Indian society. Rohinton Mistry says, 'What is this disease?' you may ask. This disease is ravaging us for centuries, denying dignity to our fellow human beings. This disease must be purged from our society, from our hearts and from our minds. No one is untouchable, for all children are children of the same GOD. Remember what Gandhiji says, that untouchability poisons Hinduism as a drop of Arsenic poisons milk'.

The Story

We find four characters. Dina and Mameck are Parsees. Shiva and his nephew Omprakash are tailors. The pathetic condition of the tailors is described here. The ancestors of these tailors were in fact 'Chamirs' or 'MOCHIS'. The caste violence made Dukhi, a Mochi and grandfather of Omprakash and father of Ishvar compelled to escape to the town nearby. There they learnt the dexterities of tailoring in the town. The physical displacement to the city made them happy. After some time, they desired to return to their village with enough money they had earned. The father of Ishvar who was doing unclean work cherished seeing a better life of Ishvar and Narayan. He left his children at the custody of Ashraf, his Muslim friend. Ashraf was kind enough to take them as apprentices in his tailoring sector. Dukhi Mochi said sarcastically, "at least my Muslim friend treated me better than my Hindu friends".

During a very difficult situation Ishvar and Narayan saved Asaraf's shop saying that they were the owners. After returning to his village Narayan started a tailoring shop of his own and became successful. He constructed a house, got married and became the father of a son and two daughters. Narayan's business was good until an election was declared by a land lord, Thakar who had killed the parents of Omprakash. An atrocity on the lower caste was on the rise. They were not allowed to continue their education. Ishvar and Narayan were beaten up as they entered into a school. Dukhi approached Pandit Lalluram a Brahmin priest and pleaded for justice. The untouchables innocently believed that Lalluram was impartial and he was a Daniel in his judgement. But they were shocked to see the true face of Lalluram. He proved himself an unmannered, crooked fellow who would never support an untouchable. Dukhi got frustrated and said, "government passes new laws, says no more untouchability, yet everything is the same. The upper caste bastards still treat us worse than animals...".

The untouchables were neither permitted to use the village well nor permitted to enter the temple. The women folk were also exploited by the high caste people. Rupa, wife of Dukhi was sexually exploited by the gardener of the Zamindhar. She was accused of stealing the fruits and milk from the upper caste families to feed her children. Rohinton Mistry wonders at the dual standard of the Upper caste Hindus. They call them untouchables but don't hesitate to exploit the downtrodden. Even the local body elections were not conducted in a fair way. The land lord's men filled up the blank ballots and deprived them of their voting rights.

Prakash's father and his two children were killed. Ishver and Omprakash went to the police station to prefer a complaint. The sub-inspector was rough and unsympathetic. He said, "What kind of rascality is this? Trying to fill up the 'FIR' with lies? You filthy achool caste are always out to make troubles! Get out before we charge you with public mischief." Every stage is a challenge to the untouchables. They went to the village in search of a bride for Omprakash. Unfortunately, they were cheated and victimized by the high caste villains. Under the stream of 'free vasectomy programme' the innocent untouchables were cheated and maltreated.

Conclusion

The theme of subaltern literature is oppression and exploitation of the weak and under privileged. Rohinton Mistry, a Booker Prize winner gives a heartrending picture of man's barbaric inhumanity towards another man.

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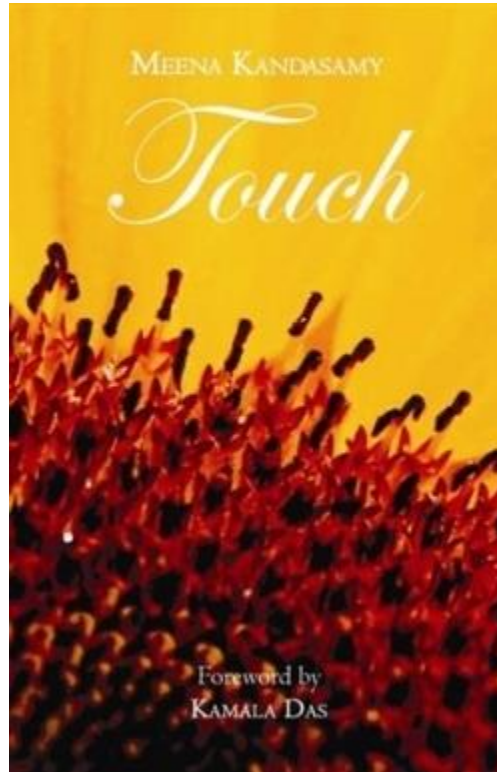
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Treatment of Women in Meena Kandasamy's *Touch*
Dr. A. Glory



Abstract

Meena Kandasamy is an emerging twentieth century Dalit poet, fiction writer, translator, journalist, and social activist. Her first collection of poetry, *Touch* (2006) is a scathing, militant attack on the perpetuation of the social oppression of the Indian women. It discusses the issues of caste, gender, sex, and cultural discriminations of the marginalized Indian women. The Indian system of life has some sort of social mechanisms, arrangements, customs, and institutions that act as covert modes of establishing and perpetuating the subjugation of women. India, being a male-ruled, patriarchal society, denied women of their fundamental rights as people. A woman was denied alongside numerous different rights, the privilege to education and the unequivocal power about her own life. The Indian caste system also has relevance to women's discriminatory status. The features of the caste system like "endogamy" act as a mechanism of retaining control over the labour and sexuality of women. The concepts like "purity" and "pollution," which segregate people from each other and regulate mobility of women deprecate the issue of gender equality. The present paper focuses on how Kandasamy's poetry concentrates on caste annihilation and the issue of women's equality on par with a man. It also portrays that Dalit women not just as the victims of

the lust of the higher caste men, but as rebels fighting against the injustice perpetuated against them and champions the cause of the equality of women. Hence, this paper helps the marginalised people who plead for liberty, equality, fraternity, and Justice to lead their life with honour and dignity.

Key Words: Meena Kandasamy, *Touch*. social activist, sexual harassment, social oppression, discrimination, caste annihilation.

Introduction

Indian English Literature has attained an independent status in the domain of world Literature. It reflects Indian culture, convention, social esteems, and even Indian history through the delineation of life in India and Indians living somewhere else. Indian young women writers have an uncommon preferred standpoint amid this regard as they require themselves been presented to the anxieties and along these lines the strain to that the women square measure subjected. A critical improvement in modern Indian writings and Dalit works are the extension of a women's activist or woman- centred approach, an approach that tries to extend and translate ability from the point of view of a female awareness and sensibility. Dalit women have been victims of patriarchy as much as other women, and still endure huge obstacles to quiet presence. Under these conditions, it is uncommon to see a Dalit woman in a position of leadership, whether in the home, at work place or in social or political institutions. It is not feasible to the possibility that a Dalit woman should have power or basic leadership expert and be unengaged to practice it. Consequently, despite she figures out how to acknowledge such an a dependable balance, it's a most powerless position-Dalit young ladies sarpanches in punchayat more often than not confront mortification, dangers and physical brutality, because of the group can't simply acknowledge a Dalit woman as a pacesetter. Meena Kandasamy is one among the most remarkable Dalit young women writers in the historical backdrop of Tamil Dalit Literature. She delineates her outrage against caste and sexual discrimination which has crippled the Dalits to dehumanized state as they're subjected to mortification and mistreatment.

Kandasamy is a poet, translator and dynamic activist from Chennai. As a contemporary Indian woman writer Kandasamy is agonized to witness the age-old social practices like untouchability based on caste system existing in Indian society. She voices her anger against caste based injustice which has impaired the marginalized to dehumanized condition as they are subjected to oppression and humiliation. Her two collections of poetry *Touch* (2006) and *Ms Militancy* (2010) portray the real picture of the marginalized in Indian society. In other words, her works focus on poverty, oppression, injustice, caste annihilation, linguistic identity and pangs and predicaments of women. Maht, Mohan Lal in his article, "Meena Kandasamy's Touch: An Articulation of the Voice of the Marginalized" observed "Casteism is an old social evil which is used to subjugate the lower stratum of the hierarchal social structure of Indian society and to uphold discrimination as well as gain unfair advantage over the 'others,' marginalized (12). The first collection of poems of Kandasamy titled *Touch* includes 84 poems is published in 2006. It is a sweltering, activist aggression on the procreation of the social ill-treatment of the Indian women. It speaks about the problems of the unseemly behaviour of the women. She illustrates the problems of women, specifically the marginalised women not as the victims of the lust of the upper-caste

men but as rebels fighting against the abuse perpetuated against them and champions the cause of the equality of women.

Gender inequality has repeatedly been taken up as a subject matter by the Indian writers in their creative endeavours. But, the problem of the disparagement and exploitation of woman is not spoken about all things regarded. The problems related to women have rarely been regarded as significant either by political leaders or writers until as of late. The reasons may require to do with the financial status and socio-political condition of women who endure to remain voiceless even today. Some contemporary Indian writers, like Kamala Das, Arundathi Roy, Sivakami, Bama, and Kandasamy, voice out their anxieties with respect to the sexual politics and the sexual orientation in their works.

Kandasamy stands unique from other contemporary Indian women writers who are gotten amidst dualities, on account of the trouble between what they require and what they are supposed to write; she portrays the themes like caste discrimination and gender inequality with a legitimate accuracy. Kandasamy examines shrewdly the complicating system of never-ending suppression of the Indian woman in her works. She represents women, specifically the marginalised women not similarly as the casualties of the desire of the higher caste men yet as dissidents battling against the treachery maintained against them and champions the reason for the balance of women. The present paper focuses on how Kandasamy's poetry concentrates on caste annihilation and the issue of women's equality on par with a man. It also portrays that Dalit women not just as the victims of the lust of the higher caste men, but as rebels fighting against the injustice perpetuated against them and champions the cause of the equality of women. Hence, this paper helps the marginalised people who plead for liberty, equality, fraternity, and Justice to lead their life with honour and dignity.

Status of Marginalized Women

The strong women characters portrayed in the poems of Kandasamy wage open wars to fight against patriarchal sovereignty to free women from their inferior position with the vigour of cognizance to provide them a transformative action. With prophetic understanding she examined the convivial and political system of society and fight against the austere caste system of India. Her principal consideration in her poetry is to empower women mainly the marginalised women to acquire a comprehensive vigilance and knowledge about their miserable situation. Her poems are born out from her own experiences and her commitment with the espousing caste and gender equivalence. Her poems provide a visual effect; she has a way of roping her readers in a forceful manner. She breaks the long silence that has misled traditional Indian women, their feminine experience and their female world.

Oppression of the Marginalized Women

A woman is perceived as a property in the male-dominated society. The men of all castes and classes connive in making certain belief of conduct and delineate the direction of female reinforcement and restrict her to the four walls of her home. In one of her poems in *Touch*, entitled "Songs of Summer," Kandasamy condemns the patriarchal society for concerning the woman as its serf and a needed dissent:

Where she could see the sunlight
Only from the lattice windows.
Domesticated into drudgery she is just
Another territory, worn out by wars. (35-38)

Kandasamy also denounces the society for not considering a woman as a woman. The male chauvinistic society concerns a woman as as a mother, a spouse, a sister and additionally a goddess, yet never as a woman herself. A woman's righteousness is judged upon her level of adjustment and servitude to her father, siblings, husband, grandchildren, and virtually every other man in her family and society.

Harassment of Dalits

In "Liquid Tragedy: Karamchedu," Kandasamy writes about the renowned Slaughter of Karamchedu which took place in 1985 in Andhra Pradesh where six Madiga (lower-caste) men are killed and three Madiga women are raped by the Kammas men (upper caste). The slaughter followed when a Madiga woman protested against the washing of buffaloes by the Kammas in the pond whose water the Madigas drank. Here, Kandasamy records:

Buffalo Baths, Urine, Bullshit
Drinking Water for the Dalits
The very same Pond.
Practice for eons.
A Bold Dalit lady
dares to question injustice.
Hits forth with her pot. Her indignation
Is avenged. Fury let loose. Violence, Rapes.
Killings... (1-9)

Through this poem Kandasamy talks to the specialist of the favoured, and their endemic obnoxious state of mind towards the marginalized. It seems to be bizarre that unconcerned of passing many years of freedom, the delusion of social impartiality is still unachieved and the denied are forced to lead a hidden life. It is persuasive in a caste-ridden Indian culture Madiga men are killed and the women are raped because they are socially and economically powerless, they are weak.

Treatment of Women by Patriarchal Society

In "Dignity" Kandasamy calls upon the special men to be responsible and valiant towards the oppressed class. She believes in pride and uniformity of all. She aspires that they would not refuse due share of the downtrodden, maintaining their self-respect and determination. But, in a warning note she lets them know not to restrain the underrated with no rhyme and reason and renounce their dignity. This is presented by her in the following lines:

You stick to your faith
the incurable sickness
of your minds,
We don't stop you from continuing
to tend centuries

of cultivate superegos.
We will even let you wallow
in the rare happiness
that hierarchy provides
But don't suppress
our rightful share of dignity. (7-17)

In caste subjugated patriarchal Indian society, untouchable women are doubly exploited being untouchable and women. They pursue through the persecution, abuse, and untouchability from the upper-caste, while they are beaten at home by their husbands. Sometimes their brothers and fathers also oppress them. In this way, they are doubled victims. They are exposed, deprived, assaulted, attacked, ambushed and blazed for no reason aside from the class they are. They are exploited for sexual vindication. It is their fate to bear perils of assault and inhumanity from the hands of the upper-caste. At home they are placed in pitiful situation as well.

Social Condition of the Marginalized Women

Kandasamy is plagued to witness the desperate condition of the women of downtrodden. In her poem, "Narration" she presents the heart rendering grief of the victimised woman who is exploited by her landlords. The very shadow of an untouchable may dirt the upper castes; yet, they are not contaminated while attacking a Dalit young woman. It is expounded by her as follows:

I'll weep to you about
My landlord, and with
My mature gestures.
You will understand:
The torn sari, dishevelled hair
Stifled cries and meek submission.
I was not an untouchable then. (1-7)

In Indian context, physical and mental exploitation of the young women of poor people segment is awfully normal. The most striking view is that the perpetrator needed in these sexual strikes find simple escape because of their high rank connections. In her poem "Shame," Kandasamy depicts how an untouchable young woman becomes the victim of a gang rape. But, the rapists are safeguarded as they have a place with upper stature and the innocent and defenceless young girl endures humiliation and desperate pain and ultimately chooses suicide:

Gang Rape.
Two severe syllables
implied in her presence
perpetuate the assault.
Public's prying eyes
segregate her the victim.
But the criminals have
already maintained.
Their caste is classic shield.
.....
Gory scars on the wretched body

serves as constant reminders
of disgrace, helpless. (1-9,14-16)

The helpless girl sets herself into fire as a solution to this sin:

Bravely, in search of
a definite solution,
and elusive purification,
she takes the test of the fire.
the ancient medicine for shame. (22-26)

Traditional System of Indian Society

Kandasamy's poem, "Becoming a Brahmin," retrieves the age-old conventions of Indian society, where the women do not have their right to select their own companions, and are in a route impelled to marry the individual, chosen by others, which is even criticized by the leaders like Gandhi and others and in patriot accounts which guaranteed and propounded secularism and equal rights to all. But, the desolation in the lives of women is heightened in her poem "Mascara" with the moment subtle elements of the distress of a whore and her inward quandary before setting out on another obvious consensual sex. The ignoble subtle elements of her physical and psychic torment repeat over and over all through the poem with her endeavour to behold back to her implicit and unfulfilled variegated dreams, which radiates through her silent tears. The allegory of "mascara" which manifests on numerous occasions with the unfurling of the poem is in a way her conscious effort not to reveal her long repressed resentment and not to wince before the social structure:

The last thing she does
before she gets ready to die
once more, of violation,
she applies the mascara...
.....
Mascara...
it serves to tell her
that long buried hazy dreams
of a virgin soul
have dark outlines. (1-4,12-16)

The origin of these hardships goes back to the age when people from the upper class used to infuse the 'Devadasi' and other concubines and later deviated from their liabilities. This culture has been prevailing over the years where the illegitimate children and mainly the girls endure their heritage and the stain related to their identity is beyond annihilation and they are obligated to be regarded as social outcastes in this hegemonic social system which evidently emerges out of some approaches of forceful ethical morals. This is gracefully presented in the poem, "Mascara":

Somewhere
long ago
in an
untraceable
mangled

matrilineal
family tree
of temple prostitutes
her solace is sought.
It has happened for centuries...
Empty consolations soothe violated bodies.
Sex clings to her devadasi skin,
assumed superficialities don't wear off,
Deliverance doesn't arrive. (21-34)

The predicament of the prostitutes which is sensitively portrayed with the composition of this poem is evocative of the appropriate representation of the agony of a woman, who is compelled to turn herself into a prostitute. "Mascara" tries exploring the anxiety and despair of transgression of her own self which portrays a monotonous sexual intercourse with a unknown person.

'Body' as a recurring image in the poems of Kandasamy is not only manifested with the categorical analysis of the untold sufferings of the prostitutes in this male chauvinistic social structure, but also manages to connect the idea of love with that of consensual sexual intercourse. Her poem "My Lover Speaks of Rape" perfectly delivers the agony of a woman for her lover's negligence and lack of reciprocation. The precise analysis of the bruises and scratches reveal the tendency of her lover to consider her as an object to appease his sensuality. Thus, the poem expels:

...Tragedy in
Bridal red remains a fresh, flushing bruise across
Brown-yellow skinscapes,
vibrant but made Muted through years of silent, waiting skin.
I am absent.
They talk of everyday assault that turns blue,
violet and black in high-color symphony. (13-19)

The above lines entailed an effort to generalize the agonies in the lives of the women which has been enduring over centuries. The absence of themselves from relationships evidently manifests the unanswered love of the women, who are considered nothing but the objects for their sexual pleasure which has become to be normal thing in their devitalised lives.

In a way Kandasamy's poetry actualises her claim to rejuvenate the third world women and to urge them to express their own dreams, aspirations, self-reliant outlooks and speak for themselves instead of spoken off by their male counterparts. Her focal point on woman's body as the main motif of her poetry and her inclination to resolve the diversified spatial and temporal proportions of suppression and how they become the subject to the various forms of social brutality are an experiment from her part to restore the self-consciousness of the women so that they can oppose the prevailing beliefs of this inegalitarian male-dominated society which tries to persuade them and legalise the prevalent enslavement of women and their repression in smaller grooves.

Kandasamy celebrates her womanhood by singing women's dreams and speaking their bodies. Her poems incite consciousness of women's psyche and her poetry bolstered other writers

to emphasis their poetry in a socio-cultural scenario as it accelerates their transformation from a marginal status to a central one. In her dreams, the modern woman is not the suffering wife, crying widow or sacrificing mother or loving sister. No other feminist poet in India can attain the outright rebellious dimensions like Kandasamy because she became the mouthpiece for revealing the right of every woman to fight and revolt against all those patriarchal forces in society which connive to impede the evolution of their personality.

Conclusion

To conclude, Meena Kandasamy's select poems from the collection *Touch*, presents the unadorned truth of the society where people living in the margins are still victims of senseless and irrational beliefs which bereave them of fundamental rights. It is also the voice of those who are chided to silence for centuries. Her poetry is an attack on the social discriminations enduring in the society such as caste system, cultural hegemony and suppression of women. Her poetry is a literary document of the humiliations, dilemmas, and barbarities experienced by Dalit women.

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Social Structure and Inequality of Dalits in Dalit Literature: An Overview

Dr. S. Gopinath



Jyothee Thass

Courtesy: <http://mulnivasiorganiser.bamcef.org/?p=622>

Meaning of the Term *Dalit*

Dalit signifies "oppressed", 'ground', 'smothered', 'untouchable', 'pulverized', or 'broken to pieces' and 'misused'. The term Dalit became a force to be reckoned with in 1972. It was first utilized by Jyotirao Phule in the nineteenth century. Dalit writing is the reflection of the standing society. Dalit writing has considered women to be a dynamic power. The eventual fate of Dalit writing sets out on the present status of Dalit and their sensibility. The dalit writing was composed in numerous dialects. Yet, we selected to concentrate on English, Hindi, Marathi, and Gujarati. Dalit writing, being the type of artistic articulation today, has obtained a place in Indian English writing. It concentrates on composing that incorporates Dalit characters or depictions of Dalit life and encounters. Dalit writing makes gigantic social pressure. This is the strain amongst haves and the poor. Those who lack wealth request that the Dalit essayist expounds on their legitimate and respectable battle for equity and flexibility. Dalit writing has advocated incensed articulation and irritates in it, for the reason that to leave such a circumstance, Dalit dogs fearlessness. Among numerous Dalits in India, Dr. Ambedkar is the best illustration. Dr.

Ambedkar yielded his life to bring a progressive change the life of the weaker segment of the general public.

Key Words: Dalits, Dalit Literature, Ambedkar, Equality, Socialism

Dalit Writing

In India, Dalits – authoritatively known as Scheduled Castes – constitute one 6th of the populace. They are reliably victimized in spite of a protected prohibition on 'untouchability', and the demonstration of particular enactments. Dalit writing, a social-abstract marvel has been far different from that of the standard writing in Maharashtra. The term 'Dalit writing' was first utilized as a part of 1958, at the primary Dalit gathering held in Mumbai. It is the writing of those persecuted by crafty framework, voiceless, dumbfounded and abused gatherings for quite a long time together. It is widely on the expansion since the 1960s. The dalit writing manages Dalit's in Indian culture. Dalit writing was composed of more than seventeen dialects; however, we have selected to concentrate more on English, Hindi, Marathi, and Gujarati. Enlivened with the alluring initiative of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar a great deal of youthful Dalit authors like Anna Bhahu Sathe, Baburao Bagul, N. R. Shinde, Arjun Dangle, Urmila Pawar, Pandit Iyothee Thass, Rettamalai Srinivasan, L.Elayaperumal, Thol. Thirumavalavan, P. Sivakami, S. P. Thamizhamuthan, Edayavendan, Unjai Rajan Abhirami, M.C.Rajah, Imayam, K.A.Gunasekaran, K.Krishnaswamy, Ra. Athiyaman, Bama, Meena Kanthasamy, devoted them to the reason for delineating Dalit life nearly, adequately in order to the social sensibility and in this manner discovering liberation of Dalits. Tamil Dalit essayists have utilized different sorts of self-verbalization. In each class that they compose, they likewise make huge reformulation and settle on their decisions as political, interventionist decisions. Their decisions have started to leave a positive effect on standard writing.

Minimal Social and Custom Class

"Dalit" has a place with the most minimal social and custom class in India. The word originates from the Sanskrit, and signifies "oppressed", 'ground', 'smothered', 'untouchable', 'pounded', or 'broken to pieces' and 'abused'. The term Dalit became a force to be reckoned with in 1972. It was first utilized by Jyotirao Phule in the nineteenth century, with regards to the mistreatment looked by the past "untouchable" stations of the twice-conceived Hindus. The beginnings of Dalit writing are frequently in the medieval Bhakti writing for two convincing reciprocal reasons. One, the vast majority of the Bhakti holy person writers were low-position nearby ministers; two, they propelled a rankling assault on accepted Hindu practices. Bhakti writers from Namdev to Kabir were low-standing writers who composed with extraordinary abhorrence against the Brahmanical conventionality. Going entirely by the Dalit writing, Bhakti artists were to be sure Dalit artists for not just they were Dalit themselves, they composed against the abundances of upper station Hindus. Among the Bhakti writers who roused Dalit were Ravidas, Namdev, Tukaram, Eknath, Chokhamela, Kabir, and others. Their compositions all in all might be portrayed as protodalit.

An Imperative

Dalit writing shapes an imperative and unmistakable piece of Indian writing. One of the main Dalit essayists was Madara Chennaiah, and eleventh-century shoemaker holy person who

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

Dr. S. Gopinath

Social Structure and Inequality of Dalits in Dalit Literature: An Overview

lived in the rule of Western Chalukyas and who are additionally viewed by a few researchers as the "father of Vachana verse". Another early Dalit writer is Dohara Kakkaiah, a Dalit by birth, six of whose confession booth lyrics survive. Dalit writing, that incorporates every one of the classes like short stories, books, verse, basic expositions, plays and personal histories, gives basic bits of knowledge into the subject of the Dalit character. The lessons of Ambedkar honed their sensitivities and made them outward-looking, eloquent and decisive in their appearance. The Dalit compositions are utilized to instruct the Dalit. The exposition accounts, particularly interceded between Dalit authors and the Dalit to frame the methods of social dissent. The Dalit accounts are utilized to bring issues to light that position is the reason for social separation.

Sharankumar Limbale



Sharankumar Limbale

Courtesy: <https://plus.google.com/117618068432043628347>

Sharankumar Limbale (b. 1956), an outstanding Dalit extremist, essayist, manager, pundit and writer of 40 books are one among the most famous Dalit voices in India. Large portions of his works are in Marathi and converted into English and different dialects. As indicated by Sharankumar Limbale, he has expressed that "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's contemplations and developments enlivened me to compose. The torments and throbs of Indian Dalits are subjects of my writing. I remain for human respect. The universe of the abused is a war zone for me." And likewise, he has expressed that "Dalit writing is accurate that writing which aesthetically depicts the distresses, tribulations, servitude, corruption, criticism, and destitution continued by Dalits. This writing is, however, a grandiose picture of despondency."

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Dalit woman's rights are a strand of women's liberation that has risen in Indian the most recent two decades. It looks for Dalit women's, self-character, reluctance, and self-rule. Dalit women's activists contend that the curious trustworthiness of the mistreatment, minimization, and enslavement of Dalit women requires a different structure of distinction to address particular worries of the Dalit women. It is against shameful acts in the arrangement of position pecking orders and male-centric courses of action which are in charge of creating divisions in the general public described by social characters, for example, booked ranks and ethnic gatherings. Dr. Ambedkar, an incredible visionary present-day observation pioneer, the planner of the Constitution of India and an enthusiastic faultfinder of the standing framework, indicated the Dalit way of life as it rose up out of a legally binding association with Hindu history, and contended that the Dalit was a discredited subject of authentic viciousness. He enlivened and started the innovative personalities of India to authorize the socio-social blast for the aggregate liberation of Dalits. Dalitism is the ideological territory where different sociocultural sensitivities and political-monetary gatherings exist together. Resistance to Hindu conventions when all is said in done scholarly and onerous station chain of command, specifically, is the focal worry of the development.

Pandit Iyothee Thass was an incredible Tamil researcher, who composed discourses on established Tamil abstract works from a Buddhist perspective. "His compositions frame all components of innovation," brings up Mr. Ravikumar, Pandit Iyothee Thass and Rettaimalai Srinivasan had run their own magazines. The membership of "Paraiyan" (1893-1900), a magazine keep running by Srinivasan, delighted in dissemination higher than standard magazines and daily papers. The same was the situation with Tamizhan (1907-1914) altered by Iyothee Thass. On the off chance that Srinivasan accepted emphatically the liberation of the discouraged classes through political support, the 1940s saw the development of Swami Sahajananda, a staunch Saivite, who looked to do the point inside the overlay of Hindu religion. Thol. Thirumavalavan, an author, a Dalit dissident, a pioneer of Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi. It is likewise a standout amongst the best Dalit's political gatherings in Tamil Nadu. Dalit political gathering in the province of Tamilnadu in India says that position abuse must be finished by building protection from beneath, through speaking to Tamil notions, as occurred in the beginning of the Dravidian development under Periyar E.V.Ramasamy. Dalits can't and ought not to expect much assistance from the Dravidian parties. The arrangement, as per Thirumavalavan, lies in Tamil Nationalism. His stage focuses on completion the rank-based abuse of the Dalits, which he contends, can best be accomplished through resuscitating and reorienting Tamil patriotism. Other than this Thirumavalavan is additionally a staunch pundit of Hindu patriotism and, specifically, Hindutva. Hindutva, to Thirumavalavan, is the quintessence of the severe Indian state. Evacuate Hindutva is a gathering of 17 of his talks, conveyed between April 1998 and November 2004; Talisman includes 34 articles composed by Thirumavalavan for the Tamil version of India Today, a week after week newsmagazine, between August 2001 and February 2003. In making an interpretation of his words into English, Meena Kandasamy has made them accessible out of the blue not simply to non-Tamil speakers from the West, however more unquestionably to Dalit from somewhere else in India.

Even Now Bound to Ghettos

As indicated by D. Ravikumar, lobbyist theoretician of the Dalit Movement, writer, reporter, interpreter, and previous official, is editorial manager of Manarkeni, an abstract every other month in Tamil, and fellow benefactor of Navayana Publishing says that "Even now Dalit are bound to ghettos in towns and much of the time there are even separate cemeteries for them. They are compelled to complete a few disparaging things. Reservation is right around a joke in Tamil Nadu." P. Sivakami, one of the most punctual Tamil Dalit scholars draw, regard for the double mistreatment of Dalit women because of sexual orientation and station on account of upper standing men and Dalit men. She was at first an IAS officer, however, surrendered her business to wind up noticeably a full-time essayist in 2008. One of her second novel, 'Anandayi' (1992), concentrates on the savage abuse of a women's body and calls attention to how the family as an establishment is implanted in man centric, harsh framework, that are unmitigated crooked to women. Dalit women's sexuality (regardless of whether as a little girl, spouse or dearest) is seriously contained and subdued.

Freedom Writing

As indicated by Bama Faustina, a creative writer, Dalit women's activist, feminist author who draws every one of her encounters and portrayals from the Dalit development in Tamilnadu says that Dalit Literature is "Freedom writing like Black Literature, Feminist Literature and Communist-Socialist Literature". Bama's commitment to Dalit writing is huge in the utilization of Dalit vocabulary. Bama regularly states, "... I frequently contemplate internally that I'm really fortunate to be conceived in the *Paraiya* group." She says, "... I don't prefer to shroud my personality and imagine I have a place with an alternate rank." Bama's Sangati analyzes "the contrast amongst women and their diverse manners by which they are liable to allocation and their adapting techniques". Bama's Karukku contends that training alone ensures social respectability for Dalit. In a meeting, Bama had stated, "You can't envision Dalit, even as a gathering, to battle against the police drive. They resemble upper standing individuals to Dalit. They do a wide range of savagery and barbarities. We don't confide in police"

Meena Kandasamy, a rising artist, fiction author, interpreter and Dalit lobbyist are known as the furious young woman; her outrage is clear in her sonnet, similar to an "unconstrained flood of intense emotions" that ebbs out of the treachery that she witnesses all around her for the sake of rank. One of her sonnets named, Touch is a sharp and clear reflection of society. Touch brings out obviously that Meena Kandasamy is an artist, who has special insight into words that jump on the peruser and influences them with crude feelings. The symbolism in her verse is striking. Her verse is her weapon on the ills of society. S. P. Thamizhamuthan (b. 1996-), a youthful author was conceived in Mazhavarayanallur Village, Cuddalore District, Tamilnadu. He was a Writer, Orator, Politician, Ambedkarite and so on. He was recognizable among all Dalit Activists and Folklore Groups. He learned at Government High School, Mazhavarayanallur. He studied his College studies at T B M L College, Porayar, Tamilnadu. He was a Full Member and a Full-Time worker of Dravidar Kazhakam up to 2017. Since 2017 he joined Viduthalai Chiruthaikal Katchi (RSF) and serving for Dalit rights and strengthening. Taken part effectively in different challenges to benefit human rights. Experienced ruthless social weight and rank segregations. He expounds on the agonies of Dalits and helpless gatherings.

A Message About Their Group, Not Distinction

Dalit writing gives a message about their group, not distinction, about revolt, not lack of involvement, about advance not in reverse. This message is to the whole world about their status in the public eye by depicting the exclamation, vulnerable, and engaged with melancholy, smothered and oppressed and a subaltern state. Dalit writing is set out on the present status of Dalit and their sensibility. The characteristics of Dalit's keep on being viewed as a risk to the happy with seating of energy, status, and respect that is attributed the upper ranks. The Dalit collection of memoirs and artistic compositions so far as that is concerned produce reactions. They defy the Dalit with the debasing life they lead and influence them to understand that they should join to battle and they remind Dalit about the mistreatment and abuse allotted to the Dalit's. This present article concentrates on these different perspectives of the Dalit compositions, the character of Dalit's, developments utilizing the distributed works of different Dalit and non-Dalit journalists.

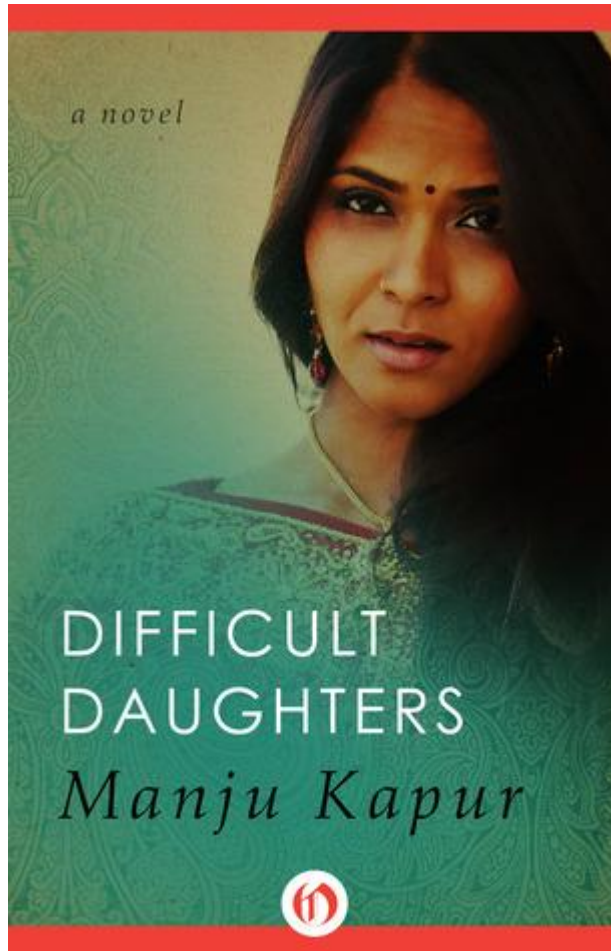
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**Exploring Self-realization of Modern Women in Manju Kapur's
*Difficult Daughters***

Imtiyaz Ahmad Mir and Dr. V. K. Saravanan



Abstract

The post-modern Indian women writers portray life in its depth and complexity. They poignantly convey the predicament of people who are engaged in the struggle not only with their circumstances, with their limitations, and failure, but also with their own self. Such postmodern novelists show a deep insight into human nature. This paper tries to explore how Manju Kapur projects the view that when an Indian woman tries to transcend the limitations of her old custom she acquires self-fulfillment and inner freedom. In their social milieu women appear to be

educated, modern and intelligent, sophisticated, bold, and assertive. It is through their individual struggle with family and society that they plunge into dedicated efforts to carve an identity for themselves as stoic woman with faultless backgrounds. They represent the needs of adaption in the traditional system. The questions with which Kapur is chiefly concerned are of a fundamental nature: Women's destiny, the problem of women's suffering, the significant suffering in realizing selfhood or identity and the related question of her domesticity and her isolation within the family.

Keywords: Manju Kapur, *Difficult Daughters*, Society, Traditional, Suffering, Identity, Struggle, Limitations.

Difficult Daughters Setting

The novel *Difficult Daughters* is set during India's independence struggle and is partially based on the life of Kapur's own mother, Virmati. Set around the time of partition, it is the story of the woman torn between family duty, the desire for education, and illicit love. Virmati, a young, woman born in Amritsar in an austere and traditional household, falls in love with a neighbour, a Professor, who was already married. She enters into a scandalous relationship with the Professor.

Manju Kapur portrays women characters' quest for equality and identity as revealed in *Difficult Daughters*. The novel deals with the reaction of the girl child against the patriarchal upbringing and expectations. Kapur explores the discriminatory mode of upbringing of the girl child in her novel *Difficult Daughters*. It is during the process of the socialization that the female child is made aware of her role as a wife and mother in future, subsequently making her realize her secondary position to her male counterpart. The emphasis is laid on the nature of mother-daughter relationship painted by Kapur in her novel. The mother, who emerges as a strong agent of patriarchy, is portrayed as a suffocating and authoritarian figure. Like Simone de Beauvoir, a radical feminist, Kapur asserts that the mother becomes the upholder of the patriarchal values and ideals and tries her best to inculcate them in her daughter so that she can adapt herself very well in the domineering set-up, subsequently making the girl child aware of her "otherness".

Meeting the Demands of the Patriarchal Society

In an attempt to make the daughter enable to meet the demands of the patriarchal society, the mother curbs her rights, and inflicts physical and psychological tortures on her, ultimately reducing her into a submissive and sacrificial being. She is made to learn to live for others and her emotions are tightly reined in, subsequently depriving her to bloom upto the mark. As the woman in the patriarchal society is expected to be a perfect homemaker, the training for housekeeping is prioritized to education, consequently trampling on her aspirations for establishing self-identity, and autonomy. Virmati's mother in *Difficult Daughters* do not value her daughters' academic merits but try her best to inculcate in her the household skills, consequently making her realise of her secondary position in the society. Like Dorothy Dinnerstein and Nancy Chodorow, the psychoanalytic feminists, Kapur highlights how the value of connectedness is inculcated into the girl child by putting on her the burden of mothering the younger siblings. Through the reproduction of mothering she is made to think of others, and consequently she always sees herself in relation with others that leads to the annihilation of her individuality. Simultaneously the novelist vehemently criticizes the big family system which becomes a curse for the eldest daughter who

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Imtiyaz Ahmad Mir and Dr. V. K. Saravanan

Exploring Self-realization of Modern Women in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

bears the burden of the household to some extent as highlighted in the case of Virmati in *Difficult Daughters*.

Religious Dogma and Patriarchal Society

Along with the destructive social norms, the author vehemently criticizes the religious dogmas which reduces woman to the secondary position. Kapur's protagonist, Virmati in *Difficult Daughters*, is brought up strictly according to the patriarchal norms and religious dogmas prevailing in the patriarchal society.

Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* focuses on the Arya Samaj Family of Lala Diwan Chand. She also employs a narrative technique that deliberately traces out a generational progression with respect to the genealogical table of the family, especially referring to the women folk of the second and the third generations. The central character, Virmati belongs to the second generation. The dominant narrative voice in the novel is that of Ida. She delivers the same solely basing upon her own past experiences, reminiscences, and the plenty of information that she gathers from Kailash Nath and Gopi Nath, her maternal uncles and her Parvati Masi and all the close associates, friends and colleagues of her parents, well after the death of the couple. Besides, a thorough and comprehensive study of the novel obviously exhibits the treatment of three separate composite sets of Indian women. All the three sets categorically centre around the very idea and spirit of marriage in the Indian context.

Marriage in the Indian Context

The first one consists of Lajwanti, Kasturi, Harish's mother, Kishori Devi and Harish's first wife, Ganga. Their marriages decidedly date back to the pre-Independence era. They seem to be behaving uniformly. To them, it is the moral aspect that counts. Naturally they glorify the institution marriage as the "be-all and end-all" for themselves. Ganga is seen as another victim of the traditional society. During her childhood, she was married to Harisol when he was three years old. She was never sent to school by her mother but she had trained her in good housekeeping. When Ganga was twelve years old, she entered her in-laws' house and tried to prove herself as a good housewife but she could never become an intellectual companion to her husband. As he felt lonely and desolate among his family members, he drew towards Virmati through her desire to learn and fell in love with her.

Ganga is also at fault for her plight because in spite of Professor's attempts to teach her, she never tried to improve herself, to become a literate woman and share intellectual companionship with her husband for which he aspired. Due to Ganga's illiteracy, he brought home her rival Virmati. Distress enveloped her but she continued with domestic routine and her role as a wife, a mother and a daughter-in-law. Her ill-feelings for Virmati are quite natural because no wife would like interference in her married life. She wished for Virmati's death when she heard that she had gone to drown herself. After Virmati's pregnancy she wished for the birth of a baby girl. At the resolution concerning Virmati's further learning Ganga resented her studying the most. She thought that if that much attention had been given to her, she would not be in the position she was that time. She smiled at the short while Virmati has lasted in the house and thought "She herself would never clear the field for anyone" (*Difficult Daughters*, 187).

Second and Third Generations

The remaining two sets, comprising the second and the third generations of the womenfolk of the family, vividly visualize the social scenario round about the Independence of India and onwards. Virmati her cousin Shakuntala and her hostel room-mate, SwarnaLata Constitutes the second set. Virmati, like so many other sub-continental women, is asked to accept a typical arranged marriage. She rebels against that destiny, to the lasting shame of her family, above all of her mother. Insisting on her right to be educated, she manages to leave home to study in Lahore. Nonetheless, she falls in love with an Amritsar Professor, Harish Chandra, a married man who first appears in her life as her parents' tenant. After a number of vicissitudes, including a period as a school principal in a small Himalayan state, she finally marries the man she loves and returns to Amritsar to live with him. However, he refuses to leave his first wife, and the consequence for Virmati are harsh indeed; she ends up being marginalized by her own family and despised by her husband.

Virmati's Role

Virmati, being the eldest in the family of eleven children is made to play a second mother to her siblings. She is reminded of the incomplete sewing and knitting or the food, milk, clothes and studies of her brothers and sisters by her mother. Education was important as educated boys asked for educated girls; it therefore was important only from the matrimonial point of view. Naturally in this set-up and with this social requirement, the role of education neither aimed at the growth of individually nor did it promise independence to women. Virmati's mother had been dutifully spinning cotton in order to make a quilt for her to be given as dowry for her impending marriage. She was visibly exasperated at Virmati's refusal to consider the marriage. When Virmati mentioned Lahore for her further studies, Kasturi became violent with rage and frustration. She grabbed her daughter by her hair and banged her head against the wall, expressly to knock some sense into her. She declared that she would readily consume poison if that would make her daughter marry the man her parents had chosen for her. Kasturi's feelings are revealed which show the anguish of an average mother:

What had come over the girl? She had always been so good and sensible. How could she not see that her happiness lay in marrying a decent boy, who had waited patiently all these years, to whom, the family had given their word? ... In her time, going to school had been a privilege, not to be abused by going against one's parents. How had girls changed so much in just a generation? (60)

This is a question that haunts every generation of mothers when they see their daughters rebelling against the imposition of values of their earlier generation upon them.

Education vs. Marriage

The "education verses marriage" argument is reiterated many times in the novel. Virmati's engagement and subsequent postponement of marriage gives her the opportunity to study further and thus begins the illicit relationship between her and the married Professor. Through most of her life, Virmati is torn between family loyalty, her love for the Professor, which is a social aberration and her desire to be educated and independent. Soon after marriage, Virmati finds that everybody

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Imtiyaz Ahmad Mir and Dr. V. K. Saravanan

Exploring Self-realization of Modern Women in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

becomes hostile to her in the new environment. It is amazing to see that Virmati who was first attracted to the Professor for his love of freedom and individuality, willingly loses her identity into that of the Professor. Not because she does not understand the wrongs done by the Professor, but she is not prepared to face the situation. She, who had evinced much spirit in defying her parents and the parochial society, gets mired in the principles of patriarchy that suit the Professor. The harbinger of emancipation reduces Virmati to the position of a concubine.

Quest for identify or Struggle for Existence?

After her marriage, Virmati's quest for identity is replaced by the struggle for existence. The woman who was supposed to be an intellectual, keeps craving for an opportunity to wash her husband's clothes. Her notions of self-assertiveness become confined to that of domesticity. Washing Harish's clothes becomes an important matter whereby Virmati has to assert her right as a wife. Love, naturally acquires another synonym for her that of servitude. She has accepted everything as her lot and completely surrenders to it. Indian women take care of everybody in the family except themselves. Bhagbhat Nayak remarks, "The novel evokes some concern over the problems of women in a male-dominated society where laws for women are made by men in its social matrix and a husband stands as a 'sheltering tree' under which a woman proves her strength through her suffering" (Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*, A feminist Reading, 19)

Shakuntaia and Swarnalata belonged to the type of advanced women in society; Shakuntaia after doing her M.Sc, in Chemistry had experienced the joys of independent life. Her decision of not getting married during those days' shows her strong character. When Kasturi said to Shakuntala "What the need to do a job? A woman's shaan is in her home" (*Difficult Daughters*, 16). She became the mouthpiece of traditional society of contemporary India. At this Shakuntala responded by criticizing the social custom of marrying the daughters: "These people don't really understand Viru, how much satisfaction there can be in leading your own life, in being independent. Here we are, fighting for the freedom of the nation, but women are still supposed to marry, and nothing else" (17).

Shakuntala sowed the seeds for further studies in Virmati and invited her to Lahore saying "... times are chinging, and women are moving out of the house, so why not you?" (18). It was due to her inspiration only that Virmati could aspire to soar very high in the sky defying her traditional family and got herself highly educated, with the potential of being economically independent through her life — a rare accomplishment for the women of the times. Shakuntala was well over the marriageable age, but had chosen not to marry. This was causing a headache for her mother Lajwanti, because she wanted her to be married and settled though she tried to hide the fact. Shakuntala was a fearless woman who opened the doors of Virmati's mind to worlds other than mere marriage.

Swarnalata

Swarnalata was Virmati's room-mate in Lahore who went to do her M.A, there postponing her marriage as she had to continue her activities in Lahore. She wanted to do something besides getting married. She told her parents if they did not co-operate her she would involve in Satyagraha and go to prison. Later she became a teacher in her old college and got married. Her husband accepted all her conditions allowing "... to continue her other activities, remain treasurer of the

Women's Conference, go on working for the Party. Everything to do with the house they would share as much as possible" (188). Due to the help of her parents and husband she could carve a path for herself in life.

Chhotti and Ida

The third set includes Chhotti and Ida. Due to her parents' unseemly indifference, Chhotti never marries. The self-willed Ida marries a fellow of academic pursuit to settle certain contradictions of her personal life. But she hardly ever seems to be happy with him. It resulted in divorce in the least possible time. She confesses: "Of course I made a disastrous marriage. I was nothing, husbandless, childless. I felt myself hovering like a pencil notation on the margins of society" (279).

Marriage as a Central Issue

Marriage is a very central issue in every Indian, family. In Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*, Virmati is brought up to be a wife and a mother, on the consciously inculcated idea of Indian feminine role. Her resolution not to marry the man of her parents' choice but to marry the Professor or no else is taken because of her upbringing in an austere family, where high ideals like morality, virginity and chastity are considered necessary virtues of an unmarried girl. The formal marriage, a social and public statement, is must for her. It is this which will establish her identity even if it is as the Professor's second wife. Marriage thus for her means deliverance from the fear of being socially condemned, a possibility which will perhaps bring her back into the fold and relieve her from the sense of insecurity and uncertainty. The earlier generation of her mother saw no reason to rebel. There was complete acceptance in life. Kasturi is an example of the typical feminine attitude - to procreate in order to bring about life and pleasure. To run her home, first a joint family and later her own, is happiness for her. Like Kasturi, for Ganga, marriage is a religious and a social institution, where love is not the basis of marriage. She too has a superb domestic sensibility.

Virmati's daughter Ida is strong and clearheaded. She breaks up her marriage as she is denied maternity by her husband. The forced abortion is also the termination of her marriage. Ida by severing the marriage bond frees herself from male domination and power and also from conventional social structures which bind women. She has that strength which Virmati lacks. Swarnalata is also a clearheaded strong woman. She too experiences tension with her parents over the issue of marriage but unlike Virmati she channelizes her energy into a new direction. Her marriage rests on the condition that it would not hamper her work.

Women in the Novel

Whatever may be their social status and howsoever promising they look to be, most of these women are quite committed to exact the underlying spirit of the very first line of the novel, "The one thing I wanted was not to be like my mother"(1). Here lie the true difficulties of these daughters. So they are not at all ready "to follow blindly beliefs that may not be valid" (112). However; their entire driving passions project each of them all the more far removed from the realities and ideals of modern, India. No doubt, these ladies are educated but their education certainly aided them in making a detour from the established path of Indian social custom and tradition. Yet, except a few like Shakuntala, Swarnalata and Ida, other women in the novel follow

the established norms of the Indian tradition and finds fulfillment and contentment in their way of life.

Thus, Manju Kapur realistically depicts women of three generations. In *Difficult Daughters*, Kapur explores the feminine psyche through marriage which is a core issue in Indian society. The wedlock proves to be a lock to the freedom of most of the women in Indian society which the women accept wholeheartedly as a result of their brought-up in a patriarchal society. Moreover, the Indian women lead rather a committed life thinking that marriage is the be-all and the end-all of their life.

On the whole, we can say that in order to determine a new meaning in life, Virmati is led to either a false existence or else to death and destruction. Both way, it is painful and she is penalised. This sense of the essential absurdity of life, of willful waste of human potential, comes through our reading of the novel. We realize that equality and liberation are operative words which cannot be reconciled with the existing reality even if wealth, beauty, education and opportunity are used as means of tipping the balance in favour of the woman. Beauteous, intelligent, economically independent women, however rare and diligent they be, find it equally difficult to reach their full potential as human beings as their less fortunate sisters. The suppressed and subjugated world of Indian women comes to full light in the character of her protagonist, Virmati. She dexterously delineates all kinds of visible and invisible pressure that kept Indian women suffocated for long.

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Exploring Self-realization of Modern Women in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

**Hegemonic Advertising and Silenced Street Vendors:
Branding and Marginalizing**

Ms. Indumathi Deivasigamani



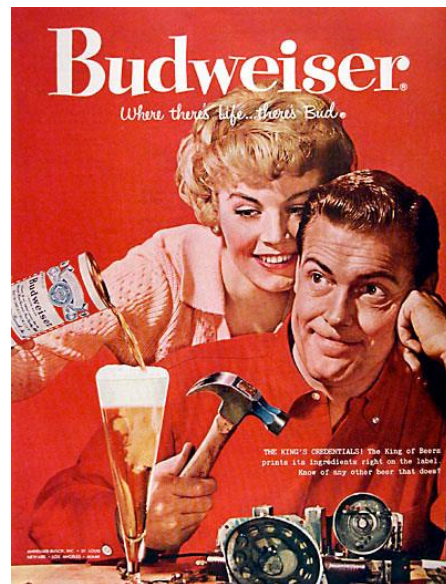
Courtesy: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Street_vendor_selling_fruits_in_market.jpg

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to explore the state of the native vendors and sellers who are marginalized in the power structure. The hegemonic advertisements pushed the native sellers and vendors to the margin and made a permanent place to the superficially branded products in the centre. The people of today will never question the MRP of a product and will go and buy things in the supermarket or in any other stores with the additional service charges and

taxes. But they will question the rate of the small vendors and petty shops until they get the lower price. The small vendor has to sell the product to a lower price without putting a profit on it. These advertisements here play an important role as it brand the product which will raise the praise alone but of same quality. The advertisement plays with subconscious of the people with these two words - Brand and Quality. The Maximum Retail Price which has to be negotiated here becomes the standard price with the addition of the store's service and maintenance charges. Nobody never ever think of reducing the price as it is made to believe as a quality product. The people who cannot advertise their products are the products of low quality in today's world. Every product needs the advertising, or it will be in some corner without anyone care to look at it, even though the product is of the same use and same quality. As the advertisements became inevitable today, the advertisements create the power structure (hegemony) where the 'others', native vendors, are marginalized and silenced with the simulated branding and western influence. Thus, the advertisements persuade and manipulate the minds of people.

Keywords: Advertisements, Hegemony, Silenced, Native Vendors, Others.



Hegemonic Advertising

Courtesy: <http://socofsport.blogspot.sg/2013/>

Introduction

This paper is an attempt to explore the hegemony that created by the advertisements for the products. The power structure created with the help of advertisements marginalizes the native vendors and sellers. The advertisement stimulates the idea of 'brand' and 'quality' to the products of same quality of the native sellers. The M.R.P. of a product which has to be negotiated instead creates a standard price for all the advertised products. But all the native products, which are not advertised and properly branded, can never have standard price. The place of the native products, without proper branding, is the margin because the branded

products will get the centre. Thus, the native sellers are silenced and made into ‘Others’ in the power structure.

Hegemonic Advertisements and M.R.P

The advertisements of the modern world are used to persuade and manipulate the consumers into buying their products. The advertisements use the simulation of ideas to persuade the consumers like how they simulate the ideas of brand and quality to the products. They create the advertisements in a way that the advertised product will get branding of high quality and will be compared to the native products. Thus, the native products get marginalized and silenced with their justification of price and quality of the advertised products or foreign products. It is also believed that the M.R.P. of a product is standard and nobody ever attempts to negotiate the price. This acronym lost its real meaning which is ‘maximum’ retail price. The native sellers or any street vendors who doesn’t have the M.R.P. to their products cannot set maximum price to their products. They will put the minimum price which will be negotiated until the consumer satisfied of the price. The native seller or the vendor never can voice his or her problems. The consumer will never question an advertised product about its price as it is advertised to be high quality with the comparison of the native products, which doesn’t have a branding of its own. The consumer is ready to pay the M.R.P. of the advertised product without any reduction and even ready to pay the service charges that the convenience store will add to the product. But he or she will never be ready to pay what the native seller or vendor sets on his product as it doesn’t bear the M.R.P and the branding on its package. All these simulations are done in the branding with the help of the advertisements. As Vacne Packard calls, the advertisements are ‘Hidden Persuaders’ which plays on the consumers’ subconscious to persuade and manipulate. Thus, the hegemony is created in the minds of the consumers through routine telecasting of the advertisements.



Courtesy: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-28523377>

Comparison of the Native Products in the Advertisements

The advertisements create power structure where the advertised or branded product will stand in the centre and the Native (non-advertised and non-branded) product will be margined in the corner. This unfair power structure was created by the careful handling of the advertisements. The advertisement plays with the words of quality and brand by comparing the advertised product with the native products. If anyone watch the advertisements it is clear that the native product will be compared as of inferior quality to the advertised product. The characters used in the advertisements will show the native product and the branded product. The characters will compare the two products and conclude that the non-branded native product is not up to the quality of the advertised product. It is always clear that the native product is what thrown out in the end. This simulation of the products' quality with the branding made the native products an inferior quality even when they are not inferior. Thus, the hegemonic advertisement plays an important role in marginalizing the native products.

Silenced and Marginalized Native Sellers and Vendors

The advertisements marginalized the native sellers and vendors. The native sellers and vendors who cannot afford to brand their products with the advertising are silenced and marginalized in the modern world where 'circulation' and 'advertising' matters a lot. If one product gets the proper advertised branding on it, then it will reach the consumers easily. But if the circulation did not happen then the product will not gain the popularity. The second strategy that followed in the advertising is that setting the product to 'statuses'. The product will decide the consumers status just with the mere change and cost of the carton used for the packing of products. So the advertised product will be the choice of the consumers to attain the status that simulated by this power structure. Even though native products are the same quality of any other branded products, the given 'image' of branded products, with the help of advertisement, creates this discrimination. The result of this discrimination is the voiceless native sellers who are unfairly priced to their hard-earned products.



Conclusion

This paper attempted to explore the hegemonic advertisements and their act of marginalizing the native products. It also explored how the advertised and branded products are shown to be superior to the native products (non-advertised and non-branded). It also dealt with the marginalizing of the native sellers and vendors' products with the use of M.R.P. The advertisements not only persuade and manipulate the consumers, but it also creates the power structure in the minds of the consumers. Hence the paper dealt with the marginalization of the voiceless natives created in the society with the help of advertisements.

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Negotiating Identities: A Representation of Contemporary India in the Novels of Sarnath Banerjee

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Sarnath Banerjee

Courtesy: <http://project88.in/press/tag/sarnath-banerjee/page/5/#sthash.IU2O5IxL.dpbs>

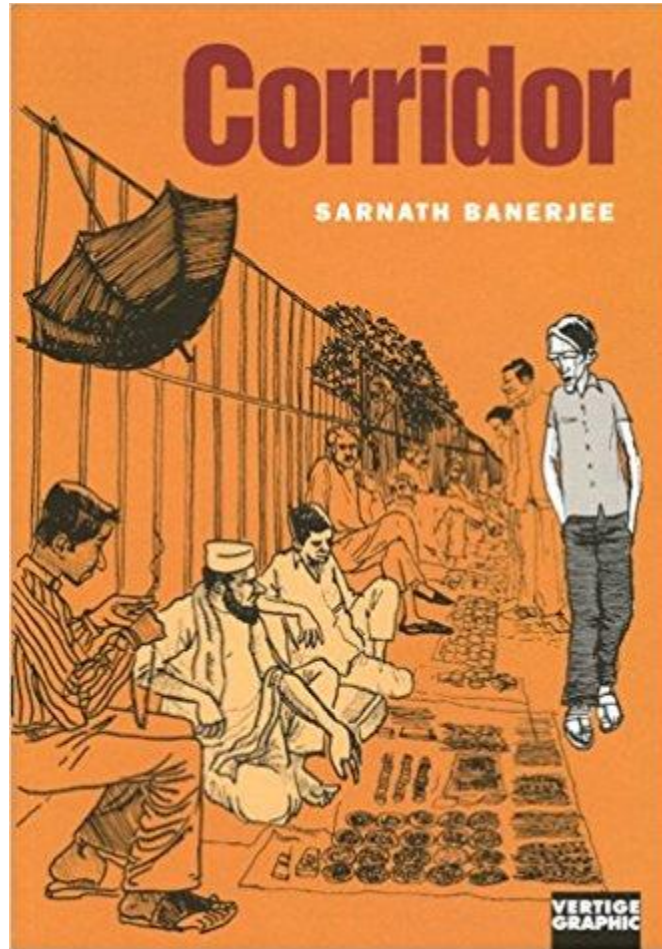
Abstract

This paper focus on fragmented narration in Sarnath Banerjee's prominent work **Corridor**, a graphic novel. The novel sketches fragmentation with characterization. Sarnath's novel focused mainly on history, regional, alienation, search of individualism – identity, quest of knowledge. The paper pictures vivid images through graphics and reflects identity negotiation in Sarnath Banerjee's *Corridor*.

Keywords: Sarnath Banerjee, identity, search for knowledge, individual's multifaceted identity, graphic Novel, fragmentation, narration.

According to Bell Hooks in *Killing range: Ending Racism* “Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world” (Hooks). Moreover, negotiating identity refers to the understanding of an individuals or groups that seek to challenge, resist, or transform accepted identity categories to sanction for more preponderant identity options. Besides this approach is further endorsed in fixating on daily issues however, they make a reading of the social issues of home, belonging, sounds, tones, gestures, nonverbal hints, pauses, silences as well as negotiating identity in the multicultural contemporary society.

Sarnath Banerjee



Sarnath Banerjee is one of the most highly acclaimed Indian writers of contemporary Indian literature, especially in the world of graphic novels. His works contain the tenets of postmodernism such as cultural degeneration, globalization, fragmentation, metanarrative, caricature and irony etc. Banerjee captures and remoulds these feelings in his graphic storytelling, either directly with words and pictures, or by activating references, echoes, symbols. His graphic stories as it vividly represents and marks the voice of the sundry characters, and can include contrivances as diverse as spelling, typography, visual alliteration, and visual puns.

Graphic Novels

The readership on graphic novels has emerged as a growing segment. The story is told utilizing a coalescence of words and pictures in a sequence across the page customarily includes text, images, word balloons, sound effects, and panels. They are like prose, printed format, but they are withal like film, that they tell a story through dialogue, and through visual images that give the impression of kineticism. Graphic novels with its amalgamation of pictures and verbal representations make the reader to fill the gaps and solve the puzzles left by the author. It has offered to be an efficacious conveyance for historical incitements, both fictional and non-fictional. *Maus* is just one example of a historical graphic novel. In this perspective, *Still I Elevate* by Roland Owen Laird, *Taneshia Nash Laird and Elihu Bey*, depicts the history of African Americans in the Coalesced States, beginning in 1619. The book includes extensive historical information and chronicles the accomplishments and struggles of African Americans. Novelist Charles Johnson contributed the *exordium*, which includes information about African Americans' little kenneled contributions to the field of cartoons and comics.

The modern graphic novel evolved throughout the twentieth century and commenced to be apperceived as a cogent genre (disputably) by the 1960s or 70s. The graphic novel is an art form that determinately has the adequate implements to transcend indicted text and to engender the felicitous medium. Graphic novels can be fiction, non-fiction, history, fantasy, or anything in-between. Orijit Sen's *River of Stories* (1994) is recognised as India's first graphic novel. Sen's work marked out a different space for itself from comic books. Several others set out, *Delhi Calm* (2010) by Vishwajyoti Ghosh, a graphic representation of the Emergency days (between June 26, 1975, and March 21, 1977), and *Bhimayana* (2011), depicted by award-winning Pradhan-Gond artists, in vivid colours the story of Dr B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of India's Constitution.

Vishwajyoti Ghosh pointed out that while graphic novels had evolved from comics and the form was identically tantamount, "the content in terms of the narrative in most cases and the page layout in some pushes the form of a comic to the next level where it can additionally handle solemn content like literature and non-fiction" However, Orijit Sen, India's pioneering graphic novelist, told Frontline that, "Graphic novels do represent a development or even break from the past in that they are not engendered concretely for children and often deal with gregarious, political, sexual and other kinds of conceptions". According to Keir Graff, a well-known American novelist, "A graphic novel, like a conventional novel, is a stand-alone story that is published as a book."

Illustrations

Both comic books and graphic novels utilize a coalescence of illustrations and words to tell a story. If we take into account, "Comics are sometimes viewed as a trashy genre filled with unacceptable language and imagery but Going Graphic gives answers to concerns about the applicability and felicitousness of comics." (Frontline) Comic art in India got an identity which the characters in the comics, as they evolved year after year, handed over, especially Raj Comics which propagated in the early 90s (Varma). In particular, the term "graphic novel" has been first utilized in 1964 by Richard Kyle in a newsletter and is published by the Comic Abecedarian Press Coalition. Graphic novel fosters interest in a variety of literacy genres in a broad range of topics. In this light, Jacquelyn McTaggart in her chapter "Graphic Novels: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly", states how "teachers use graphic novels because they enable the struggling reader, motivate

the reluctant one, and challenge the high-level learner” (Frey et al 32). Indeed, educators utilize this medium to make students “see” in their minds what is transpiring in the text. It promotes better reading skills, ameliorates comprehension and complements other areas of the curriculum for the students.

As a whole, in fact, Nancy Frey opines that, readers in the 21st century need to be able to analyse what they read and understand the motive of the author and the precision of the reading. Furthermore, graphic novels can withal avail amend language and literacy development, including second language learners; the illustrations provide valuable contextual clues to the denouement of the indicted narrative. (Crawford) It stimulates ingenious imagination, develop appreciation of art and enhance understanding of popular culture and other media. Graphics, therefore, addresses current, pertinent, and involute issues.

Pictorial Representation

As far as the pictorial representation is concerned, the space between the panels is called the “gutter” and just as you step across a gutter, your mind engenders connection between the individual panels, by drawing inference about how the action in the one can relate to the other, and thereby endeavoring to integrate them into a single, paramount narrative (Kukkonen):

Graphic novel in the latter stages of the twentieth century has been accompanied by a pedagogic impulse, a desire to document traumatic incidents from the past for a contemporary audience. In this way the woks constitute a visual pedagogy, an expedient by which the contemporary audience may come to ken, or too vicariously experience, past events by denotes of narratives that are engendered by the juxtaposition of image with text. (Adams 66)

Indian Comics

Indian comics, particularly Sarnath Banerjee, a graphic storyteller in India born in 1972 in Kolkata, has certainly come a long way since his *Corridor* days back in 2004, and has worked on three novels since - The Barn Owl's Wondrous Capers (2007), The Harappa Files (2011) and 2015's.

Corridor

Corridor (2004) presents different interconnected stories, nervously oscillating between Delhi and Kolkata, whose most extravagant characters are Brighu and Digital Dutta. In *Corridor* all the incidents of the plot are interconnected by only one character, Rangoonwalla with his narration, observations, remarks and conclusion. Jehangir Rangoonwalla is an enlightened second-hand bookseller who is always circumvented by people and his “SIPPING TEA, SELLING ASIMOV'S GIVING ADVICE” (Banerjee, *Corridor* 111). The form refers to the coalescence of pictures and verbal texts. Banerjee shifts the perspective of the narrator from first person to third person and then to first person narrative. This shift in perspective challenges the reader to ken genuinely who is communicating whether the character(s) or the indicator. It is the book shop, its owner and its customers that connect all the other characters in the plot.

Brighu narrates the story about his search in the first person while the rest of the story is narrated by Rangoonwalla. Despite these two narrators, Banerjee presents the key conceptions of his novels through his pictures with less verbal texts. The pictures such as Maya the maid that highlights the revelation made by Shintu (Banerjee, *Corridor* 102), Brighu being woebegone (Banerjee, *Corridor* 106) and missing his cousin (Banerjee, *Corridor* 112) accommodate the purport. The images of the urban life, their hopes and frustrations are best revealed through pictures than the verbal medium. Banerjee's deep insights are brought out in pictures with minimal verbal texts. His pictures on the city and the details like Public Park, high buildings, make the narration impressive. The reader is able to visually perceive more than what is verbally expressed. Some cynical and mordant remarks of Banerjee are withal noted. The setting, the time and the characterization integrate fervor to the narration.

The Barn Owl's Wondrous Capers

In the next novel *The Barn Owl's Wondrous Capers*, Sarnath Banerjee challenges the reader to deduce the monk's identity and by introducing the same at two different places and at two different centuries' endeavours to allude that he is the wandering Jew who became a legend. He alludes the reader that Digital Dutta will appear in this novel additionally. The reader who reads the initiatory pages finds it arduous to connect or even celebrate that Banerjee makes this Wandering Jew appear in virtually all the centuries. Sarnath draws us to tardy 18th Century Calcutta, ironically, he compares with the modern era atmosphere like indemnification companies. The English men invading India faced many difficulties such as weather conditions. Due to weather conditions virtually, many of them had lost their life and according to them their life became vapid due to the lack of female company.

He takes the readers to the Belvedere estate and expounds about the banyan tree which stood majestically in the effulgent sunny morning. These two banyan trees face each other in battle position which betokens the quench of blood thirst. This place is the setting for the duel between two English generals later. The reader is puzzled to find a shift in the setting from London to Calcutta and back to London. The setting apprises the reader three divergent perspectives. At Calcutta the protagonist as a puerile boy reads a book while his grandfather is diligent loading his pipe with the capstan brand pipe tobacco. There is a radio that narrates a story set in London. The boy becomes a man and he lives in London who gets a call from Calcutta about the demise of his grandfather. The layering of histories and drawings engenders a remarkable atmosphere for Banerjee. He utilizes the technique of flash back to show the readers, the protagonist's early days with his grandfather. His photos, drawings and paintings and the explication of fish market, gives us the clear picture of the nostalgic Sarnath. The last incarnation is that of Digital Dutta, which is explicitly kenned to the reader only in the concluding chapter.

The Harappa Files

The Harappa Files commences with the description of the more preponderant Harappa Rehabilitation, Reclamation & Redevelopment (GHRRR) Commission. This committee was set up by Sri Sudarshan Mittal and has the elite of the society who are retired bureaucrats as its members. Their function is to conduct a gargantuan survey of the current ethnography and urban mythologies of a country on the brink of great hormonal changes. Impending launch of the Nano, the car priced not much higher than the scooter utilized by entire families to convey themselves to

places like Delhi's India Gate for picnics and frozen monoxide-cream. Mothers get together for tea parties they discuss the sundry achievements of their children. Their notion on gelusil, boroline, vicco can be cited as examples. Sarnath has utilized stunning images to elaborate on the product, we could find less words and more images in this particular chapter.

Constructed as a series of interrelated sketches, strips, advertisements, pictures, the book is fictitiously presented as the final report of an imaginary institution called the Greater Harappa Rehabilitation. The different "files" that make up the volume are organised as sorts of chapters. These products were purchased by the well-to-do people and not by the mundane man. Boroline an antiseptic cream that remedies all type of cuts, bruises, wounded elbow, wounded nail cuticles, and cracks skin etc. It replicates the feeling of typical Indian mothers towards their children, on the optical discernment of their child's cracked lip and dry elbow. Selling homemade Calomine X unguent on local trains, on one particular route, depicts the Indianess. The product Calomine x has a legendary reputation for rejuvenating eczema that appears due to sweating in exclusive shirts in the sultry, airless compartments.

The industrial magnification gave elevate to the engenderment of cotton shirts of sundry colours and the person who sold the indigenous product vanished from the train. Lifebuoy soap and Liril soap were the two soaps utilized by the noble people and upper-middle class people, even the regalement like games were all incipient to the prevalent people and it's a stunning information's to the mundane people. Sarnath cynically remarks the architectural follies of the 1980s. He points out how there is no congruous blueprint of the building available to the plumbers to fine-tune the quandary at the right phase. So, Girish the plumber utilizes the dye to find the blockage, modern buildings which have no plumbing blueprints, so one need psychic plumbers whenever something goes erroneous. The writer attempts to resurrect, examine and catalogue cultural, human and material relics thereby reveals expectancies on the actions of target individuals.

To Conclude

Banerjee's graphic novels, spectacle the depth of a novel, and requires two readings for consummate contentment. At the first reading, we descry the characters, the clever puns all over the place and above all the consummate Indian urbanity in the divests. But due to the non-linear storytelling, a second read is needed to get in order the jigsaw pieces of the characters' lives. Through Corridor Sarnath blows the reader's mind with the details. His *The Barn Owl's Wondrous Capers* is plenary of pictures than verbal form whereas *The Harappa Files* has more of verbal descriptions than the visual representation.

Although the three graphic narratives are constructed distinctively and through different techniques, they share some structural characteristics, which constitute Banerjee's representational negotiating identities. He evokes a postmodern identity, with a certain psychological maelstrom rendered through a rich intertextual technique, using both verbal language and significant drawings. Tony Tanner (1971) remarks "the fragment form caters to a kind of disordered and rescheduled imagination." There are two distinctive tenets. Firstly, fragmented narration provides illimitable space for the writer's imagination. Secondly, fragmented narration negates the affirmation of authenticity. The features of such narration are multi-vocal, alternative perspective

and challenge the reader offering them opportunities for participation. Thus Sarnath, through his work gives us a clear picture of fragmentation and interplay between social thought and social interaction.

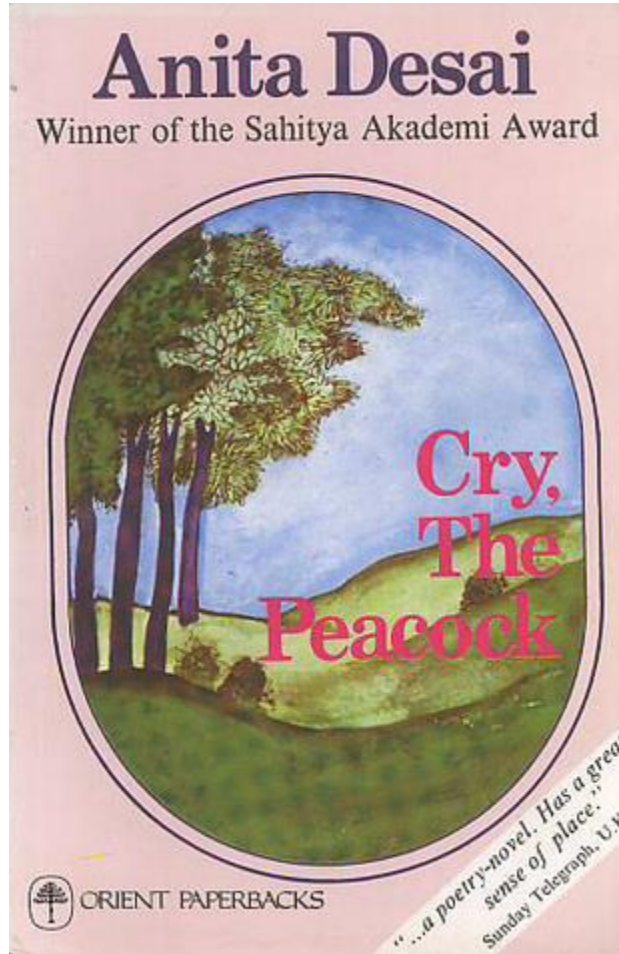
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Women Identity Crisis in Anitha Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*
J. Judi Punitha Elavarasi



Focus of Modern Women Writers

Women writers have moved from traditional depiction of enduring, female self-sacrificing and have presented strong female characters searching for an identity of their own. They no longer represent and define women simply in terms of their casualty status. Indian women writers have started questioning the high up old patriarchal domination. They are no longer puppets in the hands of men. They have shown their worth in the field of literature both qualitatively and quantitatively. Many Indian females' writers have explored female subjectivity in order to establish an identity of their own.

Anita Desai

Anita Desai is conclusively one of the celebrated Indian-English fiction writers. She holds a unique place among the contemporary women novelists of India. Anita Desai's women characters in her novels rebel against masculine community in order to discover their own identity, to live life on their terms, regardless of the outcome that such a rebel may have on their lives. *Cry, the Peacock* her first novel has been considered to be a pioneer in the field of psychoanalytical realism. It explores the inner world of the main protagonist Maya, and demonstrates her fear, insecurity and strange behavior. Through Maya's character, Desai depicts a world of alienation, loneliness and suffering.

Women Identity Crisis in *Cry, the Peacock*

In the novel, *Cry, the Peacock*, the female protagonist Maya, has been brought up under the excessive love, care and concern of her father. This extreme love on her father's part makes her behave abnormally in her later life. Maya's grief begins quite early in life with her marriage to Gautama, a middle-aged lawyer, and a responsibility of her father. There is a vast difference in their ages that contribute to further conflicts between the two. Gautama's insensitive behavior towards Maya makes her feel lonely, isolated, neglected and forced. She expects a little more attention from Gautama as her father sprinkled on her. In short, Maya wants Gautama to be her father-figure. She wants Gautama to not only take care of her childish needs but also always protect her from the outside world. Quite contrary to her expectations, Gautama is pre-occupied with his work and doesn't have a few moments to spare for his wife.

Maya

Maya is childless even after four years of her marriage. There is a space in her life which gets taken care of as she gets naturally close to her pet dog Tutto, though not for a very long time. It is said that childless women develop extreme affections to her pets. She showers all her motherly love on Tutto. In doing so she finds a way to escape from her indifferent husband and his cold behavior towards her. Tutto's death makes things worse for Maya. It creates an emotional confusion in her life. She becomes heartbroken after the loss of her pet. When Gautama sees Maya mourning at the loss of Tutto, he utters,

You need a cup of tea, he said, I cried, yes, it is his hardness – no, no, not hardness, but the distance he coldly keeps from me. His coldness, his coldness, and incessant talk of cups of tea and philosophy in order not to hear me talk and, talking, reveal myself. It is that – my loneliness in this house. (6)

Tutto's death is the first sign of Maya's abnormality that suggests a series of chain reactions in her life. She becomes hyper to worldly affairs. The agony of missing the pet lurks in the blank spaces of her mind making her restless day by day. She feels lost, frustrated, neglected and shattered to pieces. Gautama's lack of care and attention towards her too adds to further a distresses and tensions between the two and makes Maya drift even more away from him. She is unable to strike a balance between her inner self and the realities of the outer world. The insight of the albino astrologer also haunts Maya who portends that either of the partners would die in the fourth year of their marriage. This childhood prophecy remains deeply rooted in her mind and becomes one of the reason for her abnormal behavior:

The astrologer, that creeping sly magician of my fantasies, no of course they were not hallucinations. Arjun had proved them to me and yet said they be real? Had never said anything to suggest that it was I who has to die, unnatural and unviolently for years after my marriage, nothing to suggest that he even thought that. (12)

Maya has nothing to do in her idle time after Tutto's death. She has nothing to do to kill the lonely hours. She feels isolated and neglected by her husband. She reflects, "Telling me to go to sleep while he worked at his papers, he did not give another thought to me, to either the soft willing body of the lonely wanting mind that waited near his bed" (9). Neglect on Gautama's part and a childless life gives rise to her frustration and she becomes psychic. Their relationship goes through a catastrophe and neither of the two makes any sincere efforts to save their marriage. On the contrary, after Tutto's death, Gautama advises Maya to practice detachment, as attachment leads to self – destruction. Both of them share a difference of opinion about life and do not wish to see things beyond their perspective.

Maya experiences rages of revolt and terror. As insanity overpowers her, she sees the vision of rats, snakes, lizards and iguanas creeping over her. Her dark house resembles nothing but a tomb to her. Maya is governed by strange obsessions. Over the time she becomes hypersensitive. She is in love with life and turns hysteric over the fear of death. She wants to live life and find a meaning to it, but at the same time she knows death is the only escape from all the problems and realities of life. Maya is confused over her own identity in life all the time. From being an over-protected daughter to becoming a childless woman who is just a piece of furniture to her husband, all of which just got the worst out of her. It is her desire to live and the fear of death that drives her mad to such an extent that even though she is lost and has been driven to insanity, instead of killing or hurting herself, she pushes Gautama down the parapet. Like Lady Macbeth she becomes a victim of hallucinations that disintegrate her consciousness.

Gautama's Death

Gautama's death takes away all her interest from life which should have been the other way around as she chose to end his life over hers. Gautama's detachment for more involvement in life and his inability to understand Maya's identity leads to the killing of her husband. According to Desai, Maya must love in order to live as peacocks do, and like peacocks she must tear the mate and be torn by him. *Cry, the Peacock* depicts Maya's neurosis. She becomes a pathetic and psychic figure who kills Gautama as she thinks he is the root cause for her suffering. Maya suffers from conjugal incompatibility. She fails to find her own self- identity that leaves her emotionally and psychologically shattered and lonely in the end.

Exploring the Private World

Desai prefers to explore the private to the public world. Her real concern is the exploration of the human psyche, inner climate and she unravels the mystery of the inner life of her characters like that of Maya. Her female protagonists are alienated from the world, society and family because they think of themselves as individuals. Her characters are self-centered who want to change either the situation or things around themselves. When loneliness is force on such characters they became rebels. Tensions, worries, depression, disappointment, anxiety and fear

become their lot and they lose their sense of sanity. Her female characters project the battles that are fought and those left unsought. The psychological battle is fought against traditionally defined womanhood. The psychological suffering of finding themselves and their identity along with the pressures felt by women to fulfill the demands placed by the so-called ideal concept of womanhood, culminates in withdrawal, regression, neurosis, and suicide mania.

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**Exploring the Social Alienation of Untouchables – A Subaltern
Study in Rohinton Mistry’s *A Fine Balance***

Dr. B. Karthikeyan



Rohinton Mistry

Courtesy: <http://asia-canada.ca/changing-perspectives/indians/rohinton-mistry>

Abstract

In the gift world analysis situation, subaltern theme has become outstanding that it is often employed in numerous disciplines like history, sociology, science social science and literature. The word ‘subaltern’ is German word which implies ‘inferior rank’ or ‘secondary importance’. The kin study of ‘subaltern’ refers to a few outstanding thinkers. They are: Antonio Gramsci, Ranjit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorthy Spivak. The idea of ‘subaltern’ is additionally

outlined by general Wolfreys, It contains the teams that are marginalized, laden and exploited on the cultural, political, social and spiritual grounds”1. So, Subaltern literature reflects numerous themes like oppression, marginalisation, Gender discrimination, subjugation of lower and dealing categories, unnoticed girls, neglected sections of society, and disadvantaged categories etc. Subaltern literature is one amongst the subdivisions of post victimization.’ Post-colonial’ lays down conjectures in philosophy and literature that wrestles with the gift of colonial rule. Post-colonial literature could be a stem from genre literature involved with the political and cultural autonomy of the people that were subdued in colonial domains.

Suppression and Oppression of Untouchables

The word ‘subaltern’ is drawn from the Late Latin ‘subaltern us’. Oxford Advanced Learner’s lexicon denotes that the word, subaltern, as noun means that any officer within the British army who is ‘Lower in rank’ than a captain. Its major form denotes ‘of inferior rank’. However Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci for the primary time used it outside the non-military sense. In Latin ‘sub’ means that ‘under’ and ‘alter’ means that alternative. Thus, virtually it denotes to a person or cluster of inferior in keeping with some thinkers, maybe he used the term as an equivalent word for working class. Literally, he refers to a person or cluster of inferior rank and station, whether or not due to race, class, gender, quality or faith. Gramsci’s rationalization of the oppression of the bucolic class in Southern Italian Republic depicts the persisted oppression of the agricultural class, the socio-economic class, and therefore the untouchables in post-Independent Indian society.

Gramsci stressed the connotation of this expression in terms of Gender, Class, Caste, Race, and culture. Gayatri Spivak includes brand new dimension to the term ‘subaltern’ for the colonised individuals, burdened generations, operating categories, blacks and muted girls. B.K. Das opines that” Gayatri Spivak has enlarged the which means of subaltern who set the strain on gendered subaltern-that girls who square measure doubly burdened by victimization and significantly within the collection countries”.2

It is plausible that G.Spivak has given prominence to the plight of ladies. Ranjit Guha interprets the subaltern studies as “a name for the final attribute of subordination in South Asian Society whether or not this can be expressed in terms of sophistication, caste, age, gender and officer or in the other.”3 so subaltern teams could belong to any gender, caste, class, sex, quality and faith. Antonio Gramsci opines that the subaltern categories advert to any lower status person or cluster of voters during a distinct society suffering underneath the hegemonic domination of governing patrician category that denies them the elemental rights of involvement within the creating of provincial history and culture as active people of a similar country. Perhaps, Gramsci, at that point had in his mind the employees and peasants who were marginalized, burdened and suppressed by the fascist leaders within the opinion of G Spivak, that the term ‘subaltern’ is versatile and it will have area for social identities and struggles like girls and therefore the colonised that don’t plummet underneath the subtractive expressions of stern category analysis. “Like the word subaltern for one reason”. It is really situational. The word was underneath censorship by Gramsci: he known as Marxism ‘monism’, and was obligated to decision the proletarian subaltern: That word, used underneath force, has been reworked into the outline of everything that doesn’t comprise strict category analysis.”(4)

G. Spivak makes attempt to justify limpidly the lives and histories of subaltern teams who square measure exploited economically and burdened politically. Her writings clearly exhibit the expertise of social and political oppression in postcolonial societies like India cuts across distinction at school, region, language, ethnicity, religion, generation, gender and citizenship. She more points out that “The colonised subaltern subject is irretrievably heterogeneous. Mr. Habib claims ‘the term was employed by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci to confer with the operating mass that required to be organized by left mistreatment intellectuals into a politically self acutely aware force.’⁵ So as to consolidate it’s which means one will opine that the term subaltern literature covers the themes like regarding the plenty, dalits, and therefore the disadvantaged, oppressed, marginalized and neglected sections of society. Subaltern studies started within the early Eighties as AN intrusion in South-Asian historiography. It gained its quality into an active postcolonial critique. The South Asian students used the term during a wider sense that cantered additional on what happens among the plenty at the bottom level of the society than the elite.

Bonavenura Delaware bandmaster metropolis “ uses the term’ subaltern cosmopolitanism’ within the context of counter-hegemonic practices, movements, resistances and struggles against neo-liberal globalisation, significantly against social exclusion He conjointly uses the term interchangeably with cosmopolitan lawfulness because the various normative framework for an “equality of differences”.⁶ The term ‘subaltern’ here it’s wont to indicate burdened and marginalized those who tried to resist hegemonic domination.

Rohinton Mistry

Rohinton Mistry is one among the internationally acknowledged writers since his works have won international accolades. North American country based mostly, Rohinton Mistry is that the author of 3 novels and a brief story assortment set amidst the close and isolated religionist community in metropolis. His writings bear a social purpose.

He is one among the outstanding writers of the post-colonial era. His novels wear down the theme of exploitation basing on the political, economic, and social aspects stressing the requirement of social purpose in fiction. Among the only a few Indian writers in English, he's one among the novelists who restricted plight of untouchables in his novel, *A Fine Balance*. Untouchability Dalitism has been India’s most grave social group evil since yore and continues to be experienced in numerous elements of rural India. The thus known as, downtrodden- or lower castes square measure refuted to pursue education as a result of education could enlighten them to their rights as voters and should claim their rights.

The caste discrimination and repression is generally found to be in applying among the Hindus of our country. Rohinton Mistry tried his best to voice the cruelty and oppression practised by these muted untouchables in his novel *A Fine Balance*. The novel exposes category and caste disparities of Indian society that conjointly mirrors a visible rendering of these who endure its inequities. Rohinron Mistry depicts regarding ‘Chamirs’ who square measure born into a leather-making chamir family.

Fine Balance?

The higher caste individuals have treated them savagely during a distressing manner. The inhumanity of higher castes is obviously proved within the novel. One among the examples is on however untouchables square measure treated cruelly is illustrated within the following lines by Rohinton Mistry. “For walking on the upper-caste aspect of the road, mythical being was drunk, although to not death- the stones had ceased initially blood. Gambir was less fortunate; he had liquified lead poured into his ears as a result of he ventured at intervals hearing vary of the temple whereas prayers were current. Dhiraj tried to barter ahead with Pandit Ghanshyam “ the wages for chopping wood, rather than sinking for the few sticks he might expect at the top of the day; the Pandit got upset, defendant Dhiraj of poisoning his cows, and had him hanged”.⁷

The downtrodden were cruelly treated by the higher castes that is exhibited clearly within their activities such as- lapidation Sita- only for walking in the streets of higher castes until her 1st blood is seen; Into the ears of Gambhir liquified lead was poured only for hearing the prayers of temple who was near and Dayaram was compelled to eat stools of the owner for asking wages then on. Such inhuman actions by the higher castes became routine development. The untouchability may be a reasonably malady, denigrates not solely Hindu culture however it's conjointly a blot on Indian society that is mirrored within the words of Rohinton Mistry:” what's this disease? You will rise. This malady, brothers and sisters, is that the notion of untouchability, ravaging America for hundreds of years, denying dignity to our fellow personalities. This malady should be purged from our society, from our hearts, and from our minds. Nobody is untouchable, for square measure all kinds of a similar god bear in mind what Gandhiji says, that untouchability poisons Hinduism as a drop of arsenic poisons milk”.

Malady of Untouchability

It is clear that Rohinton Mistry is in favour of untouchable as a result of he feels that untouchability is not solely malady however it's conjointly poisoning the sacred philosophy of Hinduism. There square measure four characters –Dina and Mameck WHO square measure Parsees and 2 tailors Ishvar and his kinsman Omprakash. The lives of the tailors’ forefathers who were indeed ‘Chamars’ or ‘Mochis’ mirror the remorseless cruelty of the caste-system within the rustic India wherever unbelievable oppressions square measure disbursed on the lower-castes by the higher caste Jamindars and Thakurs.

Tradition-imposed Occupation

Tyrannical caste-violence has compelled Dukhi, a Mochi, and therefore the grandparent of Omprakash and father of Ishvar from their ancient occupation of operating with animal skin to be told the dexterities of craft within the city. They migrated to metropolis. The tailors expertise the poignant dislocation of following a completely unique skilled singularity, troubled to induce a secure place during a new town and therefore the physical displacement from their village to the town very often they need to travel back to their village when earning some cash.

Ishwar’s father was doing unclean work, and he needed to examine a higher lifetime of his thusns Ishvar and Narayan so he sent them to a close-by city to be told craft. He leaves his sons along with his Muslim friend Ashraf within the city who takes them as apprentices in his craft business. Dukhi Mochi opines sarcastically that a minimum of his Muslim friend treated

him higher than his Hindu brothers”. Ishvar and Narayan saved Ashrof’s search by claiming that it belonged to them, exploit Ashraf forever in their memory owing. Narayan comes back to his village and began a craft business for the individuals of his village during which he's winning and attained a enough of cash to construct his own house and married WHO is blessed a son and two daughters. Narayan’s business was flourishing well until the until the native elections were declared by a landowner Thakur who burnt each the oldsters of Omprakash by ligature along. Atrocities of higher castes on the lower castes square measure intense. Even the lower caste individuals weren't permissible to continue their education.

Conflicts and Injustice

Ishvar and Narayan are overwhelmed up for coming into the village faculty. Then Dukhi approaches Pandit Lalluram, a Brahmin priest whom he trusts that he will do justice to him: even an untouchable might receive justice in his hands”. Pandit Lalluram is bitterly satirized as an unmannered, greedy inexorable who isn't involved in doing justice for lower castes. Dukhi is annoyed at this perspective of the Lalluram and feels that the life he leads as an untouchable and raises a question regarding his identification with the order of caste: “government passes new laws, says no additional untouchability, nevertheless everything is that the same. The upper-caste bastards still treat America worse than animals... quite twenty years have passed since independence... i need to be ready to drink from the village well, worship within the temple, walk wherever I like” so Dukhi opines his anguish regarding the injustice and oppression obligatory on the untouchables who don't seem to be allowed to drink the water from the village well and proscribed to enter the temple. Even the ladies of village were exploited thanks to the class structure for instance, Dukhi’s partner, Rupa was used and raped by the Zamindar’s gardener for stealing fruits and milk from upper-caste homes so as to feed the kids. Her disgraceful exploitation by the gardener is Mistry’s remorseless observation on the twin standards existing within the modern Indian society within the style of untouchability.

Caste-based Democracy

These subalterns square measure defeated and received heartless treatment at the hands of the higher castes. Even within the native elections, the blank ballots were stuffed in by the landlord’s men. So, the lower caste individuals were proscribed to vote freely and use their franchise during a Democratic country like India. The family of Prakash’s father and his two grandchildren square measure knifed to death. when knowing this, brutal incident Ishwar and Om rush to police headquarters to file an F.I.R. however the Sub Inspector discourteously comments on them: “What reasonably rascality is this? Attempting to extra service the F.I.R. with lies? You filthy achool castes square measure forever dead set build troubles! Get out before we tend to charge you with public mischief”.

At each stage of their lives, the untouchables encounter oppression. throughout emergency, chamars-turned –tailors pay a visit to their village in search of bride for Om, they're used by their previous high-caste enemy, Thakur Dharmasi and square measure beaten and halting underneath the alleged reason of the ‘free extirpation program me’ of the govt.. one among the themes of subaltern literature is oppression besides exploitation of untouchables is touchingly portrayed within the novel, *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry who provides a heart-

rending version of man's barbaric inhumanity to man and conjointly the out of the question deprivation and inequalities practised by the downtrodden and burdened in India.

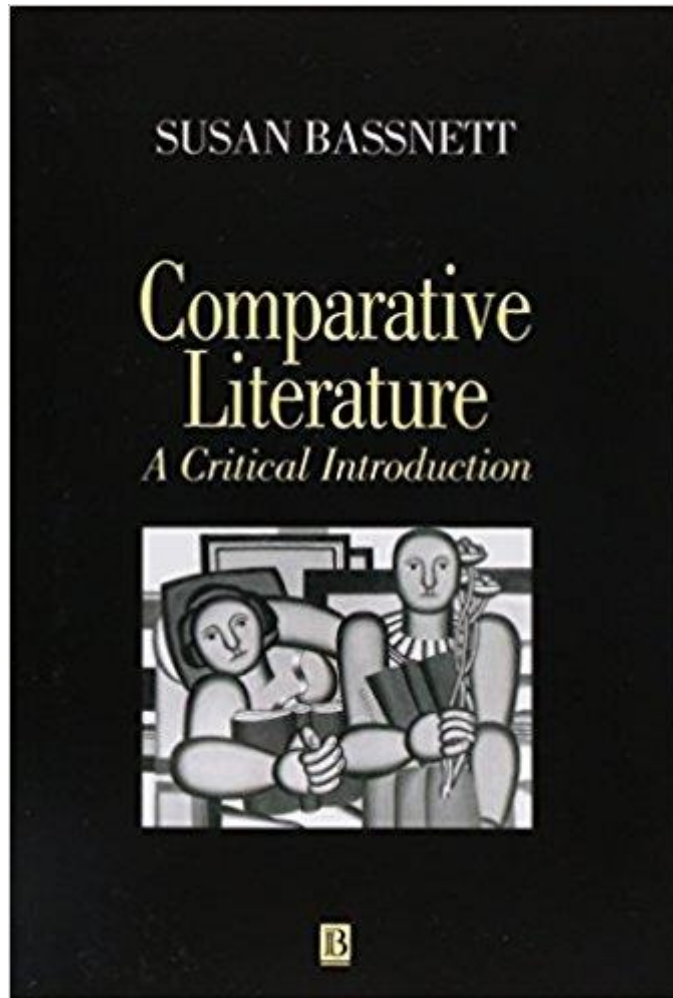
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Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction Difference of Comparative Literature

A. Logesh and Mrs. Sridevi



Abstract

Comparative Literature: the study of the interrelationship of the literatures of two or more national cultures usually of differing languages and especially of the influences of one upon the other. Sometimes informal study of literary works in translation. Majors in comparative literature focus on two different literary traditions through the study of literary works in their original language. ... Comparative Literature students can also double major with disciplines beyond the

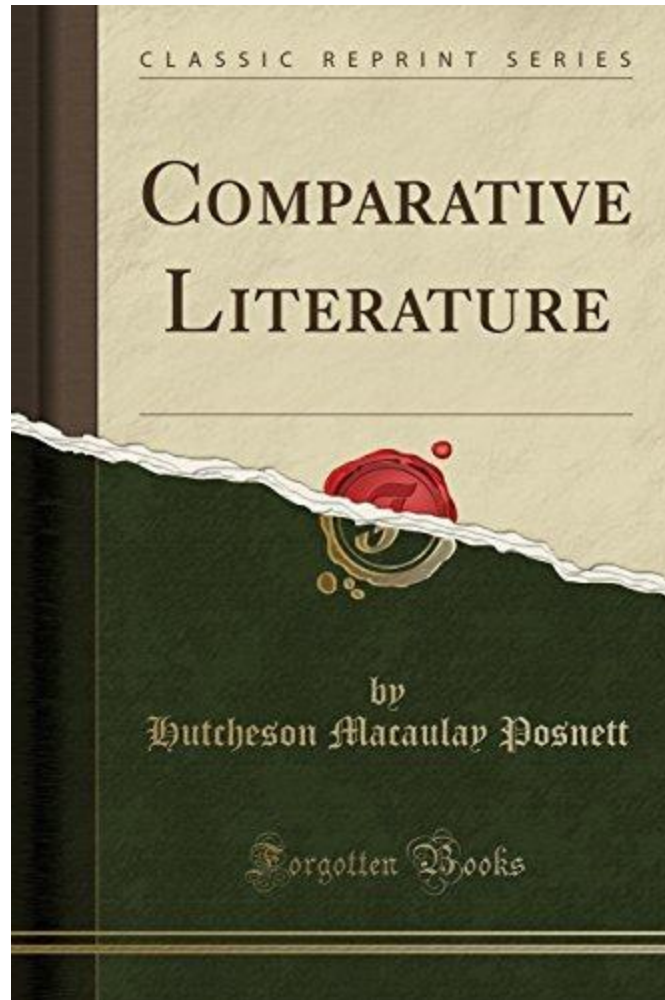
Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, such as business, government, philosophy and many others. The comparative method is often used in the early stages of the development of a branch of science. It can help the researcher to ascend from the initial level of exploratory case studies to a more advanced level of general theoretical models, invariances, such as causality or evolution.

Introduction

Comparative literature is an academic field dealing with the study of literature and cultural expression across linguistic, national, and disciplinary boundaries. Comparative literature "performs a role similar to that of the study of international relations, but works with languages and artistic traditions, so as to understand cultures 'from the inside'".^[1] While most frequently practiced with works of different languages, comparative literature may also be performed on works of the same language if the works originate from different nations or cultures among which that language is spoken.

The characteristically intercultural and transnational field of comparative literature concerns itself with the relation between literature, broadly defined, and other spheres of human activity, including history, politics, philosophy, art, and science. Unlike other forms of literary study, comparative literature places its emphasis on the interdisciplinary analysis of social and cultural production within the "economy, political dynamics, cultural movements, historical shifts, religious differences, the urban environment, international relations, public policy, and the sciences". The terms "comparative literature" and "world literature" are often used to designate a similar course of study and scholarship. Comparative Literature is the more widely used term in the United States, with many universities having Comparative Literature departments or Comparative Literature programs.

Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field whose practitioners study literature across national borders, across time periods, across languages, across genres, across boundaries between literature and the other arts (music, painting, dance, film, etc.), across disciplines (literature and psychology, philosophy, science, history, architecture, sociology, politics, etc.). Defined most broadly, comparative literature is the study of "literature without borders". Scholarship in comparative literature include, for example, studying literacy and social status in the Americas, studying medieval epic and romance, studying the links of literature to folklore and mythology, studying colonial and postcolonial writings in different parts of the world, asking fundamental questions about definitions of literature itself.^[4] What scholars in comparative literature share is a desire to study literature beyond national boundaries and an interest in languages so that they can read foreign texts in their original form. Many comparatists also share the desire to integrate literary experience with other cultural phenomena such as historical change, philosophical concepts, and social movements.



The discipline of comparative literature has scholarly associations such as the ICLA: International Comparative Literature Association and comparative literature associations exist in many countries: for a list of such see BCLA: British Comparative Literature Association; for the US, see ACLA: American Comparative Literature Association. There are many learned journals that publish scholarship in comparative literature: see "Selected Comparative Literature and Comparative Humanities Journals"^[5] and for a list of books in comparative literature see "Bibliography of (Text)Books in Comparative Literature".

The Term *Comparative Literature*

Basically, "*Comparative Literature*" is critical to explain because it incorporates two or even more literatures at a same time. Even it is difficult for comparatist to compare multi-dimensional features of comparative literature like religion, historical factors, social and cultural norms of diverse societies. In simple words, in order to understand comparative literature, one needs to understand Nomenclature. Comparative literature actually refers to some literary work or the work that we compared with some other literary work. It is the study of inter-relationship between two different works of literature.

Comparative Literature – Comparison Between Different Literatures

While comparing two different literatures, your focus should be on **Themes, Social or Religious Movements, Myths, Artistic Tactics and forms**. For a comparatist, it is easy to critical analyze the two different texts of literature having similarities or dissimilarities. However, his/her approach should be unprejudiced while comparing the two different literatures to find out the truth. It is just his sincere and genuine methodology which will yield the exposed truth or regular results and this truly is the motivation behind similar study.

Taken comprehensively, Comparative Literature is a thorough term. Its extension incorporates the totality of human encounters into its grip, and along these lines all inside human connections among the different parts of the world are acknowledged, through the basic way to deal with literary works under near study.

Famous Works of Comparative Literature

It serves vanishing narrow national and worldwide limits and set up of that all-inclusiveness of human connections develops out. In this manner the term similar writing incorporates relative investigation of territorial writings, national written works, and global writings. On the other hand, there are some over-lapping terms in this worry, for example,

Universal Literature, International Literature, General Literature and World Writing

Over and again, we can specify here that Comparative Literature incorporates encounters of human life and conduct all in all. As explained over, the comparative study is not the same as a basic methodology of a specific writing aside from the way that here we manage two or more than two literary works one next to the other. Thusly, the topic gets to be vaster and viewpoint more extensive. Limits of similar writing must be reached out to envelop the total of human life and encounters in one's grip.

Examples for Comparative Literature

George Orwell's Animal Farm and 1984 comparison;

Animal Farm vs. 1984 Similarities Government Characters Themes/Plots Themes Boxer and The Parsons Napoleon and Big Brother Squealer and Winston Classes in Society Both books contain a world full of three classes: high, middle, and low. ... Animal Farm was based on Stalin and the Russian Revolution.

Comparison between languages:

American English	British English
Color	Colour
Behavior	Behavior
Theater	Theatre
Behavior	Behavior

The differences below are only a general rule. American speech has influenced Britain via pop culture, and vice versa. Therefore, some prepositional differences are not as pronounced as they once were.

American English	British English
I'm going to a party on the weekend.	I'm going to a party at the weekend.
What are you doing on Christmas?	What are you doing at Christmas?
Monday through Friday.	Monday to Friday.
It's different from/than the others.	It's different from/to the others.

Translation and World Literature

With such a broad scope, it's no surprise that comparative literature is closely tied to world literature, or the way in which literary works circulate around the globe and across time. World literature asks things like: Why do people continue to read Dante centuries after his death? What happens when Shakespeare is read in China? Is *Harry Potter* in Swahili the same as *Harry Potter* in English? Works dealing with comparative and world literature have titles like: *What is World Literature?* (David Damrosch, 2003)

Chinese Shakespeares: Two Centuries of Cultural Exchange (Alexander Huang, 2008)

Since moving literature around the world means moving it across languages, comparative literature is also frequently concerned with issues of translation. The field considers what is both lost and gained as texts are recreated in different languages. In other words, comparative literature is interested in things like the fact that to read Shakespeare in Chinese is to find some kind of connection to the Great Bard's major themes, but at the same time, to read quite a different text than those in England do.

Indian Comparative Literature

In Indian comparative methodology, the Sanskrit faultfinders developed out during the 6th century A.D. It is clear from the analyses on Kalidasa's *Meghduta* and *Abhijnanasakutala*. After that the pundits like Kuntaka and Abhinavagupta with their subjective methodology prepared for present day comparators. R.S. Pathak, giving the chronicled advancement of the new train, near writing says: Mathew Arnold endeavored important endeavors in English world and underscored emphatically the criticalness of the relative way to deal with abstract works. He wrote in a letter in 1848, "Each commentator ought to attempt and have one incredible writing in any event other than his own and more the not at all like his own, the better."

Thus, he spearheaded the similar feedback in England and offered motivation to different commentators to take a shot at this new train. It is hereby recommended that the comparatist ought to embrace the showstoppers of inventive essayists, whose works have cosmopolitan status in abstract fields. That is the reason; Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot required a feedback of verse on

parameters of general world-verse, or the works of greatest fabulousness. This sort of methodology will coordinate near investigation of writing towards universal level.

Conclusion

Comparative Literature's approach to translation, from the time when the use of translations was considered a necessary evil (which was caused by an unblemished conviction that their status was necessarily lower than that of the original texts), going through the progressive expiry of such caution (as a result of the expansion of the materials of study and a multicultural decentralisation of the canon), to the final conviction that translation not only allows access to literary works that would otherwise be opaque to us, but that their analysis can provide very important information about intercultural contacts and the dynamics of development of different receiving literary traditions, since, at the end of the day, translations are organically related to the target literature and are in tune with it, when they do not determine it. This process has had much to do with the consolidation of Translation Studies as a full independent discipline.

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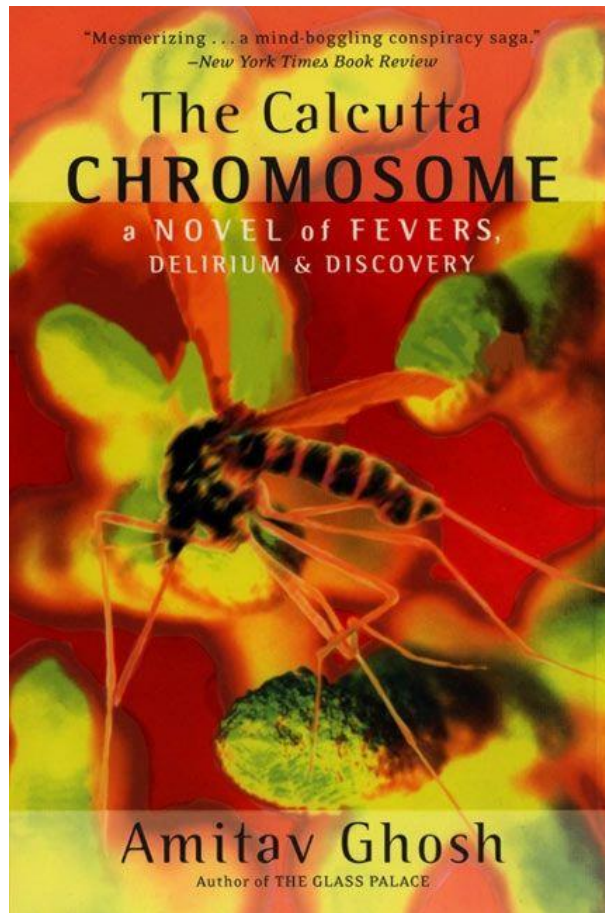
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Silence as a Tool of Resistance in Acquiring Knowledge in
Amitabh Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome*

Madhurima Nargis, Ph.D. Scholar



Abstract

Amitabh Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome* would be one of the best examples of a postcolonial discourse that rewrites the subaltern history. The novel not only provides an alternative history which is about subaltern people but also talks about the scientist Ronald Ross, the Noble Prize winner for his discovery of malaria transmission. More importantly, Ghosh punctures the idea of scientific objectivity by highlighting a counter-scientific cult that actually paved the way of Ronald Ross's discovery of the malaria parasite. Through a close analysis of this novel the motto of this paper would be to trace the ways that actually situate the subalterns at

the centre of this discourse. It would also go on decoding why Managala and Laakhan, the two subaltern figures chose the path of secrecy and remained silent through ages. And finally, it would also discuss how Ghosh, in this novel, actually makes the subaltern speak through silence.

The Calcutta Chromosome

Amitabh Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome* is a work of science-fiction narrative. The novel centers around the character of Antar who is engaged in his search of his former colleague L. Murugan, who happened to be writing about the possibilities of a subaltern cult as the driving force behind Ronald Ross's award-winning discovery of the malaria parasite. The group comprised two subaltern figures, including the scavenger woman Mangala and Ross's favorite servant Laakhan. The group experimented with pigeon sacrifice and religious rituals in their ultimate quest of achieving immortality.

The Calcutta Chromosome as a science-fiction narrative not only fictionalizes the lives of the scientists but also claims that non-scientific cult may be as valid as those sanctioned by legitimate forms of knowledge. Thereby, the novel is a postcolonial discourse where Ghosh deliberately switches the central attraction from the oppressor to the oppressed. But if so, why is Mangala, the doubly marginalized, oppressed woman silent throughout the novel? Through a close analysis of this novel the motto of this paper would be to trace the ways that actually situate the subalterns at the centre of this discourse. It would also go on decoding why Managala and Laakhan chose the path of secrecy and remained silent through ages.

Three Narrators

The narrative consists of three narrators: an omniscient narrator, Murugan and Sonali Das. The novel is a replica of multiple juxtapositions where the author places science and counter-science, fiction and reality together and while doing so provides an alternative story to the subaltern. The novel begins sometime in the future with Antar, an Egyptian working in the information industrial technology. Antar comes across a distressed identity card and tries to retrieve its owner through his super advanced computer AVA. AVA with its powerful search engine traces the card to be of Murugan, a former Indian colleague of him who mischievously disappeared in Calcutta in 1995. Murugan had his keen interest in Ronald Ross and specialized on him. He does research on Ross and comes up with the doubt of an untold story. Murugan believed Ross has been manipulated by a group of Indian counter-science cult responsible to lead Ross to a particular direction and wrote an article: "An Alternative Interpretation of Late 19th Century Malaria Research. Is There A Secret History?" There is indeed a secret story weaved by Mangala, the sweeper woman who manipulated the scientist Ross in order to help her much advanced discovery, the ultimate prize of gaining immortality. Here, at this point the novelist emphasizes on the issue that scientific discovery was not a one way process brought to India only, but is a work of mutual collaboration of both the ruler and the ruled.

Not Merely a Postcolonial Text

Nevertheless, it is hard to categorise *The Calcutta Chromosome* as a postcolonial text only as Ghosh experimented with boundaries. Here, fiction and facts blend and clash making multiple aspects possible. The novel can be termed a scientific memoir, science fiction, historical narrative and a detective novel at the same time. Mike Frangos, in his essay "The End of

Literature: Machine Reading and Amitabh Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome*", states that this book is 'famously difficult to classify' (Frangos, 2). It contains history, the future (posthuman), the machine reading, the possibility of cultural history and so on. He mainly focuses on the representation of science and the digital technology that is used in the book. According to him, "the novel imagines a future of the digital in which the digital archive's capacity for nearly infinite storage allows the reader, in this case Antar, to achieve the perspective of the posthuman future" (Frangos,7). He also points out how digital technology, memory and digital archives are relevant to the historiography of this novel. Similar to Frangos's viewpoint, Diane Nelson in her essay, "A Social Science Fiction of Fevers, Delirium and Discovery: The Calcutta Chromosome, Colonial Laboratory, and the Postcolonial New Human", writes that this novel makes the reader think about the 'human' in new ways, a new human that seems to have some more technology-based characteristics. She also argues that in Ghosh's novel it is clearly stated that machine is using human and human activities are fully manipulated by machines. However, she focuses more on Ghosh's representation of the enrichment of colonial science laboratories and their use of advanced technology. On the one hand, she praises science and technology for making life easier while on the other she criticizes Western scientific history and Western colonizers' portrayal of the British colonizers as 'scientist' and colonized as 'mice and guinea pigs' (Nelson, 254). Thereby, according to Nelson the novel is a critique of the portrayal of Ronald Ross as the prototype of the trueborn 'scientist' and his act of not acknowledging indigenous help while using them illegally as guinea pigs.

Tabish Khair in his essay "Amitabh Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome*: The Question of Subaltern Agency" writes, "What Ghosh does seek to do and largely succeeds in doing is to depict the *Coolies* (the subaltern in general term) as occupying a space". The term subaltern is derived from the work of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who used it to designate non-elite social classes and groupings like the proletariat. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak often insisted on the specific gendered forms of understanding. She has also noted the extent to which postcolonialist forms of analysis have, in their blind spots of gender issues, taken up traditional masculinist positions. Her contribution to the understanding of the subaltern state under colonialism was to expand its signification to include groups even more downgraded than the groups mentioned by Gramsci, and also those who do not figure on the social scale at all: for example, tribals or unscheduled classes, untouchables, and, within all these groups, women. Interestingly, Murugan's research work on Ronald Ross introduces Mangala a subaltern woman having scientific knowledge more than her Western contemporaries. According to Ranajit Guha the subaltern's participation in the nationalist movement is not included in the elitist historiography. Ghosh might have taken Guha's argument and added a new thought into it. Throughout the novel Ghosh emphasized on the issue of the contribution of the subaltern intelligence that is not acknowledged in Western historiography.

Delving Deep into Scientific Archives

It is remarkable to see how Ghosh delves deep into the scientific archives, journals, Ross's memoir and letters to enlighten the contribution of the marginalized class in this scientific discovery and also emphasizes their exclusion from history. Mangala is after 'a technology for interpersonal transference', that would help them gain life after life through incarnation. The Austrian clinician Julius Von Wagner Jauregg was actually ahead of Ronald Ross on the malaria

research. He was working on the clue that artificially induced malaria could cure Syphilitic paresis. But even before Wagner, Mangala, herself suffering from syphilis had achieved remarkable success in this field. In 1995, Mangala chose the body of Mrs Aratounian and later on Tara's body, Antar's neighbour, also known as Urmila Roy. Laakhan, was reincarnated as Romen Halder in 1995 and again as Tara's helper Lucky. Simply put, they strategized a way of encoding knowledge and transforming it from one individual to another amidst utter silence and secrecy without any documentation or proof. The silencing of Mangala can be best described using Spivak's remarks on the 'native women' (like Mangala). Spivak finds in her "A Literary Representation of the Subaltern" that the native woman is doubly oppressed, caught between native patriarchy on the one hand and foreign masculinist-imperialist ideology on the other. So, when and how are the subalterns allowed to speak and generate knowledge in Ghosh's text?

Silence as a Tool of Resistance

Knowledge, however, is a tricky term and Ghosh although silences Managala's knowledge, defends her silence by making it a tool of resistance to debunk the Western ideology of perceiving knowledge. Ghosh in his postcolonial narrative deliberately opposes Spivak's ideology of speaking on behalf of the subaltern. As a matter of fact, Ghosh entirely denounces the idea of documenting Mangala, the subaltern's dissident knowledge. To rely on Derrida's theory of deconstruction, our mental life consists not of concepts—not of solid, stable meanings—but of a continually changing play of signifiers. Every signifier consists of and produces more signifiers in a never-ending deferral, or postponement, of meaning: we seek meaning that is stable, but we can never really find it because we can never get beyond the play of signifiers. Thereby, knowledge, here, as a concept is fleeting and always being delayed and deferred. This is well illustrated when Murugan is explaining the logic of the counter-scientific cult:

Maybe this other team started with the idea that knowledge is self-contradictory; maybe they believed that to know something is to change it, therefore in knowing something, you've already changed what you think you know so you don't really know it at all: you only know its history. Maybe they thought that knowledge couldn't begin without acknowledging the impossibility of knowledge (*Calcutta* 103–104).

Network of Stories

Claire Chambers in her essay "Network of Stories" writes that Murugan's identification of a knowledge that recognizes its own 'impossibility' draws both on postmodernist thought and on a strain of Hindu thought which indicates that accepting the fact that one cannot know everything is the first step towards knowledge. This philosophy is illustrated in the *Upanishads*, in which it is stated:

One thing, they say, is obtained from real knowledge; another, they say, from what is not knowledge. [...] He who knows at the same time both knowledge and not-knowledge, overcomes death through not-knowledge, and obtains immortality through knowledge (Sen, 128).

Chambers also adds in her essay that the implication given both by this passage from the *Upanishads* and Ghosh's novel is that conventional knowledge is useful, but only when its limitations are recognized. However, Murugan indicates that language is insufficient to explain phenomena and inevitably changes the thing that it attempts to describe. He confirms this by arguing that the secret group "would in principle have to refuse all direct communication, straight off the bat, because to communicate, to put ideas into language, would be to establish a claim to *know* — which is the first thing that a counter-science would dispute" (*Calcutta* 103). Ghosh seems to be arguing that any claim to knowledge — whether it be historical, scientific, or aesthetic — is a construct, dependent on its cultural origins. This is not to say that the attempt to gain knowledge is a futile one, but that one must recognize the limitations of one's attempt from the outset. Thus, Murugan arrives at the contradictory, yet insightful, realization that "knowledge couldn't begin without acknowledging the impossibility of knowledge." Hence the idea of perceiving knowledge as a fixed identity is challenged by Ghosh as he shows the dynamic approaches of knowledge that keep on changing. Likewise, the *Calcutta Chromosome* is of a completely different chromosome. Instead of determining the nature of the DNA, it is unique and mutates. It not only resists empirical documentation but suspends the very concept of deeming knowledge as fixed and constant. Mangala's experiments with the disease and the nature of the Chromosome undermine the fixed and constructed notions of Western episteme while celebrates the fluidity and mutability of knowledge.

To Conclude

I would like to conclude by saying that the urge of making Magala's knowledge public and preserved is denied by Ghosh and by doing so he actually uses her silence to be a potent medium to deconstruct the Eurocentric discourse of 'othering'. Silence is therefore posited in the novel as a radical alternative to the vociferous assertions of knowledge. Hence, the narrative is also a celebration of the Orient over the Occident by dismantling both the androgenic and Eurocentric sense of superiority. *The Calcutta Chromosome* is indeed a postcolonial novel that not only challenges but also resists the colonial voice through the voiceless colonized Indians where the 'phantom' of the subaltern looms large behind the actual discovery of the malaria research.

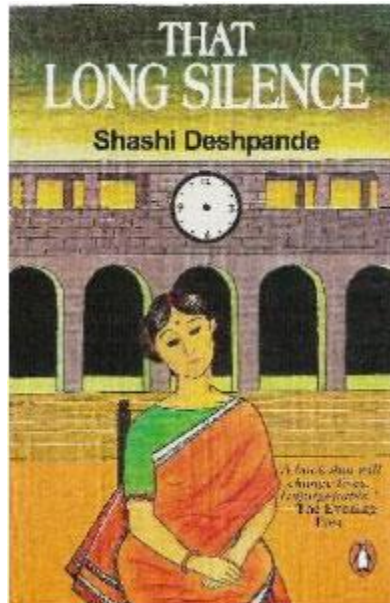
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Identity Crisis of Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*
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Abstract

Shashi Deshpande (1938 -) is among Indian English women writers in the sense that she deliberately refrains from the temptation of give away to literary fashion in the West. Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* (1988) deals directly with feminist narratological preoccupation with the context of how a woman writes. Jaya, a failed writer, is haunted by memories of the past. Differences with her husband, frustrations in their seventeen-year-old marriage, disappointment in her two teenage children. In her small suburban Bombay flat, Jaya fight with these and other truths about herself - among them her failure at writing and her fear of anger. Shashi Deshpande gives us an exceptionally accomplished portrayal of a woman trying to erase a 'Long Silence' begun in childhood and rooted in herself and in the constraints of her life.

Keywords: Shashi Deshpande, *That Long Silence*, Feminism, Subservient, Solidarity, Patriarchal

Introduction

Feminism, as a new way of life, as a new perspective came into existence in India. Feminism in Indian English fiction has a series of counters and ordeals on the part of woman to strike at the roots, to belong and assert her ideality in a transitional society. Many Indian writers now present a picture of women which is totally different from the image of the past. Change in the economic conditions has brought a remarkable change in our attitude towards gender, and as a result, woman has substantially consolidated her position as she has shed off her servile attitude

towards her husband. This has led to the creative writers to re-define the husband-wife equation, as depicted in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal, Bharati Mukherjee and Shashi Deshpande. Shashi Deshpande, an eminent novelist has emerged a writer possessing deep insight into the female psyche. Her novels reveal the man-made patriarchal tradition and uneasiness of the modern Indian woman in being a part of them. Shashi Deshpande uses this point of view present social reality as it is experienced by women. Her young heroines rebel against the traditional way of life and patriarchal values.

Novels of Shashi Deshpande

Roots and Shadows her first novel highlights the pain and suffering experienced by women in male-dominated and tradition bound society. *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, her other novel, rejects the traditional concept that the sole purpose of a wife's existence is to please her husband. It reveals a woman's capacity to assert her own rights and individuality and become fully aware of her potential as a human being. *The Binding Vine* depicts how the educated earning woman helps poor women inculcating the spirit of solidarity among women. The novel is about the suffering of a wife who is the victim of marital rape; the plight of women raped outside marriage, who would rather suffer in silence in the name of family honor. *A Matter of Time* portrays a woman who is more mature and dignified than her predecessors. When others cannot think of themselves outside the familial bond, she, finding herself in, is unperturbed. She is little detached, but manages herself admirably almost becomes self-independent.

That Long Silence

That Long Silence traces the passage, a woman through a maze of doubts and fears towards her affirmation. Looking at the man-woman relationship objectively, the novelist does not blame entirely the men for subjugation of women. She sees how both men and women find it difficult to outgrow the images and roles assigned to them by the society. The novel has three distinct phases of feminism. In the first phase it is seen as the imitation of role models, whereas the heroine has crossed the limits. Right from her childhood days, Jaya, the protagonist has been told stories about Sita, Savitri depicting the sharing of their husband's travails and their silent sufferings. Jaya refuses these role models because they have lost all relevance in Modern period Sita, Savitri and Draupadi; the legendary women followed their husbands willingly, but Jaya followed her husband Mohan because of compulsion.

In the early days of her marriage, she wants to create a gleaming fairy tale home by shutting out her fears, ambiguities and suspicions. She treats her husband as a "sheltering tree". To come across as an ideal wife and mother, she suppresses her own emotional needs. Instead of sharing her feeling with her husband she is more concerned with the external gloss or sheen, "Ours has been a delicately balanced relationship, so much so that we have even snipped off bits of ourselves to keep the scales on an even keel". The suppression of self and emotions, and worry to keep the exterior smooth, gradually create a strain in her mind. The fear of failure to conform to the stereotyped model of ideal woman makes her restless.

The major concern and thrust of the novel is the second phase of feminism in Jaya's life. At the beginning she was silent, to accept her husband's desires and to sustain the harmony of her family. When she is forced to live in Dadar flat in Bombay because of Mohan's corrupt means of

money making, again she mutely follows him. “She, like Gandhari of Mahabharatha symbolically bandages her eyes and grows blind to his weakness. Like Sita, who followed her husband into exile, she follows Mohan into the concrete jungle – Bombay”. But when he justifies, “It was for you and the children that I did this, I wanted you to have good life. I wanted the children to have all those things I never had”. For the first time in her married life, Jaya feels a strong, strange emotion of anger at this unjustified accusation made by Mohan. The accusation further leads to further re-assessment, self-interrogation of seventeen long years of married life in the mind of Jaya. Even now she is silent but she uses silence as a weapon to revolt against the patriarchy. Now she analyses her life with her husband Mohan and in the process resolves to change in the future.

Mohan

Right from day one of her marriage, Mohan never accepts her as Jaya (victorious) but he renames as ‘Suhasini’ which means “soft, smiling, placid, motherly woman”. Ever since she is named as Suhasini, she feels that her identity is in dilemma and feels disoriented. ‘Suhasini’ becomes the symbol of pain taking and fastidious house wife, to only care and look after her children, maintain the home well in order. Jaya is a gifted writer. But Mohan does not like her writing and nurtures an idea that through her writing, public will know their personal life and hence restricts her writing career. Jaya, deliberately gives up her creative aspect which is close to her heart and fits into the traditional role of an ideal wife. He keeps on finding fault with her- for not caring his profession and calls her completely selfish. He further criticizes her that she had married him because of her elder brother Dinkar. Repeated accusations and allegations of Mohan force her to react sharply.

Relationship with Kamat

Her relationship with Kamat, her neighbor is an important aspect in her process of introspection. He is somehow different from other men. He pays due respect to women. He encourages her like her brother, sometimes compliments her like an ardent lover and dares to chide her like her father. It is in his presence that she becomes uninhibited and sheds all her identities as a daughter, wife, and a mother. It is her relation with him makes her realize her real self. Besides analyzing her own self, she also explores the other women characters like Mohan’s mother; Kusum, her cousin; her sister-in law and Jeeja, her servant. They are the victims of this patriarchal society. They never raised their voice against this domination and instead lead a slave like life. By completely analyzing the agonies of various women in her life, she discovers the root cause of this problem. She comes to the realization that it is not the men folk but the patriarchy in the society which prevents women from attaining their identity. So she resolves to erase the silence and rebel against the pre-set social dogmas.

Third Phase of Feminism

The third phase of feminism in the novel is Jaya’s life- her articulation and assertion is hinted at the end of the novel to be the future possibility for Jaya. Though being silent for many years she realizes her own power only after seventeen years of her married life. She shapes her broken identity by breaking the fetters of a father’s daughter, as Mohan’s wife and as her children’s mother. The novel ends with her resolution to speak, to break her long silence now. She has discovered an answer for the most haunting question “Who am I?” When she receives Mohan’s

telegram from Delhi informing her that everything is fine she pays least importance to that. It reflects her realization that:

You are your own refuge.
There is no other refuge.
This refuge is hard to achieve.

Now she realizes that she cannot be a complete woman if she remains a wife or a mother and ignores the other equally important self, namely a writer. She finally decides to go on with her writing career and would not look up to, Mohan for an answer she wants. The same pattern of discontent and retaliation, the desire and demand for freedom is evident in Gita Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night*.

Resurgence of Hope

The novel ends up with a resurgence of hope. A woman's desire to succeed like an individual is not compatible with the desire for love and small pleasures of domesticity. If marriage and love without independence dissipate a woman's personality to nothingness, independence without love also exhausts her sensitivity in a constant tussle with the self and the society. Jaya's story proves that a balanced fulfilled life is not merely a utopian fancy for a woman if she decides to realize her creative energy to erase her conditioning and free her from her psychic fears and the bondage of centuries. In short, self-actualization is possible if a woman decides to be herself, to exhibit the genuine significance of her free, innate and uninhabited personality in its totality.

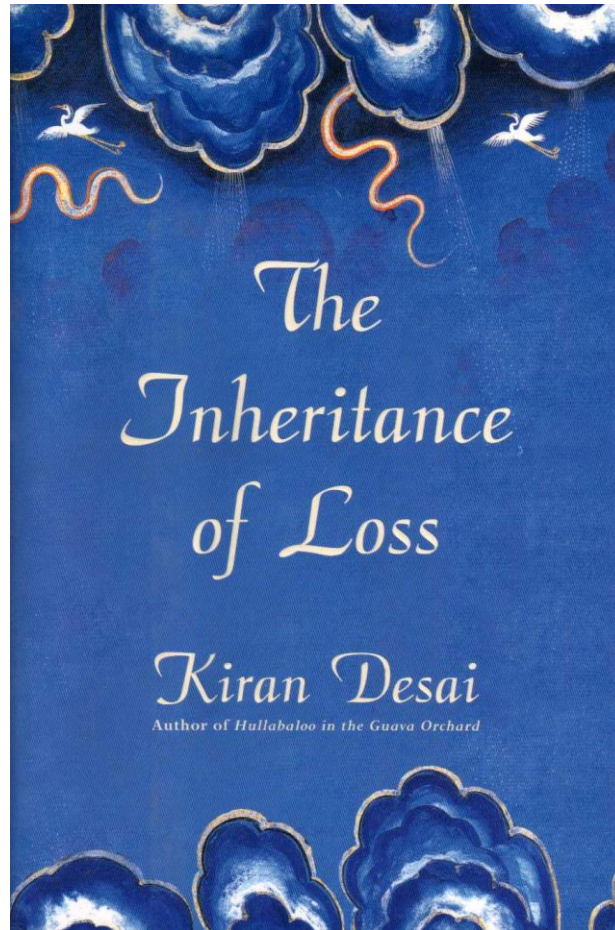
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Cosmic - Multiculturalism in the Novel of Kiran Desai's
The Inheritance of Loss

K. Manisekaran



Abstract

Desai's second novel **The Inheritance of Loss** (2005), which won her the Man Bookers Prize in 2006, talks about her inheritance and the disinheritance that had come with world. It deals with a number of present-day problems such as economic inequality and poverty, fundamentalism and terrorist violence, but the major value is on mobility and migration, on dislocation and the subsequent loss of background, of history and of family. Changes that are brought out by craze for western values, manners, language and lifestyle: impact of modernization, pre-occupation and deep-rooted reaction to indigenous values which failed to

sustain life. The novel is set in Kalimpong situated at the foot of Mount Kanchenjunga in the North Eastern part of India, which becomes vaporous because of religious and ethnicities struggle to defeat biased treatment by Indians to indigenous people whose culture is more like their neighboring Asians. Primarily, the story of *The Inheritance of Loss* is set in India in the year 1986, a period of great turmoil. From the outset it is clear that the country and the people are crying out for an identity of their own, fighting between themselves and claiming ground for their own existence, as a nation and as individuals.

Keywords: Kiran Desai, *Inheritance of Loss*, Cosmic - Multiculturalism, Ethnic, Modernization, identity, Ideology, Gorkhas, Xenophobia, Culture, Colonial, migrant, Racism, Other.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism has raised important questions about the status of minorities within the nation state. By asking whether different communities are treated as equals within the democratic polity. Multiculturalism has also shown that the presence of many cultures and communities is not enough. Within a democracy what is necessary is that difference must not be a source of discrimination. It must be admitted the existence accommodated and, above all, given an equal position within a democratic polity. However, this multicultural agenda of inter-group equality must be factored along with the concern for intra-group equality. Without the latter it may become a hindrance to, rather than a support for, the struggles for democracy. This is clearly indicated when the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), an actual political party seeks to empower West Bengal's ethnic Nepalis and once led a separatist uprising, the Gorkhaland Movement was established by Nepalese people to seek the establishment of an autonomous Nepalese state within India. This ethnic tension is still going on in the region till today where they are make troubled for a separate Gorkhaland.

The author is keenly aware that she lives and writes in a divided world—divided not only by nationalisms and colonialisms, but also by gender, class and ethnic affiliations. Trying to speak to and about multiple sectors of a global reading public spread across entrenched divides of ideology and identity is not easy. At the same time, for an immigrant writer, someone who lives in one place but writes about another, communicating across such divides is a risk well worth taking. All of these are presented by Desai as fully realized and ultimately frail human beings in recognizable search for love and happiness. Most of the time she merges cultural environments to create a complex and confusing setting for her characters. The characters in the book are in one way or another 'displaced'. They hold on to a questionable or mistaken identity and are unable to define themselves in another, more positive way. They feel inferior bounded and defeated by their Indian heritage; develop complexities which ruin their relationship. With a keen eye for telling detail and profound wisdom.

Three-Way Narrative Split

This novel presents us with a three-way narrative split, relating the stories of the sixteen-year-old Sai, her bitter grandfather and Biju, their cook's son, who tries to make his way as an illegal migrant worker in New York. This narrative split provides us with an interesting view point from which to view two very different sides of the same problem, as Biju's negotiation of his identity as an illegal immigrant in a foreign city is contrasted with the more complex situation

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K. Manisekaran

Cosmic - Multiculturalism in the Novel of Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

of Sai and her grandfather who find themselves as strangers in their homeland due to their education, language and wealth. On two opposite ends of the world, in two immensely discrepant modernities, these characters are at odds with their surroundings and effectually in similar positions of marginality and strangeness.

Undercurrent of Globalization

It's a good narrative with the undercurrent of globalization connecting India's Nepal border with New York City. In spite of being set in two completely different places the action is linked by the presence of the Judge's cook's son Biju as an illegal immigrant in New York, where he keeps moving as a cook from one third-rate restaurant to another, hoping somehow, to procure a green card and the consciousness of the fact that the Indo-Nepalis (or "Gorkhas") are tired of being treated like a minority in their own confinement where they are in majority. This is also remarked upon when the man selling Biju his return ticket to India, is trying to convince him that he is making a mistake in going back. To him, it is "still a world ... where one side travels to be a servant and the other side travels to be treated like a king" (TIL 295). Biju is not a traveler who can produce to shuttle back and forth between his native country and the 'land of opportunity'. He also finds occasion to contemplate the differences in wealth between his home country and his host country.

American Dream as a Myth

Kiran Desai tries to unravel the myths about the American dream. That the Indians more than any other community in the world raves high about America is contemptibly brought out by the novelist in a couple of places through intimate dialogues. When Biju expresses his determination to leave the US after he was thoroughly disillusioned, Mr. Kakkar gives a piece of his mind. He says that Biju is making a big mistake by going to India, where he is going to be treated as a servant; according to him, America is always like a king and those who live in America are kingly whereas all others who are living on the other side of the planet are like servants to that king. In a very strong expression, Mr. Kakkar tells Biju, "America is in the process of buying up the world. Go back, you'll find they own the business" (TIL 269). That country (the US) has lots of room. It's this country (India) that is so crowded" (TIL 85). About the US, again and again the cook tells Mrs. Zen, "Best country in the world. All these people who went to England are now feeling sorry...." (TIL 85).

Life in Harlem

Packed into rat infested apartments in Harlem, Biju's life is a juggling act and not at all far from the poverty, which his father believed he has escaped. Unlike the class of Indians who now celebrated their economic success in America, people like Biju jump from one bad job to another, always staying just a half-step ahead of the INS., in despair for them, "Oh the green card, the green card, the ... On TV: A taxi driver appeared on the screen: watching bootleg copies of American movies he had been inspired to come to America" (TIL 99). Biju is baffled at nearly every turn, unable to master the sharp skills that have enabled other immigrants to get rich. When at last he flies home, Biju is immersed with nostalgia. By bringing Biju back to Kalimpong, Desai heightens the connection of New York City with India by devoting a large chunk of her text to Kalimpong's own narrative, particularly the story of the rise of the Gorkha movement. Desai shows us that negotiation of national identity, belonging, and commoditization

are not only features of multicultural formation in the capitalist centers of London or New York, but also in countries often considered on the boundary.

Through Biju, Desai shows how migrants, who “work outside” of their home countries, represent the liaisons to global capitalism. Viewing Biju as the bearer of the commodity, provide through the narrative of Kalimpong's ethnic conflicts, we see that a particular culture is not limited to the nation state. With global migrancy the new status quo, issues of belonging, national identity, and racism transcend national boundaries. Looking at the world through Desai's eyes, we see that it's not just those who have immigrated are affected by the West. In this picture, everyone is affected. The life of the immigrant may be rich, but part of Desai's literary exploration was also to examine the burdens that come with that richness. And it is the complications of colonization and immigration that Desai has explored in her book— complications that have received little focus. Exploring the hopes and aspirations of Sai and Biju, the hopes and expectations of their families, the novel creates vivid pictures of the friends and relatives who surround them, evoking vibrant images of a broad cross-section of society and revealing the social and political history of India (Sinha 2008: 141). With great tenderness and humor. In both places, New York and Kalimpong, Indians live similar lives, conflicted by class and nationality. Untouched by globalization and the prosperity it has brought into one class of Indians; people like the cook and Gyan find the vestiges of colonialism in their unchanging poverty, in the unbreachable power imbalance. With a narrative voice that sparkles with compassion at this imbalance, Desai leads the reader into the inner lives of the poor, within the country where they are born.

Reality and Relevance of Personal Journeys

When talking of the characters in *The Inheritance of Loss*, and of her own life, she says, “The characters of my story are entirely fictional, but these journeys (of her grandparents) as well as my own provided insight into what it means to travel between East and West and it is that I wanted to capture. The fact that I live in this particular life is no accident. It was my inheritance” (www.bbc.co). Jemu, Lola, Pixie, Noni, Biju, Cook, Sai, Gyan all generic characters, reflect the pain of transition. Biju's frustration on his experience in America is almost similar to the judge's first experience in Britain. He realizes the emptiness and meaninglessness of himself and he likes people who are struggling to eke out a living, leaving their loving families. Cosmic Multiculturalism can be seen as an ethno-political movement to built against western culture and civilization under the mantle of “cultural diversity” while it also can be seen as a separation or cultural nihilism which deepens the gaps between individuals. In Desai we see multiculturalism as a separation, which is viewed as destructive, unavoidably leading their country to cultural struggle.

The unsolvable “aporia” (word appropriated by Jacques) for them is: how can we celebrate multicultural differences while keeping everyone together in a country? From this perspective, they believe that multiculturalism is to blame for ghettoizing minorities and impeding their integration into mainstream society. It has even worsened the situation of racial segregation and apartheid. Their struggle for recognition transcend the narrow confines of their community to give birth to a new culture that will allow them to exist as new beings in a new world order.

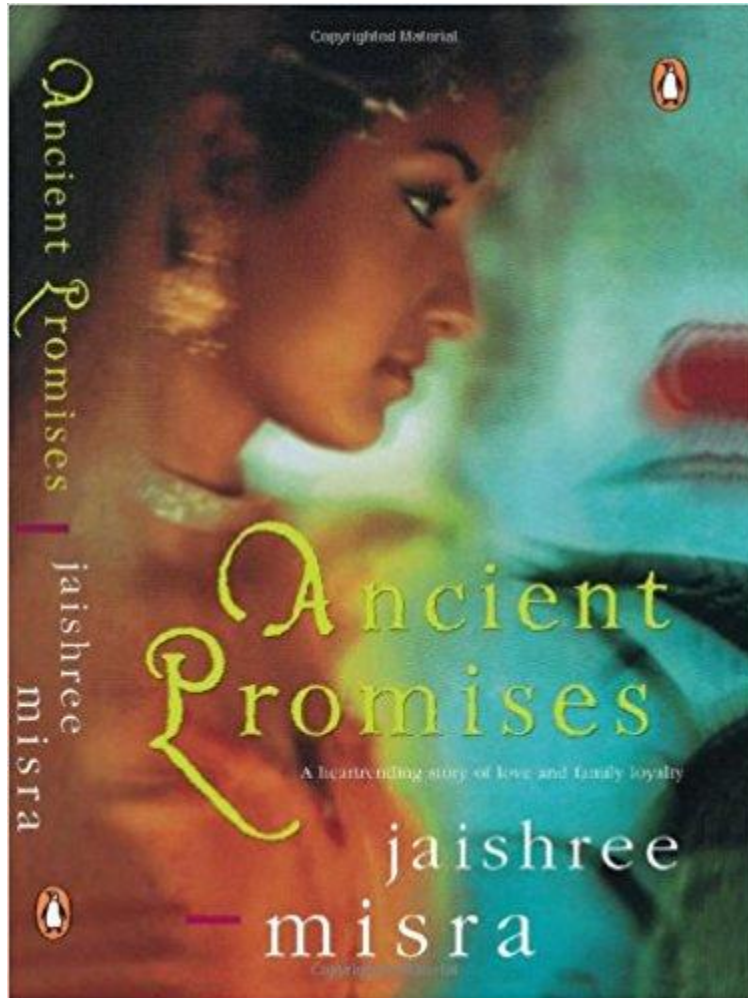
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The Divergent Shades of Domestic Violence in the Indian Narrative
Mila Michael



Patriarchy

The continued existence of mankind through ages is directly linked to the survival of the institution of family, where a man and a woman unite themselves; the catalyst being the term 'love'. By the efflux of time the relationship progresses and continues and to a certain extent gets tied down within the parameters of the definitions of compromise, commitment, responsibilities, obligations and so on. The system or institution of family carved out from marriage have its essence and rules, directly linked with the thought of a patriarchal system wherein definite set of rules define the relationship, leading to gender superiority and leaving the

female counter part to an adjustment mode disempowering her from exercising her capabilities and qualifications affecting her financial and educational independence eventually pressed to settle for lesser independence and lower status in the social strata.

Equality

In the modern society, the most debated word in every sphere of life is the term 'equality'. This term has gathered much significance in the wake of discrimination in every field of activity and the debate on gender equality tops the position. Gender equality can be summarized as the state of equal ease to access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender which includes economic participation and decision making and the state of valuing different behaviours and aspirations regardless of gender connotations. This being a general perception of equality, the term gets lesser degree of importance in a marital relationship due to a circumstance build up on a different footing. But such circumstances should not dilute the individuality, personality or any other aspects of a female, her choice of independence and dreams as a human being and the same is not subservient to her spouse or any other person in relation.

Gender Inequality

In a patriarchal society, the gender inequality in marriage persists which prevents the female from spreading her wings to her capabilities and to enjoy her rights as a human being leading to discord in relationships and discrimination in her day to day affairs. The period of silent suffering in marriages has come down by the advent of time due to the continuous debates being taken up on this issue. The suffering in marriages whether it be physical or emotional, creates injuries and distress to the woman, leaving the relationship with an unhealthy note affecting the different spheres of her life. Even though the matrimonial inequality and the suffering therefrom had always existed, it took about 5 and a half decades post-independence for us to have a serious thought for a legislation to protect the women from Domestic Violence. Over the years, this issue has attained global recognition and the same has been defined undoubtedly as a 'human rights' issue and a serious deterrent to development. The Vienna Accord of 1994 and the Beijing Declaration and the Platform of Action (1995) have acknowledged this issue as an imminent one to be addressed. The United Nations Committee on Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in its General Recommendation No. XII (1989) has recommended that State parties should act to protect women against Violence of any kind especially that occurring within the family. In India the Phenomenon of domestic violence is widely prevalent but has remained largely invisible in public domain. A specific law catering to the issue has been brought in our country only by the year 2005 keeping in mind the fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 14 (Right to equality) Article 15 (Prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion, caste, sex or place of birth) and Article 21 (Protection of life and personal liberty) of the constitution of India, to provide a remedy under the civil law to protect the woman from being victims of Domestic Violence, and to prevent its occurrence. For achieving the said objectives, the Protection of Women From Domestic Violence Act 2005 was promulgated and came into force on the 26th day of October 2006. The term Domestic Violence under the Act has been given the widest of interpretations including actual abuse or threat or abuse that is physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic. The Act provides for the rights of women to secure housing in her matrimonial

house or shared household by passing protection orders by the concerned Magistrates such as Residence Orders as well as Orders of Monetary reliefs from the husband.

Social Stigma of Domestic Violence

The wide spread social stigma associated with domestic violence discourages most of the victims from reporting such instances fearing further discrimination and the thought that “will anyone believe me” had made the issue to be swept under the carpet in most of the cases and leaving it invisible in the eye of the Public Domain. We have two characters ie Janaki of *Ancient Promises* by Jaishree Misra and the unnamed female protagonist of ‘When I hit you’ Or a Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife’ by Meena Kandasamy wherein both the characters go through such trauma in their marriages, suffering divergent shades of domestic violence which a vast majority of women suffers at some point of their lives.

Before going into the intrigue specifics of the violence meted out to the characters at the hands of their spouses, it seems to be an absolute necessity to travel through the deep rooted cultural perception of man –woman relationship in a marriage, and the influence of the societal behavior towards any issues involving marital discords. Women are placed in a submissive mode for their marriage to workout. Society being moulded on a patriarchal influence of thought, normalizes abuse that a woman may face at the hands of her husband in general. The act of forced marital intercourse by itself is not considered to be an offence if the woman is over 18 years of age, rules the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India⁽¹⁾ while deciding the issue of exception 2 to Section 375 Indian Penal Code dealing with rape which reads as follows; “*Sexual Intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife, not being 18 years, is rape*”.

Physical and Psychological Effects

The physical and psychological effects pressed upon the mental equilibrium of the woman is unattended to; as the society lives with a bundle of myths when it comes to dealing with issues of marital discords. It is in this context, the question of equality of the spouse in a relationship comes into actual conflict with the term equality. The female partner is committed to live upon in a marriage with a good girl image to have the sympathy of the society. In most of the cases, the woman’s aspirations, dreams, independence etc., may stand in her way to have a meaningful life according to her wishes within the marriage.

Ancient Promises

The two characters in comparison, here in the light of domestic violence suffered by them in marriage are Janaki of *Ancient Promises* by Jaishree Misra and the unnamed narrator in “When I hit you Or a Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife’ by Meena Kandasamy. Both these characters pass through different levels of sufferance in their marital relationship. Janaki faces abuse at the hands of an indifferent husband, whereas the unnamed narrator is physically and emotionally abused. Whatever the form of abuse, both these women are exposed to domestic violence. Janaki of *Ancient Promises* is one such character who suffers verbal abuses from her in laws unprotected by her husband from such abuses. Janaki is a Malayali Nair girl born and brought up in Delhi, daughter of an Airforce Officer. She is married off to one Suresh of Maraar family, an affluent business family. Her marriage with Suresh only brings her heart break and agony. Her husband Suresh is, according to Janaki – an expert in the art of escape.

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Janaki's husband avoids meeting her emotional needs. Janaki craved for affection from Suresh and his family which was covertly denied to her and after ten years of living with an indifferent husband and his verbally abusive family, chipped away at her self-esteem and worth. The million little things that broke her spirit over the years, the tiny insults, so small and so subtle as to be almost invisible, robbed her gradually of her knowledge of herself. Her husband and his family uses the tactic of gaslighting to make her question her reality. This form of manipulation that sows seeds of doubt in the individual being abused to make them question their perception and sanity is also used on the nameless narrator by her husband. While the nameless narrator is beaten, broken and raped to fit into the model wife of her husband's twisted mind, Janaki is made to fit the mould of the perfect daughter-in-law of the Maraar family through verbal abuse.

In *Ancient Promises*, Janaki is seen as a knick-knack on her husband's mantle piece, she looked pretty but was getting very dusty. Her husband and family were always careful to not break or cause visible cracks on her person, but it definitely caused emotional cracks. Janaki's plight can be directly compared to the Chinese Water Torture, a process in which water is slowly dripped on to a person's forehead, allegedly making the restrained victim insane. Both the characters, not for any reason of theirs, but due to the cultural prejudice netted on to them finds it difficult to convince their plight to persons or authorities who are strictly rooted in the traditional Patriarchal mindset when it comes to marriage and treatment of women within the marital circle. At some point in the marriage, a child is seen as a panacea for all marital problems. Both these characters remain perplexed before the usual set of questions such as: - Don't your husband take care of your necessities? Don't you have a shelter given by your husband when majority doesn't have it? Yes They Do- But ? None of the interlocutors see the plight and emotional sufferance of the characters, their aspirations, or their mental happiness. Both these characters felt reduced to good-for-nothing and dependent and subservient to their husbands and are engulfed in the stigma of cultural hypocrisy preventing them from finding a new lease of life, but it is always easier for an abusive man to find new lease of life.

Be in Conformity with the Society

Trying to conform with what society wants and thinks a wife should do or be, makes the female characters more uncomfortable, unhappy and hopeless. The insensitive question asked by the very society that perpetuates the crime of abuse against women is, "why do they stay in an abusive relationship? And whether it was consensual? Men tend to use physical, emotional and sexual abuse as a weapon to subdue a woman because it is considered the norm of the society, and even elevates the position of the husband. Our society actually empathizes with the abusive husband in most of the cases leaving the status of the wife to be that of a subservient slave who obeys the master.

Victims

Victims in an abusive environment resort to coping mechanisms to survive and retain their ounce of sanity. The psychological coping mechanisms are commonly termed as coping strategies or coping skills. Both the female characters use their own coping strategies to survive in their respective relationships. Janaki survives and tries to maintain her sanity by finding comfort in her daughter and hopes for a better future along with her child by trying to go for a higher education abroad and for getting herself financially placed. The unnamed narrator uses

her persona as an author to create a surrealistic feel to escape when she is hit or raped by her husband. The unnamed narrator and her husband becomes characters in her story, and this is the only way she could make herself feel she is in control of the abusive situation, to escape it. Both Janaki and the unnamed narrator find redemption from their abusive relationships through divorce. We have these two female characters who do not let the abuse meted out to them in their marital relationship ruin their perspective about men and love. We have Janaki who finds peace, solace in the right Man, and the unnamed narrator who still believes, even though it is broken heartedly, in Love.

Legal Provisions

The Law in the subject of domestic violence considers all sorts of violences meted out to a women in her domestic relationship. Whether it be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic abuse. Remedies are also incorporated by way of Protection Orders that could be passed by the Magistrate in whose court the case is brought in. How far this law has achieved its goals in protecting the women may depend on many reasons including the inordinate delay in the judicial process and the technicalities involved therein. But it has definitely opened an era which has created a cause for hope in addressing the suffering of women in a domestic relationship, and the same can lead to achieving radical change in the mindset of the society by getting itself convinced of the requirements of marital relationship by breaking out of the shell of patriarchal school of thought. Law can act as a deterrent, inculcating the wide spectrum of intentions that the Parliament thought of, or debated while passing the law of Domestic Violence. The society has to take its lessons from these aspects to treat the women as equal members of the society in relation to the marital relationship to achieve a meaningful social justice.

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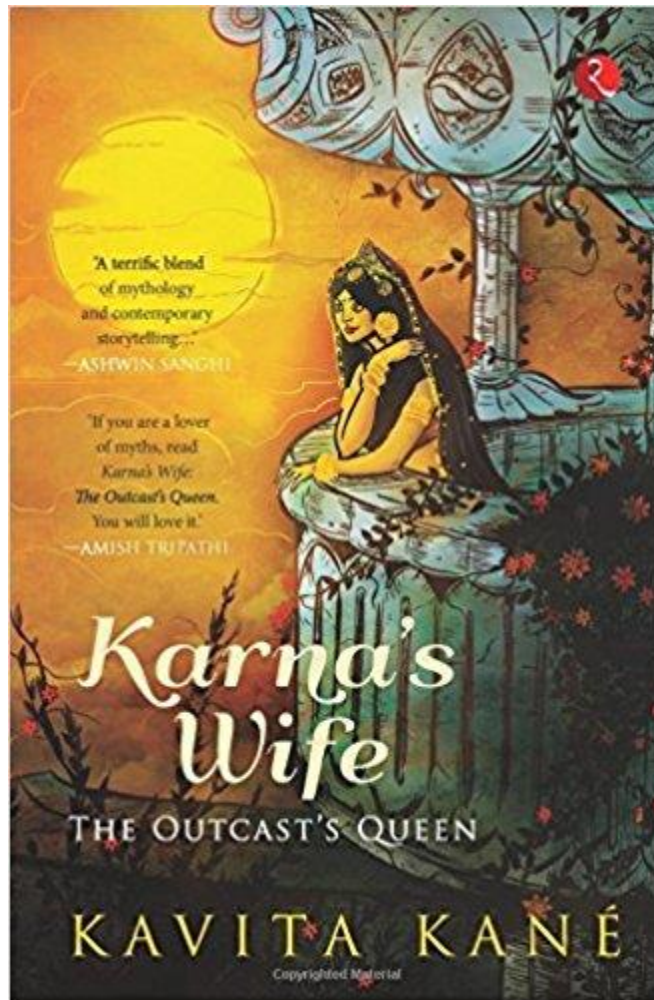
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The Divergent Shades of Domestic Violence in the Indian Narrative

Retelling Myths: A Study of Kavita Kane's
Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen

D. Monisha and Dr. SP. Shanthi



Kavita Kane

Kavita Kane is an Indian writer well known for her writings on Mythology fiction. *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* is the story of Karna, on Uruvi's perspective, which is a unique narration. This novel is a splendid episode from the Mahabharata that brings all the majestic characters alive. Characters play a very important role as the writers use them as a medium to convey their ideas. Most of the writers use the characters to deliver some social

messages to the readers. The images of women in epics are mostly in patriarchal perspective. In modern retelling the epic takes new avatars through the re-tellers' own standpoint like sociological, political, gender ideologies or prejudices.

Mahabharata Stories

Every culture has its own Myths. It is through Myths a culture is being defined. Myths are long stories about great heroes and historical figures, which are in grand style where God, Angels and other divine creatures appear in earthly form. In India Myth is the base of the Hinduism. The Mahabharata is considered to be the world's longest poem and it consists of the episode of *Bahavat Gita* which is the sacred book of the Hindus. It encapsulates numerous legendary stories that are spinning around many controversies. The Mahabharata consists of stories about Gods, Demigods, and saints. It also speaks about cosmology, astronomy, architecture, reasoning and religion. The plot revolves around the vendetta of Kauravas and Pandavas, which gradually lead to the horrific war Kuruksetra.

The complex stories in the Mahabharata enlightens the readers with intricate philosophical ideas which are the seed of Hinduism, this also enriches the religion with the qualities like social obligations and religious standards. This work has greater influence on the fields of Indian arts and architecture. This article is about the fictitious character Uruvi, who is introduced to the readers as the second wife of Karna by the writer.

Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen

Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen doesn't revolve around male characters like in the Mahabharata. Instead it sheds light on the perspectives of female characters and their emotions towards their fellow family members and their surroundings. Kavita Kane emphasis to asserting the identity of Uruvi, who is an imaginary character created by the writer. She is the second wife of Karna, the King of Anga. In Vyasara's Mahabharata no description was given about other wives of Karna except for Virushali. Uruvi is the only daughter of the King of Pukeya. She challenged all social norms and tradition to marry her love Karna, an outcast, a charioteer's son.

As a young woman in love, Uruvi saw in Karna all the qualities of a hero who was not permitted to be one. His flaws made him more interesting. At Hastinapur's tournament when he had outdone Arjuna, he had been openly belittled as a charioteer's son and deprived of his right to duel with the Pandava prince. As the King of Anga, he was inglorious ruler, looked down upon by royalty and the princes. As a noble warrior, he was cast off for not being a kshatriya. As an eligible suitor, he was disgraced for being of a lowly caste, a Sutaputra- as princess Draupadi had pithily reminded him at her royal swayamwara. No, it was not only hard to fall in love with Karna, however unsuitable a suitor he was condemned to be. (13)

Love for Second Wife

Being the second wife of Karna all she gathered was hatred from people around her. Being brought up as a fearless kshatriya woman she faces all her hurdles. She as an epitome of womanhood followed her husband in Kuruksetra war. She moved away from a typical wife and

remained as a moral support for Karna in the war field. She took care of wounded soldiers. It is Uruvi who was affected to the worst because of the tragic death of Karna.

Karna's Wife: An Outcast's Wife revolves around Karna and his love towards his wife Uruvi. Uruvi has been portrayed as a lady who is strong, and who builds her own style of life. She is characterized as a rational lady. She in order to give respect to her feelings and emotions, she rejects to marry Arjuna and marries Karna, as she was totally mesmerized by his elegance and simple attitude. She breaks all the social hierarchies to marry Karna. She is so much in love with him that she is strong enough to lose everything to marry him, "I love him. I want him. I'll do anything to have him and I will make him care for me! I'd even die for him ... there, Ma, now you know!" (24).

Karna marries her by winning the archery competition. Like every woman Uruvi had a great love and passion towards her husband but all she gained during first few months of her marital life was sleepless nights. Being second wife to a man from other class was a challenging task for Uruvi to survive in her husband's home. As Karna's first wife was soft and from the same caste of Karna she was adorned by his family. Uruvi unlike other women accepted the odd atmosphere of her husband's home. She consoled her mom, who was very much worried about her daughter's decision,

'Don't be sad for me, Mother,' Said Uruvi. 'I haven't failed, I have succeeded. You cannot imagine how I am looking forward to my new life. I shall live in the home of the man I love, looking after him and his family. There will be enough strength in me to be his wife and I shall be proud of that. I shall have him, I shall have his children. I shall have my work, my thinking and my other pursuits. I shall live my life simply. When I am old woman, I shall look back on a happy, peaceful life which I dared to choose and live the way I wanted to. What will I gain if I marry a man I don't love and lose my soul? With Karna, I will gain my life, my soul. I love him. I love him for what he is. I love him what he will be.' (21)

Brothers-in-law Attitude

Karna's brother Satruntapa did not like Uruvi he considered her a royal blood and an outsider. "I am not against Karna bringing another bride home, but she's a kshatriya princess, a stranger, an outsider who will never be able to mingle with us. She is sure to disturb the peace of this house. Worse, she may take him away from us" (35). The strongest bond between Karna and Vrushali created a sense of discomfort in Uruvi. In the beginning of her marital life she didn't even know whether Karna loved her. But as days passed Karna and Uruvi grew a strong bond between them.

Uruvi - Modest Lady

Karna's view on Uruvi grew unique he considered her a modest lady with great wisdom and knowledge. Uruvi warned Karna whenever he went against Dharma. She cursed him and quarreled with him when Kauravas trapped Panchali, for which she gained a bad remarks from Satruntapa. All these insults and hurts didn't turn her arrogant but she loved Karna even more. Uruvi showed her strength in being polite and remained soft throughout her struggles and insults becoming a good representative of twenty first century women community. She as Karna's wife

protects him at the same time protests when he commits mistakes. She never dishonoured or left him even when at the times he didn't consider or respect her; instead she stood beside him in his time of crisis. She has been portrayed as a woman liberated in the novel.

A Strong Personality

Kane has developed the character of Uruvi with a strong personality and not as a weak victim. She from the beginning protects Karna as a guardian angel, and does everything she could do, to make him walk in the path of Dharma. Kane has synthesized tradition and modernity to build a golden bridge to make the modern readers to relate themselves to the characters. Kane has given voice to the unknown character Uruvi. It is clear from this novel that the modern retellings help in bringing up the subjugated women voices which were muted for centuries.

This novel advises modern folks that it is wrong to uproot from culture in the name of modernity, for culture and tradition are the backbone of a good society. She through her creation of the fictitious character Uruvi has come forward to give voice to other wives of Karna, who were completely neglected and left muted by the writers of different eras.

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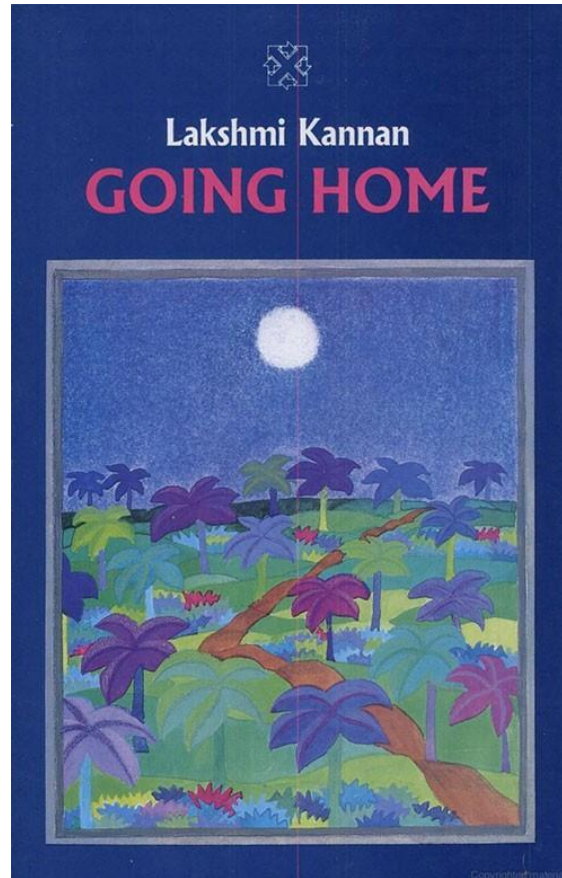
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**Lakshmi Kannan as a Feminist:
A Reading of Her Novel *Going Home***

K. Mugeshpillai and Dr. M. Soundhararajan



Abstract

Lakshmi Kannan is an internationally known bilingual writer, who has written and, published long and short fiction in Tamil and in English translation. This story deals the novel entitled *Going Home*. According to Kannan, Home and identity of a woman are related to each other. A girl's home always plays a vital role in determining the real identity of her. The identity is at stake if home does not carry the meaning and merely remains a word with four walls and a ceiling in a society to her. Sometimes, the people who are around her become hurdle in her path of achieving. What she desires though she is well secured at her parents' house. The question often arises as to where lay the actual home of a girl. It may be often the institution of the

marriage that puts her into the dilemma to remain faithful to either of the house. Freedom and identity are the two facets of a woman's home. Woman is grappling to find her own self as women novelists like Shashi Deshpande, Kamala Markandya, and Anita Desai project in their novels. Their writings are constantly trying to unveil and argue firmly the values like freedom of thought and expression, liberation from oppression and importance of home.

Keywords: Identity, Development, woman's workhouse, and Freedom.

Going Home

Lakshmi Kannan's novel, *Going Home*, is originally written in Tamil in the year 1986 and later translated into English in 1999 by Disha Books. It depicts the loneliness, ennui, existential dilemmas and the feelings of angst, that prevail among urban Indian women. It revolves around the lives of two central women characters Gayatri and Rama. Kannan in her book seems to have raised a very significant social issue related to the denial of property rights to girl children and has even narrated some very poignant and troublesome instances in the Preface to the novel. Through the citation of several real personalities, she has highlighted how such a denial makes the women dependent, vulnerable to servility and patriarchal dominance at the hands of their own kin. The interesting aspect that, she has also mentioned about this novel is that it received bitter reviews from women as their somewhat hidden and unconscious feelings of discrimination had been brought to surface through this work. It made them aware of this stark reality and coerced them to do some loud thinking, which as the author has pointed out also resulted in lot of bitterness. Although the novel reflects the issue through Gayatri, who is unable to forgive her mother, Meenakshi, for letting go of her share in her father's home, "RETREAT", yet it also explores many other women centric themes, which find expression through Rama's character.

Plight of Working Women

Theme is a plight of working women like Gayatri and Rama who had to continue working to meet the economic needs of their families. While Gayatri has a loving and understanding husband, who values and appreciates her, Rama suffers from devaluation at the hands of her husband, in-laws and parents. Working women like Rama and Usha have been projected as beasts of burden by their families. They are expected to shoulder all family related as well as economic responsibilities. Through this novel, Kannan has created strong women characters, who exhibit positive coping. Gayatri copes with the stresses and strains of everyday life and career through yoga and aerobics, Rama copes with her marital strain by immersing herself in work and writing. She finds emotional solace in her relationship with Damodaran. In this work, Kannan has also touched upon the theme of sexual exploitation and harassment faced by working women and the various compromises made by them for their promotion.

Transition from Youth to Old Age

The novel depicts the transition from youth to old age very beautifully. Gayatri's initial desire to possess a huge mansion, like that of her grandfather and her complaints about lack of adequate physical space, gradually paves way for an attitudinal change in her. She thinks about making room for the younger generation, that is her son, daughter-in-law and grandson. Theme

is a progression in her character from a desire to possess things to a gradual renunciation and ultimately a desire to embrace death.

Depiction of All Women

The novel named *Going Home* by Lakshmi Kannan very nicely depicts all kind of women far and wide, cutting across class and caste. It deals with issues of freedom and identity of women within the Indian household. It finds the meaning of home by the portrayals of various women characters. This novel is based on Tamil novel “Aathukku Poganam” and the immediate concern of the novel is the tradition, which desires women a fair share of property and the brilliant exploration of themes of home, exile, and home making at various levels.

Protagonist Gayatri

Gayatri is protagonist of the novel *Going Home* and her friend Rama throws a light on the plight of middle class Indian women burdened with responsibilities and domesticity. The question rises to the readers that does woman happy in the home of parents in her second home (husbands). But both the friends’ narratives reveal their efforts to get freedom from mediocrity that binds them restricts them and become speed breakers in their path of fulfilling their dreams, their duties as a wife, daughter –in – law mother hardly permit them to maintain an equilibrium between all those factors, this vicious circle and leave them frustrated and their angst is seen in their actions. Women are seen as wooden show pieces subjected to male hegemony to quote from Ibsen’s play *A Doll’s House* Nora wanted to be something worthier than doll in the *A Doll’s house*.

Gayatri, the protagonist always becomes nostalgic and takes pleasures in the found of memories of her maternal grandfather house in Mysore. As a child, she often tells her friend “I am going home.” It becomes one of the recurring themes of the novel. She describes minutely every nook and corner of maternal grandfathers’ home in contrast to the flat in Delhi, where she lives with her husband Shankar and Son. According to her that place is not a place to be called a house and compares her flat to a rat hole, which is crowded with things like Sofa – set, few beds, a dining table, chairs, a television and there is lack of space, not only physical space but space becomes a metaphor for her freedom that, she craves to build her identity. The flat in Delhi for Gayatri is not comfortable as her dream. It does not fulfill the definition of home that provides her solace, space to develop her skill of dance and this issue of freedom to give vent to their desires besides their workplace is common and frequently seen in lives of salaried middle-class women in India.

Rama

For Rama, Gayatri’s friend, home remains an elusive dream for her talent. Rama is a writer and socialist, but she finds herself locked in a loveless marriage with a husband who is envious of her fame. The sense of achievement remains partially attained if people who surrounds the life of a career-oriented woman, especially if her life partner himself becomes the biggest enemy and remains indifferent to her as in case of Rama who often feels humiliated in social and literary circles in absence of Dorai Swami a man with false ego. He is the person who is responsible for void in her life in spite of her being successful. Even her writings reflect what she feels within herself. Rama’s novel titled *Driftwood* eventually became a pointer to how she

herself floated on life, not unlike drift –wood. So, writing becomes an outlet for Rama from her frustration. She herself confesses if there is something one cannot speak aloud; if it chokes the throat one can unload her thoughts on paper by means of writing. Rama is the victim of discrimination where she was only the third daughter for her parents whereas Ravi only son was their favorite.

Random Accident of Birth

The status of a woman was governed by the random accident of her birth .The stereotype notion of Indian mothers regarding home is very true, in Gayatri’s case her husband Shankar is very supportive and convincing .Where as Durai, husband of Rama is extremely dominating man is indifferent to emotional need of her.

Home – Physical and Mental

Through eyes of Gayatri, home is a space, both physical and mental, that would help her to develop her skills. One more burning issue of singlehood of a girl, who does not get the match for her at right age she becomes an eye shore in Indian Society for example spinster Sheela. Gayatri in comparison to Rama is well treated by the husband yet craves for space. Therefore, it is significant that women should keep a balance between demands of domesticity, their personal aspirations and highly demanding workplace-Today men should stand by their side so that not only their dignity is maintained but they should become their mascot and they actually get a real home where their personality is enhanced not deteriorated.

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Short Stories in English Classroom at Tertiary Level: An Analytical Study

M. Murali and Dr. R. Narayanan

Abstract

The main concern of a ESL teacher is not only to teach about language, but to develop learners' abilities to make them competent in using the language for a variety of purposes. There is a wide gap between having information and being able to use or deliver it spontaneously for communicative purposes. This paper aims to pinpoint the relevant role of literature as a resource for second language teaching. Here the focus will be on the use of literary texts in order to help students to develop their proficiency in English. Literature supplies many linguistic opportunities to the language learner and allows the teacher to design activities that are based on material capable of stimulating greater interest and involvement than many other non-literary, informative texts. The aim of these activities should be to focus on the form and content of the text at stake, and to provide the stimulus for interaction to take place between the learners among them, and with the teacher. This paper is framed within the communicative approach to language teaching. A modernist text like a novel or a poem, for example, can be taken for teaching English Language skills to the students of ESL. A model followed in the ESL classroom with engineering background is discussed in this paper.

Keywords: ELT, ESL, Communicative competence, Proficiency, Culture, etc.

Introduction

Literature in English Language Teaching (ELT) at the tertiary level can be seen as the bridge between the target language and its soul. It creates a real environment in learning a language with culture. Understanding the culture of the native speakers of the target language enables the learners to fulfill the requirement of communicative competence. The elements of literature such as authentic material, language in use and aesthetic representation of the spoken language, as well as language and cultural enrichment enriches ELT. Those who study or learn English as a second language need a good production of material and practice in learning the second language. It depends upon the purpose of learning ESL. For example, the science and engineering students may study ESL for communicative purpose alone. Joan Collie and Stephen Slater define literature as a source of authentic material in the sense that most works of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching a language. In this sense, students are exposed to a language that is as genuine and undistorted as can be managed in the classroom context.

Language Proficiency Skills

During ESL teaching, the teacher tries to enable the students be proficient in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing with the integrated skill Thinking. Based on the above intention, materials, teaching aids, course plan, practice, evaluation, etc. are produced. Since study of language depends on the main course of study of the learners, the materials or curriculum are designed or produced accordingly. As far as this paper is concerned, the third year engineering students have been selected for the analytical study. As per the Anna University guidelines, the courses on English for Specific Purposes [ESP] are conducted and the materials are followed as recommended by the university. In the experimental approach and model, in order to enrich the teaching-learning process in the ELT classroom, various literary texts were used in respect of the skills required for proficiency.

As far as the engineering curriculum is concerned, it has been designed to enable the students to be competent in English communication. Since the objective of the ESP courses at technical institutions aims at communicative competence, the ESL teachers at engineering colleges have freedom in designing or choosing their own materials for ELT. In that view, I have chosen some short stories from Charles Dickens for teaching ESP to my students.

Methodology

The following short stories were chosen from Dickens for teaching and practice;

1. The Child
2. Somebody's Luggage
3. Going into Society
4. The Poor Relation

In the first class, the students of V semester students of B.Tech. Information Technology were divided into four groups each comprising of 15 students. Each group was given with one story in a printed format and given 30 minutes time to read the stories in the classroom. And for the teaching and testing of Listening and speaking skills, audio files on the following short stories of Dickenson were also used in the language lab.

1. Mugby Junction
2. Going into Society

For the above purpose, a three-period class allotted by Anna University for conducting Communication Skills Laboratory course was utilized. Following is the methodology of the approach.

Objective: To develop communicative competence

Duration: 3 hours

Activities: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

Materials: paper-printed stories and question papers, multimedia equipments

Skill	Aim	Time	Activities	Procedure	Assessment
READING	Attention to grammatical		Reading to Writing and	Selected passages from	Based on correct

a.Intensive	forms, discourse markers, and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationships, etc.	30 min s.	Reading to Speaking Cloze Reading, comprehensive reading, Skimming, Scanning, Quizzes, simple questioning and answering, etc.	the given stories, names of places and characters, to answer questions, to describe a situation as given in the story, oral explanation or description of characters	answers/choice for the writing part and proper delivery and sequence of events, etc. for the speaking part.
b.Extensive	to achieve a general understanding of a text, to build reader confidence and enjoyment and to comprehend main ideas of a text.				
WRITING	Attention to grammatical functions, coherence, To promote skills on expository, descriptive, narrative, persuasive, creative, argumentative and critical writing	60 min s.	Describing characteristics of characters, situations, concept/moral, and creating own concept or criticizing the moral, etc. by writing	Essays, paragraphs, critical essays, choose the best one, fill in the blanks, etc.	Correctness, grammar, coherence, content, etc.
LISTENING	Attention to - Receiving - Codifying - Processing & Storing - Ordering -- Answering - Criticizing - Reproducing - Repeating	45 min s.	Able to receive the message and reproduce/repeat, criticize, to answer questions, to create ideas, etc.	Listening to Dictations, Instructions, casual conversation, questions and answering , etc.	Correctness, relevance, proper and aptness in answering, etc.

	- Recreating				
SPEAKING	Attention to public and private speaking, Group discussion-small, large and peer, describing, proper pronunciation, fluency, etc.	45 min s.	Able to narrate the stories on his/her own way with proper usage of idioms, phrases, etc., able to involve in group discussions, give public talk –among students, answering questions, etc.	Asking to describe or explain about a character and place, narrate the story, seek opinion of the student/s, etc.[oral explanations and answers]	Correctness, relevance, fluency, grammar, proper and aptness in answering, etc.

Response Analysis

The response and result gained through the above approach in ELT at the technical institution is good. It is noted that the students were fully involved in the experimental approach since the literary texts are interesting to learn the global language English in an entertaining way. Following is the result analysis between the models of existing Anna University [ESP] and the experimental method using literary texts.

Conclusion

Literary texts such as poetry, prose, novels, short stories, etc. can help the teachers to approach the students with a humanistic touch. The intercultural differences, habits, dialects, etc. of the native can easily be taught to the students of ESL through the literary texts of the native speaker in an easy and interesting way. For example, if someone says that I met her in white dress in the Western context; it means that she in wedding dress, but it is totally different from the Indian context which conveys the meaning that she is a widow. Hence, it is the duty of the Language teachers to create proper environment and provide learners with interesting English literary texts to enable them to learn the language easily.

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**Collective Transform and Cost-Effective Maturity in
Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Vision of India**

Dr. B. Nainar



Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B. R. Ambedkar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B._R._Ambedkar)

Abstract

Ambedkar was one of the pioneers of social justice in India. It was Ambedkar who provided new dimensions to the concept of justice. We regard him as the 'Champion of Social justice. He was himself a victim of social injustice, faced its difficulties; and he not tolerated the injustice, but boldly fought against them. Ambedkar had a liberal concept of justice. Like Gandhi, for Ambedkar, justice is simply another name of liberty, equality and fraternity. In this sense, the core value of Ambedkar concept of justice is human equality, equal distribution of the welfare materials and discrimination less society. Thus, the spirit of social justice, according to Ambedkar, gives a significant place to mutual sympathy and respect. Whatever he achieved, that would have been possible for his strength of character which manifested his individual charisma. As a statesman, scholar, crusader of downtrodden and above all a spiritual guide, Ambedkar has

left an indelible impression on the Indian History. His contribution to uplift the downtrodden made him a cult figure among the depressed classes. He now lives in the heart and mind of the millions of the suffering people. They now look at him as immortal soul whose memory will even guide the nation on the path of social justice, liberty and equality. Thus, Ambedkarism is of great relevance to Indian society even today in achieving social justice, removal of untouchability, in establishing equality and freedom and true democracy. Democratic socialism is the key note of his political thought and constitutionalism is the only way to achieve it.

Introduction

Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar is one of the greatest figures of modern India who liberated a vast section of the Indian people from the debased, dehumanized, irrevocable condition of divine slavery. That is why; he was called, with devotional fondness, *Babasaheb*, the father by the destitute who goes resurrected into humanity. The Dalit bahujans, pay homage and respect, adore and worship their messiah, Babasaheb. Like the Buddha, he never made any compromise with injustice, never cared for prestige and self-aggrandizement. He was an uncompromising rebel against social injustice and inequality. He worked relentlessly for the regeneration of humanity, for the well-being of mankind, for the transformation of man and society. He was a great social liberal. His vision was to produce a new social order based on the principles of justice, equality and fraternity. Thus, the idea of justice, equality, liberty and fraternity was the crux of his activities. He regarded justice is the foundation of moral order and justice is related with equality. Justice is to be secured through Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Equity signifies equality. In a nutshell, justice is simply another name for liberty, equality and fraternity so far as Ambedkar was concerned. In Ambedkar's philosophy, liberty and equality had a place, but he added that unlimited liberty destroyed equality and absolute equality left no room for liberty. To restrain absolute liberty, equality comes in picture. Equality recognizes equal basic rights of people. Positively, his social philosophy may be said to be enshrined in three words, liberty, equality and fraternity.

Objectives of the Study

1. To Study the Influence of Ambedkar's thought on Dalit's assertion in Indian Polity.
2. To Study the Dr. Ambedkar as a major contributor to Indian constitution.
3. To suggest remedial measures to improve the life status of Dalit's
4. To Study the Discrimination at higher level teaching in Ambedkar's thought.
5. Impact an alternative Economic implication of Dalit's schemes conceived by Dr. Ambedkar.

Methodology

I have studied mainly the primary Sources of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and his writings and speeches published in several volumes by the Higher Education Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, which helped me to assess his concept of justice and equality and his vision to reconstruct Indian society on the principles of justice, equality, liberty and fraternity. I have also used several secondary sources related to Dr. Ambedkar like his biographies, works, relevance and contributions, comparative studies and critical reflection on Ambedkar's socio-political and economic thought written by noted scholars, in addition to that, the Constituent Assembly Debates, Journals, Magazines and Newspapers provided me some understanding about an icon of

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

Dr. B. Nainar

Collective Transform and Cost-Effective Maturity in Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Vision of India

186

inspiration who never rested till the end in his struggle to establish an egalitarian social system in India.

Influence of Ambedkar's Thought on Dalit's Assertion in Indian Polity

In Post-independence India, the dominance of one political Party whose leadership was predominantly high Castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Rajputs, Vaishyas) who had monopolized democratic institutions like Administration, Legislature, Judiciary, Bureaucracy, Ownership of land, Educational institutions and the media. From top to bottom it is controlled by the Caste Hindus. Ambedkar was convinced that the depressed class people cannot capture political power by joining in the mainstream political party. However, he was very much pragmatic and wanted his people to be a ruling Community in this country with separate Political Party. For him, it is not enough to be electors only, so also it is necessary to be law-maker. Hence, he strived hard to evolve untouchables into a formidable force on the political landscape of India. He located the political power in the people. Political power, to him, is the key to all social progress and the Dalits and Tribal can achieve their salvation by capturing political power and organizing themselves into a third party.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had given advice to the people of the Dalit's, Tribals and neglected Other Backward Classes in the country to get together and form a separate political party and organization of their own so that they can protect their self-respect and take their society forward in every respect. The Constitution of free India has made the Backward Classes, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes virtually the masters of the country. Joining hands with the Scheduled Castes for a political party may improve their conditions as SC and OBC constitutes majority of the population of the country. Keeping in mind all these factors Ambedkar formed the Scheduled Caste Federation in 1954, to give more emphasis on the caste politics and secure the interests of the Scheduled Castes. But the poor performance of the party in the first general election 1952 compelled Ambedkar to find out a new political strategy and finally SCF was converted into the Republican Party of India (RPI) in 1956, with the aim to bring together the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes into a single political platform.

Dalit and Bahujan Samaj Party

The term "*Dalit*" is a Sanskrit word. Though the term Dalit represents a broader social category of poor and downtrodden people, mainly the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes but in day –to- day usage in political discourse, the term is so far mainly confined to Scheduled Castes. When the Bahujan Samaj Party came to power in UP, Mayawati strongly attacked the upper caste people for using the term *harijan* in print and electronic media. Due to severe protest from different quarters of Dalit organizations the Scheduled Castes are being called Dalit. Ambedkar's dream to make it a national political party to liberate the depressed classes remains unfulfilled as the party remains confined within different sub-castes of Mahar Community of Maharashtra. The Republican Party of India was fractionalized and its leaders are under the control of upper caste party. Later the miracle of Kanshi Ram gave India to its most powerful Dalit Party (BSP).

In 1971 Kanshi Ram launched the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minority Communities Employees Association by applying the strategy initiated by Ambedkar to aggregate all castes and tribes who were victims of discrimination relating to their social status. In 1983 was used by Kanshi Ram to pave the way for the formation of Bahujan Samaj Party. Finally, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was launched on 14th April 1984 on Babasaheb Ambedkar's birth anniversary. Kanshi Ram Saheb selected the Party flag and symbol as 'Elephant' and 'Blue Flag'. 'Babasaheb Tera Mission Adhura Kanshi Ram Kareng Pura' (Baba Saheb Ambedkar, your mission remains unfulfilled, Kanshi Ram will complete it). The Bahujan Samaj Party is the only representative party of the Dalits, exploited, and neglected, Backwards and poor people of other communities in the country. Finally, BSP became a national political party in 1996, at that time it was in the eighth rank. Mayawati's as a Chief Minister her main political focus was to appoint Dalit administrators in different sectors and create 'Ambedkar Villages' for the overall advancement of Dalit community.

Moreover, Kanshi Ram's effort to transform Bahujan Samaj into a political force was parallel with Ambedkar's policy. Despite of BSP's inconsistent performance in elections the party has emerged as a strong National political party in the era of coalition political scenario of Indian polity. The founder of Bahujan Samaj Party, the torch-bearer of self-respect and humanitarian movement of the BSP, "Bahujan Nayak" Manyavar Shri Kanshi Ram Ji's untimely and sad demise on 9th October, 2006 brought a huge shock to the people of Bahujan Samaj. During his life time Kanshi Ram had declared Kumari Mayawati as his 'political heir and successor'. Ehen Mayawati, the President of the party and Satish Chandra Mishra (Brahmin), now the National General Secretary of the party worked hard in bringing the upper caste people to BSP fold and also set up Dalit-Brahmin *Bhaichara* (Dalit-Brahmin brotherhood) Committee across the state. In 2007 Assembly election verdict BSP found its own 19th government. The BSP government has taken 'New Positive Reservation initiatives' for first time in our country giving reservation for Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, Religious minorities and Upper Castes in the state. The BSP is not against any Caste or ideology.

The Bahujan Samaj Party's Movement is humanitarian movement and it wants to establish an 'Equalitarian Social Order' breaking down the Unequal Social System of India. The unique character of BSP is that in Independent India, it is the first National Political Party of India founded by a Dalit and also led by Dalit leadership. Along with the Constitutional right to vote Dalits, BSP has given them power to vote. It is the Bahujan Samaj Party that given strength and power to Dalits and Backwards people to be a ruler of this country. To what extent did the authority of kings vary over distance and in relation to local conditions of geography and socio-economic organization?

Dr. Ambedkar as a Major Contributor to Indian Constitution

Dr. Ambedkar had imprinted his mark of talent and vision in drafting Indian Constitution. His statesman qualities can easily visible each and every article of Indian Constitution. Ambedkar preferred the parliamentary system in England than the Presidential System in America. Dr. Ambedkar described the role of President as "He is the head of the state but not the executive. He presents to nation but does not rule the nation. He is the symbol of the nation. His place in the administration is that of a ceremonial device on a seal by which the nation's

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decisions are made known ... The president of the Indian union will be generally bound by the advice of the Ministers.

He can do nothing contrary to their advice nor can he do anything without their advice". He strongly supported for federal system. He said "The Draft constitution is, Federal Constitution is a much as it establishes what may be called Dual polity. This Dual polity under the proposed constitution will consist of the union at the center and the states at the periphery each endowed with Sovereign powers to be exercised in the field assigned to them respectively by the constitution...The draft constitution can be both unitary as well as federal according to the requirements of time and circumstances. In normal times, it is framed to work as a federal system. But in times of war it is so designed as to make it works though it was a unitary system".

Dr. Ambedkar supported the minorities' rights that "It is wrong for the majority do deny the existence of minorities. It is equally wrong for the minorities to perpetuate themselves. A solution must be found which will serve a double purpose. It must recognize the existence of the minorities to start with. It must also be such that it will enable majorities and minorities to merge somebody into one. The solution proposed by the constituent assembly is to be welcomed because it is absolutism which serves this twofold purpose". Dr. Ambedkar clarified about the criticisms of The Directive Principles of state of policy as "whoever captures power will not be free to do what he likes with it. In the exercise of it, he will have to respect these instruments of instructions which are called Directive Principles. He cannot ignore them. He may not have to answer for their breach in a court of Law. But he will certainly have to answer for them before the electorate at election time".

Dr. Ambedkar stated about Article 32 that "It I was asked to name any particular article in this as the most important an article without which the constitution would be a nullity I would not refer to any other article except this one. It is the very soul of the constitution and heart of it". Dr. Ambedkar said about independent Election Commission that "the greatest safeguard for purity of elections, for fairness in elections, was to take away the matter from the hands of the executive authority and to hand it over to some independent authority". He remarked about the constitution as "It is workable, it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peace time and in war time. Indeed, if I may so, if things go wrong under the new constitution, the reason will not be that we had a bad constitution what we will have to say is that man is vile".

The Bhopal Declaration

Some of intellectuals among SC/STs and politician, social reformers gather in Bhopal in January 2002 and come with agenda for SC/STs empowerment known as The Bhopal Declaration. Accordingly, ensure that each SC/STs family will own enough cultivable land for socio-economic well-being. The law must be amended to ensure that lengthy litigation with the ulterior motive of denying SC/STs of legal redresses is not resorted to. Enact legislation and enforce the right of SC/STs, agricultural laborers to living wages, to gender parity in wages, to job security, to better working conditions and welfare measures, and ensure punitive measures against offenders.

Enforce with stringent measures the Bonded labor system (Abolition) Act, 1976 and abolish forthwith child labor to ensure freedom with dignity for all the SC/STs Make the reservation quota applicable in all the public and private educational institutions from primary to technical and professional levels. Implement effectively in letter and spirit the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and Rules 1995, especially with regard to atrocities against SC/STs women, and accordingly prosecute the dominant caste leaders and their minions who stoke the fire of caste clashes and the police officials acting in connivance with them.

Ensure that in all state and national budgets allocations are made as per the proportion of SC/ST population and penal action taken against not utilization or diversion of funds meant for these sections. The state must assume sole responsibility in protecting the SC/ST. Make it statutory for parliament and state Assemblies to debate on the Annual Reports of the National and state level Commissions for SC/ST and Safari karmcharis within the following year, and ensure that these annual reports and the action-taken reports of the government are made public. Make reservation mandatory in the private and corporate sector in the same proportion as in the public sector. These are some of the suggestions of the Bhopal Declaration. But unless the mind set of upper caste Hindus changes the implementation of these provisions are not possible. Identity SC/STs and OBC are in majority in India. They should have their own identity in the Democratic society like India because of self-identity all these depressed castes people can organized themselves and fight for justice through democratic ways. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has shown us the path of conversion to Buddhism. All SC/STs and OBC should follow the way shown by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and embraced.

Buddhism will be the identity of depressed castes being in majority they can have their own government in democratic society and use the political power to empower themselves and establish the just society based on the principle of liberty, equality, justice, and fraternity. I conclude with the words of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar that, “turn in any direction you like, caste is the monster that crosses your path. You cannot have political reform; you cannot have economic reform, unless you kill this monster”.

Remedial Measures

Special Central Assistance (SCA) for the special component plan (SCP) is a major scheme for the welfare and development of SCs. Under the scheme 100% assistance is extended to supplement the efforts of the states/ UTs for ensuring rapid socio-economic development of SC specially those living below the poverty line. Allocation for 2005-06 was Rs 407.36 Cr. for economic development of these disadvantaged groups through income generating schemes, special financial institutions have been set up Namely Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSCFDC) National Safari Armchair Finance and Development Corporation(NSKFDC) National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) and National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFDC) The Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act 1955, and the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities (POA) Act,1989 are two important legal instruments to prevent/curb persistent problems of social discrimination, prevalence of social evils like untouchability and cases of exploitation and atrocities against these disadvantaged groups. But as I said earlier that, because of prejudice mind set of upper castes Hindus these tools are not implements in right spirit. The upper castes

Hindus always find different loopholes to avoid the implementation of the Act and therefore, the exclusion of SC/STs continued.

Discrimination at Higher Level Teaching

Thorat Committee was appointed by the government to find out the reported discrimination in India's most reputed All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi. The report revealed that, the struggle that SC/ST students face to enter premier institutions of higher learning seems mild compared to what they have to put up with later. On top of coping with academic challenges and a totally unfamiliar environment, many Dalit students have to deal with the hostility that comes with being a "reserved category student". Most of the students complained that teachers were inaccessible and plain indifferent towards them. The committee found that over a period of time, SC/ST students have moved from their allotted rooms to be closer to other SC/ST students. The one-month of ragging to which the authorities turn a blind eye is sheer hell for these students since they are publicly subjected to caste-based questions, taunts and jeering. Many of the students said they moved because their rooms would be locked from outside repeatedly while they were in, vulgar abuse would be scrawled on the doors and it would be made clear that this would stop only if they moved to floors where other SC/ST students stayed.

They also faced social isolation, refusal to share books and notes and objections to sharing seats in class. As far as SC/ST faculty are concerned, their written complaints to the committee are of a serious nature, ranging from non-filling of reserved posts to denial of opportunities to develop better skills and gain further experience. Similar situations were revealed in the IIT Powai, in Mumbai two years back.

Economic Implication for Dalits

Bank credits to SC/ST to run their own businesses have also declined. Data from RBI shows the amount of credit per capita received by SC/ST declined from Rs 495 in 2003 to Rs 285 in 2011 and further to Rs 225 in 2014. In fact the number of small borrowable accounts of them declined from 77 to 23 per thousand. The Indian system of exclusion on the basis of castes has also been clearly reflected in the National Sample Survey Organization's (NSSO) Report (2014-15). It is revealed from the report that 40.94 % out of total population are OBC, 19.59 % are SC and 8.63 % are STs. Approximately 70 % of Indian population is backward castes population as per Hindu Social Order.

The second important point revealed by report is that, 91.4 percent of STs, 79.8 percent of SCs and 78.0 percent of OBC live in rural areas. The third point is that, the economic growth seems to be reflecting in the expenditure of urban India, which is spending nearly double the amount on an average compared to the rural areas. The per capita monthly expenses of people living in urban areas were Rs. 1052.36 a month as against Rs 558.78 of those in rural areas. With minor exceptions, the general level of spending of SCs and STs was lower than the OBCs and the others, while that of the OBCs was lower than that of others. According to the NSSO survey, the all India average spending by rural STs was the lowest at Rs 426.19, followed by rural SCs at Rs. 474.72, OBCs Rs 556.72 and others Rs 685.31. In urban India, STs spent Rs 857.46, SCs 758.38, OBCs Rs 870.93 and others Rs 1,306.10 in a month on an average.

These are the implications of social exclusion of SC/STs from main stream of development in our country. As an economic organization caste is therefore, a harmful institution in as much as it involves the subordination of man's natural powers and inclinations to the exigencies of social rules. Economic survey (2014-15) says, if people are healthy, educated and adequately skilled, they can participate fully and contribute more to economic development process. However, India's overall performance on human development has been poor in last decade. Infant mortality rate have been much slower than expected. There is widespread under nutrition among women and children and maternal and child health still remains areas of concern. UNDP's global Human Development Report (HDR) for 2005 ranks India at 127 out of 177 countries of the world in term of a composite Human Development Index (HDI) for 2015.

Special Component Plan

For raising SC/STs families above poverty line, there is a Special Component Plan (SPC) under which each central ministry and all state governments are supposed to allocate funds in proportion to the scheduled castes population. According to the Mid-Term Review of the 12th five year plan (2012-13) only 14 out of 37 central government ministries had complied with this.

It is reported in review of the state corporations, the National Institute of Financial Management (NIFM) in 2015 paints a shocking picture. Most of these agencies have parked their funds in fixed deposits instead of giving loans to needy SC/ST it's on an average; their equity–debt ratio was 65:35. The report says that there is widespread irregularity in selection of beneficiaries–cases of submitted lists not matching actual recipients have been recorded. Most state corporations have not prepared accounts for anything between 6 to 16 years. A Parliamentary Committee looking into the working of NSCFDC found that between 2011 and 2014, only 281 SC/STs artisans had been provided loans in the whole country. Another problem is declining allocation and even lower utilization. In the past decade, central government spending on welfare of SC/ST and OBC declined from a tiny 0.005% of the total non- plan revenue expenditure to 0.004%. Plan expenditure for this purpose declined from 2.4% to 1.6% over the same period.

Conclusion

Dr. Ambedkar's was a short life and yet a most remarkable one. He rose up from dust, from being treated worse than an animal to becoming the father of the Indian Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar was truly a multi-faceted personality. A veritable emancipator of Dalit's, a great National leader and patriot, a great author, a great educationalist, a great political philosopher, a great religious guide and above all a great humanist without any parallel among his contemporary. All these facets of Ambedkar's personality had strong humanist underpinnings. It is only regrettable that the press in the past as well as the contemporary has projected Ambedkar mainly as a great social rebel and a bitter critic of the Hindu religion. Critics of Dr. Ambedkar have ignored his basic humanistic instincts and strong humanitarian convictions behind his every act or speech throughout his life. Thus we conclude Dr. Ambedkar was one of the foremost makers of Modern India.

In conclusion, it can be said that this research gives closer and analytical insight into the thoughts of Ambedkar on equality and freedom and provides an answer to the question of whether we achieve religious tolerance, human equality and freedom, true democracy in the society, justice and peace in the light of political philosophy of Ambedkar whose memory will ever guide the nation on the path of justice, liberty and equality.

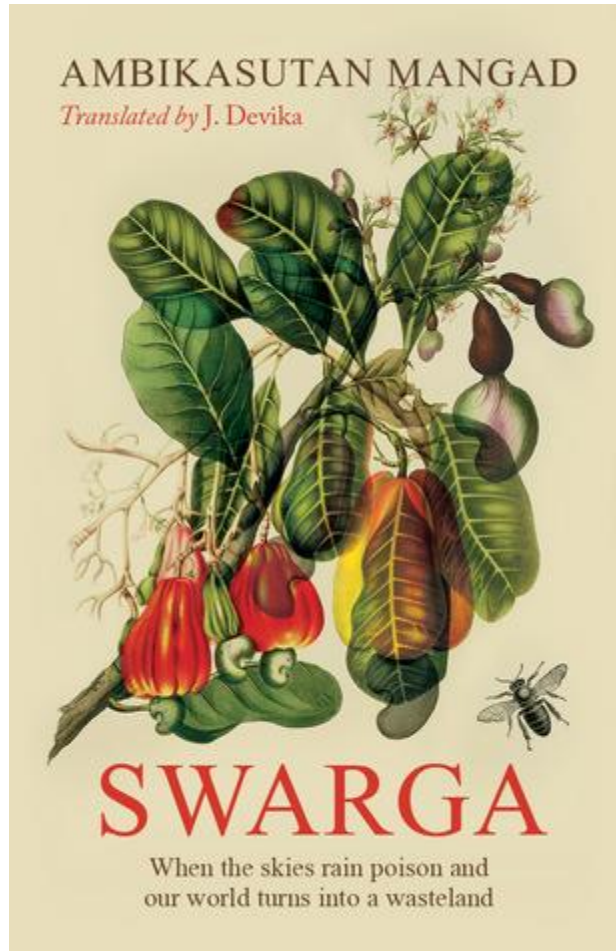
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The Doom of a Generation: A Reading of Ambikasutan Mangad's *Swarga*

Namratha Manoharan



Abstract

Kerala, often mentioned as 'God's Own Country' by nature enthusiasts, is famous for its unique landscape and rich flora and fauna. Of late, its natural vegetation got replaced by high yielding cash crops, with the silent node of administrators. *Swarga*, throws light into the plight of people who have faced the adversities of the deadly poison, endosulfan. This toxin sprayed in plantations got mixed up with the land and water bodies thereby polluting it. Moreover, a generation is begotten, who are suffering from many physical and mental ailments. Thus, a land and its people are doomed with no hope for the future and a dagger perpetually hanging over

them. *Swarga* is a realistic account of this brutal tragedy by an author of the same place, who has witnessed the sufferings of these subalterns and their lone battle against multinational corporate giants. The paper would focus on bringing out the life of these marginalized people and their poisoned environs.

Keywords: Ambikasutan Mangad, *Swarga*, ecology, subaltern, multinational corporates

Postcolonial Situation

European Enlightenment or Modernity, according to Anthony Giddens, prioritized rational and optimal utilization of resources in order to ensure maximum profits, and this also forms the economic basis of capitalism. Even today, this colonial legacy continues in post-colonial nations, as Fanon puts it, propagated by the elite classes of that society. Although power struggles between the colonial master and the native subject has ended with political independence of the colonies, it re-emerges in a postcolonial society in a different form. Native elites occupy the spaces of power once occupied by White masters; and the corruption, oppression and exploitation of the have-nots continues, and this is termed as neo-colonialism. It is manifested in *Swarga*, where the power structures exploit the ignorant and superstitious people of Enmakaje by over powering them with the aid of certain discourses or ideological state apparatuses, thereby exploiting the people, their land, and depriving them of their resources and a good livelihood.

According to Pramod K. Nayar, “we live in a world increasingly lost to pollution, contamination and industry sponsored bio-disaster”, and “Ecocriticism originates in a bio-social context of unrestrained capitalism, excessive exploitation of nature, worrying definitions and shapes of development and environmental hazard.”(241) All these issues figure prominently in *Swarga* and therefore it carves out a space for itself in the list of toxic discourses along with Rachael Carson’s *Silent Spring*. Toxic discourses, a concept coined by Lawrence Buell, and developed by Rob Nixon; undertake to study faulty land claims and environmental degradation brought about by over exploitation of land resources.

Neelakantan and Deivayani

Neelakantan along with his soul mate Devayani, arrive at *Swarga*; which literally translates into heaven, a remote hamlet of Enmakaje in Kasaragod district. They had renounced the city, along with its comforts, turmoils, chaos, and unpleasant life marked by crimes and negligence; discarded their names and identities in order to retire to an austere and pious life, in the midst of exuberant flora and fauna in a remote area adjacent to the mythical Jadadhari hills. They were living there as ‘man and woman’ for some time, until Devayani broke her vow and brought a young child home, whose parents had died. Although Neelakantan was averse towards the child initially, since he detested the presence of human beings around; later on, Pareekshit influences his life so much that he is once more heralded into social activism and becomes a foremost crusader against the deadly poison affecting the region and its youth adversely.

The couple gets associated with the community outside through an ‘Adivasi’ elder, a veteran in traditional healing using medicinal plants and herbs, and who comes there to treat the child of his body sores and premature graying hair. They are amazed when Panji says that he has

been treating the child for five years since the child just looks and behaves like a one year old, apart from having many other ailments. Neelakantan accompanies Panji downhill and into the valley where he is mesmerized by “Enmakaje’s uniqueness- well trimmed hibiscus fences...in perpetual bloom!” (67).

Enmakaje Uniqueness and Diseases

Later on this wonder turns into nightmare when Neelakantan is dumbstruck by the sheer number of diseases and abnormalities suffered by the people, who believe that the adversity which struck them is because of the fury of Lord Jadadhari whom their ancestors had insulted and defeated through black magic: “‘Al’ twenty – seve’’ ouses’ ere hav’ sick people... chil’re’ and bi’ people. Nowher’ else you’ll fin’ o many sick people.’... ‘Jadadhari’s ang’r and curs’.”(70) Even the verdant landscape and its fauna are not spared and the land is bereft of lizards, chameleons, frogs, snakes, mongoose, cockroach and even crows. As Neelakantan proceeds to explore the land seeking a remedy for the maladies which afflicted it, he recognizes that many places regarded as sacred by the native populace has been trampled with- the Seat of Truth, sites of snake worship and sacred grooves which are rich in biodiversity to name a few. He even realizes that bees do not thrive there anymore, adding to the misery of the people who sustained on bee cultivation and the sale of honey.

Endosulfan

A serious discussion about endosulfan comes up at a meeting of bee cultivators and gatherers in Enmakaje. A young man Prakasa, was the first person to dismiss the maladies suffered by people as a curse of God and remarked: “It isn’t Jadadhari’s anger. Eve’ see’ how they spray pesticid’ on th’ cashew plantations on th’ hil’ from the air? *That’s* the reaso’.” (100) Srirama, an agriculturalist and a writer on agricultural practices agrees with him, as it goes in agreement with his earlier studies on the ill effects of Endosulfan. Dr Arun Kumar, the sole medical practitioner of Enmakaje joins in: “... Here’ ever’bod’s’ouse ha’ a patient. No’ jus’ chil’re’... many hav’ died. ... the curs’ o’ thi’ lan’ is tha’ poison. That poison they brin’ year afte’ year in the aeroplan’’nd spray dow’ below’.”(101-02) He had published his findings about the morbidity caused by endosulfan in the *Kerala Medical Journal* inviting assistance from specialist doctors and also promising his help to them in the form of medical reports and so on but no one responded or showed interest in the malady.

Plantation Response

The Plantation Corporation had initiated aerial spraying of the deadly chemical in Ukkinadukka way back in 1979 in the name of the pest ‘tea mosquito’, which according to them brought down cashew production drastically, thereby affecting the revenue earned by the government adversely. When the residents organized a protest march to the Corporation demanding a ban on endosulfan, the authorities disregarded them and dismissed them casually paying no heed to their words by remarking that if human beings are unwell, they should be given the proper treatment. Gradually the aerial spraying of the pesticide spread to other areas too- Saya, Bajakkoodalu, Nalkka, Oद्या, Peryaal, Swarga, Seraja, Uthrakala, Perdala. People involved in the protest marches and those who educated the masses about their plight were branded as extremists, terrorists, naxalites and so on, and on various occasions they were

arrested, tortured and thereby silenced. At times, the pesticide lobby also resorted to brutal acts like killing or trying to kill the people who raised voices against them.

Involvement of Newspapers

Gradually, newspapers started publishing horrifying reports and the outside world came to know about the effects of the poison especially within a radius of four kilometers where aerial spraying was rampantly done - incidence of cancer, epilepsy, mental aberrations, low intelligence, deformed limbs, skin diseases, and so on were widely reported. Although, the District administration and the state government conducted medical and relief camps, all these were a farce since the people in power left the venue soon after the inauguration, citing other priorities, after waxing eloquently about the welfare activities of the government and how committed it was towards the people; without speaking a single word about endosulfan or the health crisis in Enmakaje. The fact that all the verandas of the school buildings, the pavilion set up in the middle of the school ground, and beneath the shade offered by the trees, were overflowing with the sick and the destitute projects the sheer masses of people affected by the chemical in Enmakaje.

III Effects of Endosulfan

Studies have proven that endosulfan was capable of mimicking hormones and could upset women's menstrual cycles as well as the sexual organs of men, thereby reducing sperm count. They were even capable of causing genetic mutations which accounted for the deformities in a large number of new born infants. Endosulfan was even detected in breast milk beyond permissible limits thereby proving that it was not degradable, and accumulated, and passed on in the food chain leading to bio-magnification. Jayarajan, a social activist, managed to collect many reports against endosulfan : "One of those is from US- based researchers. When the milk produced by sheep affected by endosulfan spraying was examined, they found that the highest concentration was in its cream...They've found this poison in cows' milk too. Also in fish, eggs, vegetables... in many kinds of foodstuff. (143)

The harm done to the environment in the name of cashew and rubber cultivation too was beyond reversal since monoculture practiced in plantations destroyed the rich multifariousness of a huge portion of the ecosystem; nearly, almost 600 hectares of land in Kerala itself. Similar environmental damage is brought about in Kerala citing afforestation, by planting a large number of acacia trees across the state. These trees were initially used to dry up swamps in Australia, and are known to increase the acidity of the soil, besides causing various allergies to the people in its vicinity. So acacia trees bring about environmental damage and destroy the fragile ecosystem.

Colonization and Imperialism in a Different Dimension Today

Colonisation and Imperialism carried out by the West is still taking place in an altogether different dimension today, where the land and its material resources are no longer captured by military or despotic powers, but the traditional and indigenous knowledge is exploited and looted away. To cite an example, the 'aryaveppu', a medicinal plant which is known to ward away pests is being harnessed and utilized by western companies who have developed almost 75 patents out of it. They have perceived the baneful effects of chemicals and stopped using it, replacing it with

organic and bio- fertilizers, while thrusting it upon the third world countries in the name of increasing agricultural productivity. So there occurs a kind of double jeopardy or neo-colonisation in the guise of globalization.

Although reports were pouring in from different corners of the world regarding the ills of endosulfan, all these are not enough for the government to stop its further use: “In Sudan, children accidentally ate grain doused in endosulfan meant to curb birds, and thirty-one of them died. In the Philippines, eighty-five people were killed. In Alabama, this was sprayed on cotton fields and it got into the river water, and all the fishes in some twenty-five kilometers died.” (145) It is saddening to note that the pesticide used at the Plantation Corporation estates in Cheemeni was even more lethal. ‘Roundup’, the pesticide used, was just another name for Agent Orange, the fatal poison used by United States in their war against Vietnam. It is also ironic to note that all the hazardous chemicals are named after wars or violence or in language of cruelty- for example roundup, machete, assert, avenge, prowl and so on.

Far from banning endosulfan, the authorities flouted all the laws in the air with regard to the aerials spraying of endosulfan. The natives were not given prior notices, and the water bodies were left uncovered, thereby rendering the numerous streams and canals in the area poisonous: “In Swarga- in Pedre village- alone ther’ are mor’ tha’ a thousan’ surangas! The water flows to you’ house, in an’ weathe’! And besides, thousan’ s of water channels flowin’ ev’rywhe’!... ‘Thi’ abundance of water which’ made this place heaven is wha’ s makin’ it hell now.’(126) Moreover, endosulfan was used indiscriminately for a number of years when the law makes it mandatory that one particular pesticide should not be used more than three years continuously at the same place, since the pests would become resistant to it. It was also not permitted to be stored near water bodies, but in Kasaragod the excess pesticide, following a temporary ban in the year 2000, was buried in the soil in the vicinity of streams and canals. There were no local doctors trained to treat the victims, in case of a calamity and the workers were not given protective garments and respiratory equipments. So, it is clear that the authorities were exploiting the natives, who remained on the fringes, both in terms of geography and with regard to policy making and implementation. This phenomenon termed by Gyanendra Pandey as post colonial subalternization, neglects the people who remain in the periphery, thereby reducing their position to the level of Fourth World citizens.

The fact that Karnataka government has also been using endosulfan in its tea, banana and vegetable plantations shows that the use of endosulfan is not an isolated case in Kasaragod (Kerala) alone. This chemical, under its several brand names would have been used in different parts of the third world countries. The chemical apart from deteriorating the fertility of the soil is proven to affect the plants too, incapacitating plants to draw out nutrients from the soil.

Since there is a nexus between MNC’s, scientists, agricultural officers and authorities who pocket a huge sum from the companies for endorsing the product, the different committees and commissions set up to study about the harms, if any, and the health hazards caused by the chemical falsely testify and do not give out the actual case studies. Even though independent and autonomous bodies like National Institute of Occupational Health, and Centre for Science and Environment under the able leadership of Sunita Narain, had come out with strong evidences

against endosulfan, the committees set up by the government gave it a clean chit. Dr Shanbaug's (Professor of pharmacology at Kasturba Medical College) study which runs into one hundred and forty pages also gave a bleak report, "He stresses that the samples from here contained very dangerous levels of endosulfan. Even if they stop the spraying it will be contaminating the soil and other things for fifty years...the changes to the DNA will appear repeatedly over many generations". (192) The plight of people at Enmakaje is symbolic of Mahabali, the mythical demon ruler of Kerala, who ultimately was forced to sacrifice his land, when demanded by the Lord who came in the disguise of a dwarf Brahmin.

Author's Emphasis

The author, through his mouthpiece, Neelakantan, calls for the harnessing of nature to meet the needs of men, rather than for wealth creation as echoed by Marxist Environmentalists namely, Peter Dickens and Ted Benton. According to them, "species- life or species being is based on the fact that man lives from nature, nature is his body, and he has to maintain a proper relationship with it or die." (247) David Pepper argues that with globalization, sites of production shifts to third World countries, where both labour and nature are taken advantage of, and *Swarga* is reminiscent of this growing trend.

To Conclude

One can conclude by stating that *Swarga*, a faction (fact + fiction) developed along the lines of Carl Muller's *The Jam Fruit Tree*; incorporates shocking and disturbing facts, fictional characters, and draws upon innumerable anecdotes, while relying deeply on mythology to expose the blatant effects of the chemical endosulfan in Kasaragod district of Kerala. The author incorporates the philosophy of deep ecology propounded by Arne Naess, which believes in the interconnectedness of all life forms and natural features, and adheres to ecofeminist spirituality throughout the narrative, by retrieving old myths and religious beliefs in which nature was held in high esteem.

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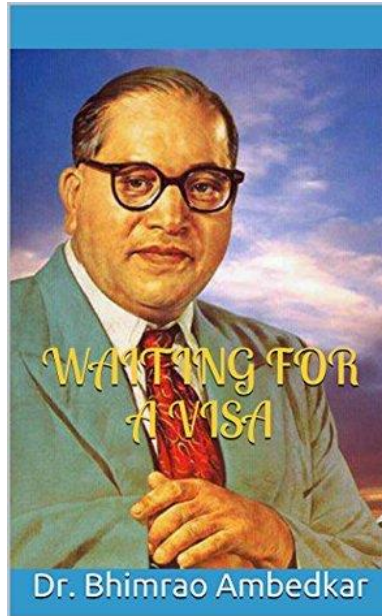
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Ambedkar's Views on Caste: Justice and National Unity
P. Parthasarathy and S. Jeyanthi
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Abstract

Caste is one of the most challenging social institutions of India. It has divided society into various rigid categories. The caste becomes a vote bank for political parties leaving no scope for individual decision-making. The political positions are decided by caste than individual. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar opposed caste, despite being a victim of this institution. His opposition to caste was not based on negative or violent reaction but it is based on humane and rational approach. Ambedkar denied accepting caste as a race or any other physical entity. Caste is not race as there is hardly any racial similarity between the same caste men of different regions. Castes can ultimately be annihilated only by inter-caste marriage, it is also imperative for every citizen to leave aside traditional religious beliefs and teachings that hold sacred and unchangeable.

Introduction



Ambedkar's reflection on caste was maybe based on his social background. Being an untouchable, Ambedkar had suffered a lot from the tyranny of the caste system. These sufferings had surfaced in some of his writings, especially in his autobiographical notes "*Waiting for Visa*", where his childhood experience where depicted. Ambedkar's first academic presentation "*Caste in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development*" at

the anthropology seminar dealt with the genesis and growth of caste; where Ambedkar referred to the caste problem as a vast one, in the academic world is the exhibition of a 'Human Institution'. In "*Essays on Untouchables and Untouchability*" and in his undelivered lecture "*Annihilation of Caste*", Ambedkar described the anti-human tendencies of caste in detail and commented the caste system is not merely a division of labor but it is a *division of laborer*.

Vivekananda vs Ambedkar on Caste

Caste is still a governing institution in India and there are frequent appearances of caste atrocities, which attest its presence and its continuous inhumanity in contemporary India. Vivekananda, who is proudly remembered by Indians for his rational and humanitarian outlook, especially for his lecture at Chicago World Religion said, 'Caste has kept us alive as a nation... It is in the nature of the society to form itself into groups... Caste is natural order; I can perform one duty in social life and you another; you can govern a country and I can mend a pair of old shoes... Caste is good.

Ambedkar despite being the worst sufferer of casteism, put his own views on caste in a different way and it was based on humanism and rationality. In his judgment, Caste is unnatural, inhuman and worthless, hence its destruction is a must for the betterment of society. There are two different points in Ambedkar's conclusion; Caste is not the same as race and caste is not a permanent entity as it is commonly observed.

Caste Is Not Race

"*Caste in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development*", dealt with the genesis and growth of castes in India was silent on the ideas of Aryans invasion; includes Ambedkar concludes his argument on the origin of caste by noticing its most essential feature and he defined 'Caste as an enclosed class which was created by the superimposition of endogamy over exogamy'. In his later writing, 'Who Were the Shudras', Ambedkar firmly rejected the ideas of Aryans invasion and this research concludes that Aryans were not foreign invaders and there is no evidence of imposing the lowest social status to original inhabitants.

Ambedkar completely refuted the racial explanation of caste and it was not race but priestly supremacy, which led to the creation of castes and the foundation of caste was based on the introduction of endogamy-an essential feature of caste. Ambedkar observed priest's i.e., Brahmins who first enclosed their community by becoming an endogamous class, and become a separate social unit. The direct relationship between caste and gender and observed that gender could not be seen in isolation from caste and vice versa. Ambedkar held the crafty approach of Brahmins responsible for the creation of castes.

An important difference between Ambedkar and others, who also held Brahmins responsible for this mischief. Ambedkar did not assume Brahmins as a race-people from the same racial stalk; instead he found the process in ancient India when the recruitment was being individual of different groups into particular Varnas. In Ambedkar's

conclusion, Varna is not a race and each Varna is composed of individuals of diverse segments of society and there was a time when even in Brahman Varna, people from different background could be recruited.

Caste Is Not A Permanent Entity

Caste is commonly observed as a permanent status in a predetermined social scale; the reason behind this belief is quite obvious, there is no case where an untouchable caste rose to the position of Brahmin or vice versa. In his view, caste system though always hierarchical yet at certain level it had never been so static and despite continues feeling of high and low there had there always been instance of the upward and downward mobility of different individuals and castes within the system. Ambedkar (1989; 207) showed one example, which he found in Ambattha Sutta, where the Buddha, an egoist Brahmin on the question of caste, where the Buddha, while answering an egoist Brahmin on the question of caste, started seeking the lineage of that Brahmin and showed him that despite the claim of Brahmanic superiority the Ambattha Brahmin was not in the superior status since the beginning, but had a humble origin. “If one follows up your ancient name and lineage, on the father’s and on the mother’s side, it would appear that the Shakyas trace their line back to Okkaka the Kings” said the Buddha. Buddha’s explanation was not only for the casteist Ambattha Brahmin but it is a teaching to all those who hold their lineage as pure and superior to others as the real lineage of any individual is hardly possible to know and such belief is nothing but a notion.

Indian history has a number of such cases where a lower caste/varna people gained upward mobility. There were many instance degraded into lower social scale because of diverse reason such as refuting Brahmanism by their non-belief in the Varna system, inter-marriages, relations with the lower castes, crossing the sea and importantly, by the loss of political power. Ambedkar discussed the downward mobility of castes in his book ‘Who Were the Shudras’ where he categorically proved that the Shudras were not despised in society from the very beginning, but were one of the branches of the Kshatriyas who later lost their social position owing to the refusal of sacred thread by the Brahmins.

Untouchables were Once Broken Men

Ambedkar believed that the untouchables were once Broken Men and in order to prove this argument he took references from two sources. The word *Antya and Antyaja* which are frequently referred to as synonyms of the untouchables. Ambedkar pointed out that according to the Hindu order of divine creation, it was not untouchable who was born last but it was the Shudra. This argument is absurd and does not accord with the Hindu theory of the order of creation. Ambedkar concluded Antya did not mean the end of creation. This also proves Ambedkar’s argument that the untouchable were not despised from the beginning but were one among the ruling stalk who lost their position by the tribal wars.

Referring to the point why the Broken Men became the subject of hate and abhorrence, Ambedkar searched two causes – first religious and second customary. Ambedkar brought attention to an important phase of the Indian history where Buddhism was once a prominent religion and was followed by important rulers and the masses but later lost its position and became a subject of hate. Ambedkar found instance when the Buddhists had been treated as untouchables he referred to one case from Nilkant's *Prayaschit Mayukha*. Ambedkar also quoted the dialogues of Sanskrit drama *Mrichhakatikam*, where a Buddhist monk was beaten brutally in front of Hindu crowd only because of his following of Buddha's dhamma. Buddhism suddenly became a subject of hate and contempt in the society, which was at the time governed by Brahmanic theology. The relation between untouchability and Broken Men, Ambedkar found the root in the practice of beef eating, which was once common among ancestors of the caste system. Ambedkar said that the Brahmins adopted vegetarianism only to counter Buddhism, which become so popular that it eroded the roots of Brahmanism. The continuity of beef eating by the Broken Men even after the mainstream completely abandoned.

Therefore, because of religious and political suppression, untouchability came into existence. According to Ambedkar, the untouchables are not a separate race but the Broken Men, who were once the Buddhists, and were not only distinguished citizen but also they were ruler of the principalities.

Caste Is A Notion Of Hierarchy

Ambedkar not only rejected the racial basis of caste but he also viewed that caste is not a physical object.

Caste is not a physical object like a wall of bricks or a line of barbed wire...Caste is a notion, it is a state of mind.

It is important that the social position in the caste system is never determined by the worth or race, but it happened in ancient India where the group that first imitated Brahmanic practice gained higher position and those who neglected it fell into lower position. Ambedkar also refers to the case of Pathare Prabhus, one of the backward castes of Maharashtra, who tried to raise their status by following Brahmanic practice of abandoning the widow – remarriage. Caste is therefore nothing but idealization of Brahmanism. Dalits owned different culture such as beef eating, no reverence to Brahmins, comparatively lesser observance of gender discrimination, they were deemed as untouchables in the Hindu society.

Ambedkar understood caste as a notion of hierarchy and he wanted to convert the unjust and hierarchical society into an egalitarian society. However, Indian social system with the theological support of Hinduism has hegemonic belief in caste. Ambedkar's conversation to Buddhism is not simply adopting new gods and new forms of worship; but more than this, it is complete change in one's outlook in every field of life. Ambedkar's Buddhism is fundamentally different from the traditional Buddhism where there is a little space for rituals, rather it is action – oriented and based on the principles

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Ambedkar's Views on Caste: Justice and National Unity

of liberty, equality, fraternity. Ambedkar tries to profess Buddhism as an ideology nothing short of Marxism; and he try to spread his understanding not only amongst his Indian followers but also among his international audience. Ambedkar firmly rejected any hateful move against caste Hindus. Instead, he appealed to all and especially to the sufferers of the caste system to first change their own mindset by leaving their traditional belief and religion and secondly by breaking caste through inter – caste marriages. Ambedkar’s mission is just and this shows a practical way to bring peace and harmony, which is the need of every nation.

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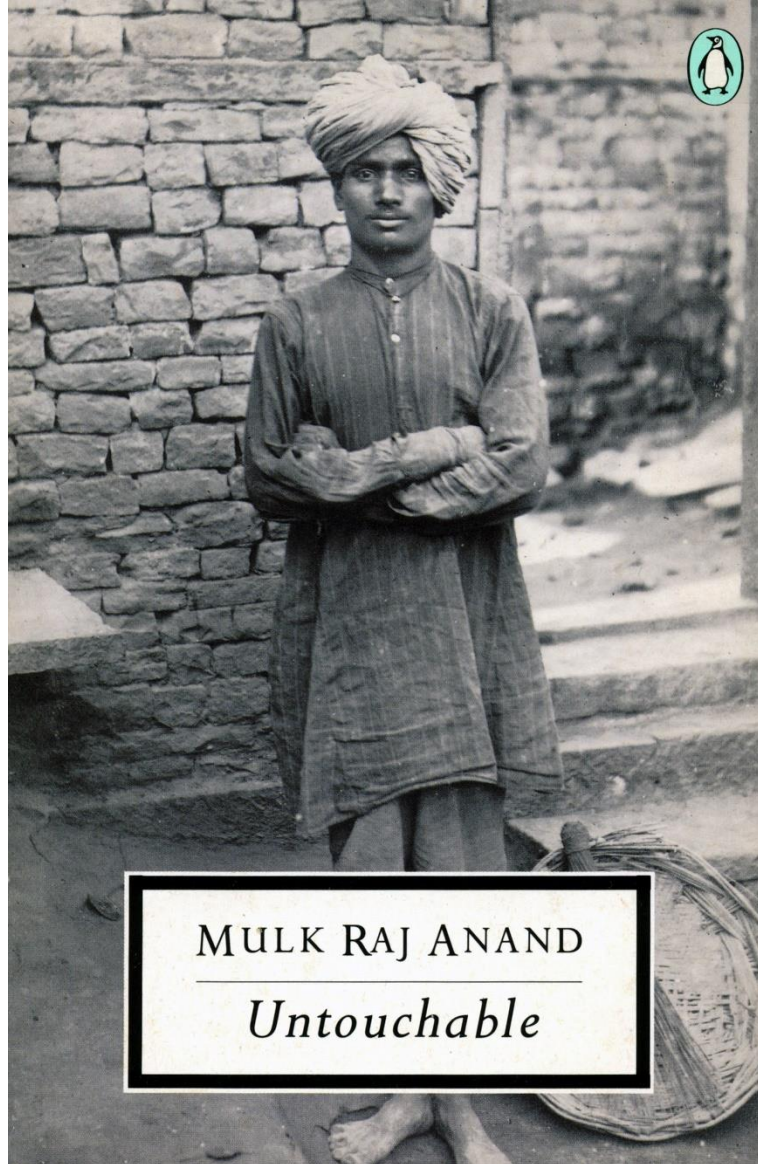
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Exploring the Exploitation of the Young Adult in
Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*

S. Prabu, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. B. Karthikeyan



Abstract

Mulk Raj Anand is a socially committed author. He exposed the real suffering of the groundlings to the world. The aim of this paper is to bring out the social and realistic lives in early nineteenth century in which India struggled for independence. Further, it discusses the exploitation and brutal treatment of the low class people in the dominated society. The novel

depicts the image of untouchable sweeper. His name is Bhaka. He is ill-treated by the dominant class along with his sister Sohini. There are several occasions within the novel that reveal the stark and naked realities in the society. It presents the evil of untouchability and the want for radical sympathy. The reader can notice the humiliation and physical assault still as mental agonies of the untouchables throughout the novel. The equality has been denied to the low class in the name of caste in India. The high class people projected they only born from the head of the God and low class people from the feet of the God. But, God created all human beings as equal. Mulk Raj Anand gave strong voice against the untouchability through his writings.

Keywords: Exploitation, alienation, humiliation, social discrimination, human dignity, suppression.

Untouchable

Untouchable is a social novel which exposed the evil of Untouchability in India. The novel records the experiences of Bakha, who is eighteen-year-old sweeper boy within the course of single day. The sweeper boy, Bakha has the work to keep the general public latrines of the city clean. It is terribly tedious and punishing furthermore as degrading. The novel *Untouchable* shows Anand's sympathies on the unsuccessful person or the weaker section of the society in India. The social Alienation is the significant importance in *Untouchable*. Basically, social alienation is played a major role in Bhaka's life. In different words, Bakha is not completely different from the other individual. This is often the condition, which enables his social alienation to continue in his life. Social alienation exists within the type of a class structure relegates individuals to mounted roles. Anand's condemnation of the class structure is formed on the grounds that a system that labels individuals like Bakha as "Untouchable". It is unmoving in social alienation. Bhaka is literally exploited by the society while cleaning latrines. Sohini is the sister of Bakha. She is sexually exploited by the Brahmin but the dominant society made the people of that village to ignore the incident.

Exploitation of the Young Adult

The primary theme of *Untouchable* is the exploitation of the young adult. Bakha is the protagonist of the novel. The elementary right of Bakha is denied, which is helpful to grow into respectable position in the society. Bakha's life is condemned from the starting point of his life as sweeper regardless his dream to transcend in to miserable existence. E.M. Forster points in 'Preface to *Untouchable*'. Bakha longs to travel to high school but he is aware of that an untouchable man travelling with the high class people to the school is impossible in society. So, he dumped up the dreams of him. If he has had protected childhood, he would have gone to high school and studied like different kids. Bakha detected the ardent, zealous look that lip up the tiny one's face. Once Bakha had "wept and cried to be allowed to travel to school" however he was told by his father that "schools were meant for the Babus, and not for the Bhangis." He had not understood the rationale. It is the education would have created them revolt against injustice. The mental object of the exploited is blissfulness for the exploiters.

H.M. Williams is all praise and admiration for the treatment of the latrine-cleaning category condemned to isolation and deprivation as handlers of excrement. "There are several occasions within the novel that reveal the stark and naked realities within the society." The untouchables are put-upon on such occasion that is ravished and their morale shattered into items. The well incident within the novel affectingly describes the real condition of the low

class people. However, these ill-omened individuals are taken by the high category tangible. Bakha's sister goes to the village well for taking water. She waits to incline touch water from the well, as she is not allowed near to the well for being untouchable. Ultimately, the village priest asks her to return to his house for cleaning. But, seeing no one around, he tries to molest her. The priest tries to seduce her and later blamed her in the public.

The Priest

The priest unrepentantly indicts the innocent woman that she has defiled his faith. Bakha returns home urgently and tells his father Lakha concerning his insult and Sohini's molestation by the Pandit. He says; “They assume we tend to are mere dirt, as a result of we tend to clean their dirt”. If we tend to read the incident from humanitarian perspective, we may say which is correct. The untouchables are weak because the system prevailed by the wealthy people and justice is denied to them. We can see from the beginning of the novel that the lives of Bakha and his sister’s trouble for money, identity and social unrest.

Tragic Experiences

On the fateful day the story of *Untouchable* takes place, Bakha features a series of distressing and even 'edifying' experiences. The primary theme is 'touching' episode. Bakha's frightened once, enjoying the style of Jebebi. He accidentally touches a caste Hindu man and suffered a lot because of the punishment given by the high class people and that 'defiled' man not hesitates to slap him in the public place. The folks gather there too find fault with Bakha. His protestations fall on deaf ears. After this, as he moves ahead, he is alert to his presence in a very public place and takes care to announce his approach.

The crowd's cruelty repeatedly returns to his mind. He painfully realizes his unenviable position of a sweeper boy. He does not have a stepparent. However, society itself appears to act as arduous step-mother as far as he is involved. All of them abused, abused, abused. “Why are we tending to invariably abused? As a result of we tend to are sweepers. As a result of we tend to are bit dung..... They [Muhammadans] do not mind touching United States..... It’s solely the Hindus, and also the outcastes UN agency aren't sweepers. For them I’m a sweeper, sweeper-untouchable! Untouchable! That is the word! Untouchable! Untouchable! I’m associate Untouchable.”

Treated Worse than a Slave

The sweeper is worse off than a slave, for the slave could modify his master. The right is given to him to modify his duties and may even become free. However, the sweeper cannot escape from his work and wherever he is excluded from intercourse and also the consolation of his faith. He pollutes others when in an unclean situation but the people from high class pollute the people by appearing cleanly. Anand presents that a high class man is only clean out side but his inside is polluted like anything in his writings. This novel shows that even though the people born in different places and categories the blood which flows in their bodies are in same colour. The God created us equal but the human divided the people for their benefits and keep them as toy.

Continuing Atrocities

The suffering of the supposedly low-class people still exists in India. The Girls like Sohini has been affected because of the high class people. They only go for work to support their unconditioned family but the high class and wealthy people used this opportunity and

spoiled their lives. People like Bhaka are suffering a lot even in 21st century because the cast system, which is still ruling our country and making cruel thoughts among the people. This cast system makes the high class people to deny work to them. The poor people have to depend on the wealthy man in many situations for yearning money. Even though they get the job, they are not allowed inside the houses of the upper class people. They stand outside of the upper class people's house and do work. The situation which is presented in the writings of Mulk Raj Anand perfectly matches with today's condition. Still, the equality is denied to the people in many villages.

The novel presents the harsh reality and the curse of Untouchability. The manifest plea within the novel is for the entire conclusion of Untouchability. Mulk Raj Anand has designed with the novel *Untouchable*, which is completely unique and articulates the abuse of exploited category through sheer sympathy within the traditionalist manner of the realist novel. Anand has been a good author and he is often compared to Dickens. There is clear ray of seeing India free from all dogmatism, insensitivity, and inequality discrimination, which is a continuous fantastic thing about equality and closeness. It could prevail in our country soon. The people from low class still long for complete equality. Even though they have the skills, they have been neglected and ill-treated by the upper class people in working places.

Fake Lines

The intelligent people had created the fake lines in between the people and ruled them in those days. They told that as control over humanity but today the people strongly stand on those fake lines and say that the lines were truly created by the Gods. Mulk Raj Anand tried to break this disbelief through his writing but it is still grow like an Everest Mountain. The equality emerges when the fake lines are broken down by the people and start to think as all are kin and kith.

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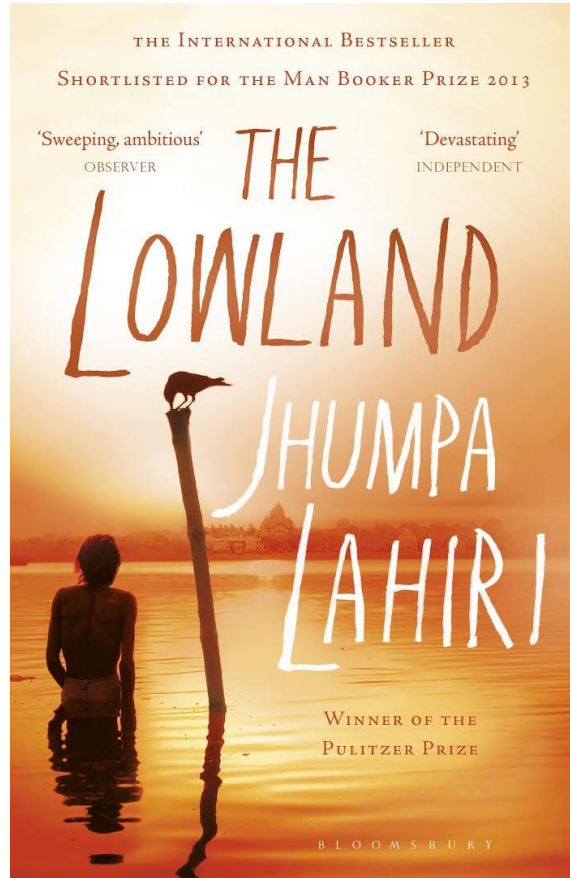
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Identification: An Analysis in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*

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Abstract

Jhumpa Lahiri's, *The Lowland*, traces the fate of tender fraternal bonds torn by violent politics. Lahiri describes the events how the absence of loved ones becomes covertly a portent haunting presence within the subconscious mind of the affected characters directing their obvious actions to their own consequential ways of life. The novel acclaims as the timeless tale of emotions, beliefs, their vulnerabilities, needs and struggles. These are all woven together and brought to life by the simple expression, narrative and multi-dimensional perspectives. The emotional complexity is rich in the novel providing good reading experience. Lahiri's sense of history and its consequences presented in the novel are introspective to grasp human hearts. The present paper reflects on naked identities of the brothers, lovers, father and mother in the novel.

It also challenges the national politics with pathetic desperation and revolutionary zeal and also the hope and despair with devastating stories of passion and indifference.

Keywords: *The Lowland*, Melancholic, Identification, Life, Agony

Melancholic *The Lowland*

The melancholic tale, *The Lowland* is narrated with self-possession and distance. This book portrays gestures, symbolism, impeccable details and the subtlety with which people encounter life. The plot of the novel reminds one the story of a shattered family which is a kind of remaking the darkest hours of history. Jhumpa Lahiri examines the psychological nuances of certainty, guilt, grief, marriage, and parenthood in the book. The novel depicts two young brothers - one being headstrong and the other more conscientious, growing up in the 1960s amid the lowland of Calcutta, getting into mischief that suits boys their age in the background of the partition of India which led to the division of the Bengal province and the infamous Naxalite movement in India.

The novel unfolds various dimensions of its characters as growing older, meeting a bookish young wife who, even in the midst of conservative society, has feministic ideals and crude ambition and a determined and cruel mother-in-law. In this novel, Lahiri compares and contrasts a marriage that is made in love and another conceived for convenience. She contrasts the wet lowland of Calcutta with the coast of Rhode Island. The plot has woven with many complex strands such as intellectualism, battles, civil unrest and the sufferings of the living characters with post-traumatic stress disorder. It tends to compare how one mother lives with torment and agony while the other lives with ambivalence and it also showcases how our own skin moves slowly from a mother's abandonment and understands to live a life of exile. The happenings when people refuse to reconcile with the past and how this haunting past ruins the lives in the present and the realization of happiness is intertwined with misery and agony in the novel.

Confrontation and Shifting

The first section of the novel speaks about a kind of confrontation and shifting between Subhash's scholarly absorption in the estuaries and wildlife of Rhode Island and Udayan's tragedy of modern life such as political injustice and environmental degradation. The silent feel of coastal and suburban New England are captured skillfully with some disjunctural characteristics by the way of contrast, as when Subhash sees "vivid hues of cayenne and turmeric and ginger" (Ranasinha 263) in the autumn foliage. Meanwhile the private lives of the brothers seem to promise illuminating entanglements as how Udayan marries an independent woman defying his family and committed to his own political causes while the timid Subhash who is willing to get an arranged marriage, moves towards a single mother whom he meets on the beach. The brothers seek their identity choosing the lives of their own.

In spite of divergent thoughts, Lahiri explores how love can still be constant though people's lives. This concept suits the life of the brothers, Udayan and Subhash, in which they are tied together not only just by blood and their love for one another but also through devotion to their parents and their shared homeland. The novelist deals with the delves into the clash of

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

M. Pradeepa

Identification: An Analysis in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*

210

cultures and the expectations for men versus those for women. The constant theme of hers is love, its expression and its meaning according to the characters depicted and their unique way of portrayal in the book. She raises the theme of silence and brotherhood between individuals as well as countrymen. In adulthood Udayan and Subhash tries to realign themselves to other people but their past continues to have an iron grip on them.

Focus on the Effect of the Movement

Lahiri stays away from the trap of politics and mainly focuses on the effect of the movement with her characters and their lives that form the heart of the book. At the end of the story, the life of the brothers and the women spot the sorrow lurking everywhere. The pain of inequality, duty and obligation are seen as a means to exceed the chaos of life and brings out revolutionary actions. The people become inwardly, closed-off and unable to count their blessing. The novel is about separate lives, coming together and crashing apart.

The novel does not seem to deal with the movement of Naxalism. In 1960s and 70s, the Naxalite movement is something that touches a raw nerve of almost every Calcuttan who might have lived in the city during those decades. Lahiri thinks of creating a story around it with the local ecosystem of the area inhabited by the protagonists as the backdrop. Naxalism was at its zenith during this period in West Bengal and perhaps Calcutta was the only place in India which saw the repercussions of Naxalism at its worst. Gouri's fate changes when she left Calcutta for America. Hence the past was analogous to determine the personality and identification of the characters in the novel.

Naxalism

Lahiri describes the background of Naxalism but not the pros and cons of the movement. She describes the struggles of the Bengali Communist Party, the reconciliation, immigration and integration, grief and its effects and the evolution of people as they grow from youth to middle age. The political and social structures oppress certain groups of people more than natural human suffering and oppression. In the end of the novel, the author proposes a metaphorical monsoon that hits Subhash to rouse out of his lifelong timidity as showing mud a hiding place. This mud out of the hard rain may provide Subhash new life or drown him. Hence the identification is subjected to every character in the novel those the author has well showcased from the bottom of her heart.

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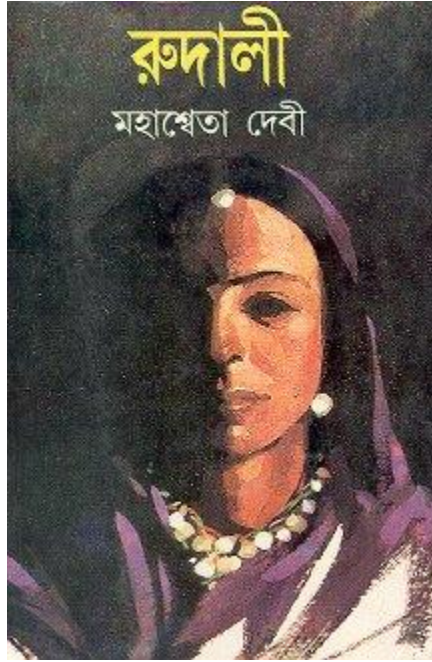
Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

M. Pradeepa

Identification: An Analysis in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*

212

Marginality in Mahasweta Devi's *Rudali*
S. Pragadhipriya, M.Phil. Research Scholar



Mahasweta Devi

Mahasweta Devi was born in 1926 in Dhaka, in a privileged middle-class Bengali family. She is an extraordinary woman who has written and fought for the marginalized tirelessly for the past six decades. She is a culmination of an activist and a writer working for the betterment of subaltern in her own way of protesting against the atrocities on down trodden by the main stream society. Mahasweta Devi is one of the eminent voices in Bengali Literature. Her writings configure more the social problems in her geographical trope. She is a powerful writer who is more concerned with the problems of the social classes which are in the peripheries. Mahasweta amplifies the sufferings of the marginal cases castes and above all the women in these classes and castes. Her characters are the strong and realistic representatives of their respective castes and communities. Mahasweta Devi, at the beginning of the novel, places her central character Sanichari in the area of low-caste with deperate poverty. The problems of Sanichari are also the problem of her caste, class and her gender. Mahasweta Devi's major concern is the social, political, cultural and economic 'down and out' ness of a sect which is inseparable from a society.

Pangs of the Female Protagonist

Further, the author concentrates more on the pangs of the female protagonist who echoes the agonies of other female characters in the text, as well. In fact, Sanchari belongs to the social

marginality which remains far off from the social-cultural and economic focus. Her marginality becomes graver as she is a female and is further dominated by the males of her own caste and community. The same psychology subalternity keeps recurring in her life with the death of her brother-in-law before dawn keeps her away of wailing. Ramavatar Singh's callous nature is revealed in the very beginning of the shortstory, as he locks up all the ganjus and dhushads for a meager loss of wheat. It was a threat to the community altogether that they will be thrown out of the village. The same psychological subalternity keeps recurring in her life with the death of her brother-in-law and his wife. Sanichari is afraid of religious rituals and ceremonials to be undertaken to control her grief. Death becomes relief to Sanichari as the least their own stomachs would be full. The most disastrous thing happens after this which is the death of her own husband, her responsibility to bring up her son and the religious rituals to be offered persist her stone heart to remain calm after her husband's death. In order to appease Mohanlal, she received Rs.20 and put her thumb print on a paper stating that she would repay Rs.50 through bonded labour on his fields over the next five years, capitalist ideology of dominating the lower class people with debts is shown when Mahasweta Devi writes that Ramavatar Singh faced a lot of criticism when he wipes out the debt of Sanichari at his uncle's death. Dominant class in the society wants the subaltern to work like cattle.

Have and Have Not

The author brings together `have and have not` on the same path for neglecting their responsibilities of nourishing their old relatives. Poor do not have money to spend for the medicinal treatment for their old relatives. There is a competition among the rich fellows to spend huge amount on the death ceremonies of their relatives only for the sake of gaining prestige. Mahasweta Devi sidesteps gender issues, patriarchy and more highlights on the community relations. Dulan becomes a guiding star for Sanichari in every juncture of her life steps. After Bikhni's death, Sanichari is under pressure to leave to work as Rudali, Dulan understands the gravity of situation and says to Sanichari, "Look Budhua's ma, it is wrong to give up one's land and your profession of funeral wailing is like your land you must not give it up"

Community for the Weaker Sections

The writer stresses on the importance of community for the weaker section of the society, the community bondage between the poor and oppressed is strong enough for survival of the each and all of community. There are number of examples depicts in the novel by the author about how the poor and oppressed help and cooperative other poor and oppressed in their respective communities. The author portrays with examples that the marginalized men and women help and support each other, on the contrary upper caste and class people cheat betrays their relatives for gaining wealth, money, land, and prosperity. It is impossible for the marginalized people to survive in the village without the support of each other.

Rudali

The text of *Rudali* highlight on the bond aging relationship between women, the relationship between Sanichari and Bikhni is off course close, sensitive, affectionate and supportive. Sanichari meets Bikhni in the market place, where she is searching her grandson is already lost every member of her family, she is free from all other ties and relations. On the other

hand Bikhni is equally abandoned by her son; leave her home with no plan about where to go. She prepares to survive by begging at some railway station if necessary. In every domain of life such as social, financial, caste, gender, age, family these women are tribally equal. Bikhni is delighted with Sanichari's house, she loves a household work, she clean the house, clothes mats and quilts, she fetch water from the river and with little effort start vegetable patch in front of Sanichari's house.

The dreams of the marginalized people are very simple, straightforward and ordinary, but these dreams are never fulfilled. The central character of the novel, Sanichari has a simple dream to live peacefully in the bosom of her family surrounded by the grand-children, she desires to buy a wooden comb for her hair, to wear bangles for a full year, neither of her dreams are materialized. The author devotes much of the text to tracing evolution into a professional team; she also insists that this is a story of survival. The major concern of the text is to establish itself, as reality and not fiction. The harsh realities of poverty, exploitation, the struggle for survival and deaths are exposed in the brutal detail by the writer in the novel. The gender issues are secondary as discourse of class in the text. Mahasweta Devi at the closing of the text comprised the marginalized and the outcaste intervening to the center of the society. The writer throughout the text represented the marginalized voices through central and the various characters. Throughout in Mahasweta Devi's varies fiction women's subjugation is portrayed as linked to the oppressions of caste and class.

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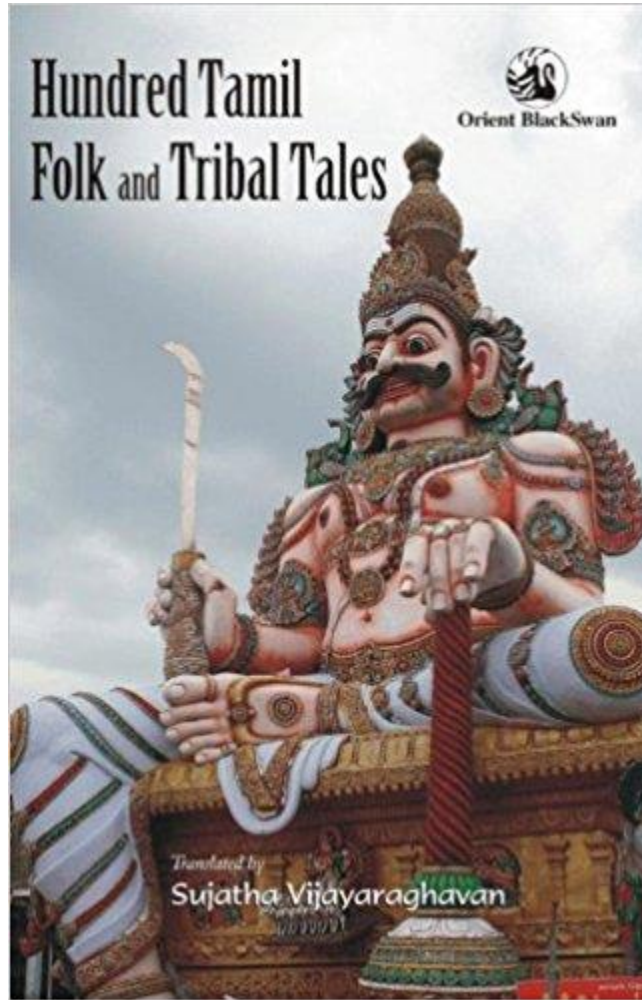
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**The Lost Cultural and Traditional Identity of Indian Lore in Third World & Subaltern Literature:
A Study of Sujatha Vijayaraghavan's *Hundred Tamil Folk and Tribal Tales***

Raghavi Priya. J. and Dr. Laxmi Dhar Dwivedi



Abstract

There is a recurrent theoretical question asked by many theorists, critics, “Is folklore and tribal-lore beyond preservation for future generations?” Using references from post-colonial theory and colonial gender discourse, the researcher shows how colonialism has eroded the cultural, traditional sheen of Indian lore in the so-called context of the third world nation; how

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216

literature is sidelined in terms of third world & Subaltern literature; It also gives an insight into the rich, cultural, traditional system of India as showcased by folk and tribal-lore and how a section of the society scrutinizes this recognition by sidelining the “Other” literature; the subalterns cashing on the postcolonial hangover by silencing it, a literary infatuation that separates our literature from the literature of the west.

Keywords: Sujatha Vijayaraghavan, *Hundred Tamil Folk and Tribal Tales*, *Third World Literature*, *Subaltern*, *Colonialism*, *Oral Literature*, *Folklore*, *Tribal-Lore*

Introduction

There are various types of cultural and traditional practices in India and other places which are interwoven into our society and religion. If we take India alone, it is in a humongous level; and thus, hard to keep a written record of each and every cultural and traditional practice because most of them are found only in oral format. The only way through which our heritage; along with its culture and traditions could be carried forth to the generations to come, was through ‘Folk Tales’ or ‘Folklore’ also known as folk literature, oral tradition, or the lore, and through ‘Tribal Tales’ which were the best way of spreading knowledge to the illiterate and tribal clans, from then to now. It is transmitted by [word of mouth](#) and consists of narrations in [prose](#) as well as verse; it also has poems, songs, myths, dramas, rituals, proverbs, riddles, and the sort.

The recurrent theoretical question asked by many theorists and critics is, “Is folklore and tribal lore beyond preservation for future generations?” as many youths of our modern generation are unaware of the traditional value of ‘Folklore’, because they are not accustomed to it, due to globalisation and as they are living in a fast-paced world based on e-commerce and e-technology. Oral literature and Oral form of telling tales is a tradition which is dimming in the 22nd Century.

These issues can be seen using the post-colonial theory, Subaltern studies and colonial gender discourse found in it for a better understanding of this issue. To embark on this exploratory sojourn, we draw on a piece of medieval Tamil Literature called “Ramayanam”. This epic has a lot of sub-plots based on the folklore of that century. It shows how rich our political and social system was then. It also has lore’s like how the squirrel got its three stripes, the test of fire which gives way to the latter tradition of Sati which prevailed in India, Why one should not cage a parrot and so on. But there is not just one form of telling “Ramayanam” but there are many. It started from the rich tradition of “Oral Tales” even before it was written by Kambar. It had many different narrations of the same story. As each place has added its own traditional and local culture and flavour to the original story, we have as many as “1000 Ramayana's”.

Can the Subaltern Speak?

Gayathri Spivak in her work has asked a very in-depth question, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

Although Spivak acknowledges the "epistemic violence" done upon Indian subalterns, she suggests that any attempt from the outside to ameliorate their condition by granting them collective speech invariably will encounter the following

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217

problems: 1) a logocentric assumption of cultural solidarity among a heterogeneous people, and 2) a dependence upon western intellectuals to "speak for" the subaltern condition rather than allowing them to speak for themselves. As Spivak argues, by speaking out and reclaiming a collective cultural identity, subalterns will in fact reinscribe their subordinate position in society. The academic assumption of a subaltern collectivity becomes akin to an ethnocentric extension of Western logos--a totalizing, essentialist "mythology" as Derrida might describe it--that doesn't account for the heterogeneity of the colonized body politic.(Graves)

What is Folklore in the modern-day world?

Folklore is the body of expressive [culture](#), including tales, [music](#), dance, legends, oral history, proverbs, jokes, [popular beliefs](#), customs, and so forth within a particular population comprising the traditions (including [oral traditions](#)) of that culture, subculture, or group. Traditional customs, beliefs, stories, and sayings: ideas or stories that are not true but that many people have heard or read (Merriam)

Sujatha Vijayaraghavan

Sujatha Vijayaraghavan is a professor of English in Pondicherry University and has written several Tamil novels and poetry as well as translated many into English. *Hundred Tamil Folk and Tribal Tales* (HTT) is one of her translation works. In HTT we see a beaming cause to save folklore and tribal tales for the future generations.

Sujatha Vijayaraghavan is the translator of HTT which is a translation of "Naatupura Kathai Kalanjyam" compiled and edited by Aaru Ramanathan. It is a collection of popular folk and tribal tales from all over Tamil Nadu. Vijayaraghavan has separated the tales according to the the districts they were gathered from and the region of their origin. The tales revolve around themes like "Tribal lore- independent literature", "The carnivalesque", "ancient cities and tales," and "folk dances."

The Lost Cultural and Traditional Identity of Indian Lore

The Folklores and Tribal tales have been an integral part of our culture and heritage. When it comes to Indian folk tales, it is found intertwined in this land filled with diverse religions, languages, cultures, castes and creeds. India is a land where tales and short stories are found in an everlasting range. Indian folklore and tribal tales have a wide range of stories filled with mythological legends, which surfaces from all walks of life. The interesting stories range from from 'Panchatantra', 'Hitopadesha', 'Vikram and Vethal' to, 'Jataka' and 'Akbar and Birbal'. It does not stop at this; it even follows the great Indian epics like 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata', Religious scripts like 'Bhagavad Gita', 'Vedas' and 'Upanishads', which are full of didactic stories inspired from the lives of great men and saints, filled with moral values. Indian folklore has perfect moral stories for children, who have to be implanted with right values. All these ancient stories have been passed from generation to generation, from the old to the young through oral form, creating bonds of traditional values with their present-day generation.

Surely no other discipline is more concerned with linking us to the cultural heritage from the past than is folklore; no other discipline is more concerned with revealing

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218

the interrelationships of different cultural expressions than is folklore; and no other discipline is so concerned ...with discovering what it is to be human. It is this attempt to discover the basis of our common humanity, the imperatives of our human existence that puts folklore study at the very center of humanistic study. (Wilson 101)

Folklore

Folklore is an unrecorded, unofficial, tradition of oral communication by word of mouth from one person to another. It gives importance to both the form and content of our traditions. It embraces all knowledge, moral and ethical values, attitudes, assumptions, feelings, and beliefs transmitted by examples of either real or imaginary stories or a mix of both telling the stories of human and animals. But this richness is lacking in our present-day world as the future generations are fixated upon social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Viber, hike and so on; which in reality are not social in context. The physical connection and contact are lost between a child and a mother, a grandmother and a grandchild; as gone are the days of 'Nila Sooru'¹, when the mother used to feed the child showing the moon and telling stories about Gods, Goddesses, poochaandis², etc. Now-a-days grandchildren don't go to their grandma to hear stories of mythical characters or 'Thalattu song'³. Many times, our rich literary culture is lost in transition because of our failure to retain such knowledge. But due to some pioneer Indian Folklorists in contemporary India like A. K. Ramanujan, and other Indian folklorists like Jawaharlal Handoo, Sadhana Naithani, Anjali Padhi, Nandini Sahu, Mariamma Chedathy,

¹ The food fed to the child under the full moon or just under the night sky, while telling various folk or tribal tales, to amuse the child.

²Poochaandi is the Tamil version of Bogymen. In Tamil Nadu, poochaandi is a word that is typically used to scare children, to make sure they sleep early, or to get them to eat properly. You will often hear mothers saying – "Poochaandi varan. He will take you away." He is given descriptions of someone looking ferocious and scary and who will come and take away misbehaving children.

³It means lullaby sung to a baby.

Gambhari Devi, Verrier Elwin, Komal Kothari, K. K. N. Kurup, P.R.Thippeswamy, , Ki. Rajanarayanan, Dinesh Chandra Sinha, Komal Swaminathan and others; and editors like Aaru Ramanathan, Dr G. Stephen, T. Nadarajan and others and translators like A. K. Ramanujan and Sujatha Vijayaraghavan, we have got back a part of our lost vibrant folklore and tribal tales.

Tales Included in HTT

In HTT we can see the first set of tales from the regions around Cuddalore and the theme is “Gender and divinity.” It includes the popular “Anandayi” tales; the translator points out how Anandayi is worshipped only by women and is a woman turned in to the goddess by the local. In “The Foolish King” we see an Irulatchi becoming a queen and how human beings had direct contact with Gods and Goddesses. In stories like “Who can be Trusted”, “The Creator’s Knot” we see the tradition of village elders being the justice provider to the victims, Just like our Panchayat system.

The story “Speak After You Look Before and Behind You” is a perfect example of how bribery can change even the Gods, It is a story about how lord pillayar sides the monkey which had shattered a sparrows nest because the sparrow told the monkey that it was suffering in the rain due to its laziness. Pillayarm supports the monkey because he of his bribe of one ripe jackfruit “Well! Money reaches even the Netherworlds, if need be” (HTT 23). It is a moral folktale. There are tales that deal specifically with Tamil beliefs and literature. The “Kuttiandavar” tale gives details of the glorious port city of Caveripoopatinam, it also shows the origin of the word city and urban people, as in those days it seems that the name “pattinam” or city only referred to Caveripoopatinam and the people was referred to as “pattanathar”. Vijayaraghavan draws our attention to the fact of “the little canon shaping the big” and explaining how scholars hold the view that the literary classic, ‘Silappadikaran’ “grew from folklore”. In this story, she shows how the cast chettiyar came about and how some rivers and ponds in Poompuhar could cure an illness like leprosy, tuberculosis and one such pond called Agni Kundam at Osarappar temple is capable of curing any level of poison if you just take a dip in it. Till today no one has died of poison or snake bite in Poompuhar. Thus, it proves that there is some kind of truth in folktales and the entire lot of them are not false. It also gives us a rich description of our sea ports and trade.

The series, “The Female Goddess: Consent and Dissent Narratives” shows how women were too chaste as the character Duruvathayi seen in “The God who Tested His Wife”, who lives with her husband who is a chauvinist God in disguise of a man with leprosy as he wants to test his wife of her chasteness. The story “When are you Going to Die”, shows a witty mother in law who wins over her daughter in law without fighting with her. The story “Serving Food in a Clay Bowl” shows how one day we are going to get old and what we sowed will be returned to us by the future generation. “His mother became an old woman in due course of time. The boy who was now married man called his wife and instructed to bring the clay bowl from the banana patch and serve the old woman food in it. The wife did as she was told.” (HTT 54)

“The Smart One”, “The Pleasure with Madhavi” shows the tradition of riddling and placing bets to check who the intelligent one is. “Footprints” and “Beating with the Broom”

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shows how wrong decision skills can lead one into troubled waters. “About Giving Alms” shows us the tradition of giving alms to the Brahmins, which is sometimes misused by that clan. It also shows how one must be generous only to the needy and poor. “A knock with the Pestle” also deals with a similar issue but it is a story which talks about the traditional value of giving food to the poor as according to lore it may even save us our life and secure a place for us in heaven.

The Tamil specifics are also brought in with reference to folk deities such as Ayyanar and Jakkamma, sports such as Jallikattu, and dances such as Kummi. It has 100 tales which deal with Mythology, Moral values, Wit, parables, Religions, Customs, beliefs, knowledge, riddles and songs with values. It shows both the bright and gloomy sides of our tradition and customs. It shows how both men and women can be selfish and cruel, as well as loving, caring and helpful.

Conclusion

There is a distinct identity of our traditions and cultures as well as universality about folk tales. The folktale “The Foolish King” is about a sister who saves her brothers and this tale has striking similarities to that of Hans Christian Andersen’s fairytale, “The Wild Swans” where the girl silently makes shirts for her brothers who have been turned into birds by their wicked stepmother. The story of the jealous neighbour who tries to imitate the journey to the forest and gets thrashed by bandits is another that has universal tones. In “The Tale of Tales,” there is even a reference to “Chakespiyar” (Shakespeare). The chants and songs have been translated retaining the local flavour. Any attempt to document the richness of indigenous culture is appreciable in a globalised world, which is felt to be losing many of its distinct ethnic and cultural forms, languages, and performing styles. Sujatha Vijayaraghavan has spread this book to a wider audience through her translation.

If we ask ourselves the recurrent question asked by many, “Is folklore and tribal lore beyond preservation for future generations?”, our answers would be a big “NO”, because our folklore history is filled with world-renowned tales compilation like The Hitopadesha Composed by Narayana Pandit around a thousand years ago, The Jataka Tales originally written in Pali language by Buddhist monks in 300 B.C, The Panchatantra a legendary collection of short stories from India originally composed in the 2nd century B.C by Vishnu Sharma along with many other scholars. After all these centuries still, they are looked upon as something valuable and resourceful by some of the readers and even writers like A. K. Ramanujan, Sujatha Vijayaraghavan, Komal Swaminathan and others. They are the “Treasurers” of our “Culture, Traditions and Heritage” of our nation. They should be preserved and protected and not discarded as simple third world and subaltern writing. The folklore and tribal tales have universal concepts which are useful to all. It is a known fact that the people of the so-called Third World share a common historical back-ground- colonialism and this subaltern experience makes the themes that the folktale address very convincing and identical.

The translator in her preface, points out how ‘Eurocentric’ emphasis’s is on the text of the other or the third world nations, especially their disregard to folktales as a cheap inferior thing and how “Contemporary folklore studies questions this attitude not only pointing to the

colonial/imperial impact upon research but also upon us, the country, at large where the same attitude kept and keeps the divide alive” (HTT xxiii).

I like to conclude that The Lost Cultural and Traditional Identity of Indian Lore as seen in Third World Literature are reviving slowly but steadily. We must be ready to shed our “cannibalism” and get in touch with our roots, our traditions. We must take extreme pride in showcasing our folklore and tribal tales like the rest of the third world nations. Folktales are the only means through which society and social contact can be formed and through which the subaltern speak.

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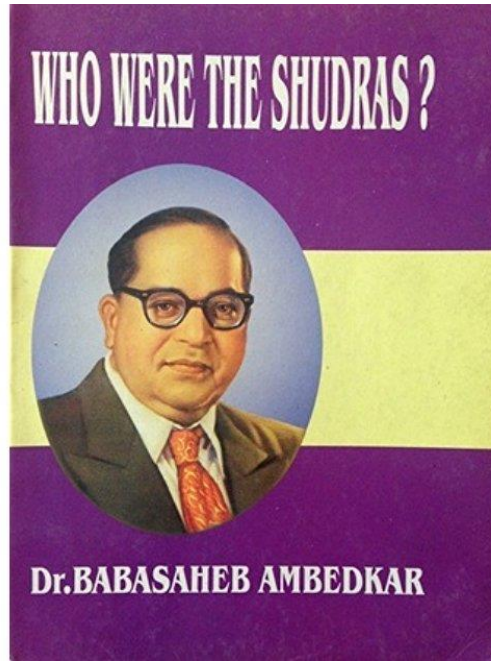
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**Dalit Literature and Dalit Movements Continued Dr. Ambedkar's
Ideology and Strategy**

P. Ranjith Kumar



Abstract

The age-old issue discussed deeply in India for many years and continued even today is Casteism. It is a social evil. Started from Lord Buddha many reformers and thinkers fought against Caste system by using their own strategy and ideology. The very vibrant ideology and strategy given by Dr. Ambedkar to eradicate caste system is "Educate Agitate Organize". Many Dalit intellectuals follow Dr. Ambedkar and his ideology. Many Dalit writers like Sharan Kumar Limbale, Omprakash Valmiki, Narendra Jadhav, Vasant Moon, Bama and Gurram Joshua, etc. insisted his ideology and strategy in their writings. In the same way Dalit Movements like Depressed India Association (Pune), Hyderabad State Depressed Classes Association, Sanmarg Bodhak Nirashrit Samaj (Nagpur), and South Indian Buddhist Association, etc., in India created awareness (Educate) among Dalits and organize them for their liberation. Both Dalit Literature and Dalit Movements agitate Dalits by giving awareness to be one. This paper projects that Dalit Literature and Dalit Movements Continued Dr. Ambedkar's Ideology and Strategy.

Key Words: Ambedkar, Educate Agitate Organize -- Dalit Liberation -- Dalit writers -- Caste System -- Dalit Movements in India.

Introduction

In the field of English Literature in India the current focus of the area is Subaltern Studies. If it is narrowed down, Dalit Literature is the center of discussion. Dalit writers project Dalits' lives and their own experiences in their works. Due to continuous social discrimination based on Castes, there emerged Dalit Literature. Throughout India Dalit Writers register their opposition to Caste atrocity through their creation. This sense of agitation and fight started from Lord Buddha followed by many revolutionists like Guru Nanak, Kabir, Mahatma Jothirao Phule, Shagu Maharaj, Narayana Guru, Dr. Ambedkar, and Periyar. The struggle continues still. The Revolutionists used their own ideology and strategy to eradicate caste system from the society. Among the revolutionists Dr. Ambedkar is the unique personality who dedicated his whole life to abolish caste system in India. He used his own ideology and strategy in multidimensional way to bring social justice to all the Indians. He himself is a multi-talented person. He used all the opportunities perfectly to make India as Enlighten India. At the ultimate, he framed Indian Constitution based on the principle of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Dr. Ambedkar became the inspiration to many Social Activists and Dalit Writers. His ideology and strategy become the manifesto of many Social Activists and Dalit Writers. This Paper projects that Dalit Literature and Dalit Movements continued the Ideology and Strategy of Dr. Ambedkar to bring change in the society.

Dr. Ambedkar's Ideology and Strategy

Dr. Ambedkar intended to implement his ideology like Capturing Political Power, Religious Conversion, Empowering Dalits, Attain Enlighten India and Create Casteless Society etc. He has written many books and spread his own ideas. He used many strategies to implement his ideology. For the empowerment of Dalits he insisted on the revolutionary slogan "Educate, Agitate, Organise". In order to create awareness among Dalit people, he used this slogan. By knowing the value of education he gives preference to education first in this slogan. Being a highly qualified educated person Dr. Ambedkar participated in the Round Table Conference in London in 1931 and fought for the rights of Indians. And his speech got attraction of all the people and press. Out of his experience he suggested that Education must be given first preference by the people.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar established "Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha" on 20th July 1924 at Bombay. The founding principles of the Sabha were "Educate, Agitate and Organize". One of the aims and objects of the Sabha was as under:

To promote the spread of education among the Depressed Class by opening Hostels or by employing such other means as may seem necessary or desirable. (Kshirsagar 82)

This paper discusses that Dalit Movements and Dalit Writers followed Dr. Ambedkar's revolutionary slogan "Educate, Agitate, and Organize"

Dr. Ambedkar on "Educate, Agitate, and Organize"

Dr. Ambedkar was very much fond of teaching. Because he believes that the future of India will be depend upon Students community.

I am very fond of teaching profession. I am also very fond of students. I have dealt with them, I have lectured them in my life. I am very glad to talk to the students. A great lot of the future of this country must necessarily depend on the students of this country. Students are an intelligent part of the community and they can shape the public opinion. (Ambedkar Thoughts 70)

He insisted education with moral. According to him an educated man without character is a beast. That is the power of Education.

Education is a sword and being a double edged weapon is dangerous to wield. So an educated man without character and humanity is more dangerous than a beast. (Ambedkar Thoughts 71)

Dalit Literature

Bama

Bama's *Karukku* is the first Dalit auto biographical work in Tamil. In her works *Karukku* and *Sangati* she insisted Dr. Ambedkar's slogan "Educate Agitate Organize" Education everyone must have. Means of defense everyone must have. These are the paramount requirements of every man for his self-preservation. (Ambedkar Vol. 1, P. 62)

According to Dr. Ambedkar, education has various meanings. He not only sees education as academic one but also a tool which will change the society. Here, in her novel *Karukku* Bama shows education in both aspects.

Apparently it was just the same at the library. They would look at the Paraya lads from Cheri Street in a certain way, with certain contempt. Once, when Annan was signing out his books, he added his title, M.A., on a sudden impulse. Immediately the attendant brought him a stool to sit on, and what's more, began addressing him as 'Sir'. (*Karukku* 17)

In *Karukku*, when Bama's elder brother went to library in his village while in signing he added his degree as M.A behind his name. As soon as the attendant saw this, he brought stool to sit to him. So, education gives respect.

Because of my education alone I managed to survive among those who spoke the language of caste-difference and discrimination. (*Karukku* 22)

When Bama was a student, she was encouraged by her brother, to study well in order to throw away these indignities. She studied well and stood first. Many students from other castes joined with her because of her knowledge. As Dr. Ambedkar said she didn't believe in her fate, but believed in her strength. And she was awarded a prize for standing first among students in the S.S.L.C exam. You must abolish your slavery yourself. Do not depend for its abolition upon god, or superman (Ambedkar Thoughts 70). My final words of advice to you are educate, agitate and organize; have faith in yourself. With justice on our side I do not see how we can lose our battle. (Ambedkar Thoughts 72)

Dr. Ambedkar says that Dalit people should believe themselves. Out his experience he said that Dalits should not depend upon Gods and others.

History shows that where ethics and economics come in conflict, victory is always with economics. Vested interests have never been known to have willingly divested themselves unless there was sufficient force to compel them. (*Ambedkar Thoughts* 81)

Dr. Ambedkar says Economics defeats ethics. Government will only support the rich and upper caste people not the poor and Dalits. So the Depressed people should struggle and fight for their rights:

All the same, because of our caste and because of our poverty, every fellow treats us with contempt. If ever there is a problem or a disturbance, everyone, starting with the police, choose to blame and humiliate the women of our community. The government does not seem prepared to do anything to redress this. So we must take up the challenge ourselves. It's like the proverb that says, if a man sees a terrified dog, he is bound to chase it. If we continue to be frightened, everyone will take advantage of us. If we stand up for ourselves without caring whether we die or survive, they'll creep away with their tails between their legs. (*Sangati* 66)

For a long time, Dalits were suppressed and oppressed. They were treated like slaves. Unconsciously their minds were trained to be slaves. So, it is needed to create awareness among Dalits to protest against their social injustice. Dr. Ambedkar says that we should create awareness to a slave to realize his slavery then only he will protest against slavery. Most of the times Dalits are not aware that they are treated like slaves. So, the protesting attitude should be inculcated among Dalits to break their slavery chains. Once when we were shelling groundnuts, we girls discussed this among ourselves. Subbamma said:

'because haven't been to school or learnt anything, we go about like slaves all our lives, from the day we are born till the day we die. As if we are blind, even though we have eyes. That is why any old dog will make a grab at us when we are working in the fields. But it's only by struggling like this that we can eat; otherwise we have to starve, that's all.' (*Sangati* 118)

In the novel *Sangati*, one of the characters, Subbamma, expresses frustration regarding education. She is one of the daily wages labor. She has to work every day in the fields of upper caste people to lead her family. She expresses that without education though they have eyes they are blinds. So, education is important like light:

On 26th January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics, we will be recognizing the principle of one man-one vote and one vote-one value. In our social and economic life, we shall by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man-one value. (*Ambedkar Thoughts* 80)

If I find the Constitution being misused, I shall be the first to burn it. (*Ambedkar Thoughts* 82)

Dr. Ambedkar shows his agitation. He went to the extreme to burn the constitution when it is being misused.

We who are asleep must open our eyes and look about us. We must not accept the injustice of our enslavement by telling ourselves it our fate, as if we have no true feelings; we must dare to stand up for change. We must crush all these institutions that use caste to bully us into submission and demonstrate that among human beings there are none who are high or low. (*Karukku* 28)

Bama keeps on registering her feeling of agitation throughout the novel. So Bama's works reflect Dr.Ambedkar's Mantra "Educate, Agitate and Organize."

Sharankumar Limbale

Sharankumar Limbale's Marathi autobiography *Akkarmashi* was translated into English as *The Outcast*. The protagonist Sharan an illegitimate son of village Patil, a rich landlord of Basalegaon Hanumant Limbale and a poor Dalit woman Masamai, is the narrator.

Lost rights are never regained by begging and by appeals to the conscience of the usurper's but by relentless struggle. Goats are used for sacrificial offerings and not lions. (*Ambedkar Thoughts* 82)

Dr. Ambedkar motivates Dalits to be courageous as like Lion not like Goats. It creates agitating sense among Dalits and they will protest against social injustice.

I used clean clothes, bathed every day and washed myself clean with soap, and brushed my teeth with toothpaste. There was nothing unclean about me. Then in what sense was I untouchable? A high caste who is dirty was still considered touchable. (Limbale 107)

The narrator Sharan raises the rationalized question which shows his agitation. The writer Sharankumar Limbale registers his agitation through his character Sharan. Afterwards Sharan joined in Dalit Panthers Movement. Dalit Panthers Movement was established to organize all Dalits throughout India.

Political power is the key to all social progress and the scheduled castes can achieve their salvation if they captured this power by organizing themselves into a third party and holding the balance of power between the rival political parties of the Congress and Socialists. (*Ambedkar Thoughts* 45)

Dr. Ambedkar wanted to establish the political party as the third one for Dalits in national level except Congress and Socialists. He planned to found the Political Party called Republican Party of India in 1956. But unfortunately he passed away. Finally the followers of Dr. Ambedkar started Republican Party of India in 1957. The Party was broken into many. Later people started Dalit Panthers Movement to bring Dalits under one umbrella.

The Hindus hold to the sacredness of the social order. Caste has a divine basis. You must therefore destroy the sacredness and divinity with which caste has become invested. In the last analysis, this means you must destroy the authority of the shastras and vedas. (*Ambedkar Thoughts* 78)

Dr. Ambedkar said that Hindu Religion is the root cause for caste. He opposed Hinduism. He questioned God and His existence. He burnt all the Hindu Holy Scriptures. Finally as he

resolved “Though I was born a Hindu, I solemnly assure you that I will not die as a Hindu”, he converted to Buddhism.

He says God discriminates between man and man. He makes one man rich and the other poor. One is high caste and other untouchable..... We don't approve of this God. Nor his religion, nor this country because they ostracize us. (Limbale 62)

Sharan, the hero out *The Outcast* also did not accept Hindu Religion. Following Dr. Ambedkar he converted to Buddhism. It shows the feeling of agitation.

Dalit Movements

1. Depressed India Association (Pune)

Depressed India Association was founded by Ganesh Akkaji Gawai in 1917 at Pune. It came into existence in 1922.

The objectives of the Association were:

- To spread education among the Depressed Classes
- To introduce social reform
- To develop their moral and material condition

In order to achieve those objectives, it conducted many meetings and conferences, opened many schools for boys and girls and run a newspaper to vent the grievances of the Depressed Classes both in India and outside.

2. Hyderabad State Depressed Classes Association

The Youth League of Ambedkarites was formed by P.R.Venkataswamy and B.S.Venkat Rao at Hyderabad on 17 May 1936. Later in 1938 it was renamed as Hyderabad State Depressed Classes Association.

The objectives:

- To organize the youth of the depressed classes under one banner.
- To enlighten the community on the evils of Hinduism.
- To obliterate existing caste differences among them.

3. Sanmarg Bodhak Nirashrit Samaj (Nagpur)

The Sanmarg Bodhak Nirashrit Samaj was founded by Shri Kisan Fagu Bansod in 193 at Nagpur.

The objectives:

- To spread education among all the Depressed Classes.
- To organize all the Dalits under one banner.
- To reform the untouchable society.
- To struggle for human rights.

4. Rajputana Mehtar Sudhar Sabha.

Rajputana Mehtar Sudhar Sabha was founded by Shri Gopalanand Maharaj in 1948 in the conference held at Udaimandir Bhangi Bustee, where the representatives of the Bhangi Community from various places in Rajasthan were present.

The Objectives of the Sabha were:

- To promote the spirit of unity among the community members.
- To promote social and material welfare of the members of the Bhangi community.
- To preach importance of education.

5. Bihar Rajak Sangh

Bihar Rajak Sangh was founded in early 1940's. Shri Nayantara Das was the General Secretary of this organization from 1947 to 1951.

The Objectives of this Organization:

- To educate the Children
- Not to take liquor at least on ceremonial occasions.
- Not to give or accept dowry.

6. The Bahujan Shikshan Sangh

The Bahujan Shikshan Sangh was formed in 1928 at Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. The main objective of the Sangh was to spread education amongst the Depressed Classes. The Sangh opened its first hostel for the Depressed Classes students in June 1948 at Sangamner in District Nagar. It was named as 'Siddharth Boarding'. The Sangh runs Janata High School Pune (1967), Siddharth Vidyalaya, Sangmner (1965), Sambodhi Vidyalaya, Nagar (1962), Siddharth High School, Sangamner (1970), Mahatma Phule Vidyalaya, Ghulewadi (1970), and 23 hostels at various places in Nagar, Pune, Aurangabad and Thane districts Maharashtra.

7. Adi-KeralotharanaSangham (AKS)

The Adi-Keralotharana Sangham was formed in 1927 in a conference of the Depressed Classes people at Calicut. It was led by K.Kelappan and C.Krishnan.

The activities of the Sangham were mainly concerned with the education of the Dalits, freedom for them to walk along public roads, and starting hostels for the Dalits students.

Conclusion

The impact of Ambedkarism could be found in Dalit Literature.

The intellectual class is the class which can foresee, it is the class which can advise and give lead. In no country does the mass of the people live the life of intelligent thought and action. It is largely imitative and follows the intellectual class. There is no exaggeration in saying that the entire destiny of a country depends upon its intellectual class. If the intellectual class is honest, independent and disinterested it can be trusted to take the initiative and give a proper lead when a crisis arises. (Ambedkar Vol. 1, P. 71)

Following the words of Dr. Ambedkar the intellectuals keep on doing their social work through their writings. And Social Activists also keep on doing their tremendous work in order to bring equality in the society. Both Dalit Movements and Dalit Literature continued Dr. Ambedkar's Ideology and strategy.

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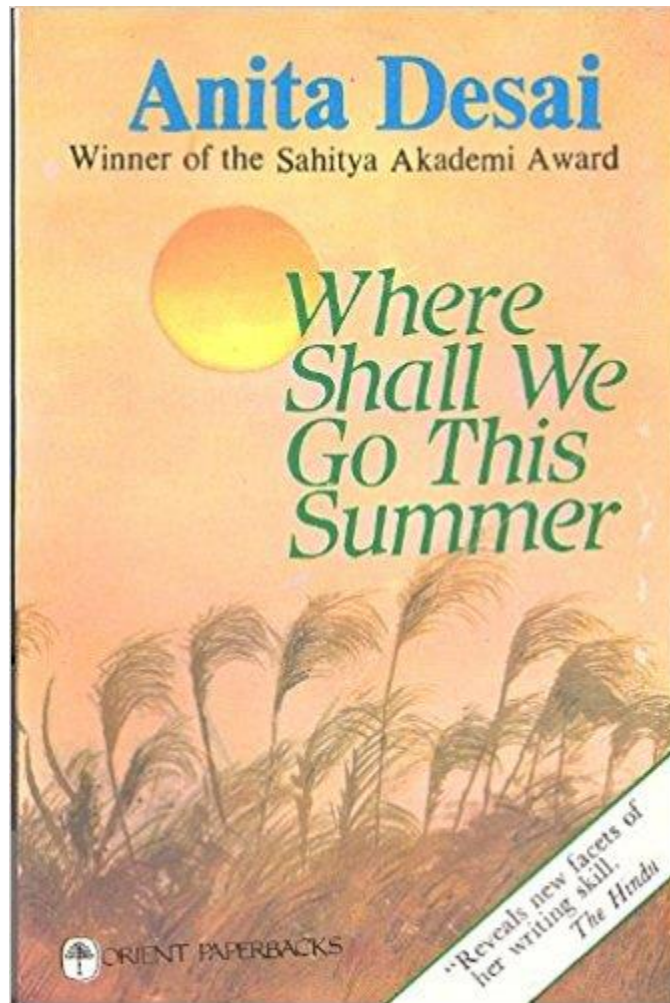
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**Emancipation of Woman in Anita Desai's
*Where Shall We Go This Summer?***

P. Sakthivel, Ph.D. Research Scholar



Abstract

Anita Desai is one of the most famous Indian novelists in English. She is deeply captivated in exploring the independence of women through her novels. Her novel '*Where Shall We Go This Summer*' focuses in various ways on emancipation of Sita who the protagonist of this novel is. It brings forth the strain and intense identity crisis of a sensitive woman, Sita. It shows how intricacy of the loneliness is experienced by Sita who is unable to accept the demands

of male dominated marital life. In this novel, Sita always wants to escape from reality to fantasy. She is not able to tolerate the violence in her daily life whereas Raman is a practical man with a rational view of life. This paper analyses the novel to find out the prerogative aspects of woman in the life of Sita.

Keywords: Emancipation, Liberty, Patriarchal, Marital Discord, Feminine Sensitivity, Female Psyche, Prerogative.

Introduction

Anita Desai is a renowned novelist and short story writer who has much contributed to Indo-Anglican Literature. She has written many novels like *Cry The Peacock*, *Voices in the City*, *Bye-bye Blackbird*, *Where Shall We Go This Summer*, *Fire on the Mountain*, *In Custody*, *Fasting, Feasting* and *The Zigzag Way*. She is known for her susceptible portrayal of the inner feelings of her female characters. Her novels explore anxiety among family members and the estrangement of middle-class women. She has devised a stylized pattern and she has created new concept in her novels. As Tripathy puts it: “Anita Desai possesses one of the healthiest and psychologically most balanced minds in the realm of Indo-Anglican fiction” (1).

Feminism is emerged as a movement for the emancipation of women and their struggle for equal rights. Indian women’s struggle is centered on emancipation from the prejudices governing her position as wife. This involves declaring women’s rights without any dispute to the standard of values. Women’s emancipation continues to take an important place in patriarchal society. Women have faced many problems and the issues of discrimination in Indian history. They are subjugated by male dominated Indian society. As Virginia Woolf observes it: “The history of men’s opposition to women’s emancipation is more interesting perhaps than the story of that emancipation itself” (72). Anita Desai’s novel *Where Shall We Go This Summer* exposes the emancipation of Sita who tries to escape into senseless lonely life.

Sita, the Protagonist

Sita has been pregnant for several months. She is bored with life in Bombay with her husband Raman. She has been hurt in several ways in her previous delivery and so she does not want to give birth to her fifth child. She would keep the baby forever in her womb. She imagines in her mind the process of hospitalization and the procreative procedure and therefore she wants to escape from the quandary. She decides to go to Manori island where she thinks she would be able to live under a magic spell. She considers her visit to the island as a pilgrimage. Anita Desai is distinguished for her portrayal of psychological insight and feminine sensitivity through her female character. As she puts it:

She had come here in order not to give birth. An explanation she had repeated to herself and her husband so often that, instead of acquiring lucidity --- ‘Ah! Oh, *now* I understand!’ --- it seemed steadily more strange, mistaken. Yet she had arrived, she was on the island, in order to achieve the miracle of not giving birth. (28)

Suffering of Middle-Class Woman

Anita Desai depicts the sufferings of Indian middle-class woman through character of Sita. She is a young sensitive woman and she could not tolerate the violence in her life. She is a fidgety, receptive woman with unstable mind. She does not want to face responsibility of a family woman and so wants to escape from realism. Her inability to adjust with society makes her feel isolated. She experiences strange aloneness and restiveness in her life. She finds her life dull and tedious. She is fed up with her life and she always spends her time standing on the balcony and looking out at the sea. But Raman is a realistic man and he is very busy in his business. He pays much attention to his business without caring his wife. He does not fulfill her wishes and ignores her feelings. She is dissatisfied with her husband and she has marital friction with him. Anita Desai here presents marital disharmony which is existing in tradition bound male dominated Indian society. As R.K. Gupta comments:

The marital discord between Raman and Sita is based on the conflict of values, of principles, of faith even, or between normal, double social standards and the iconoclastic temperament of uncompromising honesty. (109)

Sita feels herself dull dreariness and hopeless dissatisfaction in her life. She finds her surroundings too horrible and nasty to survive with. The incidents such as fighting of her children with one another, ayahs quarreling on the streets, tearing beautiful pictures to pieces by Menaka make her unhappy. These activities appear to her as mad and meaningless. It paves a way for psychological conflicts and problems into her mind. She tried to save a wounded eagle from the attack by a horde of rapacious crows. As M. Maini Meitei puts it: "Sita's words "perhaps it flew away?" against her husband's caustic remark that her eagle has been eaten by the crows, suggests the future course of her action following her defeat and loss of identity"(35). She does not want to deliver her fifth child in a world of violence and disgust where "a woman who had once stood all day on the balcony, keeping away the crows that were attacking a wounded eagle on a neighboring roof top, and who winced dreadfully every time she heard a child cry" (31).

Sita is distressed with her husband and begins to rise up against her family. She is woman of deep emotion and fine sensitivity who is ensnared in marriage with Raman. She agrees for the marriage with Raman hoping that it would be relief from the droning life in Manori. She is married to Raman not for true love and affection but for pity and lust. As Anita Desai writes it:

When Deedar's son came to cremate her father, shut the house, fetch her away, send her to college, install her in a college hostel and finally – out of pity, out of lust, out of sudden will for adventure, and because it was inevitable married her. (89)

After the marriage, Sita and Raman live in small flat. Her urban life in Bombay is entirely different from the rural life under the protection of her father. After taken away from her native place, she expects more love and affection from her husband. She wants to live alone with her husband away from his friends and visitors. Raman's friends, businessmen and visitors come to meet him. Raman respects them with happiness but he ignores the feelings of Sita. She is quite disgusted with them and she remarks them as:

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They are nothing – nothing but appetite and sex. Only food, sex and money matter. Animals’. ‘I thought you liked animals.’ ‘My pet animals – or wild animals in the forest, yes. But these are neither – they are like pariahs you see in the streets, hanging about drains and dustbins, waiting to pounced and kill and eat. (43)

Sita hates Raman for his lack of feeling and she scorns the subhuman placidity, sluggishness, and the routine life in her family. She remains restive and discontented with her monotonous domestic life. She often sits alone smoking gas if waiting for someone. As Anita Desai observes it: “She sat there smoking, not even looking at the sea any more, till he exclaimed, ‘Bored? How? Why? With What?’ and could not begin to comprehend her boredom” (32). Her trip to Manori is the result of her wish to indulge in dream rather than to face reality. She isolates herself from the daily activities as a homemaker. She thinks that illusion is only alternative to escape from the existed rules of family and society. Her frustration and havoc atmosphere in Bombay drive her to the island, Manori. After sometimes, she realizes that her effort from the harsh reality of the world proves to be failure. As she says: “I think’ she said, going back to the suitcase and the filling of it, ‘what I’m doing is trying to escape from madness here, escape to a place where it might be possible to be sane again” (32).

Sita came to Manori after twenty years to fulfill her desire. She considers her visit to the island as place of shelter from the tedious life of Bombay. Sita recollects her father’s dubious life and accomplishments. She is disturbed by her daughter, Menaka’s tearing to shreds her fine drawings and her son, Karan’s arranging blocks laboriously and then tumbling them down. She could not get any satisfaction in the island and she is unable to achieve compatibility there. She experiences turbulence and conflict instead of tranquility and harmony. She initially escapes from reality later settles to the situations. As Hariom Prasad puts it: “Sita has come to accept the prosaic nature of life which runs through difficult human situations in different ways. She finds the courage to face life, in the end, with all its ups and downs” (119). Sita has passed carefree life on the island under the control of her father. Sita’s father is a freedom fighter. Her mother runs away to Benares. She is denied the standard life of a normal child. She lives a weird life in the island of Manori. She is suspicious of her father’s relations with her step sister Rekha. She loses her faith on life and develops in her mind unrealistic attitude towards life. As R.K.Gupta puts it:

Sita’s condition is symbolic of the unrelieved loneliness of a modern woman, in the garb of a wife, a mother and a daughter. Her insanity is the direct result of clash between the hypocritical outer world of her wedlock and her inherent honesty that resists any opportunistic compromise. (111)

Conclusion

Anita Desai presents the depressed condition of highly perceptive and emotional women besieged by seclusion. She portrays the familial dissonance in traditional Indian families and the silent suffering of women in a largely patriarchal world. She analyzes the complex nature of female protagonists who resist against a patriarchal concept of regularity. This article brings fresh insights to the presence of the existential dilemma of a woman as an

individual. It has explored the situations and experiences of middle class Indian woman who wants to escape from norms of the society and fights for her liberty. Thus, this paper has illustrated the inner world of Sita and her rising tone for self-emancipation.

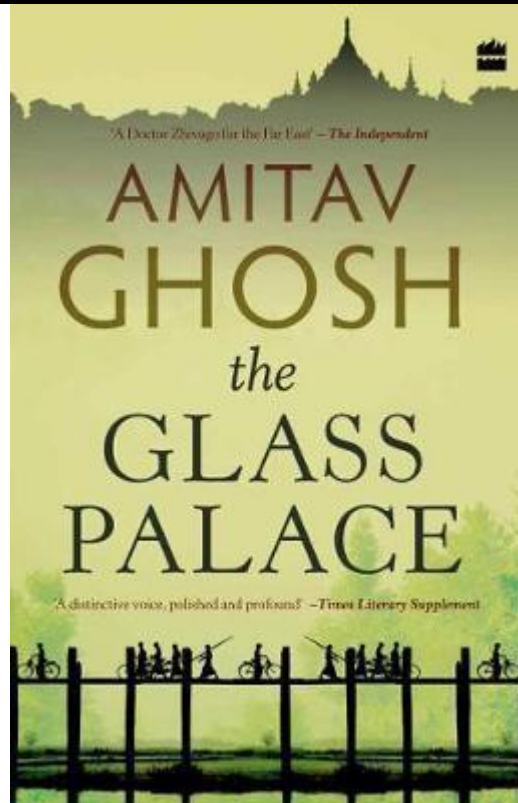
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Literature of Diaspora - Amitav Ghosh Selected Novels

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Abstract

Diasporic writing occupies a place of great significance between countries and cultures. Diasporic writing mostly become a response to the lost homes and to issues such as Dislocation, Nostalgia, Discrimination, survival, Cultural change and identity. Dislocation is one of the first feelings that haunt the diasporic community. When diasporic people find themselves dislocated from the home society they are upset mentally and strive to remember and locate themselves in a nostalgic past.

Keywords: Amitav Ghosh, Diaspora, Alienation, Migration, Dislocation, cultural displacement, gender discrimination

Introduction

The term *Diaspora* was derived from the Greek word *diaspeiro* which means “I Scatter”. This original meaning was began to develop when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek. The term *Diaspora* carries a sense of displacement the population finds itself for whatever reason separated from its national territory, and people have a hope, desire, to return to their homeland. The literature of the Indian diaspora contains an important place in postcolonial literature. The famous diasporic writers like V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, Bharati Mukherjee, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Desai, M.G. Vassanji, Shyam Selvadurai, Kiran Desai, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Kamala Markandaya, Amit Chaudri, and many were contributed more for the Indian Diasporic literature. Amitav Ghosh holds a great part in the diasporic writing. All his novels explores the life and sufferings of Indian diaspora and recollects the nostalgic past. There are several factors which are the reasons for the dislocation of the community for their home country to the foreign land.

Diasporic Touch in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh

Amitav Ghosh was born in Calcutta and grew up in India, Bangladesh, Srilanka. He studied in Delhi, Oxford and Alexandria. His novels are *The Circle of Reason*, *The Shadow Lines*, *In An Antique Land*, *Dancing In Cambodia*, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, *The Glass Palace*, *The Hungry Tide*, and *Sea of Poppies*, *The Ibis Trilogy*. *The Circle of Reason* was awarded in 1990. *The Shadow Lines* won Sahitya Akademi award and Ananda Puraskar award. *The Calcutta Chromosome* won the Arthur C. Clarke award for 1997 and *The Glass Palace* won the International e-Book Award in 2001. *The Hungry Tide* was awarded the crossword Book Prize in 2005.

The Shadow Lines

The Shadow Lines by Amitav Ghosh explores the political and economic growth of India through the lives of two families Bengali and English. This novel captures perspective of time and events that bring people together and hold them apart. The novel has an unnamed narrator relating the story of his experience and his uncle Tridib’s experiences. Tridib is considered to be the protagonist of the novel. Ghosh novel is a useful resource to study the both the challenges of diaspora as well as the strategies of negotiation. The politics of negotiation determines the multi-layered spectrum of responses to the diasporic space, and varied parameters exist in order to study these negotiations. In this novel Ghosh explains the sufferings of Tridib through the unnamed narrator. The distance draws him even closer and the homeland is elevated to a higher pedestal. He uses personal stories to shed light on the social, political and historical. The Characters keep turning back to the homeland-its sacredness, rituals, culture, and thus adopt various families symbols to help them freeze the image of the homeland in their being. This novel is considered to be a successful novel which stands for its powerful imagination. Both Tridib and narrator are good with their dominant imagination.

Strength and Frailty of Human Constructions

Ghosh’s narrative highlights both the strength and frailty of human constructions of space, location, and time, wherein humans create nationalism, national, regional, and personal identities. The Social constrictions of his society made the narrator stays with a platonic relationship. Another interaction Ghosh focuses on is that of the narrator's relationship with another male Tridib. This story focuses on the love between the Indian and the English. As the

narrator goes on in his personal narrative many historic events in India's history are revealed. It interweaves facts, friction. The difficult relationship with colonial culture. The need for independence. The search for identity. The novel deals with the concerns of our period. It is a continuous narrative which replicates the pattern of violence not only for 1964 but also for 21st Century. And the novel is enthusiastic. This tribal instinct has been magnified beyond all measures resulting in political and economic activities. Thus nationalism which had and which has great uses can become the greatest obstacle to world unity and world peace. The author has held the extreme form of nationalism responsible for many a problem these days.

Sense of Displacement

The Circle of Reason was published in 1986. It is considered to be a picaresque novel. It explains the Adventures of Alu a weaver from a small village near Calcutta. This novel has a Diasporic theme of Sense of Displacement, self-identity, migration, alienation, quest for home, rootlessness. The Diasporic theory about psychological journey of an individual. The idea of diasporic sensibility is to be found in the ambivalent, transitory, culturally attached. The condition of migration is seen as a state of undetermined. In this novel all the characters serve the purpose of highlighting the nature of experience of a migrant was characterized by the element of alienation. The same themes are mentioned in another novel of his *The Glass Palace*.

The Glass Palace

It was published in 2000. This novel explains the three generations of the family. It is considered to be the historical novel. This story is about a Character named Rajkumar, and his sufferings and longings of his homeland.

In *Glass Palace* Ghosh explores the predicament of migrants. The novel includes the sufferings of the last King of Burma. In this novel Rajkumar expressed his longing to return home. Rajkumar character reveals the great diasporic sensibility. Ghosh explains the main theme of alienation and migration in all his novels. Most often the first generation of a diasporic community face loneliness and alienation in the new country and they do not mingle with others in the settle society. Even if they try to blend with the other community people, most of the time they find it difficult as they find that they are discriminated. The diasporic writers are often preoccupied with the element of nostalgia as they seek to locate themselves in new cultures. There is an element of creativity present in the diasporic writings. The cultural displacement, alienation, dislocation, migrations are the major concept of the diasporic writers.

Conclusion

Ghosh was a prolific Indian Bengali writer belongs to the Diasporic community. All his novels influenced by the effect of loneliness. The immigration and alienation as a fact holds a great place in Diasporic writings. All his novels explore the sense of nostalgia. The haunting effect of losing homeland is considered to be the main aspect of diasporic writings. The dislocation in the characters explains the great sense of diasporic sufferings.

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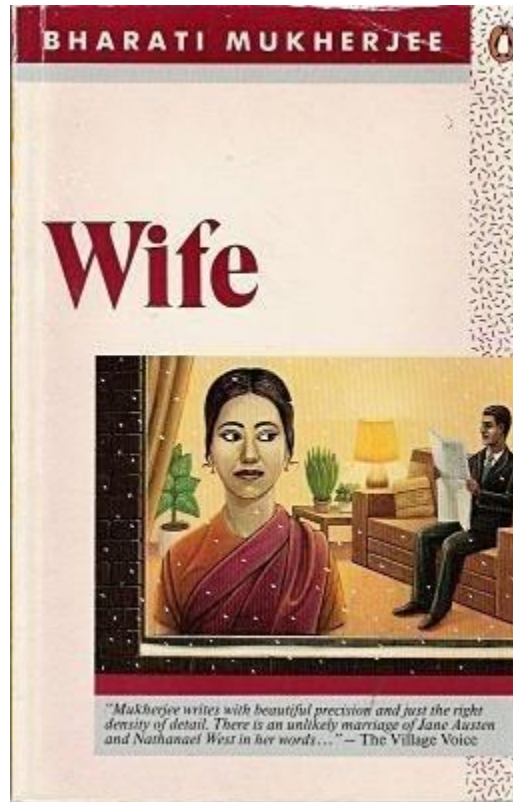
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Feminist Perspectives in Bharathi Mukherjee's *Wife*
S. S. Joseph Sebastian and K. Manisekaran



Abstract

The objective of this paper is to make an analysis of feminist perspectives in Bharathi Mukherjee's novel *Wife*. Before taking up a discussion of the history of feminism, it is essential to arrive at a definition of what a "Perspective" means. In the words of Susan Wendell "perspective is a pattern of thought, emotion, perception, expectation, and motivation" (284). Feminist perspective underlines the need to look at problems concerning women from the angle of woman's point of view of woman's self-discovery. The fundamental goal of feminist perspective is to understand woman's oppression in terms of race, gender, class, sexual Z's preference and how to change it. Feminism is a concept that women as a class have been suppressed, subordinated and oppressed in all spheres-political, social, economic, religions, legal, artistic, and domestic – and assigns roles and functions according to gender. It considers the social fabric as a construct of man, for man and of man.

Bharati Mukherjee

Bharati Mukherjee is a novelist and short stories writer. He often reveals contemporary themes and concerns. One of these is the culture conflicts and immigrant psyche. Born in 1940 in a Bengali Brahmin family of Calcutta but married to a fellow Canadian student Clark Blaise at the University of Iowa. The following are the major works Bharati Mukherjee has to her credit. **The Tiger Daughter (1972), Wife (1975), Jasmine (1989)**, etc. And two collection short stories. She has co-authored with her husband two non-fiction works *Day and Night in Calcutta and the Sorrow and the Terror*. The titles of the novel **Wife** interpreted as common nouns with no articles attached to them have an extended meaning. They stand for the expatriates and immigrants experiencing conflict of culture and the consequent tension. In the following pages an attempt is made to make a study of the diasporic experience encountered by the women protagonist of the two novels.

Dimple, a Forlorn and Accommodated Self

Bharati Mukherjee is concerned with characters that strain and struggle for the articulation of their repressed and stunted voice in order to carve out vision of their life. Dimple in wife, symbolizes the tight spot of a voice without enunciation and without a vision. She is visionless because she is voiceless; she is rootless because she is basically human. She gives vent to her feminine sensibility in her frantic desire for an authentic communication with the self as well as the society. Dimple is an instance of the forlorn and accommodated self of an Indian wife finding herself out of depths in foreign country with an alien milieu this situation of "Culture shock" is too to need analysis but essentially it is the agony of a voice struggling for identity and getting stifled repeated.

Pliant, Docile, Obedient and Submissive

Dimple, the pliant, docile, obedient and submissive daughter of a middle class Bengali family marries Amit Basu, an ambitious Engineer, chosen by her parents about to migrate to the U.S. Dimple; herself is still a child because she has not been initiated in to the mysteries of woman hood. "she thought of premarital life as dress rehearsal for actual living". Delay in marriage had made her very nervous and anxious so when she is married ostensibly to a worthy groom by the Indian standard of marriage, his chance of happiness ought to be high. Dimple happened to set a high store on marriage. "Marriage, she was sure, would free her, fill her with passion. Discreet and virgin, she waited for real life to begin "(wife13). She hoped that marriage would offer her a different kind of life. She constantly imagined her future husband to be the very embodiment of the virtues of the commercial society.

Trying to Obliterate Her Own Body and Appearance

She borrowed a forehead from a body builder and shoulders and the stomach and legs from a trousers ad and put the ideal man by herself in a restaurant on Park Street or by the side of a pool at a five- star hotel (*Wife* 23). We very often see her ideal man and her life against her dream and finding both of them wanting in many respects. Dimple Basu does everything she can to obliterate hers. She even induces a miscarriage so that she does not have to bring a child conceived in India in to the new world. She does "not want carry any relics from the old life". The description of self-abortion is very poignant and touching. She had skipped rope until her legs grew numb and her stomach burned; then she had poured water from the heavy bucket over

her head, shoulders, over the tight little curve of her stomach. she had poured until the last of the blood washed off her legs: then she had collapsed. She never repents for the cruel death she had committed.

Her abnormality reaches the climax when she skips her ways to abortion, conflagrations of the psyche and hysterical fits of passion. This leads her to do violent act. Symbolically, by revoking her motherhood, Dimple liberates herself from the role of a Hindu wife of just bearing and rearing a child. Like the western feminists, she asserts her will but her abortive act abortive act is a kind of ‘moral and culture suicide’. Her killing of the niece which looked pregnant also suggests that she does not feel at ease with her pregnancy. She becomes almost hysteric in killing that tiny creature without rhyme and reason. This act of killing is a manifestation violence smoldering inside her. Dimple’s psychic defect is implied in her name, significantly the meaning of the word “dimple” taken from oxford English dictionary is ‘any slight surface depression’. With this psychic defect, she naturally reacts in a peevish way to all the things around her.

Far from Being a Normal Person

From the very beginning we feel that Dimple is far from the normal girls. The lake reminds her of death.” She hated the lakes, thought of them as death”. She does not like her new name ‘Nandini’ either. “The name just doesn’t suit me’. Her flat is horrid”. Dimple is a psychic study of an abnormal woman. She wants to note the angry faces of men by purposely dropping on them “bits of newspapers, hair balls, nail clippings, down on to the heads below to make them jerk upward in anger.” Dimple’s problems lie within her. She would remain a foreigner where ever she is to go. She has isolation is rooted not merely in loneliness, in isolation or cultural difference but in her own inner estrangement from her own past and her own inner being.

After marriage, dimple does not feel easy at her husband’s residence at Dr. Sarat Banerjee Road. She doesn’t like Amit’s mother and sister also. However, Dimple thinks that all these problems are temporary and with the confirmation for migration they will eventually come to end. The furious outbursts of dimple show her accumulated frustrations. She is suffering from inferiority complex and thinks that she is not able to win her husband’s love and affection. Amit may also be blamed for his ignorance of female psychology. He thinks that providing creature comfort is enough. The idea of murdering Amit also come side by side. Dimple has always lived in a fantastic world, a world which is built by herself. Dimple has the marks of an existentialist in her she feels alienated from the environment from herself and from existence itself to quote swain.” Dimple’s self-alienation breeds a terrible anguish in her and prompts her to murder her husband ‘(87). A lacerated and anguished spirit. Dimple is nowhere a woman, in a questing for an identity. Dimple is entrapped in a dilemma conflict between American culture and the tradition bound Indian society surrounding an Indian wife between a feminist desire to be assertive independent and the Indian need to be submissive and self-effacing.

To Conclude

Bharati Mukherjee’s novel *Wife* stands out as a unique fictional work by virtues of its insightful probing into its heroine’s psyche. A Wife is normally portrayed as a woman, calm quite, submissive, duty conscious and so on. Mukherjee focuses her attention on the negative

aspects that are to be discouraged by feminists. She rings cautions alarms to every other wife of the female world on psychological depression.

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The Sad Songs of the Subaltern Subordinates

Shanmathi. S. and Ms. J. Sridevi

Abstract

The heartless hunger game of marginalization battles the downtrodden people who are socially and economically low. On the basis of race, caste and gender people are completely excluded from the world. The Subalterns are entirely imprisoned by the inequality. They are branded as marginalized in the society. The rights and opportunities are always gifted to the high ranked people. In India and America, the inferior ranked people face marginalization based on caste, class and race. Bitter truth is the gender-based suppression is existing all around the world. The extremely alienated and unnoticed community in the world is said to be the third gender called transgender. Here, the paper highlights the pain experienced by the subaltern people. The Indian Dalits, the coloured Americans and transgender are sailing in the same boat termed subalterns. In order to acquire the equal rights and recognition from the society, the main aim of this paper is to delineate the violence and adversities faced by the subjugated.

Keywords: African Americans, Dalits, Transgender, Marginalization, Subalterns.

Marginalization is found to be a ceaseless practice in all around the world. In a society a particular set of people is always separated from the common people. An individual or a clan who are below the margin level is termed as subalterns. The subalterns are being humiliated on the basis of class, caste, race and gender. The Government schemes and policies did not satisfy them, they long for the equal rights and respect in the society. The coloured people are suppressed by the whites, the Dalits are oppressed by the upper caste people and the transgender community is completely ignored by the entry world. The subalterns penned down their agonies and frustration in their poetry. They kept writing as a tool, to pour out their subjective and objective feelings. People may differ according to the race, caste, class, country and culture, but the humiliation faced by them is the same.

Meena Kandasamy is an Indian poet, translator, novelist and activist from Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Her works focuses on the exploitation of lower caste people in India and feminism. The pathetic condition of the Dalits, influenced her to eradicate the caste system through her immortal writings. Through her poems, it is understood that Dalit women are facing the brutal oppression more than their men. "Narration" her poem depicts about the cruel landlord who exploited a lower caste woman. This poetry reflects the voice of a Dalit woman who is seduced by an upper caste landlord. The rape victim questions everyone that, how she could be a Non-Dalit only during the time of rape.

I'll weep to you about
My landlord, and with
My mature gestures-
You will understand:
The torn sari, disheveled hair
Stifled cries and meek submission.
I was not an untouchable then. (1-7)



Meena Kandasamy

Courtesy: <https://www.poemhunter.com/meena-kandasamy/>

In this poem, the Dalit woman cries out about her tragic condition. Her torn sari and disheveled hair reveals the readers that she had lost her chastity. The wealthy landlord always sees the lower-class people in disgusting look and segregates them in every aspect because of their caste. When they found a Dalit woman alone, they forgot all their orthodox values and touched the untouchable women. The victim voices out that, how she could not be an untouchable by the time of rape. It shows that the landlords are playing in the lives of the untouchable female workers.

The Dalit women are doubly oppressed by the upper caste men in the society. In the poem, “Shame” Meena Kandasamy has portrayed how the high caste aristocrats escaped from their trial and how the female victim bore the blame and pain. Her heart pricked her for bearing the shame, so she committed suicide and took salvation.

Public’s prying eyes
segregate her—the victim.
But the criminals have
already maintained—
Their Caste is classic shield. (5-9)

.....
Bravely, in search of
a definite solution,
and elusive purification,
she takes the test of the fire-

the ancient medicine for shame. (22-26)

Here the victim blames the scar of disgrace and shame and not the accused. Even though the mistake did not lie in her path, the public's starring eyes killed her alive. The upper ranked men escape with the loops using his high caste as a tool. The caste shielded the rapist from the crime, he had committed. The poor lady at last decided to purify her mortal body which was stained by an upper class civilized animal. So she submitted herself to the fire which she considered it as a medicine for her shame. The Dalit women are polluted physically and psychologically by the superior ranked men.



Verlena Dillard

Courtesy: <https://plus.google.com/110211635450012824991>

Verlena Dillard in her poem *Don't Judge Me for Existing* speaks about how the blacks are surviving racism in American society. The coloured people and whites may vary according to their facial colour but not by blood. The poet reflects the painful feelings of the blacks throughout this passage:

Do you hate me because of the color of my skin?
like I'm a disease?
you don't think I have desires?

that I have needs? (9-12)

.....
You may think I'm nothing,
just push me into the mud,
knowing we both have the same colored blood.
You can't judge me by my appearance,
or by my race,
or even the color on my face. (16 – 21)

This poem questions the white racists that, why they did not like the coloured people. The poet wants to know the reason why the whites hate black, whether it is because of the skin colour or the diseased look. The coloured people are also one among the common people, but their desires and needs are not given importance. Dillard says that the white racists suppress them without knowing that they both have the same blood. He wanted to teach the whites that they could not judge anyone by their appearance or race or even with the colour of their face.

The poem “Wrong Color” by Christopher Stanard deals with the theme of racism. Christopher Stanard’s “Wrong Color” and Wole Soyinka’s “Telephonic Conversation” have the common theme of rejected opportunities of the coloured because of their race. It voices out against the opportunities which are not provided to the coloured people just because of their colour.

Gray suit.
Blue day.
Great Telephone interview.
They say they like my resume.
But
When the interviewer sees me
He does a double take.
Damn. (1 - 8)

The poet’s bitter experience replicates the common situation faced by most of the African Americans in the United States of America. The coloured are not less in intellect, but the whites are blinded by the racism. They were highly satisfied with the poet’s resume and telephone interview; unfortunately, they were not ready to accept his race alone. So the racist rejected him. It shows the brutal mindset of the white racists who considers more on race and not the caliber of a person.

Deborah Zambo’s “Who Am I?” is a transgender poetry. This poetry reflects the transgender lives caught in between the mixed gender. “Betrayed by my own body”(1) the first line itself shows the gloomy mindset of the poet who feels that he is internally and externally different.

Belonging nowhere
Insiable hunger
Desperate need
Unquenchable desire
Unspeakable pain

Aching for every day privileges
enjoyed by most people...(6-12)
My label is transgender. (17)

Here, the speaker feels that he does not belong to anywhere. Their desires are left unsatisfied. Their dreams are unfulfilled. Their desperate needs remain a question mark. The pain they feel inside their heart is unspeakable. Like every person, they longed for equal rights in the society. More than that they should be treated like other humans in the world. In many place transgenders are humiliated. There are so many weeping souls around the world, for mistakes not committed by them.

Through these poems, it is understood that the subalterns are marginalized in many parts of the world. The subalterns are always expected to remain submissive under the superior ranked people. These poems serve as an evidence for the existence of racism, casteism and gender discrimination in the world. The subalterns believed that their writings may bring light to their life, so they gave voice to their pen.

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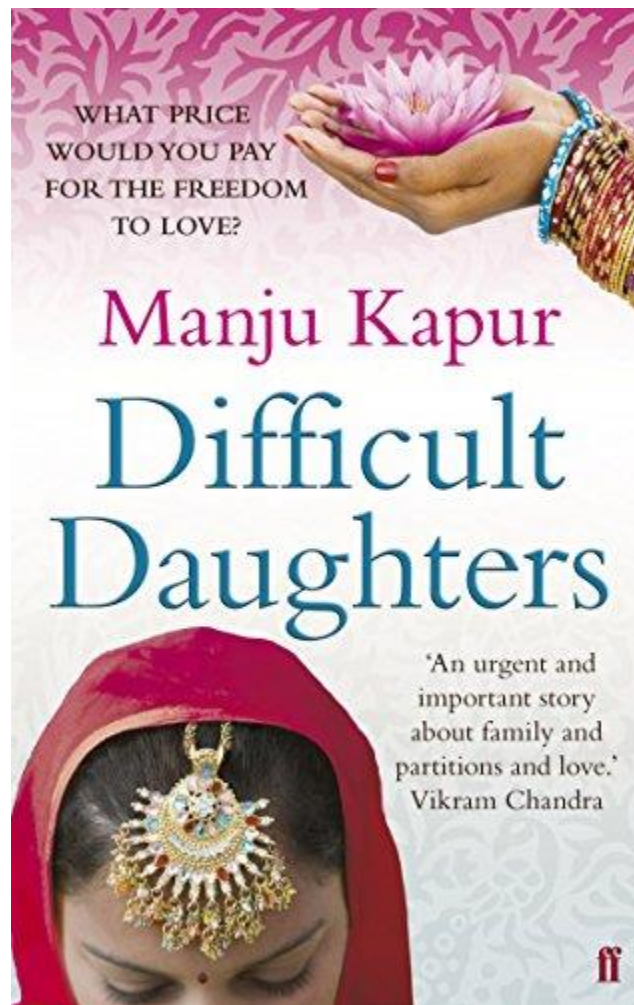
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The Power of Gaze – An Analysis of Manju Kapur’s
Difficult Daughters

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Abstract

Gaze is a powerful phenomenon which can reveal what words fail to show. The presence, as well as the absence, of gaze has its unique impact on a work of creative imagination. Manju Kapur, an acclaimed Indian Writer in English, has used gaze abundantly in her works, especially in *Difficult Daughters*, her debut novel. Gaze brings out the finer nuances which the story itself does not reveal directly. An analysis of the various gazes present in this novel brings out the power of gaze and its relevance as a suitable tool for literary analysis.

Introduction

Gaze is a powerful theory with its origin dating back to the origin of Psychoanalysis and Sigmund Freud. The exponents of psychoanalysis spoke about the power of gaze in kindling desire. The primary preoccupation of psychoanalysis being the therapeutic value of the patient's talk, the gaze of the patient while delivering his talk hardly gained importance. It is in the later years, during the time of Lacan, that gaze received its due significance.

Lacan, in his famous theory of the mirror stage, demonstrates that every child undergoes a dynamic change in his or her perception between 6 months to 18 months. It is during this time that a child encounters the mirror for the first time with due understanding. The image in the mirror makes the child realize that it is a body like all other bodies it sees around. The mirror thus serves to objectify the child. The child realizes its separate bodily existence for the first time. This is the first stage of realization and individuality, as the child now realizes its difference from its mother.

The complexity in the concept of gaze too has its origin in the mirror stage. The mirror itself serves as a complex symbol because it tends to signify the human eye in its ability to gaze back. The child, when it looks at the mirror, is confounded by its own staring image. The child, in reality, holds the dominant position as the holder of the power of gaze, but when a similar image stares back with the same force from the mirror, the child's position of prominence is challenged and the child becomes an object in relation to the image on the mirror. Thus, gaze becomes a dual concept, affording prominence to the one who looks from the subject position, yet holding the possibility of reversal with the reversal of the gaze.

Gaze and its power has been realized and expressed by many scholars. Sartre and Foucault are the chief exponents. Sartre speaks about role play which is primarily playing parts to satisfy the eyes of others. We often act to fulfill the expectation that society has towards our roles. As an individual we play many roles within our family and in the society. Our freedom is minimal while we play these roles because the norms for all these roles have already been framed by the society. We know that we will be criticized and ostracized if we do not play these roles according to the dictates of the society. So, whether we are willing or not, whether we derive pleasure from it or not, we tend to play these roles, which Sartre calls bad faith. To Sartre, our life will achieve its purpose only when we move from bad faith to good faith.

Foucault, in his study about the prison systems of the world, has highlighted the power of the Gaze. He speaks about Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, which is an architectural model for an ideal prison based on the power of Gaze. Panopticon is a tower like structure in the middle of a large field surrounded by small cubical rooms. The inmates of the cells imagine that they are watched from the center tower and there by self-behave. Irrespective of the presence of the Gaze of the watcher, the tower itself signifies a powerful Gaze, making the inmates self-behave. This system will be ideal for hospitals, educational institutions and corrective centers. Disciplinary action has moved from bodily punishment to self-discipline with Gaze.

The concept of Gaze gained a gender perspective with French feminist critics. Laura Mulvey in her essay, Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema speaks about the absence of female

Gaze in movies. She identifies three prominent gazes in movies - the Gaze of the male behind the camera, the gaze of the male character in the movie and the Gaze of the male audience. She argues that the female audience assume the Gaze of the male character in the movie, as they do not have a scope for their female Gaze. Various feminist critics have argued in support of and against her theory.

Literature, from time immemorial, has used the power of gaze to express the complexity of human life with its myriad feelings and emotions. Many are the instances, when though we would, we remain speechless, powerless and thereby live in falseness. There are instances where words fail. They fail in their inability to express the subtler aspects of feelings and fears which can hardly be explained or expected to be understood even when explained. In such cases, Gaze is the only option available. Gaze, signified by a simple, casual look to observing, staring, to an intent, focused look, is available in many different forms for human beings to directly convey and communicate with the mind and heart of a fellow being. The dynamism of Gaze makes it powerful even in its absence. When gaze serves the purpose of kindling desire, as expounded by Freud, the absence of a significant gaze from the woman may speak volumes about her actual desire, though she may be a silent bearer of the male gaze. Thus, the power of Gaze can be studied both in the presence and absence of it, a befitting dual study, as Gaze itself is a dual phenomenon, operating from both ends – the subject and object perspectives. The power of Gaze can only be brought out by such a dual study, which is the purpose of this paper. Manju Kapur's debut novel *Difficult Daughters* has been taken for the analysis.

Manju Kapur

Manju Kapur, a famous feminist writer in India, has written six novels to her credit. All her novels have female protagonists. All her stories deal with the life of her protagonists. The plight of an Indian woman can be understood from her novel. *Difficult Daughters* is her first novel and it won her recognition as a feminist writer and created a space for her in the field of Indian writing in English. It also won her the Eurasia prize for the first novel in English. As Manju Kapur has made abundant use of the Gaze in this novel, it has been chosen for this analysis.

Difficult Daughters

Difficult Daughters is the story of three generations of women in a middle class family in Amritsar. The story is narrated by Ida. The chief protagonist is Virmati, Ida's mother. The novel also deals with Kasturi, Virmati's mother. Ida tries to unearth details of her mother's life during her adolescence. She is particularly interested in that period because she was not able to learn anything about it from her mother directly. Her mother's confused expression, when questioned about her earlier life leads to this desire. Kapur writes, "...her eyes looked confused and her face went blank whenever her daughter demanded a story about her Lahore days."(Kapur, 256). This confused gaze is the basis of the plot.

The bond between Ida and Virmati is a weak one. This could be understood from Ida's eyes during Virmati's funeral. "Now she was gone and I stared at the fire that rose from her shriveled body, dry-eyed, leaden, half dead myself, while my relatives clustered around the pyre and wept."(Kapur, 1) The situation of Ida, after her mother's death, is expressed by Kapur

through the gaze of others. “From time to time they stare openly at me, middle-aged, alone and not eating.” (Kapur, 2)

Ida soon learns about Virmati’s unquenchable thirst for education. Kapur identifies the gaze of Virmati which kindled such a desire. Virmati gaze at Sakuntala, her cousin, who is educated and employed. “Virmati, looking at her glamorous cousin, marveled at the change Lahore had wrought in her.”(Kapur, 16) Her desire to go for higher studies leads her to Professor Harish Chandra, who falls in love with her. Harish remarks about his gaze, “How difficult it is to teach while you are sitting before me! Your face is the fixed point to which my eyes keep returning.” (Kapur, 56) Virmati falls in love with this married man with a daughter. Her reverence for his knowledge, kindled by the thirst to learn, which is the result of her gaze at her cousin, leads to the further complications in the story.

Virmati’s gaze at the professor is conspicuous by its absence. She does not have a direct gaze. She tries to understand his heart from his letters and from his gaze. There is only one instance when she gazes at him with love. It is a furtive female gaze at the back of the dominant man. “She turned her head and saw the professor’s distinguished looking head, hair brushed back from high forehead...” (Kapur, 128). The intensity of her gaze makes the professor turn back and smile at her. Such is the power of gaze and Virmati, being capable of using it, never does use it in her life. It is the lack of her self-assertion that leads to all her troubles. She remains the secret wife of Harish for more than three years. She often asks him to marry her and sometimes even boldly rebukes him, but yet, she is always submissive before the bold gaze of the man.

In Nahan, where she is the Principal of a school, she could not assert herself to the selfish Harish. She has a peaceful and individualistic life there. Harish cunningly visits her at night, spoiling her reputation which leads to her dismissal. She fails to uphold herself. She becomes an easy prey to his gaze. Harish employs different types of gaze to deal with Virmati. When she questions him about their future, he has a faraway expression, and avoids direct answers. He only speaks of hope and a united faraway future. When she speaks angrily to him, he puts on a sad expression and has a hurt look on his face, which forces her to reconciliation. Kapur writes, “Why don’t we get married? You say your family makes no difference. But still you want to continue in this way... Virmati felt trapped. What had she been saying, was it so unreasonable? Why was he looking so sad? How could she leave him like this? Slowly she moved towards Harish...” (Kapur, 149 -150)

Harish is well aware of the power of gaze and uses it in different ways to make Virmati submissive. He does not let her appreciate anything and speak about it. When she comments about a picture depicting the unity of Hindu, Muslim and Christian community, Harish scolds her. When she fails to find any beauty in the graves by the hill side of Nahan, he points it out to her and forces her to accept that they are beautiful. Literally, he forces her to abandon her gaze and substitute his gaze in its place. Kapur points out to this fact, “Virmati followed. Was it charming? She supposed it was. He usually had an eye for the charming, beautiful, lovely, quaint, picturesque. She tried to see through his eyes when he pointed things out to her. After all these years she was getting quiet good at the exercise.” (Kapur, 190)

Virmati's life in Harish's house as a co-wife with Ganga, the first wife is beyond description. Ganga's gaze reveals her feelings to Virmati. "When Ganga saw her, she would turn her face away, or what was worse, would stare intensely at her, her eyes moist, her lips trembling, her big red bindi flashing accusingly." (Kapur, 219) When Virmati conceives, Kishori Devi, her mother-in-law, becomes so worried about the evil eye. When Virmati has an abortion, she thinks of the malevolent gaze of Ganga. Much later, because of partition and the accompanied communal violence, Harish sends Ganga and the children with his mother to his native village. Virmati gets a chance to live alone with her husband. When the tension subsides, Ganga tries to come back, but Virmati asserts herself and makes her stay permanently in the village. Her assertion of her rights could be understood from her gaze. In the absence of Ganga, she gazes at Ganga's clothes, "Virmati stood before Ganga's open cupboard. Just seeing those saris made her sick. Each one of them reminded her of the woman, with her round face, round bindi and black kaajal-lined eyes staring fixedly at her with loathing." (Kapur, 276) The saris represent Ganga and Virmati's throwing away the saris from the house, donating them to the refugees without discussing about the issue with Harish or Ganga, shows her self-assertion and the symbolic ousting of Ganga. So, this final gaze acts as an indicator of what would have happened further in the life of Virmati. As Kapur points out in the Epilogue, Ganga is finally and completely ousted from Harish's house, though not from his life.

To Conclude

Thus, it is obvious from this brief study that gaze plays a significant role in the basic plot of the story. Gaze lends meaning by its mere presence or absence throughout the story. In many places, Gaze reveals the hidden meaning and enables a correct understanding of the subtler feeling and expressions. Harish's use of the Gaze to dominate Virmati from the dominant position of a man, as well as from the dominant position of a subject using Gaze as a weapon, speaks volumes about the power of Gaze. So, it is only too apt to say that Manju Kapur has extensively used Gaze in her novel *Difficult Daughters* and the novel, in its turn, serves to bring out and highlight the power of Gaze.

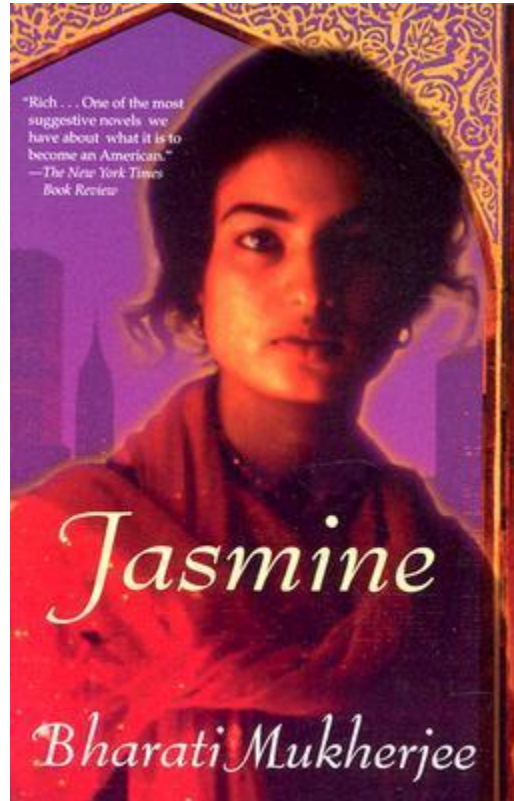
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New Image of Woman in Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine*

R. Sharadha



Introduction

Indian novels depict Indian life and culture and it resembles the problems generated by individual's life and it is determined by the society. In this way Indian novels reflect typical Indian feminine sensibility and their emotional propensities. These types of themes can be easily identified in works of immigrant writers of Indian English. Bharati Mukherjee's novels deal with the problem of female subjugation and give a new identity to the women of modern times. Self-empowerment is essential for a human being. Here she stresses on women empowerment through the character Jasmine. This paper tries to highlight how Bharati portrays Jasmine as the new age of woman who adopts the new lifestyle in an alien country.

Bharati Mukherjee

Born and brought up in a wealthy family, Bharati Mukherjee is a well-known immigrant writer. She was born on July 27, 1940 in India and moved to Britain in 1947 with her family. She got married to Clark Blaise and moved to Canada. She came to the US and became a naturalized US citizen in 1988. Some of her notable works are *The Desirable Daughters*, *Jasmine*, *Wife*, *The Tree Bride* and *The Tiger's Daughter* etc. She deals with the contemporary women's struggle to define herself in cross cultural crisis in her novels.

Self-Empowerment of Jasmine

Jasmine is a story of a strong-willed girl who crosses many obstacles and never gives up at any circumstance. Throughout the course of the novel, the title character's identity along with her name changes again and again from Jyoti to Jasmine, Jasmine to Jazzy, Jazzy to Jase and Jase to Jane. Jasmine is the narrator of the novel was born in 1965 in a rural Indian village called Hasnapur. She is different from other village girls in her thought. She marries Prakash who gave her a new name Jasmine by saying that, "*You are small and sweet and heady, my Jasmine. You'll quicken the whole world with your perfume*".

Soon Prakash dies in a bomb blast and Jasmine plans to go to America which was a dream of her husband. She says, "*A village girl, going alone to America, without a job, husband or papers ... I had sworn before God. A matter of duty and honor, I dared not tell my mother*". This shows that she is not a normal village girl but a self-willed. She has a tremendous will power to go to America alone. She moves to America on a forged passport but she is raped by a Captain of a ship, Half face. Since she is resolute enough she doesn't kill herself instead she kills the Captain and her Indian clothes and begins a new life in America.

She takes the identity of Jazzy when she stays in Lillian Gordon's home. She tries to come out her old identity of Jasmine a widow. "*Jazzy in a T-shirt, tight cords and running shoes*" gives her a new identity of an American with such a resolution. She decides to move to Vadhera household. The strong urge in her to re-invent herself and her eagerness for independence and self-reliance made her life difficult at the Vadhera household. She finds of losing herself in a superficial rituals and adherence there. She takes green card with the help of Vadhera and moves to New York.

Jasmine takes on a new identity and gets a job as a baby-sitter in the house of Taylor and Wylie Hayes. While living in the Hayes she begins to master the English language, empowering herself to further appropriate American culture. Here we could find out a great upliftment in the character of Jasmine a girl who came to the US to commit sati on her husband's suit and the present Jase in the Taylor's household.

"Taylor didn't want to change me... I changed because I wanted to".

Here she asserts her willingness to change or empower herself and be part of America. She has such a strength and capabilities. She takes in everything with so much enthusiasm. This can be considered as Jasmine's rebirth in a way, where she becomes a more daring self, ready to face the umpteen challenges and roles that lay ahead of her. She obtains yet another identity when she leaves her role as a caregiver and moves to Iowa to become the common-law wife of

Bud Ripplemayer, a banker and mother to their adopted son and later on becomes pregnant with Bud's child. She enjoys her new liberated self and allows her a part of the American society.

The protagonist Jasmine leaves her country to fulfill her wishes. She begins to search for self-independence. Though the astrologer predicts about her widowhood and exile in an early age she refuses to believe on it and always tries to raise her above all the false beliefs and superstition. When she is New York she expresses her survival skill in an alien country. "I wanted to become a person they thought they saw: humorous, intelligent, refined and affectionate. Not illegal, not murderer not widowed, raped, destitute, fearful"

Conclusion

Human life has many obstacles and odds. Only some of them emerge as survivors whereas some of them surrender to fate. Here, Jasmine displays courage and the ability to survive in her various identities. She discovers more and more of herself in the journey of multiple identities. She approaches life in a positive tone and leads a successful life. She creates a new world consisting of new ideas and values.

Though Jasmine seeks to distance herself from cultural expectations and tradition the possibility of independence and agency exist in reality. Throughout the novel, Jasmine experiences enormous situations which bring out the violence and mental trauma in her. She not only faces physical violence, but also mental violence that forces her to be born as a different person in various phases of her life. The progression of Jasmine from one stage of evolution to the other stage of life is portrayed as a courageous character.

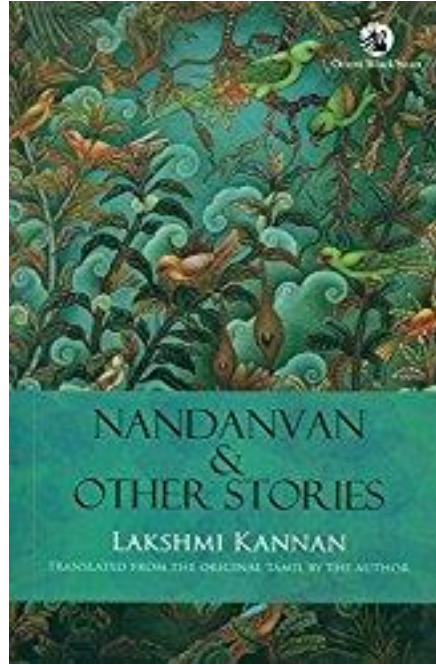
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Indian Ethos and Milieu in Lakshmi Kannan's Short Story *Muniyakka*
Dr. M. Soundhararajan



Lakshmi Kannan

This research paper entitled “Indian Ethos and Milieu in Lakshmi Kannan’s Short story *Muniyakka* aims to explore the story as a discourse of Indian Ethos and Milieu. This study also establishes Lakshmi Kannan as a feminist. Lakshmi Kannan is an internationally known bilingual writer, who has written and published long and short fiction in Tamil and in English translation. There are powerful messages, descriptive, and evocative prose, arresting dialogues and soliloquies, incredibly strong never-say-die characters dot the landscape of Lakshmi’s short fictions. Clearly, there is a distinct literary style within which the stories are grounded, that makes Kannan a part of the distinctive genre of postcolonial Indian writers. She brings the sensibility of poetics to her stories, where the resolution sometimes is encapsulated in a single word or metaphor. Her English prose is fluid and the rendering taut.

Lakshmi Kannan’s chiseled prose makes gripping statements and one is struck by the felicity with which she highlights the working of patriarchy in contemporary Indian society. She says what she has to say quietly and effectively and leaves the rest to her reader. She pours scorn not only on age-old self-deceptions but also on new-fangled superficialities. The brittle urban milieu inhabited by simpering socialities is a cause for anger as older prejudices and oppressive practices. Kannan’s fiction makes an earnest attempt to preserve the shrinking domain of

innocence and purity in her both life and relationships. What sets Lakshmi Kannan apart is her seemingly effortless ability to capture the flavour of the Tamil Brahmin milieu. Though critical of the secondary status is accorded to women in Tamil society, she also showcases its liberal outlook in certain instances. Lakshmi Kannan's immaculate grip over her medium is definitely commendable as, it enables her to shift from one realm of human experience to another so seamlessly and effortlessly.



Lakshmi Kannan

Courtesy: <http://archive.jaipurliteraturefestival.org/jlfspeakers/lakshmi-kannan/>

Struggle and Inevitable Pain

Kannan's characters reflect their strength of spirit as they struggle with the inevitable pain of existence, everyday grievances and prejudices, the indomitable will to survive loneliness and sorrow, and the confidence to resolve inner and external conflict. Her protagonists reveal themselves through soliloquies, dialogue, and evocative silences. Her rhythms and idioms of the Tamil world translate into fluid and sensitive prose in English, masterfully retaining the intensity and ethos of the original. The spectrum of experiences and sensibilities depicted in these lucid, probing, and absorbing narrative style. This study highlights how does Muniyakka resist Indian patriarchal society and its Ethos and Milieu.

Muniyakka – Feminism and Fidelity

Lakshmi Kannan's famous story *Muniyakka* treats the issue of gender from an entirely different perspective. It is cast in surrealistic mode. It is a short story feminism which is the other side of the coin of wifely fidelity. The character Muniyakka is from a servant class. Her life story involves strategies to survive, negotiating difficult situations and yet maintaining her selfhood and independence. Being a shrewd woman, because she is illiterate, she has to exercise her native wisdom. She has no one to turn to her husband Bairappa wasted his life and hers. Her sons are "shameless bastards". She has no hesitation in cursing them in her rasping soliloquies, for which she is famous. She is 'The Walkie-Talkie' for the children in the neighbourhood who are amused by her sight. Paradoxically she has a fierce loyalty to her dead husband. she never fails to perform the rituals on his obsequies day. She punctiliously arranges bathe freshly washed banana leaf all the things dear to the departed soul, including a packet of his favourite brand of *beedi* and a bottle of toddy, which she hands to Thimmayya as a ritual offering. She performs the *sbraddha* in her hut meticulously. What is odder is that, on that day, she wears a clean saree, flowers on her hair

and a *blight kumkum* on the brow, her face glowing as if in youth. The inoment the *sbraddha* is done over. she sweeps the hut clean and delivers a sermon on empty human relationships:

'Husband! .. Son! What humbug all these relationships are ... huh!. She is delivered of the bondage, of her servile role. she is now a free spirit. Lakshmi Kannan brilliantly exploits the features of the Gothic to underscore this perception. Muniyakka's lonely hut in the corner of Rao's bungalow is iconographic of her fiercely independent spirit. In the "inky darkness", her hut is surrounded by the coconut grove with its eerie atmosphere, the jackfruit tree, the stormy wind howling through the foliage, the incensed figure of Muniyakka sits, conversing with her favourite ghosts and "devils". They are "being essentially female in their form". Her abject poverty and minimal existence, which is a social detail creating awareness of her class situation, is off-set by her undaunted dancing with the devil. The author succeeds in projecting a supernatural female force out of this famous servant woman Muniyakka, who occupies a prime place in the gallery of female figures Lakshmi has created.

Women's Superstitions

The other aspect of gender critique in the story is Muniyakka's castigation of women's superstitions in propitiating snake idols made of stone in the temple as Fertility Gods, feeding them with milk, decorating them with vermilion and flowers. Muniyakka also serves in the shrine. It is her responsibility to clean up the mess of piety created by the worship after the women leave the premises. She curses them heartily and lambastes them for their foolish beliefs. The author surely exposes the ambivalence of such a folk faith, in ordinary circumstances the snake is feared and distrusted and killed pitilessly but is revered in stone when women pray for a male child. Throughout the story the hooded cobra is a striking image and contributes much to the Gothic ambience.

Gothic Narrative Dealing with Gender Issues

If *Muniyakka* is a quintessential Gothic narrative, dealing with the gender issues of woman as wife, woman as mother, and woman as a free force. we have, at There is the other end of the spectrum, a highly discursive, intellectual story, modern and cosmopolitan in its ethos and mode of writing. Lakshmi Kanrian's keen artistic imagination works discursively.

Dialectics of Woman Being a Woman

This story examines the "dialectics of a woman being a woman, and woman becoming a woman for the sake of men. Its discursive span is quite striking". Thus between "Muniyakka" and "Simone de Beauvoir and the Manes", Lakshmi Kannan has achieved two different realisations of the feminist short story. Lakshmi Kannan brings in her favourite staple character in many of her stories. Muniyakka to strikes at entrenched establishment thinking. The solicitude of the devil that the women really experience a different order of reality.

It is Muniyakka in the story, who firmly turns her back on the dead wood in tradition and encourages the child to be free. She is the alternative image of women set against the traditional archetypes so that Lakshmi projects her as strong, spirited, independent, and rational. Paradoxically enough, she believes in devils, even communes with them, takes direction and

protection from the good devil, “*Olle Pichachi* “against the “assault of the wicked devil” *Kettu Pichachi*.

Her talk and habits and stories are so captivating to the child that she wants to know, 'Muni ... Muniyakka ... you ... who are you? I mean, are you a woman or a devil?' This innocent doubt of the child can be interpreted as the author's challenge to patriarchy and its cultural practices. Muniyakka's answer at once touches the supernatural and rational levels. She tells the child that she can practise sorcery and out-devil the devil, the wicked one. She explains “with a broad grin” that 'we should also have some wickedness within us. Otherwise any rogue will devour us. You must realise that, Surely, it is a lesson in strategy for women to stave off society's attempt to annihilate their self.

Purgatory Function

Lakshmi simply excelled herself in creating this poignant Gothic tale, making a modern institution like hospital her Dantean purgatory. Lakshmi uses the short story form to explore the hidden, dark motivation and drives in the recesses of human consciousness and the unconscious.

Lakshmi Kannan's short stories are an important contribution to contemporary Indian literature. Basically, she draws her characters and voices from the middle class, with which she is conversant. She also has the necessary power of empathy to construe life lived in other material conditions. She is committed to examining issues in feminist ideology and study the functioning of patriarchy in society. But, she is not the one to allegorise human beings into abstract categories and demonise any particular sex or a system, be it the male or the family. Her writings have always been marked by a certain-urbaneness, respect for polyvalence, a genuine concern to resolve problems rather than stand impaled on issues for their own sake. Hence. her critiques of institutional structures have invariably been nuanced and multifaceted. Her art and craft owe much to her sensitivity to language and feelings. Hence, she is a mistress of creating a striking atmosphere and ambience. Her word-horde is amazing from which she quarries most appropriate and revealing expressions. They give texture of poetry to her stories. Her narrative technique and discursive tools are therefore never mechanical. They emerge in consonance with the experiences, she wants to depict. The Indian ethos and idiom are superbly captured in her resonant English.

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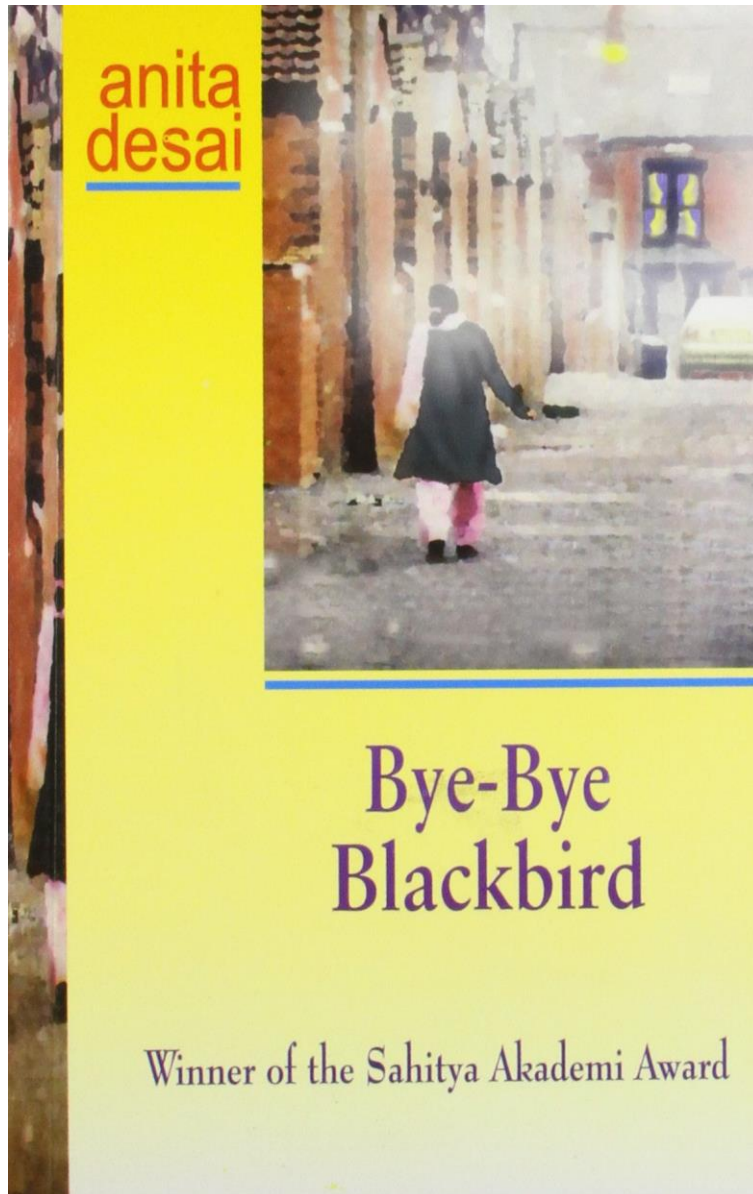
Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

Dr. M. Soundhararajan

Indian Ethos and Milieu in Lakshmi Kannan's Short Story *Muniyakka*

261

Exile and Cultural Alienation in Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird*
E. Tharunika Vaishaale, M.Phil. Research Scholar



Abstract

The word "Exile" is to cover a range of displaced existence. The word "Exile" has negative connotation but if a self-exile of a Byron is considered, then the response to that word becomes ambivalent. Exile literature shows some sense and part of Diasporic Indian

writing. The dilemma of the immigrants in Exile literature by focusing upon its attraction, repulsion and their exploitation by the vested interests. Indian Diasporic literature novelists Anita Desai has chartered, the crisis disturbing the sensitive soul of immigrants. This essay also attempts to highlight, through an real study of the novel *Bye-Bye Blackbird*. Desai clearly explained the problems and troubles of Exile and the Diasporic individuals caught in the crisis of the changing society. Through her master style, the essay tries to capture the confusions and the conflicts of the Exile and shows how her novel pictures the view of Exile literature and Indian Diasporic literature. This paper is to serve as an introduction and encouragement to the study of Exile literature.

Introduction

The exile and cultural alienation is the most dominating theme in Anita Desai. It is common in the 20th century. Exile and cultural alienation has become a universal phenomenon. Anita Desai gives a graphic picture of the exile and cultural alienation of uprooted individuals in the novel. Desai reads the minds and understands the fact that they are suffering from alienation. Her characters in *Bye - Bye Black Bird* becomes victims of themes. Desai portrays the ontological insecurity, alternation and anguish of uprooted individuals in her novels. Her alienation of this problem is prevalent in most of her works. She remarks her condition as.

“This has brought two separate stands into my life. My roots are divided because of the Indian soil on which I grew and European culture which I inherited from my mother”. (Desai, Anita. The Book I Enjoyed writing most. *Contemporary Indian Literature, XIII, 1973, 24*).

Anita Desai’s preoccupation as a novelist has been the exile alienation of characters.

Each of her novels presents one or two memorable characters. In the portrayal of character, she primarily interested in the projection of female protagonist living in separate, closed, sequestered worlds of existential problem and passions, love and hates. Unlike most of Indo - English novelists, Anita Desai does something unique by portraying each of her individual as an unsolved mystery. Her concerns of character alienation enables her to offer an unexpected glimpse into the deeper psychic state of her protagonists.

Anita Desai’s novel *Bye Bye BlackBird*, captures the confusions and conflicts of another set of alienated persons. It has rightly been maintained that in the novel “the tension between the local and the immigrant blackbird involves issues of alienation and accommodation that the immigrant has to confront in an alien and yet familiar world”. (R. S. Sharma, Alienation, Accommodation and the Local in Anita Desai’s *Bye Bye Blackbird*. *The Literary Criterion*, 1979, 14/4).

Bye Bye Black Bird

The novel *Bye Bye Black Bird*, there is an authentic study of human relationship bedeviled by exile and cultural encounters. The focus of *Bye Bye Black Bird* is on Dev who comes to London to pursue his studies. As the plot develop, one can find him turning into a completely disillusioned man. He feels alienated in London from both Indians and

English men. There is a lack of sympathy men, who do not, recognize their neighbor and behaves with them like strangers. The silence and hollowness London disturb Dev and makes him uneasy and alienated. He finds himself insulated and isolated. He realize that the immigrants rush to the west and in the process miss badly their own mother land. He feels extremely suffocated in the Tube station and consider himself, “like a kafka stranger wandering through the dark labyrinth at a prison”

Dev’s contact begins from Adit who has settled in London with an English wife. He is confronted with the major problems as Dev moves out in search of job. He finds it difficult to adjust with silence and emptiness of it - the house and blocks of flats, streets and crescents - all. He never wants to live in a country where he is insulted and unwanted. He calls Adit, his friend a boot - licking today and a “spineless imperialist - lover”. Searching for an identity in an alien culture, Dev feels lost and suffers from alienation. Dev become a victim of alienation as his conception and perception are at variance with the experience he gets. He compares and relates everything to India. He goes through different phases of the bewildered alien, the charmed observer, the outraged outsider and thrilled sightseer all at once in succession.

Final Decision

Dev takes his final decision not to return to India and not to lead the way of the masses there. He slowly and steadily adapts himself to the new environment. His friend Adit Sen, a young man from India lives in England with his English wife. After coming to England Adit worked as a teacher, and finally accepted a little job at Blue skies. He is happy with his job. He feels now a sense of cultural affinity. At times Adit even groans:

“O England’s green and grisly land, I love you and only a Babu khan”

The last part of the novel changes the scenario. He secretly longs for Indian food, music and friends. A sudden clamor was aroused in him, like a child’s tantrum, to see again an Indian sunset. Even on out spread hair about Sarah’s shoulders he could see the Indian landscape. When he thinks about India, the images of food, dress and music are predominant in his mind. Adit feels himself as a stranger in England and realize alienated from English people. He frankly admits to be “stranger, a non - be longer” in England. He takes a boat back to India with his wife.

Marrying an English Girl

The theme in the novel is the Adit marries an English girl name Sarah and by doing so he incurs the anger of the white society. By marrying a brown Asian she has broken the social code of England hence she is always subject to taunts and jibes of not only her colleagues but even of young pupils of the school, where she works as a clerk. She always avoids any questions regarding her husband and family life but her peeks take a perverse delight in asking such questions. Julia who is a teacher in her school comes out with typical British superciliousness.

She was still breathing hard at having so narrowly escaped having to answer personal questions. It would have wrecked her for the whole day to have to discuss Adit with Julia, with Miss Pimm, in this sane, chalk dusted, workday office. She was willing to listen for hours to Miss Pimm's diagnosis of her aches and pains... But to display her letters from India, to discuss her Indian husband, would have forced her to parade like an impostor, to make claims to a life, an identity that she did not herself feel to be her own, although they would have been more than ready to believe her... She had stammered out her replies, too unhappy even to accuse them of tactlessness or inquisitiveness and, for her pains, had heard Julia sniff, as she left the room, "if she's ashamed of having an Indian husband, why did she go and marry him?" (Bye 4)

What of grown-ups, even the young ones emulating the elders, taunt her. Her pupils ignore her and taunt. As she dated through their throng, they pretended not to notice her at all, but once she came across the road, she heard them scream, "Hurray, Hurray, Mrs. Scurry". And "Where's the fire, pussy cat?" She undergoes at her work place at the hands of her colleagues and pupil. The strains of interracial marriage are so much on her that they affect her day - to - day life.

In spite of all her precaution she cannot escape the fake which is made part of her life. The tension between pretension and actuality, appearance and reality is always there which tells upon her. She does not know where she belongs and she is fed up with putting on faces. She wants genuineness and that would come only when she leaves England for good at the end of the novel. In England she is not in peace. Her alienation has been described more than once in the novel which makes her lonely, the question always nagging her who she is. After marriage Sarah faces alienation crisis.

Sarah's Identity Crisis

A clear description of Sarah's identity crisis is to be found in later authorial comment in the novel. If a girl marries in a same culture it is easier for her to adjust in her new home and people. But inter-racial and intercultural marriage causes adjustment problem which are not easy to overcome. In Sarah's case the problem becomes more complicated for her to married a person whose race ruled over by her own. The "Progress" and "Modernity" old prejudice die hard. Sarah s homeless in her native country which is biggest irony. The question continues to haunt her: who was she?

Sarah's problem is human. She wants to be real person whether English or Indian. She is fed up with sitting in the fence. She tries her best to remain a sincere wife seeing that her marital life is not destroyed. Her husband too playing charade although not as consciously as she. But he also realize falsity of his existence in England and Sarah also known it well. After 1965, Indo - Pak war Adit is in the process of making a decision to leave England for good, he is very edge and unstable and this is the time when he needs a co operative understanding wife, and Sarah does well as a wife. Off all the wives in Anita Desai's novel she is the best in understanding and supports her husband. In the circumstance mentioned above she knows how to handle her husband:

She could not tell what effect the smaller refusal or contradiction might have on him - ...Rather she would sacrifice anything at all, in order to maintain, however superficially, a semblance of order and discipline in her house, in her relationship with him. His whole personality seemed to her to have cracked apart... if she allowed this chaos to reflect upon their marriage, she knew its fragments would not remain jangling together but would scatter, drift and crumble.

Feeling of Alienation

Sarah, the English wife of Adit Sen has the same feeling of alienation as her husband. She lives in a dual world, the two social worlds that do not meet the two incompatible cultures that split her. She gets herself alienated from her society through her marriage. She remains an outsider in the Indian community because she is English. She does not belong anywhere. She is not a physically uprooted person. Yet her condition is precarious.

Sarah's dilemma is not that of finding new roots but it is that of uprootedness and hence deeper. She finds herself an alien and a stranger. At the time of her departure, Sarah is sad to leave her place, "It was her English self that was receding and fading and dying, she knew, it was her English self to which she must say good - bye.

Conclusion

The study of novel shows that even though socially Sarah is not very happy because of racial prejudice and alienation from her people yet as a wife very sensibly takes care of things. Most of Anita Desai's couples don't pull well in marriage. Her social being may not be satisfied. This alien women who understands her husband, his family and country which she would accept, once in India. Anita Desai very brilliantly has brought to focus the exile and self - alienation of these three characters in *Bye - Bye black Bird*. The uprooted individuals Adit, Dev and Sarah have constant identity crisis and suffer from exile, culture and social alienation throughout the novel.

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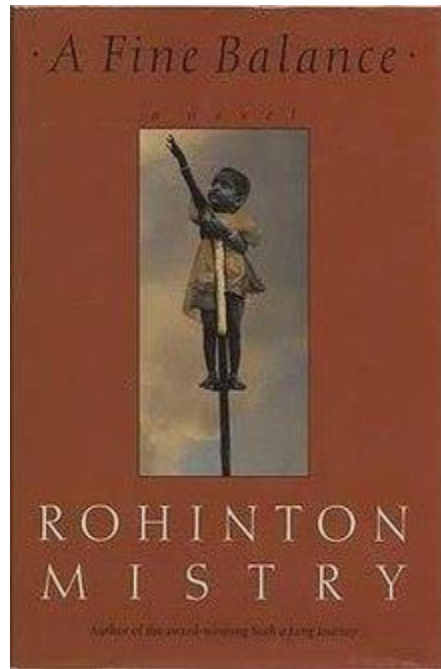
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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

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Exile and Cultural Alienation in Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird*

The Concept of Untouchability in Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*
Dr. T. Deivasigamani and G. Thibiga Lakshmi, Ph.D. Research Scholar
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Abstract

The concept of untouchability is a practice in which some lower caste people are kept at a distance being ignored by higher caste people. It also refers to a group of people who are marginalized, oppressed, and exploited by these social structures. Some of the writers in Indian literature are giving voice for untouchability through their writing. Like Bama, Spivak, Raja Roa, Kamala Markandaya, Rohinton Mistry, and so on. Rohinton Mistry is a writer of Indian Diaspora and his writings reflect the crisis of self-identity and aspects of immigration. He belongs to Parsi community of Indian origin who migrated to Canada in his early twenties. This Paper intends to study the social status of subalterns during the emergency period that is represented in Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*. It represents a clear picture of Indian Political and historical facts about the life of subaltern people. This paper shows how the common people of India are changed as subalterns and the paper further intends to explore the tragic life of four major different characters who belong to different social classes. Mistry brings out the oppressed condition of the common people in India.

Kew words: Untouchability, caste, marginalized, oppressed, exploited, Subalter, Diaspora

Introduction

Rohinton Mistry, born in Bombay and now resident in Canada. He was born into the Parsi community of Bombay on 3 July 1952. He was the second of four children, three boys and a girl. Rohinton's father was an advertising account executive, and he recalls his mother, happy in the role of nurturer 'doing the miracle that all mothers perform of making what was barely enough seem like abundance. Mistry draws his inspiration both from sharply recalled childhood experiences and from the upheavals of migration. His writings always with such intense and apparently personal narratives, the relationship between fiction and autobiography is hard to determine. Mistry can offer a unique perspective on the multiple accommodations involved in the construction of identities. Search for identity as a key theme in his works and is seen in both personal and national terms. His writing provides a wry, but occasionally tragic perspective on the postcolonial nation of India: a perspective from the margins, so to speak. Mistry interest in his writings lies with the average people of India struggling to wrest a basic life that is brutal against the poor and downtrodden. He usually speaks of his characters as though they have life of their own. His characters actions are very clear, but their motives are always disputable. Mistry's strong opposition to social and class differences have extended the spectrum of contemporary reality through this novel.

Triumph of Fictional Art

Mistry writings accomplishes the most convincing manner without straining the credibility of the reader, a real triumph of his fictional art. Raymond William in his book *Realism and Contemporary Novel* comments on Mistry's novels deals about the realist tradition of India. He remarks:

When I think of the realist tradition I fiction, I think of the kind of novel which creates and judges the quality of a whole way of life in terms of the qualities of persons. The balance involved in this achievement in perhaps the most important thing, the sort of the things most novels do.... Yet the distinction of this kind is that it offers a valuing of a whole way of life, a society that is larger than any of the individuals composing it, at the same time valuing creations of human beings who, while belonging to and affected by and helping to define this way of life, are also, in their own terms, absolute ends in themselves. (314).

A Fine Balance

In *A Fine Balance*, Mistry has made a conscious effort to embrace more of the social reality of India, so although the novels open with a Parsi woman Dina Dalal's story in Bombay, it soon enlarges its scope to include her lodger Maneck Kholah from a Hill station in North India and her tailors, Ishvar and Omprakash, who are come from a village. The narrative also encompasses what Walter Benjamin has called the city poet's special concern with rag pickers, beggars, and suicide victims/heroes. As their tragic tales unfold, one gets the impression that Mistry's novel is attempting to articulate the silence of centuries of exploitation, domination, and oppression of the poorest of the poor of India. This novel was published in the year 1995 and has won the prestigious Giller Prize.

Three Aspects

A Fine Balance demonstrates three things with respect to caste. First of all, the novel explores the effects of untouchability on individuals. It explores the injustice of caste and probes the implications of defying it. While Narayan opts for political resistance, Om and Ishvar suffer from escape and exile. Secondly, *A Fine Balance* makes clear that while loyalty and trust in the socio-cultural system of religion are undermined, Hinduism is not necessarily affected by this. Thirdly, the gruesome practice of caste as a cultural system is more prevalent in a rural context than in an urban one. Williams Raymond portrays the Diasporic elements of common people to survive that, Mistry being a Diaspora writer and Parsis sensitive to the conditions of those who do not belong to the marginalized people have to struggle twice as hard for what come with lesser effort to those belonging to the mainstream because 65 strength with them and also because unable to fully comprehend and appreciate the socio-cultural context of the situation in which they are placed, these people constantly experience fear, alienation, rejection and insecurity. (Raymond, 301)

Representation of Dalits

The present paper focusses on how Mistry portrays the representations of Dalits in *A Fine Balance* brings a sensible and sensitive understanding of social exploitation inherent in the class structure of India and points out how a marginalized person loses his individual identity. As a humanist and social novelist, it becomes easier for Mistry to describe the dignity, value, freedom of the individual human being with their identity. The reason being the search for the individual and social identities, is palpable in Mistry's works. As Narayan states: "Life without dignity is worthless" (144). The characters face the consequences of their beliefs in the end which is brutal and tragic.

The novel also illustrates the deeper insight of political activity, and struggle of suffering people. It focuses on the deep structure of the individual's existences of human life. *A Fine Balance* is taken up for analyzing the human suffering in which Mistry ultimately gives a space of endless suffering of the individuals. Mistry's novels mostly depicts with all the problems which a normal person faces in his or her life and also voice the lower class people are being oppressed by upper class people not only in their personal life and also socially, politically and economically. Mistry characters are fight against an aggressive social environment to create a new world and freedom. In his novels the characters are very young and middle/low class people. His novels deal; with major Indian social problems and imbalances of Indian society where the protagonists themselves are the downtrodden and the underdogs.

Prominent Characters

The Hindus, Omprakash and Ishvar Darji occupy prominent positions in *A Fine Balance* in so far as both are crucial in illustrating the novel's central concern of how to make life livable under unfavourable conditions and adverse circumstances. One aspects is of particular importance in this context: India's cruelest social constraint- caste. Any discussion of the effects of caste on Ishvar and Om must necessarily include their family background. It starts from Dukhi Mochi, Ishvar's father and Omprakash's grandfather. Dukhi Mochi belongs to the Chamaar caste of tanners and leather workers. Together with the other Chammars in the village, Dukhi lives on the carcasses of dead animals. Untouchability is a stigma; other castes avoid contact with Dukhi

because he is deemed impure. The caste divisions in the village strifle Dukhi, but he remains patient and cautions and not enrage the upper class villagers so that he can live safely. Simple incidents like Dukhi a Chammar having two sons and the upper class producing none becomes an issue and they connive to disrupt it. Those in the highest social hierarchy in the social order seriously ruminates and decide to whip the world into shape by enforcing a stricter “Dharmic Order” (101), which means more flogging and pain for the Chammar.

The abandoning of “the leather for choli “(113), brings prosperity for Iswar and Narayan. After the required apprenticeship Narayan decides to stay in the village and Iswar decides to stay with Asharaf. The Chammar who are used to wear the tatters thrown away the upper caste people are now eager to have dress tailored for them. Soon Narayan becomes a representative figure of the community. Narayan’s success is similar to that of Omprakash Valmiki’s autobiography *Joothan: A Dalit’s Life* expresses that: “the personal success is interpreted as a success for the community” (36).

As Narayan astutely develops the skills of tailoring, he secures comfortable living for Om, his son. Following his father’s footsteps, he goes to Asharaf’s shop to be trained as a tailor. Dukhi’s status in the Chammar community rises but nothing else changes. Things like caste discrimination remain strong as Narayan laments: “But what about the more important things? Government passes new laws, says no more untouchability, yet everything the same in the upper class... they still treat us worse than animals “(112). Anger bubbles up within him and frustration leads him to become defiant. He voices his deep-seated desire thus: “I want to be able to drink from the village well, worship in the temple, walk where I like” (142).

Though Narayan was killed because of his involvement in anti-Emergency activities, the officials projected his death as an accident. Mistry raises doubts regarding such political murders: “The police claimed it was a railway accident, but the parents spoke of wounds they had seen on their son’s body at the morgue. According to the reporter, the injuries were the injuries were consistent with other confirmed incidents of torture” (584). Through this passage, the novelist records that such political murders were very common during Emergency and people like Narayan is not able to do anything to protect their lives. The lives of individuals were affected relentlessly due to Emergency though they were not related to politics even indirectly. For example, Omprakash and Ishwar, the tailors were forcefully taken to the Prime Minister’s against their wish.

Conclusion

The Dalits life highlighted in *A Fine Balance* reveals the growing voice of the Untouchable people in India. Through Mistry’s vivid and picturesque descriptions of the conditions of the untouchables, he illustrates how mainstream literature has gone to merge untouchability in the content. *A Fine Balance* between hope and despair; the novel ends certainly on an optimistic and hopeful note. By analyzing the characters, the concept of untouchability is well demonstrated. *A Fine Balance*’s broader scope shifts the focus away from a single community to a variety of communities within multicultural India. The sociological interest in how people construct meaning in world otherwise impossible to bear remains constant throughout Mistry’s narratives. The mentality of the people has to change in respect to caste discrimination to abolish untouchability completely.

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**Indian Female Gothic Narratives and Resistance:
A Study of Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock***

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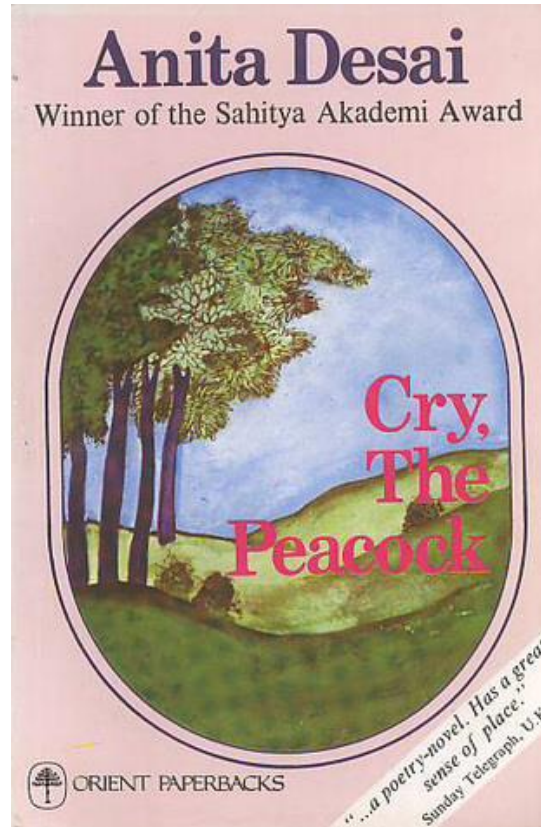


Anita Desai

Courtesy: <http://www.in.com/anita-desai/profile-21703.html>

Indian Women Writers Questioning Patriarchal Norms

Indian women writers are one of those revolutionary fighters who moved the pen extensively to recover and recuperate the self-identity. Throughout the years they raised their voice to find a place in the society. They created their own literature in which they questioned the whole lot of patriarchal norms and regulation, and stereotypical representation, and confined role of women in literature texts. They eradicated such kinds of concepts by creating an individual space to show the agony and sufferings of women through their strong writings. As Cixous says, "Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies" (78).



Anita Desai's Narratives

Anita Desai is such a prolific writer who brought out her inner feelings outside through the narratives and showed the path to youngsters how to represent and evince the women sufferings and painful condition before society. She is always concerned with the inner world of her characters and their roles. She basically showed the plights of modern women in the existing condition of patriarchal society. Desai has written abundantly who published her first novel in 1963, *Cry The Peacock*. Then she came up with *Clear Light of Day* (1980) which she counted as her most autobiographical work as it is set during her age and also in the same background. Later, she published *In Custody* which was short listed for the Booker Prize, was all about an Urdu poet. Besides these novels she has written many novels which gained the appreciation and obtained many awards also.

Focus of This Paper – Analysis of Characters Using Gothic as Medium

This paper tries to explore the resistant attitudes of female characters in her first and famous novel *Cry the Peacock* by using Gothic as a medium. The gothic literature has a long history that span over many centuries. This particular genre flourished in the age of eighteenth and nineteenth century where people started attracting to this innovative style. Critics have studied thoroughly about the genre and described the features in different ways. Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered as one of the first original Gothic novels. Later many writers published, wrote and contributed abundantly to this genre. M. H. Abrams defines the Gothic in General in his book *A Glossary of Literary Terms* in the light of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* as follows:

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

K. T. Unais, Ph.D. Research Scholar

274

Indian Female Gothic Narratives and Resistance: A Study of Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*

Some writers followed Walpole's example by setting their stories in the medieval period; others set them in a Catholic country, especially Italy or Spain. The locale was often a gloomy castle furnished with dungeons, subterranean passages, and sliding panels; the typical story focused on the sufferings imposed on an innocent heroine by a cruel and lustful villain, and made bountiful use of ghosts, mysterious disappearances, and other sensational and supernatural occurrences (which in a number of novels turned out to have natural explanations).

Female Gothic

The female gothic is one of the most exciting sub genres of Gothic literature. It is derived from the work of Ann Radcliff and other female writers of the nineteenth century. The term female Gothic is coined by Ellen Moers In 1977 in *Literary Women* to figure out the depiction of women in a Gothic. But, Indian gothic narratives are very different from the western gothic narratives. Indian writers come up with their own style and subverted the genre into a new style. Instead of using extreme physical terror and horror full setting places they converted into old gardens and some actions. Hence, Indian women writers widely use gothic as a medium to express their feelings and sufferings.

Image, Plots and Settings

Novels of Anita Desai, often, expose certain recurring methods in image; plot and settings which provide the charm of the narratives. The two opposing components such as gothic mystery and philosophical elements combined together in her novels. *Cry the peacock* is a best epitome of such narration in which she clearly brings out the philosophical elements and gothic mystery. Most of Anita Desai's novels show the characteristics Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) in which she used the same technique to evoke the terror and horror.

Focus on Modern Situation

The setting of the Anita Desai's novels is particular in terms of bringing up the modern formation instead of old fashion which we usually see in the gothic narratives. She often makes her novels in the city, hill station or in the big gardens. Besides, she mostly portrays her characters as wanderers who are searching the self-identity. Desai has opened up a space to discuss the feminist mode of writing throughout her career. N.R Gopal talks about Anita Desai's particular characterisation as "Anita Desai not only explores and portrays the feminine psyche of a common women but also of the subnormal bordering on abnormal women" (21).

Cry the Peacock

Cry the peacock is one of the most discussed and poetic novels of the Indian English literature. It deals with the mind set of Indian culture and tradition beautifully. The novel revolves around the character Maya, the protagonist of the novel, struggles to find a place in the society in the novel. She has been given different kinds of roles to understand and figure out the actual scenario of the world of indifference. Actually, the entire narration is the protagonist's psychic tumult, who is seen haunted by the prophecy of an astrologer in the beginning of the novel. Desai

uses the technique of stream of consciousness in the novel in which she describes the protagonist's psychic dilemma and alienation. It is the story of Maya's relationship with her husband. The novel mainly deals with the theme of marital discord between Maya and her husband Gautama. Maya goes through the different stages of life in the novel in which the author discusses the inner world of the protagonist, her desire for love and companionship, her eagerness to live freely and her fixation with the death.

Maya as a Rebel Woman

Anita Desai portrays Maya as a rebel woman, who feels uncomfortable in this patriarchal society. Being alone in the family, she got most of the father's love and affection. But, she clearly unsatisfied with her lively conditions and she resists and challenges the way her father nurtured her. She says that:

You have a very obvious father – obsession, which is also the reason why you married me, a man much older than yourself. The realization that another person, both close to you and your father does not place the same trust as you do in the adored figure shakes your faith. (Cry 122)

The other instance she rebelled the whole lot of patriarchal system is when she talks about her unsatisfied life with her husband Gautama. Lack of emotional attachment is very evident between Maya and Gautama. Though she is very eager and obsesses with the life, she challenges all the norms of the society. Her displeased sexual life portrays clearly by Anita Desai. She frankly admits and says her sexual dissatisfaction:

How little he knew my sufferings, or of how to comfort me. Telling me to go to sleep and while he worked at his papers, he did not give another thought to me, to either the soft willing body, or the lonely wanting mind that waited near his bed. (09)

Other Women Characters Who Rebelled and Resisted

Apart from Maya, there are other women characters that rebelled and resisted the odds and norms of the society in the novels. Nila, Gautama's sister and his mother one way started questioning the problems of society in the novel. Nila talks about her marital life as "After ten years with that rabbit I married, I have learnt to do everything myself" (162). The other woman character in the novel Laila, Maya's friend, mocks the entire system of marriage in the novel. She never complained about her unhappy marriage life, but she accepted her gloomy and unhappy life and said that "it was all written in my fate long ago" (54). In all these instances the women characters of Anita Desai's *Cry the Peacock* show the dejection of all the odds and norms prevailing in the society. They whole one way or other rebelled the so-called customs and tradition.

Dejection

Anita Desai portrays her characters as willing to do anything in the life. She gives priorities to each and every woman characters by showing the dejection of stereotypical representation. The incident of Nila's divorce clearly evinces the superiority power of her characters. Even Maya amused when she heard about Nila's initiative on divorce and went to near lawyer alone to discuss about it. Despite of her mother's disapproval for divorce she has shown immense courage to do so.

She uttered after the diverse letter that i have learnt everything to do myself. It is a clear proclamation of dejection and resistance of entire patriarchal system of the society.

Resistance

Maya's angry reaction towards the Leila's husband proves resistant attitude of the protagonist. She talks about her husband's silly talks on Leila's parents in a fuming way. Maya says:

Sometimes i thought of him as an animal, a ferocious and wild beast that allowed itself to become a house pet for its own reasons, and he accepted the food and drink she earned for him, as his due, even teasing her about her parents who had not seen her, written to her, or in any way communicated with her since the day of her elopement.(58)

Another instance for the resistance of the entire system is very obvious when Maya talks about her husband's obsession with money. She entirely unsatisfied with her husband and rejects his idea of life. She does not think money as a basic need of life. She proclaimed there are more things than money one has to share in the entire life. Maya says:

But, of course, we must, though I'm sure I don't know if money is basic. And why must it always be money? It's always be money, or property never a case of passion and revenge, murder and exciting things life that basic things why? Don't they ever happen? (23)

Maya continued fighting to get place in this male-centred society. Though she is in full love with the happy life, she showed her rage in the time. As astrologer's prophecy she decided to kill her husband who treated her as a puppet. The killing act of Maya (female character) shows dejection of entire stereotypical narration in which women were merely tools for their counterpart. Most of the western gothic and female gothic novels failed to portray their female characters as strong and superior than their male counterpart. It was not merely a killing, but it was Maya's revolt against entire social order and the rage that comes out from her past experience. Maya says:All order is gone out of my life, all formality, there is no plan, no peace nothing to keep me with the pattern of familiar, everything living and doing" (195).

Transferred Inner Affection to an Object

Maya's love towards her dog is something transferred her inner affection to an object. She has grown up without fulfilling the affection of mother and later she was denied the desirable love by husband. So, Maya is very much affected to her pet dog, Toto. Whenever she remembers about Toto she really feels something missing. She says on to that:

Small while Toto, whining a little, out of fear, his futile barks dying away into a hopeless silence. Small white Toto, small white corpse in the blaze of sun, abandon. "I shall miss himself-terribly, Gautama, I cried then, the confession fearing out of me in a stormy lush and even as I wiped away my quick tears and wept-more, I cried to myself what is the use? I am alone. (24)

To Conclude

In short, *Cry the Peacock* is a work in which Anita Desai portrays voices of resistance through the female characters throughout the entire narration. For that, she used gothic as a medium to reflect her ideas in a simple way.

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K. T. Unais, Ph.D. Research Scholar

278

Indian Female Gothic Narratives and Resistance: A Study of Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*

Domestic Violence in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal

Dr. S. Veeramani and P. Ramesh, Ph.D. Research Scholar



Nayantara Sahgal

Courtesy: <http://english.mathrubhumi.com/news/india/nayantara-sahgal-returns-sahitya-award-protests-rising-intolerance-english-news-1.580570>

Abstract

It is found that even in the novels of the Indian English women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal, and R. P. Jhabvala, Indian women remained more chained to their circumstances than liberated and are more tradition-bound. Yet we also see women try to be free from their shackles and have moved towards freedom. But the trend has not been firm enough. Restlessness, uneasiness, and a kind of turbulence persist even in their traditional, transitional or liberated states. They are all in an unsettled state - seeking something which always deceives them.

Key word: Indian Women Writers of Indian English Writing, female characters, domestic violence, women's identity, liberation of women.

Introduction

Domestic violence, also known as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence, intimate partner violence (IPV), is defined as a pattern of abusive behaviors by one partner against another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family, or cohabitation.

Domestic violence, so defined, has many forms, including physical aggression or assault (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects), or threats thereof; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; controlling or domineering; intimidation; stalking; passive/covert abuse (e.g., neglect); and economic deprivation. Alcohol consumption and mental illness can be co-morbid with abuse and present additional challenges in eliminating domestic violence. Awareness, perception, definition and documentation of domestic violence differ widely from country to country and have evolved from era to era. Domestic violence and abuse is not limited to obvious physical violence.

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is abuse involving contact intended to cause feelings of intimidation, pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm. It includes hitting, slapping, punching, choking, pushing, burning and other types of contact that result in physical injury to the victim. Physical abuse can also include behaviors such as denying the victim of medical care when needed, depriving the victim of sleep or other functions necessary to live, or forcing the victim to engage in drug/alcohol use against his/her will. If a person is suffering from any physical harm, then they are experiencing physical abuse. This pain can be experienced on any level. It can also include inflicting physical injury onto other targets, such as children or pets, in order to cause psychological harm to the victim.

2. Sexual Abuse and Marital Rape

Sexual abuse is any situation in which force or threat is used to obtain participation in unwanted sexual activity. Coercing a person to engage in sexual activity against their will, even if that person is a spouse or intimate partner with whom consensual sex has occurred, is an act of aggression and violence.

3. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse (also called psychological abuse or mental abuse) can include humiliating the victim privately or publicly, controlling what the victim can and cannot do, withholding information from the victim, deliberately doing something to make the victim feel diminished or embarrassed, isolating the victim from friends and family, implicitly blackmailing the victim by harming others when the victim expresses independence or happiness, or denying the victim access to money or other basic resources and necessities. Degradation in any form can be considered psychological abuse. Emotional abuse includes conflicting actions or statements which are designed to confuse and create insecurity in the victim. These behaviors also lead the victims to question themselves, causing them to believe that they are making up the abuse or that the abuse is their fault. Women or men undergoing emotional abuse often suffer from depression, which puts them at increased risk for suicide, eating disorders, and drug and alcohol abuse. Emotional abuse can include verbal abuse is defined as any behavior that threatens, intimidates, undermines the victim's self-worth or self-esteem, or controls the victim's freedom. Verbal abuse is a form of emotionally abusive behavior involving the use of language. Verbal abuse can also be referred to as the act of threatening. Through threatening a person can blatantly say they will harm you in any way and will also be considered as abuse.

4. Economic Abuse

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

Dr. S. Veeramani and P. Ramesh, Ph.D. Research Scholar

Domestic Violence in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal

Economic abuse is a form of abuse when one intimate partner has control over the other partner's access to economic resources. Economic abuse may involve preventing a spouse from resource acquisition, limiting the amount of resources to use by the victim, or by exploiting economic resources of the victim. The motive behind preventing a spouse from acquiring resources is to diminish victim's capacity to support him/her, thus forcing him/her to depend on the perpetrator financially, which includes preventing the victim from obtaining education, finding employment, maintaining or advancing their careers, and acquiring assets.

Effects

1. Physical

Bruises, broken bones, head injuries, lacerations, and internal bleeding are some of the acute effects of a domestic violence incident that require medical attention and hospitalization. Some chronic health conditions that have been linked to victims of domestic violence are arthritis, irritable bowel syndrome, chronic pain, pelvic pain, ulcers, and migraines. Victims who are pregnant during a domestic violence relationship experience greater risk of miscarriage, pre-term labor, and injury to or death of the fetus.

2. Psychological

Among victims who are still living with their perpetrators high amounts of stress, fear, and anxiety are commonly reported. Depression is also common, as victims are made to feel guilty for 'provoking' the abuse and are frequently subjected to intense criticism. It is reported that 60% of victims meet the diagnostic criteria for depression, either during or after termination of the relationship, and have a greatly increased risk of suicidal tendencies. In addition to depression, victims of domestic violence also commonly experience long-term anxiety and panic, and are likely to meet the diagnostic criteria for Generalized Anxiety Disorder and Panic Disorder. The most commonly referenced psychological effect of domestic violence is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD (as experienced by victims) is characterized by flashbacks, intrusive images, exaggerated startle response, nightmares, and avoidance of triggers that are associated with the abuse. These symptoms are generally experienced for a long span of time after the victim has left the dangerous situation. Many researchers state that PTSD is possibly the best diagnosis for those suffering from psychological effects of domestic violence, as it accounts for the variety of symptoms commonly experienced by victims of trauma.

3. Financial

Once victims leave their perpetrator, they can be stunned with the reality of the extent to which the abuse has taken away their autonomy. Due to economic abuse and isolation, the victim usually has very little money of their own and few people on whom they can rely when seeking help. This has been shown to be one of the greatest obstacles facing victims of domestic violence, and the strongest factor that can discourage them from leaving their perpetrators.

Causes of Violence

There are many different theories as to the causes of domestic violence. These include psychological theories that consider personality traits and mental characteristics of the perpetrator, as well as social theories which consider external factors in the perpetrator's environment, such as family structure, stress, social learning. As with many phenomena regarding human experience,

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Dr. S. Veeramani and P. Ramesh, Ph.D. Research Scholar

Domestic Violence in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal

no single approach appears to cover all cases. Whilst there are many theories regarding what causes one individual to act violently towards an intimate partner or family member there is also growing concern around apparent intergenerational cycles of domestic violence.

1. Psychological

Psychological theories focus on personality traits and mental characteristics of the offender. Personality traits include sudden bursts of anger, poor impulse control, and poor self-esteem. Various theories suggest that psychopathology and other personality disorders are factors, and that abuse experienced as a child leads some people to be more violent as adults. Correlation has been found between juvenile delinquency and domestic violence in adulthood. Studies have found high incidence of psychopathy among abusers. Some research suggests that about 80% of men in these domestic violence studies exhibited diagnosable psychopathology and typical personality disorders.

2. Jealousy

Many cases of domestic violence against women occur due to jealousy when one partner is either suspected of being unfaithful or is planning to leave the relationship.

3. Behavioral

Behavioral theories draw on the work of behavior analysts. Applied behavior analysis uses the basic principles of learning theory to change behavior. This program leads to behavior therapy. Often by identifying the antecedents and consequences of violent action, the abusers can be taught self-control.

4. Social Stress

Stress may be increased when a person is living in a family situation, with increased pressures. Social stresses, due to inadequate finances or other such problems in a family may further increase tensions. Violence is not always caused by stress, but may be one way that some people respond to stress. Families and couples in poverty may be more likely to experience domestic violence, due to increased stress and conflicts about finances and other aspects.

5. Mental Illness

Many psychiatric disorders are risk factors for domestic violence, including several personality disorders: all Cluster BPDs, (especially antisocial), paranoid and passive aggressive. Bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, drug abuse, alcoholism and poor impulse control are also risk factors. It is estimated that at least one-third of all abusers have some type of mental illness.

6. Marital Conflict Disorder

The American Psychiatric Association planning and research committees for the forthcoming DSM-5 (2013) have canvassed a series of new Relational disorders which include Marital Conflict Disorder without Violence or Marital Abuse Disorder (Marital Conflict Disorder with Violence). There is current considerable controversy over whether male-to-female marital violence is best regarded as a reflection of male psychopathology and control or whether there is an empirical base and clinical utility for conceptualizing these patterns as relational."

1. Medical Response

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

Dr. S. Veeramani and P. Ramesh, Ph.D. Research Scholar

Domestic Violence in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal

Medical professionals can make a difference in the lives of those who experience abuse. Many cases of spousal abuse are handled solely by physicians and do not involve the police. Sometimes cases of domestic violence are brought into the emergency room, while many other cases are handled by family physician or other primary care provider. Medical professionals are in position to empower people, give advice, and refer them to appropriate services. The health care professional has not always met this role, with uneven quality of care, and in some cases misunderstandings about domestic violence.

2. Law Enforcement:

In 1983, Domestic Violence was recognized as a specific criminal offence by the introduction of section 498-A into the Indian Penal Code. This section deals with cruelty by a husband or his family towards a married woman. Four types of cruelty are dealt with by this law:

- Conduct that is likely to drive a woman to suicide,
- Conduct which is likely to cause grave injury to the life, limb or health of the woman,
- Harassment with the purpose of forcing the woman or her relatives to give some property,
- Harassment because the woman or her relatives is unable to yield to demands for more money or does not give some property.

The punishment is imprisonment for up to three years and a fine. The complaint against cruelty need not be lodged by the person herself. Any relative may also make the complaint on her behalf. The above section relates to the criminal provisions of a more stringent offence. The civil law does not however address this phenomenon in its entirety. There was a need of provision in law with more pliable remedies to offer within the broader framework of civil and criminal laws. A law was enacted keeping in view the rights guaranteed under the article 14, 15 & 21 of the constitution to provide for a remedy under civil law which is intended to protect the woman from being victims of domestic violence and to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence in the society.

Conclusion

Despite efforts made by various sections of society and the Government to curb the menace of domestic violence against women, there is a rise in domestic violence. This can be curbed by:

- Educating women about her rights.
- Community screening for domestic violence.
- Providing adequate assistance to the victim.
- By offering safe shelters, crisis intervention, advocacy, and education and prevention programs.
- Provision of strict laws and punishment for offence of domestic violence. To conclude it is therefore necessary that every strata of society must contribute to ensure a violence free life for every woman.

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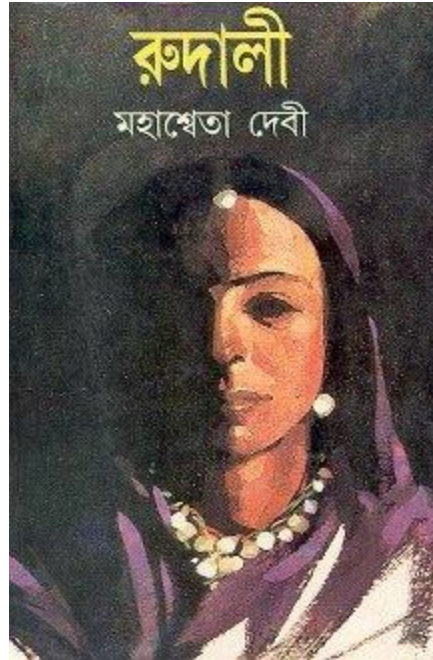
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Domestic Violence in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal

The Metamorphism of Women in Indian Society: A Study of Mahesweta Devi's *Rudali*

Dr. K. Ananthajothi and Dr. (Mrs.) R. Santhi



Abstract

Mahasweta Devi, a veteran Bengali writer is among those irresistible voices who puts a question mark on the so-called progressive, democratic and civilized nation called India. Even after so many years of independence, the marginal are deprived of their basic rights. Mahasweta's texts carry out a contrapuntal reading of the mythical discourse and write back to the nationalist mythologizing of a colossal, integrated Indian custom and culture at the cost of oppressing the low castes, and tribals. The present study focuses from the novel *Rudali* depicted the struggle Sanichari oppressed against poverty, mortification and wrecked by an exploitative patriarchal caste-based social structure. Broken by their own family, community members and the ruling rich, these women either submit to a consigned existence made them became prostitutes for survival; or like Sanichari and Bikhni, challenge their subjugation. In digital era, Indian society still clings with certain religious and traditional values the name of social standard. Characters who undergone natural life calamities like Sanichari and Bikhni have been forced to face battle for life by creating new humorous ideas to come up in their life. Here, the innocent fades self-centered glitters.

Introduction

In the post-colonial era, the field of gender has been of much debated and many seminal works have been based upon it. Different societies have treated women as the 'other', 'colonized', 'deprived' and; 'the fairer sex' has time and again suffered the politics of oppression and repression. Of late, the concept of gender bias has been of much consequence which implies that women have been doubly suppressed first on the basis of nationality; the other, on the basis of gender not only that women are also forced to transform from innocent to self-centered.

There are two pictures of modern India; the first one portrays us the bright picture of 'India Shining' while the second one is a dismal picture of India reeling under starvation, poverty, debt and unemployment. The first picture depicts constant growth in every field, be it healthcare, education, industries, service sector, etc. This current position tries to project India as a nation continuously moving on the path of development. The other picture puts a question mark on the reality behind the first position. In the same land called India, we have millions of landless peasants reeling under debt and poverty; tribals who are losing their lands and are forced to become farm workers and even bonded labourers in many cases, and ordinary men who are making die-hard efforts to make their ends meet. But the calamity with these socially double suppressed people is that their lives are below the national attention.

There are a number of women writers who have marked their presence steadily in the men dominated land. They have declined to follow street and state censors and succeeded in bringing unheard voiced to the fore. Mahasweta Devi, veteran Bengali writer is among those irresistible voices who puts a question mark on the so-called progressive, democratic and civilized nation called India. Even after so many years of independence, the marginal are deprived of their basic rights. Through her novels, stories and a number of articles; Mahasweta exposes the feudal system which is anti-tribal, anti-women, anti-poor and anti-tiller. This study is an attempt to explore and throw light on Tribal women and how they suffer in the society. Throughout her literary career, she has written fervently about the tribal, subjugated and the deprived and tried to bring their unheard stories before the world to make the people sensitize about these people. And she is still active in her eighties talking to people, forming self-help groups, writing letters to authorities, visiting to people, rebelling against government atrocities.

Mahasweta Devi was an Indian Bengali writer and social activist. Her notable literary works include *Hajar Churashir Maa*, *Rudali*, and *Aranyer Adhikar*. She worked for the rights and empowerment of the tribal people (Lodha and Shabar) of West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Chhattisgarh states of India. She was honoured with various literary awards. She is well known for her pioneering work among the most oppressed in the Indian society - the dispossessed tribals and the marginalized divisions such as landless labourers of eastern India. Mahasweta's writings are often based upon scrupulous research, conducted sometimes through unconventional means (such as oral history), into the history of the peoples she writes about.

Rudali

Mahasweta Devi's *Rudali* revolves on the two women who build up a partnership for existence. *Rudali* is one of the haunting stories that come from remote villages in Rajasthan. The novel depicted the struggle Sanichari oppressed against poverty, humiliation and wrecked by an

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Dr. K. Ananthajothi and Dr. (Mrs.) R. Santhi

The Metamorphosis of Women in Indian Society: A Study of Mahesweta Devi's *Rudali*

exploitative patriarchal caste-based social system. Damaged by their own family, community members or the ruling rich, these women either submit to a consigned existence, which became prostitutes for survival; or like Sanichari and Bikhni, challenges their subjugation. The novel represents the miserable condition of a low-caste starving family in post-colonial Indian society. It highlighted the particularly miserable position of backward class women in rural India.

The story of *Rudali* draws attention to on the bond aging relation between women, the relation between Sanichari and Bikhni is off course close, sensitive, affectionate and helpful. Sanichari meets Bikhni in the market place, where she is searching her grandson is already lost every member of her family, she is free from all other ties and relations. On the other hand, Bikhni is equally abandoned by her son; leave her home with no plan about where to go. She prepares to survive by begging at some railway station if necessary. In every domain of life such as social, financial, caste, gender, age, family these women are tribally equal. Bikhni is pleased with Sanichari's house, and she loves a household work, she cleans the house, clothes, mats and quilts, she brings water from the river and with little effort start vegetable patch in front of Sanichari's house.

Sanichari was marginalized firstly as a girl child and she was forced to get married at the time of adolescence. And then her mother-in-law was also responsible for her marginalization, she always ridiculed her saying that she was born on Saturday so her name was inauspicious. She even said that Sanichari's life is full of sufferings and brings out a bad luck to their family. This made Sanichari feels rebellious against her mother-in-law. Sanichari was forced to go for the profession of a paid mourner (Rudali) because there was nobody to provide her with basic requirements of life. "For them, nothing has ever come easy. just the daily struggle for a little maize gruel and salt is exhausting. While those people spend huge sums of money on death ceremonies, just to gain prestige..." (Devi.9)

More on Sanichari

Sanichari, the protagonist, is a vigorous Dalit widow who lives in a village of Bihar, reeling under the burden of earning for her family. Without any earning family member, she faces many difficulties, feeding his family as she was cursed as a 'witch' who has devoured the men of the house. Sanichari is alone, and she gets a supporter in her long-lost friend Bikhni, another ill-fated Dalit widow who was left alone by her own son.

"Everyone said - she's led such a hard,sad life. But finding Bikhni has been a blessing" (Devi.110).

The two form a deep bond and a partnership for survival as they find out financial help in different livelihoods as hired mourners (Rudali)to add pretentiousness to funerals of the feudal rich in their two-faced society. The new profession gave them their first sense of mastery. But then, Sanichari suffers another waft when Bikhni dies from dysentery as given lack of basic medical care.

After facing this much of loss, Sanichari is moreover shaken. But she refused to take a break and emerges revolts against her loneliness. She meets the brothel to recruit a band of Rudalis all by herself from among the prostitutes, where she encounters her fiercely disobedient

runaway daughter-in-law Parvatia. Wishing to free them from ill-treatment of the flesh trade, Sanichari encourages them on how to outshine as false mourners at funerals of the rich landlords,

"When you start, weep as if you have lost someone close to you, someone dear to your heart. Beat your breast and cry out with such feeling that their blood runs cold!" she teaches them.

The play culminates with these prostitutes forging loud mourning at the demise of the very man who pushed them into the pyre of prostitution. There is a sense of liberty from their indignant life in this alternative profession that earns them cash, food grains and goodies without having to sell their bodies.

Importance of Community

Community is a medium of offence for the bloodsuckers at the same time it become the form of security and strength for subjugated. The writer stresses on the importance of community for the weaker section of the society, the community bondage between the poor and oppressed is strong enough for survival of the each and all of the community. There are a number of examples depicts in the novel by the author about how the poor and oppressed, help and cooperate other poor and oppressed in their respective communities. The writer stresses on the importance of community for the weaker section of the society, the community bondage between the poor and oppressed is strong enough for survival of the each and all of the community.

Marginalized Women

The writer strongly portrays with examples that the marginalized women and men help and support each other, on the contrary the upper caste people cheat betrays their relatives for gaining money, wealth, land, and property. It is impossible for the marginalized people to survive in the village without the support of each other. The author presents the central character Sanichari work very hard besides with her husband, her son and her grandson to support her family for survival and livelihood. Sanichari and her childhood playmate Bikhni are abandoned by their family accepted by the bondage of community and friendship.

In the very opening of the storyline is that Sanichari be treated as a commodity and thrown away as soon as her commoditized existence becomes futile to the males in her life. Mahasweta discriminates between the civilized and common reader, reading a short story or novel about the condition of the exploited tribal sitting in his or her comfortable hearth and home, and the condition of the "Ho-Oraon-Mundra girls."

The tragic fate of tribal girls like Sanichari is clearly portrayed by Mahasweta Devi in this short story. The Indian paramilitary forces sought to subjugate the tribal people by burning their shelters, by looting their possessions and killing them, and by gang raping their women. When someone died in a Malik Mahajan household, the amount of money spent on the death ceremonies instantaneously raised the reputation of the family. The status of the Rudalis also rose.

"We can offer worship to Shiva as well. After all we've managed to save up sever rupees!" (Devi.73).

Such is the humiliating conditions in which the low caste woman is destined to live. And such women are termed as a separate caste or caste of low "whore" women. It is the women who are ruined by the Malik Mahajans who turn them into prostitutes.

"The Malik-Mahajan demands honor even when he is a corpse." (Devi.91)

But Sanichari rises to the occasion and confiscates the opportunity by making it an act of revenge and expression of historical opposition. Sanichari contemplated that perhaps her tears had been reserved for the time when she would have to feed herself by selling them.

It can also be identified as a predictable part of the advancement of the cultural politics of dissent and difference from the historically marginalized people of India. It can be justly termed as representation the cultural politics.

Finally, she turned up to be a Rudali just to earn her daily bread. Rudali is all about how to survive. She had to sell her tears which she never shed at the death of her own people but the death of the landowners so that she could earn livelihood.

To Conclude

Mahasweta intensely loves tribal people and makes every possible effort to make their life better. She openly criticizes government policies which are meant for a selected group of people. She not only writes about tribal but also write about subaltern, she has taken many significant steps to uplift the underprivileged people. In 1980, she launched a Bengali quarterly, Bortika which has become a forum for marginalized people to voice their opinions and stories. In 1983 she formed Paschim Bangla Kheriya Sabar Kalyan Samiti, a welfare society to train the tribal to earn their livelihood. In her stories and articles, she celebrates rustic beauty and innocence of tribal people which has become so rare in today's materialistic world. She feels angry when people separate the tribal people calling them different:

"Who says they are different? You deny rights to these people make them invisible and label them as different! I live, eat and sleep with them like one of their family."

She is a long-time champion for the political, social and economic. She describes the "suffering spectators of the India that is traveling to the twenty first century". Many of her stories are about tribal fighting subjugation, resisting exploitation, rebelling against power. The author not only portrays miseries of the widows but one who spent her entire life for the advancement of tribal community.

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290

Dr. Ambedkar - The Lion at the Round Table Conferences
R. Anthony Raj, Ph.D. Research Scholar

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Introduction

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was one of the greatest sons of India. A Parliamentarian scholar and Constitutionalist of World repute, he has been universally acclaimed as a saviour of untouchables. As a great crusader of the downtrodden, he waged a relentless struggle against the old order which was based on injustice and was devoid of human dignity. He strove, throughout his life, to establish a new social order based on principles of liberty, equality and universal brotherhood. He stands as a symbol of struggle for social justice. This paper brings out the speeches of Dr. Ambedkar at the round Table Conferences. This includes his speeches in the Plenary sessions of the First Round Table Conference, his arguments in the Minorities Sub-Committee and fight for safeguarding the rights of the untouchables in the future Constitution of India and his role in the Franchise Sub-Committee as protagonist and advocate of universal adult suffrage. In second round Table Conference, he is crossing sword with Mahatma Gandhi on the question of Untouchables' Rights in Minorities Committee.

Round Table Conference

On 12 November 1930, the King George V formally inaugurated the Round Table Conference. The Round Table Conference was an event of great significance to Indians as well as to the depressed classes. Its significance lay in the recognition by the British of the right of Indians to be consulted in the matters of framing a Constitution of India. As regards the Depressed Classes they were for the first time allowed to be represented separately by their delegates. These delegates were Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and R. Srinivasan.

In this very session Dr. B. R. Ambedkar put forth the cause of Depressed Classes as well as their position on Indian matters clearly and seriously. In this session Dr. Ambedkar greatly emphasised on Dalit demands which only due to the huge pressure of the awakened Dalit people of India and the demands which he raised were actually the demands of common enlightened Dalits. Dr. Ambedkar spoke on behalf of the Depressed Classes of India in the Plenary session in the 5th sitting of the Round Table Conference on 20th November, 1930 to "put the point of view of Depressed Classes".

"The point of view I will try to put as briefly as I can. It is that the bureaucratic form of Government in India should be replaced by a Government which will be the Government of the people, by the people and for the people. This statement of the view of the Depressed people I am sure will be received with surprises in some quarters... We have judged the existing administration solely in the light of our own circumstances and we have found it wanting". He again surprised the Congress as well as the British by attacking the British Raj in the following words:

“The Government of India does not realise that the landlords are squeezing the masses dry and that the capitalists are not giving the labourers a living wage and decent conditions of work. Yet it is a most painful thing that it had not dared to touch any of these evils. Why? The reason why it does not intervene is because it is afraid that its intervention to amend the existing code of social and economic life will give rise to resistance of what good is such a Government to anybody? ... We feel that anybody can remove our grievances as well as we can and we cannot remove them unless, we get, political power in our own hands. No share of this political power can evidently come to us so long as the British Government remains as it is. It is only the Swaraj Constitution that we stand any chance of getting the political power in our own hands without which we cannot bring salvation to our people. WE KNOW THAT POLITICAL POWER IS PASSING FROM THE British into the hands of those who wield such tremendous economic, social and religious way over our existence. We are willing that it may happen though the idea of Swaraj recalls to the mind of many the tyrannies, oppressions and injustices practised upon us in the past”.

The above remarks of Dr. Ambedkar against the British and for the Swaraj are answer to historians like Arun Shourie who uttered that he was a “pro-British and anti-nationalist” leader .

Emphasis on Two Major Points

In his introductory speech, Dr. Ambedkar emphasised chiefly on two points. Firstly Depressed Classes were totally with their countrymen on the demand of independence from the British rule. Secondly, the Dalit problem was mainly a political problem which could be talked only politically. The second point was never accepted by the Congress. They only described this problem as social problem. Dr. Ambedkar stressed very forcefully on this aspect. “We are often reminded that the problem of the Depressed Classes is a social problem and that its solution lies elsewhere than in politics. We take strong exception to this view. We hold that the problem of Depressed Classes will never be solved unless they get political power in their own hands”.

“ The depressed classes form a group by themselves; the position of the depressed classes is one which is midway between that of the serf and the slave and which may, for convenience, be called service with this difference, that the serf and the slave were permitted to have physical contact, from which the depressed classes welcomed the British as their deliverers from age long tyranny and oppression by the orthodox Hindus”.

Minorities Subcommittee

On 31st December,1930 in the second sitting of the sub-committee No. III (Minorities) he spoke: “The disabilities of the Depressed Classes were mentioned in almost every dispatch that was recorded by the Government of India in connection with the Political advancement of the country; but the dispatches only mentioned the difficulties and never attempted to give any solution of those difficulties.

“I voice the grievances of 43 millions of people and grievances which the committee will agree are unparallel by the case of any other community that exists in India. The depressed Classes are

a minority which comes next to the great Muslim minority in India and yet their social standard is lower than the social standard of ordinary human beings. The minorities shall have, in the future Constitution of India, representation in the public services of the country and that the Constitution shall provide that there shall be imposed on the future legislatures of India, certain limitations on their legislative powers which will prevent the majorities from abusing their legislative power in such a manner as to enact laws which would create discrimination between one citizen and another. There is difficulty the Depressed classes find in getting themselves accommodated in public inn when they are travelling, the difficulty they find in being taken in an omnibus when travelling from one place to another, the difficulty they find in securing entry to public schools to which they have themselves contributed, the difficulty they find in drawing water from a well for the building of which they have paid taxes and so on.”

Taking on Gandhi

In the Ninth Sitting on 8th October 1931 of the Minorities Committee, Dr. Ambedkar took on Mahatma Gandhi and said, “What disturbs me after hearing Mr. Gandhi is that instead of confining himself to his proposition, namely that the Minorities Commission should adjourn sine die, he started casting certain reflections upon the representatives of the different communities who are sitting round this table. The Mahatma has been always claiming that the Congress stands for the Depressed Classes and that the Congress represents the Depressed Classes more than I or my Colleague Srinivasan can do. To that claim, I can only say that it is one of the many false claims which irresponsible people keep on making, although the persons concerned with regard to those claims have been invariably denying them.”

“The Depressed Classes are not anxious, they are not clamorous, they have not started any movement for claiming that there shall be an immediate transfer of power from Britain to the Indian people. They have their particular grievances against the British people and I think I have voiced them sufficiently to make it clear that we feel those grievances most genuinely”.

Political Safeguards

Due to the various efforts of Ambedkar and R. Srinivasan, a scheme of political safeguards for the protection of the Depressed Classes in the future Constitution of a self-governing India was brought out as an Appendix to report of Sub- Committee No. III (Minorities). This includes Equal Citizenship, Fundamental Right, Free enjoyment of equal Rights, social Boycott, Protection against Discrimination, Adequate Representation in the Legislatures, redress against Prejudicial Action or Neglect of Interests, special Department care etc.

Conclusion

Thus, Dr. Ambedkar took care of the helpless, hapless, sapless condition of the Depressed Classes and the Round Table Conferences were an event of great significance in which Dr. Ambedkar’s brainstorming, striking and though provoking speeches bear ample testimony to his depth of knowledge, thorough grasp over subject, immense power of logic, etc. He roared like a lion causing flutter in the political circles of India and England.

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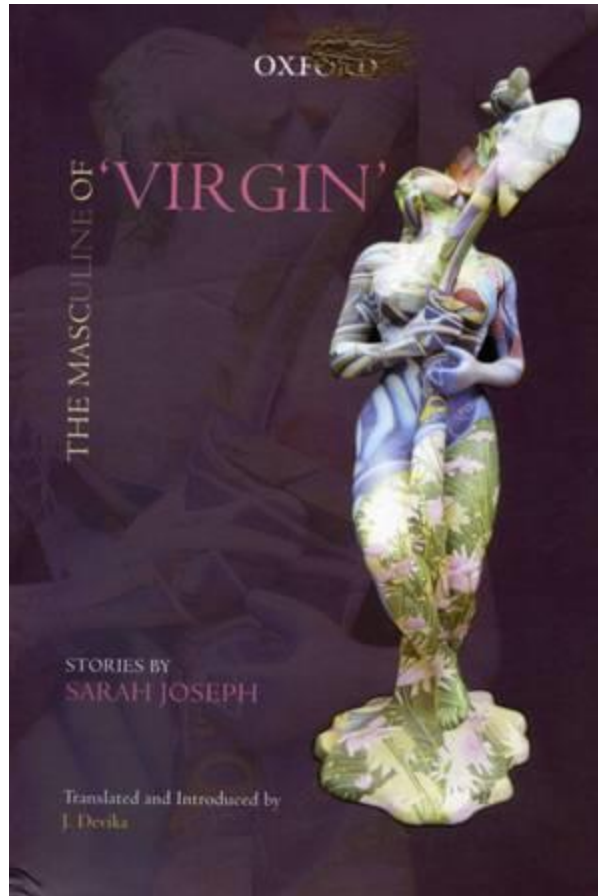
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Dr. Ambedkar - The Lion at the Round Table Conferences

Re-Birthing: Women Translating Women

Elizabeth Mathew and Keerthana K. S.



Abstract

The research paper is an attempt to analyse the translation of feminist fictional literature into English by women, focusing on select short stories of Sarah Joseph translated into English by J Devika. The problematic of gender representations and translatability were key concerns since the origin of translation practice, which feminist translators and theoreticians are now critiquing through their practice. The present study seeks to explore how feminist translation practices invent, intervene and interact with the text, languages and cultures in the transposition of explicitly feminist content to the target literary polysystem. It is also necessary to focus on the linguistic hegemony in translating from a third world language to a global language. The study follows an interdisciplinary approach, drawing inputs from translation studies, gender studies and linguistics.

Language and Literature

Language and literature reflects the social, cultural and political realities of the time and society it represents. These values operate at multiple levels in translations, and the practical and theoretical works in the discipline are no exception to this. From the times of the emergence of the practice, translation has been identified with the female body, sharing the sexist and derogatory attitudes prevalent in the society towards both women and translations. The violent and forced equations followed from the theological deliberations regarding the hermeneutics of translation and notions of patriarchal social order together contributed to this flawed and biased views that in part formed the ideals of translation in the early ages.

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics view advocated the word as divine and author as supreme authority whereas the translator is but a non-entity, a carrier who can only make a distant reproduction of the original in the translation. The religious patriarchy viewed women as flawed versions, derivational subjects, and inferior to men. This sanctified the associating of translation with women. This led to translation being seen in gendered terms, being described by metaphors of rape, fidelity and reproduction, an act equally violent to the female body as well as to the practice of translation.

Feminist Translation Approaches

Feminist theoreticians of translation approach these with suspicion. According to Lori Chamberlain, "...the reason translation is so over coded, so over regulated, is that it threatens to erase the difference between production and reproduction, which is essential to the establishment of power." (Cited in Simon, 1996:8) They sought to identify power as the reason for regulating both translations as well as the female body. The narratives invented to regulate the female in both private and public spheres were imposed on translation as well. A woman writing was deemed banal for ages citing her derivational status. At a time when women were considered incapable of creative production, many women undertook translations to vent out their creative aches and some translated to revolt.

Translation Studies opened itself to the feminist turn in the 1990s. However, the practice of translation and feminism were already overlapping and inseparably combined since the middle of the twentieth century, in connection to feminist movements. Through 1970s and 80s, feminists found translations a suitable tool to undo the historical wrongs propagated by the patriarchy. They perceived that the liberation of women must follow from their liberation from the grips of the language of patriarchy.¹ The solution was to rework language to find a space for women to express themselves. The feminist translation projects they undertook were aimed at uncovering writings by forgotten women writers and record their role in literature and history, altering the sexist nature of classic texts through inclusive language and expose the sexism inherent in language and literature.

The history of the discussions surrounding equivalence and fidelity in translation is decidedly chauvinistic. The notorious "*les belles infideles*" (beautiful, infidel woman) (Cited in Simon: 10) was a celebrated tag corresponding to the practice of translation. Susane de Lotbiniere-Harwood's claim "I am a translation, because I am a woman" (Cited in Simon, 1996:1) depicts the rebellious asserting attitudes of feminist translators at the face of patriarchy. Fidelity

was questioned by many woman translators, some of them claiming that fidelity to the work is not necessary for a translation. The translation is seen as an independent work on its own and not a derivational entity. Feminist translation fixed the debate over fidelity on the purpose by insisting that fidelity in translation must be fixed to the translation project and not otherwise.

Different Translation Strategies

The feminist translators employed different translation strategies/ techniques to serve the purpose of the translation project. While critical disagreements to feminist translation practices complained that the work is not preserved when the focus is shifted elsewhere, feminist translators disregarded it, advocating greater visibility and inclusiveness as a political concern. De Lotbiniere-Harwood states that “my translation practice is a political activity aimed at language speaking for women. So, my signature on a translation means: this translation has used every translation strategy to make the feminine visible in language.” (Cited in von Flowtow, 1991:79) The three translation strategies – supplementing, prefacing and footnoting, hijacking – that Luise von Flowtow identified from the translation practices of women translators of English Canada and Cuba are more widely used ever since. The translator claims her position as a co-author of the text rather than remain as the “modest, self-effacing translator”¹

“Papathara” and “Poothalayam”



Sara Joseph

This paper examines the English translations of two of Sarah Joseph’s short stories - “Papathara” and “Poothalayam” translated by J Devika “Paapathara” and “Dimwittude” in the light of feminist translation practices. Sarah Joseph writes in Malayalam, and her works are known for their striking feminist interventions both in thematic and language in the literary scenario. Her diction that marks a definite departure from the so called standard Malayalam is regarded for her

linguistic genius and often considered a major problem in translating her works. The style of her writing and the nuances of language use are challenging for the best translators.

Paapathara is a story set in a humble village atmosphere laden with superstitions and gendered prejudices. The story explores the problem of female infanticide in India, with the plot of a mother in labour pain praying and begging the midwife to save her to be born daughter. It is rich in the village female dialect, and feminine and cultural specific language and diction.

Poothalayam revolves around the thoughts of a woman scientist hailing from humble backgrounds in a Kerala village regarding preserving her chastity as she gets ready to go to work in the space. What upsets her, a scientist, is the thought of the possibility of having to compromise her chastity when out in the space as the only female among a group of men. The story ends as she decides to jump out of the spaceship and die if she is approached, for chastity is the greatest virtue she is taught to guard with her life from her childhood. The story employs dialect of migrated Christians from Kottayam to Malabar in a sarcastic tone.

Sara Joseph

Sara Joseph intervenes in the language and literary norms of the Malayalam literature and makes the woman heard. Her linguistic interventions make the female visible, creating a language of her own to make her voice heard. Joseph is doing an elaborate ritual of translation in the language she writes in as she composes her stories.

The translator's task here is double-fold. She not only has to transport the stories into English, an evolving global language that obviously is masculine-normative, from a third world language, but also has to bring in the tensions of a woman-oriented narration in a masculine language. This is like the story is conceived again by the translator, who shares the birth pangs of the work as does the author. Vasanthi Sankaranarayanan in the afterword to *The Vigil*¹ says that translating Sarah Joseph is like returning to the author the child she has been entrusted with to look after. Feminist translations, however, has little to do with the metaphor of looking after a child. As translation is a rebirth, feminist translation is re-birthing, a task impossible to physically imagine, where the translator reproduces the text with authority and brands her name on the translation.

J Devika

J Devika in the translations employs different techniques of translations such as borrowing, calques, explicitation, etc. Footnoting is used freely in both translations. In translating "Paapathara," she preserves the title as such, with a foot note, so that the sense of sin and guilt, the load of female emotions and lack of it are preserved. In "Dimwittude," she does not preserve the Malayalam title. The various considerations in arriving at the title are discussed in the foot note. The footnotes elaborate various aspects of the titles and the translatorial choices she made. Her translation practice is active. She does not seem to erase out her existence in the text, instead draws attention to the act of translating.

The translator opts for a cultural translation of the stories. She chooses to keep a fair ground between localizing and foreignizing. The English J Devika uses in the stories are different and

deliberately distanced from the Standard English. The borrowing of words like “*appan*” (56) “*amma*,” (56) “*makanaakkum*” (72) adds to the foreign flavour in the translation. Calques like “Girl-bearing-bitch” (“*pennuperanankodichyey*”) are used in the text. Cases of explication as in “of robust build – a sturdy knee and a strong leg” (55) where a borrowed phrase along with in text explanation can also be seen.

Her strategy is one of intervention in the target language rather than in the text. Dialect was not translated into another possibly equivalent dialect in the translations. Instead, the translator experimented in the language to produce the effect of a different accent, with spelling that seeks to imitate the way Malayalees generally pronounce English with a Malayalam pronunciation. The typically chauvinist question *Randoonnu aanungadeoppa maakashathum mattum parannunadanntennathenkilumpattippoyaaithiyaanennacheyyum?*” is translated as “some-ding-uh haa-ppens after flying up with two-three men? What to do then, olly?” (57) This method is followed with respect to dialect in both translations. Devika’s translation engages in an active dialogue with the text that is a translation of its own right into the source language.

Relevance of Feminist Studies

The relevance of feminist studies is its capacity to evolve through self-reflection and self-criticism. Experimenting and exploration of new strategies and techniques are central to their resistance and reclaiming. The source texts and translations discussed here excel at this; the translator, asserting her role in giving the text a new life in translation, rather than being an ever apologetic, absentee entity. The feminist-turn in the discipline of Translation Studies and the feminist practices it brought to the discipline boosted the development of the practice and theory of translation. Feminist translations problematize cultures, histories and languages. The notion of meaning is interrogated ever more by the feminist translators, in a global scenario that is centred on the transfer of languages. The constant revisions and re-evaluations it demands on the paradigms our languages and literatures are found in, and this necessitates a promising shift towards the creation and adoption of better sensibilities and standards in them, and for language dictates how we construct and perceives our lives, to society in general.

NOTES

¹ “Women’s liberation must first be liberation from patriarchy” was the call for action and a widely used slogan during the feminist movements of the 1970s and 1980s.

¹ Barbara Goddard cited in Simon.

¹English translation of Sarah Joseph’s novel *Oorukaaval*

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Gender Discrimination Against Women in Workplace

Dr. A. Vidhyarathi

Abstract

Since time immemorial, society instruct and encourage men to value (or devalue) women throughout the world even where there are anti-discrimination laws in place to discourage such attitudes. In the workplace, women are frequently subjected and treated as 'the other' to subtle discrimination by both sexes. When they are promoted, they are discouraged by both and women. Women are also more likely to be judged by their looks and how they dress than are their male counterparts. Women are discriminated against for being not pretty enough, poverty, or, in some positions (especially sales and public relations) for not being attractive. The term "glass ceiling" is also a form of gender discrimination. It refers to the invisible barriers that prevent women from reaching the ranks of management because the upper level and executive positions are given to men. If men work for more than their allotted working hours, better compensation packages or benefits than women based on unfair gender bias -- it's gender discrimination and it is illegal. Despite protective anti-discrimination laws making gender discrimination illegal, management practices at small, mid-size, and even giant corporations often still favor the advancement of men.

Introduction

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone in the workplace because of their sex. Employees have to be protected from discrimination at all stages of employment including recruitment, workplace terms and conditions and dismissal. Gender discrimination may be direct or indirect. When direct, an employee is treated unfavourably because of their gender sex. Indirect can occur if employers or managers hold assumptions about what sort of work women and men are capable, or not capable, of doing.

Gender discrimination could include:

- Not hiring a woman because the boss thinks she won't fit into a traditionally male workplace
- Offering women and men different rates of pay or benefits for the same job
- Not promoting a woman to a more senior position because it's assumed the other staff won't respect her authority
- Dividing up work tasks based on whether staff are male or female
- Insisting women has to wear different clothing at work to men, for example, short skirts
- Not considering women for a particular role.

The exceptions in regard to gender discrimination include:

- Maintaining decency and privacy (for example, in a fitting room or toilets)
- Performing searches of people or their clothing.

- Maintaining authenticity and credibility in regard to an artistic, photographic or dramatic performance, modelling work or similar activity.
For example, an employer may limit the offering of employment to people of one gender if it is a genuine occupational requirement for this to happen.

Liability

Employers are liable for their employees’ acts of discrimination or sexual harassment. They also have a positive duty to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation as far as possible. Like, complaints of discrimination made to the Commission are resolved through a process called conciliation. Sexual harassment or abuse is unwelcome sexual behaviour, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It can be physical, psychological, verbal or written.

Sexual harassment is covered in the workplace when it happens:

- At work
- At work-related events
- Between people sharing the same workplace
- Between colleagues outside of work.

The context related to sexual harassment – no matter how large or small or who is involved – require employers or managers to respond quickly and appropriately. Just because someone does not object to inappropriate behavior in the workplace at the time, it does not mean that they are consenting to the behavior.

Against Law

Sexual harassment is against the law. Some types of sexual harassment may also be offensive and has been categorized under criminal law and should be reported to the police, including indecent exposure, stalking, sexual assault and obscene or threatening communications, such as phone calls, letters, emails, text messages and postings on social networking sites. If the person sexually harasses someone else is liable for their behavior, employers can also be held vicariously liable for acts of sexual harassment by their employees or agents.

Perpetrators

Sexual harassment can involve employees, managers, contractors, agents, clients, customers and others connected with or attending a workplace. It can happen at work, at work-related events or between colleagues outside the work environment. A workplace covers any place that a person attends for the purpose of carrying out their work or trade. They do not need to be an employer or employee of the workplace. Employees or members of industrial organizations must not sexually harass other employees or members of the organization, or people seeking to become a member. Employees or members of a qualifying body, such as a professional association, must not sexually harass other employees or members, or people seeking action on an occupational qualification.

A partner in a firm must not sexually harass another partner or anyone seeking to become a partner at that firm. Volunteers and unpaid workers have the same rights and responsibilities in relation to sexual harassment as paid staff. If a woman faces the confrontation against

discrimination either sexually harassed, victimized or vilified, contact and talk about with the concerns concerns. Our dispute resolution service is free and confidential. Once it is taken into accountability. Severe punishment will be preceded. A single incident is enough to constitute sexual harassment – it doesn't have to be repeated.

Bullying and Harassment

The discrimination is possible through bullying and harassment when it happens because of someone's disability, race, sexual orientation, age, physical features or any other protected attribute under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. Bullying and harassment can be verbal, physical or in writing, and includes behavior that intimidates, degrades or humiliates another person. This is an unfavorable treatment covered by the law. If someone is being bullied because of a personal characteristic protected by equal opportunity law, it is a form of discrimination. In most cases, bullying behavior is not controllable and becomes persistent and happens over a period of time. However, under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, this behavior does not have to be repeated to be discrimination – it may be a one-off event.

Bullying can occur wherever people work together and in a range of different workplace relationships. It can be verbal or in writing, including online.

Bullying can happen:

- By managers towards workers
- Among co-workers
- By workers towards managers.

Bullying can take many forms, such as:

- Publicly humiliating someone
- Verbal abuse
- Spreading malicious rumours or gossip.

Reasonable Management Actions

Reasonable management actions carried out in a fair way are not included into the form of bullying. For example:

- Allocating work and setting performance goals, standards and deadlines
- Informing and warning a worker about unsatisfactory work performance
- Informing and warning a worker about inappropriate behavior
- Undertaking performance management processes and providing constructive feedback.

Employers should respond to instances of workplace bullying in a way that is appropriate to the seriousness of what has occurred. Serious instances of bullying, including threats to harm a person or damage to property, can be criminal matters and should be referred to the police.

An employee who believes and comes to know that they have been discriminated against or sexually harassed has the right to make a complaint, either using the organisation's internal complaints procedure or to an external agency such as the Commission. He is responsible to ensure that a person is not victimised, or treated unfavourably, because he or she has made a complaint or supported another person to make a complaint. Victimisation is specifically prohibited under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* and federal anti-discrimination laws.

Victimisation

Victimisation means punishing or threatening to punish someone. It is against the law to punish or threaten to punish someone because they have:

- Asserted their rights under equal opportunity law
- Made a complaint
- Helped someone else make a complaint
- Refused to do something because it would be discrimination, sexual harassment or victimisation.

Victimisation in the workplace can include:

- Bullying and intimidation by co-workers
- Being denied a promotion or being moved to a position with lower responsibility
- Dismissal from employment
- Being refused further contract work.

The legal definition of victimization is when someone 'subjects or threatens to subject the other person to any detriment'.

Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination is against jury. It has to focus on the treatment that negatively affects the terms or conditions of employment. Gender inequality includes treating an employee or an applicant differently based on sex stereotypes or because he or she does not conform to traditional notions of femininity or masculinity; includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may also include offensive remarks made about women. The following are the ways that how women face the confrontation in work space.

- Hiring
Being woman, one cannot be hired though she has enough experience and educational qualification because some of the company's long-time clients are more comfortable dealing with men.
- Firing
A woman is told that she is laid off due to company cutbacks and reorganization. However, men in the same position and/or with less seniority keep their jobs.
- Promotion
The work of a woman as a sales clerk at a retail store for ten years but have been repeatedly denied the opportunity to advance. Men with less experience, some of those woman even when she is trained and/or supervised, receive the promotions instead.
- Job Classification
It is understood that most of the sorting jobs, which are low-paid and offer little opportunity for promotion, are held by women, while most of the better-paying office positions are held by men.
- Benefits
In private concerns, women are required to use sick and vacation leave to take time off for your pregnancy because the employer does not provide disability leave for pregnancy, but does provide such leave to employees with other temporarily disabling health conditions. A

male coworker was on leave for six months because he had a heart attack and he was able to access the benefits under the disability plan.

- Pay

A woman is not given equal wages on par with men especially in daily wages job.

- Sexual Harassment

If the boss is male and manager of the company, he repeatedly makes unwelcome comments about your body and routinely puts his arm around your waist when discussing work-related matters. Even when a woman warns about his behavior, the company wont take severe action on him.

- Gender Identity

You apply and are hired for a position at a new company. Before beginning your job, you inform your employer that you are undergoing a gender transition and will presenting as a woman instead of as a man. Your new employer then informs you that the job is no longer available due to budget constraints. You later find out that another person was hired for the position.

- Sex Stereotyping

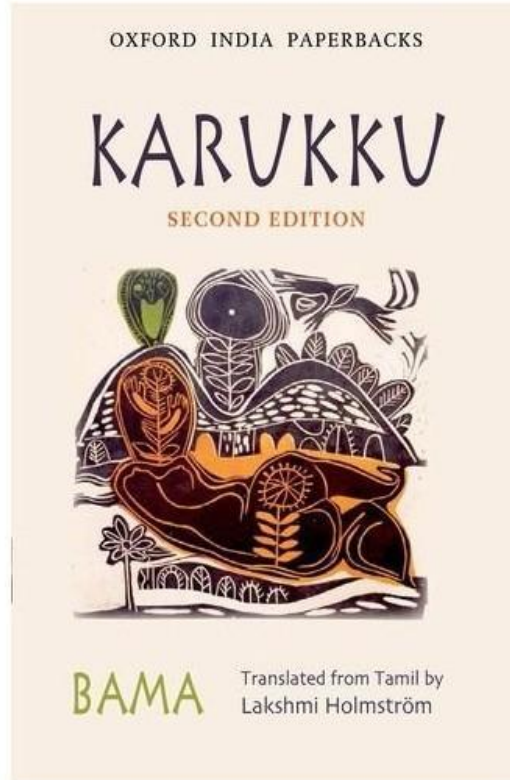
A woman working in the sales department of a major retail chain has to be in short hair and dress in pants most days. Although she meets deadlines and sales quotas, she receives poor performance evaluations, which include comments about your lack of femininity and “aggressive” nature. Men with similar personality traits and equally or less impressive sales records and are promoted more quickly.

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Sufferings of Dalit in Bama's *Karukku*

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Abstract

Dalit Literature is literature written by the Dalits and about their lives. Dalit literature forms an important and distinct part of Indian literature. Dalit Literature emerges in the 1960s. Starting with Marathi Language soon appeared: Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Bengal and Tamil Languages. Through narratives such as Poems, short stories and most Autobiographies. Dalit Literature demanded as petty and false the then privative portrayed of life by the mainstream Marathi literature which lacked mention of the object poetry-stricken life style of the Dalit faced, at that time, from the higher castes. It is often compared with African American literature especially in its depiction of issues of social and racial segregation and injustices as seen slave narrative.

Introduction

Bama was born in 1958 as Faustina Mary Fatima Rani in a Roman Catholic family from Puthupatti in the then Madras State. Later she accepted 'Bama' as her pen name. Susairaj was her father and Sebasthiamma, her mother. Her father was employed in the Indian Army. Bama's

grandfather had converted from Hinduism to Christianity Bama's ancestors were from the Dalit community and worked as agricultural labourers. Bama had her early education in her village. On graduation, she served as a nun for seven years.

Bama Faustina Soosairaj is a Tamil, Dalit feminist, committed teacher and novelist. She rose to fame with her autobiographical novel *Karukku* (1992), which chronicles the joys and sorrows experienced by Dalit Christian women in Tamil Nadu. She subsequently wrote two more novels, *Sangati* (1994) and *Vanmam* (2002) along with two collections of short stories: *Kusumbukkaran* (1996) and *Oru Tattvum Erumaiyum* (2003). She is the sister of famous Dalit writer Raj Gauthaman. In addition, she has written twenty short stories.

Karukku

Karukku is the first Tamil Dalit autobiography written by a Dalit Christian woman. Bama gets international recognition when *Karukku* won the Crossword Award in 2001. *Karukku* means Palmyra leaves with their serrated edges on both sides are like double edged swords. The autobiography is a narrative of trauma, pain, resistance and atrocities committed on Dalit Christian women. It is a document of poverty, violence, rejection and suffering and how the writer strives hard to overcome the problems and how she reconstructs her 'self'. She is one of the most challenging figures in Dalit feminist world. She starts her career as a writer in 1992, when she comes out of the convent. She has been awarded a life time achievement award by Canada Tamil Literary Garden Toronto. She is bold enough to focus on caste domination and social discrimination in the present work. The work describes personal crisis of the author's life and anticipates equality, social justice and love towards all. It has been adequately perceived that, Dalit women's writings largely concentrate on the problems and experiences of Dalit women. Bama's life resembles the saw edged *Karukku*.

Karukku expresses sorrows, joys and humiliations that her mother, grandmother and many other Dalit women face in fields and at home. Therefore, though it is an autobiography, it is linked with communal problems. Bama's inspiring words awake Dalit women from the deep slumber; portraying their experiences, Bama is trying to seek her identity in the mainstream literature.

We who are asleep must open our eyes and look about us. We must not accept the injustice of our enslavement by telling ourselves it is our fate, as if we have no true feelings; we must dare to stand up for change. We must crush all these institutions that use caste to bully us into submission and demonstrate that among human beings there are none who are high or low. Those who have found their happiness by exploiting us are not going to go easily. It is we who have to place them where they belong and bring about a changed and just society where all are equal.

Bama Themes

Bama's novels focus on caste and gender discrimination. They portray caste-discrimination practiced in Christianity and Hinduism. Bama's works are seen as embodying Dalit feminism and are famed for celebrating the inner strength of the subaltern woman.

Sufferings

The author shares her experiences as a Paraya girl as a school teacher and as a nun. She looks back her life from a moment of personal crisis as she leaves the religious order to which she has belonged for seven years. She reminisces her childhood days in her village and reflects on them in her autobiography poignantly. The grip of caste is so overpowering in India that even the conversion to another religion cannot annihilate it. The Christian converted Parayas are treated as untouchables even by Christian communities. Bama's family had been converted to Christianity in her grandmother's time. The writer focuses mainly on casteism within the Roman Catholic Church.

The writer argues for the wage disparity among men and women. Her feministic voice is obvious in the following words:

I saw our people working so hard night and day, I often used to wonder from where they got their strength, but of course, they never received a payment that was appropriate to their labour, men received one wage, women another. They always paid men more. I could never understand why. (47).

Women retain strength and pleasure even after worst hardships and various crisis in their lives. Even the writer's mother is not an exception in this regard. She brings up all the children in the absence of her husband who is in the army and away from home for months together. She is a combination of strength and vigour and tenacity. The writer articulates Dalit women's oppression by Police, Panchayat, upper castes, at the Church and further by Dalit men at home. The writer throws light on the patriarchal male centric society and the violent oppression of Dalits, particularly the oppression of Dalit Christians.

According to Bama, though Christianity does not recognize caste divisions, Churches in India are not different in respect of casteism. Dalits are not allowed to join in the choir, are forced to sit separately and are not allowed to bury their dead bodies in Churchyard. Converted Dalits are disillusioned by seeing such rampant casteism in Church. Moreover, they are deprived of all the benefits by the Government as they are Christians. She walks out of the convent after seven years when she finds out discriminatory conduct by Christians. She urges Dalits to get education and to understand the spirit of Christianity and the message of Lord Jesus. But when she comes out of the convent, as she suffered discrimination, she feels economic insecurity. Bama writes this autobiography after leaving the convent, and those days are considered a period of crisis by the author herself. She faced many problems when she came out of the convent. Then she wrote *Karukku*. Bama feels very sad when she finds that even Dalit children are constantly oppressed and humiliated by nuns. They are put to degrading jobs like sweeping, cleaning, washing and even cleaning the lavatories. Parayas are humiliated, irrespective of their age. Her brother always told her that education is the only way to attain equality. His words always inspired her and helped her to study hard. Throughout her life she is reminded of her caste and that makes her so sad. When Bama observes the Naikar woman pouring water from a height of four feet which her own grandmother drinks with cupped hands holding close to her mouth, she gets upset and becomes terribly furious. Each day is new to the writer as it brings something new in her life. She has experienced brutality of the high castes. By seeing the ugly face of the society, she gets enraged.

Conclusion

As a true feminist, Bama resists all kinds of oppression on Dalit women. The author wants to break all the barriers of social and cultural system and depicts her problems as a Dalit and as a woman. A Dalit woman is Dalit among Dalits. She is oppressed thrice. The writer is further oppressed by being a Dalit Christian. Hence, she is oppressed by caste, gender and religion. It is a painful journey with open ending story, and many questions are left unanswered. The writer mainly concentrates on religion and education and gives expression to her bitter experiences. It is the depiction of a journey from weakness to strength.

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Dalit Literature: An Overview

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Abstract

History testifies the presence of cleavages in every society, characterized by atrocities, discrimination, exploitation and subordination that raised peoples demand for justice and equality. It is this idea of equality that forced people to protest in the form of movements. The Dalit Movement also began as a protest movement in India. The Dalits, also called as Atisudra, Panchama or Outcasts, at present constitute one of the most depressed and marginalized sections of Indian society. Socio-cultural exclusion, economic deprivation and political exploitation of centuries made them to break out of such kinds of age-old prejudices. Hence, they began to protest with the help of literatures, or forming organization like the Dalit Panthers, which came to be recognized as the Dalit Movement. This paper is an attempt to bring forth the various aspects of Dalit's lives that led to the movement, in the radiance of four Dalit literatures.

Keywords: Cleavages, Dalits, Depressed, Equality, Exploitation, Protest, Marginalization, Movement.

Introduction

History testifies the presence of social cleavages in Indian society, in terms of caste, class, gender and the like. Such cleavages have changed the entire social fabric of Indian society, whereby the exploited section, be it the Dalits, adivasis or women, have been systematically pushed to the periphery by the traditional Brahmanical structure of oppression. Dalits are the people who are economically, socially, politically exploited from centuries. Unable to live in the society of human beings, they have been living outside the village depending on lower level of occupation and lived as untouchable. This exploitation is due to the discrimination followed by age old caste hierarchical tradition in the Hindu society. This hierarchy has been the cause for oppression of Dalits in each and every sphere of society since centuries. It has subjected them to a life of poverty and humiliation. The Dalits (ex-untouchables), who have been brutally exploited by the so-called upper castes, lag outside the Varnasrama theory and were referred to as outcasts in pre-independent India. India attained independence, but the Dalits were not allowed to live a life with dignity and equality. It is this idea of equality, which sparked the beginning of the Dalit Movement in India, as a protest to the age-old atrocities committed against them. Dalit movement is a struggle that tries to counter attack the socio – cultural hegemony of the upper castes. It is a movement of the masses that craves for justice through the speeches, literary works, dramas, songs, cultural organisations and all the other possible measurers. So, it can be called as a movement which has been led by Dalits to seek equality with all other castes of the Hindu society. The main objective of the Dalit Movement was to establish a society in India based on social equality. The

constitutional identity, however, fails to capture the true picture. The real picture is something different which will be reflected in this paper, in the light of the four books including *Debrahmanising History*, *Poisoned Bread*, *The Prisons We Broke* and *Dalit Visions*.

Different Connotations of the Word ‘Dalit’

Dalits, the group of people who constitute the last category of castes in the Varnasrama Theory. This is the traditional definition of the term Dalit as is given by different scholars. According to the Indian Constitution the Dalits are the people coming under the category Scheduled castes. With slight changes, however, the term Dalit ‘would mean not only one category of caste, it means the human who is exploited economically, socially, politically and from all the spheres of life, by the traditions of the country. By tradition would mean the Brahmanical Indian tradition prevailing in the country for centuries. A Dalit does not believe in God, religion as propagated by the Hindu scriptures and religious texts , as because it is these tradition only that have made them slaves. A Dalit is the person who has the realization of the sorrows and struggles of those in the lowest stratum of the society. The Dalits, called by different names like Dasyu, Dasa, Atisudra, Panchama, Tirukulattar, Adikarnataka, Adi Dravida, are actually the Depressed Classes of Indian society. Dalit is one who believes in equality, who practices equality and who combats inequality. A Dalit is the believer of Humanism—the ultimate ideology of human beings. The real symbol of present Dalit is Change and Revolution. Therefore, any individual from any caste category (including the Brahmin), will be considered a Dalit given the fact that the person is depressed and exploited, aspire to attain equality through change and revolution, being the firm believer of the ideology of Humanism.

Brahmanism as the Root Cause of Dalit Movement: A Historical Critique

The Dalits and women in India are, at present, categorized under the marginalized sections of the society. All these castes (Pariahs, Chamars, Mahars, Bhangis and so on) share a common condition of exploitation and oppression by the so called upper castes of the Indian society .If we trace back to the historical periods, it will be found that the root cause is the formation of the Caste System which actually led to the oppression of the other categories of oppressed classes of India—the women. It was with the Aryans who entered the country from Middle East and settled in the fertile land of the Ganges after a fight with the indigenous people of the civilization. The people, well versed in the techniques as shown in historical aspects, were defeated by the Aryans. The Minority Aryans defeated the majority Dalits by the use of their tactics of Divide and Rule, as assumed by Braj Ranjan Mani because without doing so they won’t be able to defeat the majority. The Brahmins had retained this tactic even today. Later in the Vedic period, the formation of the Rig Veda laid the foundation of the oppression of the people in their own land, with the Purushashukta in its tenth book. It was later in the 5th century that people of Shudra Varna were transformed to untouchable. And this led to beginning of the Brahmin domination accompanied by Dalit exploitation. A Brahman is a great God, whether he is learned or imbecile, and the Brahmins should be respected in any way, even if they indulge in a crime¹. These are the Religious texts of the Hindus, which strives for an unequal society, a society where a certain group of people are given the status of God, in total contrast with the other group who are considered even worse than animals. God who is considered as the Almighty do not exist but is considered as the Supreme power. Is it that the Arya-Brahmins, devised the institution of Varna and thereby caste, in order that they consider themselves as the Supreme. By putting themselves in the supreme position, they

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Dalit Literature: An Overview

actually wanted to attain superior status, a life of dignity, and aspired to be obeyed by everyone in the Indian society. Caste, the very creation of man and not God, is now rooted firmly in the Indian society, through the religion of majority Hinduism. Gail Omvedt in her book *Dalit Visions*, equated Hinduism with Brahmanism. Hinduism is constructed in order to hide the discriminatory laws of Brahmanism under a religion to be considered as the religion of the country, and thereby obeyed without any question. The caste ideology is founded in the twin religious doctrines of Karma and Dharma. And that it was the basic duty of every individual to maintain Dharma which was to retain the social structure based on the Varnasrama Theory. Not only Manu, Kautilya, another Brahmin, also emphasized on retaining the Caste structure as the basic structure of Indian society that cannot and should not be changed. The same was asserted by Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, to change is to create disorder². This means that the Brahmins should stay at the top of the pyramid and the Dalits at the bottom. Even if the Dalits die under the situation, they should not be uplifted. This is Brahmanism –believer of inequality, the roots of which lie in the ancient Vedas. Formulated 3500 thousand years back, the Vedas are ruling Indian society even now, through its instrument – Hinduism. It is controlling the minds of the people, which made the minority groups –the Brahmins to be the policy makers of the country. And in order to retain their position they have devised myths. For instance, they devised the myth of Punarjanma which explains the phenomena of re-birth. It explains that the activities of our past janma are responsible for our present status, and the activities of present will decide our life after re-birth. This myth has two connotations-

Firstly, the Dalits should accept the exploitation done against them as the result of their own deeds of past birth. They should consider that they committed some bad deeds due to which they are facing such kind of oppression.

Secondly, even if they are exploited in this birth, they should not protest, which will provide them a good life in the next birth after re-birth. That is, with the desire to get happiness in the next birth, they should cry. Because it is believed that, God will help them to come out of distress, and that the Brahmins being Gods are the only solution for their distress. If these texts are observed closely in sociohistorical perspective, the aim to write these texts becomes clear, which is to establish and maintain Brahmanical hegemony, and exploit the non-Brahmins, basically the Dalits.

The Dalit Movement

The Dalit Movement is the result of the constant hatred being generated from centuries in their heart from the barbaric activities of the upper castes of India. Since Dalits were assigned the duties of serving the other three Varnas, that is all the non– Dalit, they were deprived of higher training of mind and were denied social-economic and political status. The division of labour led to the division of the labourers, based on inequality and exploitation. The caste system degenerated Dalit lives into pathogenic condition where occupations changed into castes. The higher castes of the society looked down upon the Shudras. It was a general belief that the Dalits are part of the lowest of low Varnas. Thus, for centuries Dalits have been positioned at the bottom of the rigid Indian caste society. People from other castes, who considered themselves to be higher, believe that Dalits are impure by birth and that their touch or sheer presence could be polluting. Hence, they are assumed to be untouchable. For centuries, Dalits were excluded from the mainstream society and were only allowed to pursue menial occupations like cleaning dry latrines, sweeping, tanning or working as landless labour for meager daily wages. They were the people who cultivated

the land and worked as bonded labour, did the work of scavenging and did all types of manual works. The most inhuman practice is that of untouchability, which made the Dalits to live in extreme inhuman situations. In other words, they lived a barbaric life. Starving for food in their own land where they themselves are the owner of the land, enraged the Dalits. This has made the Dalits to rise and protest, against the inhuman practices of Brahmanism. Dalits were discriminated in every sense. They lived in the Hindu villages hence did not have advantage of geographical isolation like tribes. They were pushed to the jungles whereas; the mainland was occupied by the Brahmins. They were to serve all classes of people around and had to do all the dirty jobs. They were barred from entering into those mainland areas in every sense, they were prohibited to wear decent dress and ornaments besides being untouchable. Many of the atrocities were committed in the name of religion. Besides, the system of Devadasi they poured molten lead into the ears of a Dalit, who happened to listen to some mantra. To retain the stronghold on people, education was monopolized.

From the Vedic age, the Dalits began struggle against oppression and exploitation. The most striking aspect of Manus formulations is in the sphere of punishment for breaking law where the quantum of punishment for the offender increases as one goes down the caste hierarchy (Chakraborty .11). From the classic instances of Shambuk who was killed for acquiring spiritual knowledge and Eklavya who was forced to cut off his thumb for his prowess to archery, the Dalits were always punished. Their only fault was that they are Dalits, and that they did not have any right to attain knowledge. Dronacharya could not take off the art of archery from Eklavya finally punished him by taking away his finger. The Dalits were always punished for the deeds that they didn't commit, just because it was coming in the way to the Brahmins. Whenever they constitute a threat to the Brahmanic hegemony, the Brahmins would not leave a chance to punish them. The Dalits were never placed in their rightful position, which they deserve. Today, they constitute the marginalized section of society .The reason behind this is that they were denied access to resources –material or intellectual as well as were exploited .It was thus the Dalits decided to stop the following of such unequal practices in society where one group benefits stealing from the other and began their movement due to the fact that they were denied equal status.

Dalit Literary Movement

At a time, when there was no means of communication to support the Dalits, pen was the only solution. The media, newspapers were all under the control of the powerful class –the Brahmins. Given that the Brahmins would never allow the Dalits voice to be expressed, as it would be a threat for their own survival, the Dalits began their own magazine and began to express their own experiences. Their pen wrote not with ink, but with blood, of their own cuts –the cuts being basically mental, with instincts of physical in them. Dalit literature, the literature produced by the Dalit consciousness, emerged initially during the Mukti movement. Later, with the formation of the Dalit Panthers, there began to flourish a series of Dalit poetry and stories depicting the miseries of the Dalits the roots of which lies in the rules and laws of Vedas and Smritis. All these literatures argued that Dalit Movement fights not only against the Brahmins but all those people whoever practices exploitation, and those can be the Brahmins or even the Dalits themselves. New revolutionary songs, poems, stories, autobiographies were written by Dalit writers. All their feelings were bursting out in the form of writings. Writing is not simply writing, it is an act that reflect ones continuous fight against evil. It seemed as if the entire Dalit community found the

space to break out their silence of thousand years. Such effective were the writings that each of its word had the capability to draw blood. The songs were sung in every village, poem and other writings were read by the entire community. Educated Dalit and intellectuals begin to talk about the problems of poor and about exploitation and humiliations from the upper castes without any hesitation educated Dalits tried to explain to the other illiterate brothers about the required change in the society. Dalit literature, try to compare the past situation of Dalits to the present and future generation not to create hatred, but to make them aware of their pitiable condition. It is not caste literature but is associated with Dalit movement to bring about socioeconomic change, through a democratic social movement.

Conclusion

Dalit Movement, a social revolution aimed for social change, replacing the age old hierarchical Indian society, based on the democratic ideals of liberty, equality and social justice, has begun much earlier, became intense in the 1970s and began to deem at present. One reason behind this, as pointed out by Uma Chakraborty, is that the academicians are not paying much attention. Books on Dalit Movement are written but these books do not reflect the actual things and are written keeping in view the Brahmin elites. No one wants to confront with those who have power. Besides this, the minds of the people are brahmanised through hegemony. Yet another vital issue is that the movement lack people from all the communities of Dalits. For instance, in Maharashtra, the Mahars dominated the movement. The other Dalit communities like the Mangs, Chamars were not actively involved in the Movement. As Kamble pointed out that the Mangs and Chamars had their traditional duties, whereby they could somehow manage their food. But the Mahars did not have any traditional duty which made them to protest. At present there came up many new issues. The Dalits who got power became the dolls in the hands of the Brahmins. Many of them tend to imitate the Brahmins changing their surnames and thus identity. They are ashamed of being called Dalits which make them to discriminate against their own kith and kin. It should be noted that Dalit Movement is against Brahmanism and not Brahmins. The Brahmanism is a mental state which accepts superiority of one man over another man. It gives more respect and profit for the caste which is up in the ladder of caste system, and as it goes down the ladder, resources and respect also decreases. Its contribution for the Dalits which is lowest of all the castes is nothing but exploitation, jeering and slavery. This mental state of Brahmanism not only exists in Brahmins but also in Shudras, who simply shape the ideas of Brahmanical practices without testing them with scientific temperament and reasoning. India got independence, but the Dalits are humiliated even now. Untouchability is abolished but injustice practices are not. Today to wear good clothes is not forbidden, but to get good job is. In the name of reforms and social uplift, today's political and social systems are pitting one group against the other, sowing hatred and perpetuating a sense of rejection from the past. Education is the only remedy for such discrimination. Thus, the Movement for social change will succeed only when all the Dalits unite together to fight for equality. However, they should accept that caste that is deeply rooted in people's mind cannot be erased. So here social change would mean to get rid of discriminatory practices and get rights, necessary for the upliftment of the backward section of society-the Dalits.

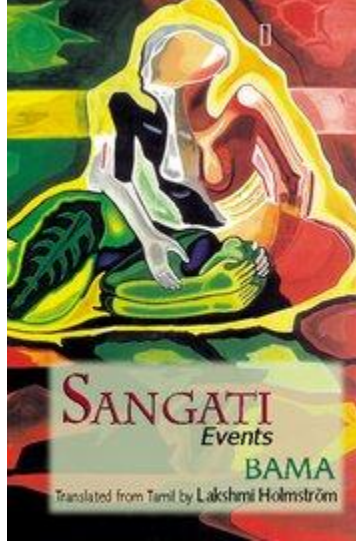
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An Analysis of Dalit Women's Distress in Bama's *Sangati*

Dr. J. Michael Raj and Dr. M. Suresh Babu

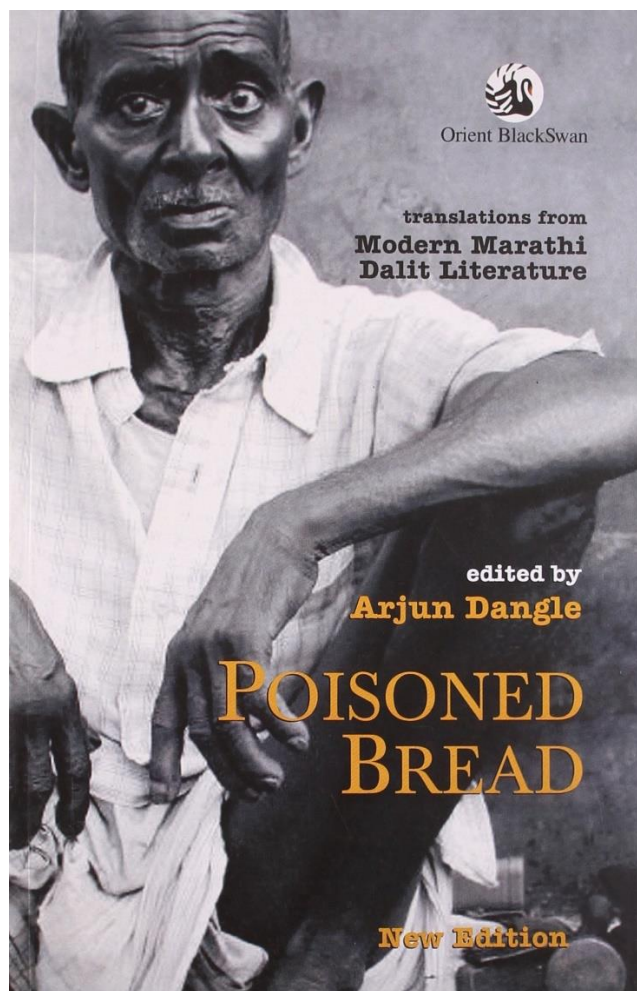


Abstract

This paper examines the varied underlined, invisible ways of sufferings embedded in the lives of the Dalit community, particularly women and their lived experiences portrayed in Bama's *Sangati*. It also discusses how Dalit women are constantly exploited by the powerful Caste-Hindus and experiences faced by the two protagonists: Maariamamma and Maikkanni in the novel. In the light of this background, the paper delineates how Bama analysed and characterized many individual stories in Dalit life. *Sangati* is an autobiography of Bama, which highlights the struggles of Paraiya women and it unlocks the physical and mental sufferings experienced by the suppressed, discriminated and marginalized Dalit women.

Dalit Literature

Dalit literature is a revolution against exploitation and humiliation of Dalits. Equality, justice and freedom are the basis of Dalit literature. These have been denied to Dalits. The touch of Dalit, the shadow of Dalit and the voice of Dalit treated as impure. After the independence, Dalits became aware of their self-respect and equality it is because of the movement of Dr. Ambedkar. A common man is the real hero of this literature. He revolts against inhumane oppression and wins in his struggle of self-respect. This is the real beauty of this literature. The emergence of political leaders from Dalit community and their identities, which coincide with the emergence of Dalit literature. The term 'Dalit' means the oppressed, broken and downtrodden. It is not a new word. It was used in Hindi in 1930 as 'depressed classes'.



Dalit literature was disregarded for a long time and not taken seriously in the literary circles. The publication of translations from modern Marathi literature entitled 'Poisoned Bread' edited by Arjun Dangle ignited debates in the literary circles. Then, Arun Prabha Mukherjee who translated Omprakesh Valmiki's 'Joothan' into English that gave a wider acceptance and circulation of Dalit literature in and outside of India. There is an anthology entitled 'No Alphabet in Sight' edited by Suche Tharu and K. Sathyanarayana opens up new debates on the long history of Dalit literature and its current prominence in the contemporary scene of literature and politics. It also shows how Dalit literature moves beyond the other forms of literature.

Sangati

The novel *Sangati* (Events) deals with several generations of women. The older women belong to narrators narrating the grandmothers' generation, VelliammaKizhavi's generation and downward generation. If a woman belongs to Dalit community, she has to suffer in two ways. The first being a woman and second is belonging to the lowest community. Bama's *Sangati* is a unique Dalit feminist narrative carrying autobiographical elements of the whole community. It focuses the double oppression of females. The novel has several individual stories, anecdotes and memories that portray the events taking place in the life of women in Paraiyar community in

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Tamilnadu. Women are presented in *Sangati* as daily wage earners. They earn less than men do. However, the money earned by men, can spend as they please whereas women have to bear the financial burden of running the family. Women are also regular victim to sexual harassment and abused in the place of work. In this novel Marriamma tells a lot about the sexual assault faced by her and her community women and their inability to stand up against it. The physical violence is realistically portrayed in this novel like lynching, whipping and canning by fathers, husbands and brothers.

Thirty-Five Characters

Sangati was written in Tamil then translated into English by Laxmi Halmstrom. The whole narrative is divided into twelve chapters having more than thirty-five characters. The word *Sangati* means events. It carries an autobiographical element in its narrative, but it is the story of a whole community and not an individual. The condition of Dalits was very vulnerable as they were not allowed to enter into temple and schools for education. In Indian social hierarchy, Dalits get the lowest status. Observing all, Bama expresses caste and gender problems both outside and inside the community. According to Bama “All women in the world are second class citizens. For Dalit women the problem is grave. Their Dalit identity given them a different set of problems. The Experience a total leak of social status. Even they are not considered dignified human beings. My stories are based on these aspects of Dalit culture...” (Ranjana 2-3)

Psychological Stress

Bama expresses the psychological stress in this novel. “The subject matter of the novel is ‘human relationships...’ in which are shown the directions of men’s soul,” As Dorothy van Ghent (1953) says in the book *The English Navels: Form and Function*. Her language is different from other Indian writers. She uses more Tamil Dalit slogans and addresses the village women as Amma such as Vellaamma, Maarriamma and Pecchiamma. She uses various Tamil words to name the places, months, festivals, rituals, customs, clothes and occupations. In this novel, women address one another and share their everyday experiences sometimes with anger or pain. The language of this novel is full of sexual references. She bridges the spoken and written styles of Tamil by breaking the rules of grammar and spellings. She also says that “man can humiliate woman many times, he can disrespect a woman, it is very normal. But in this partial double minded society woman has no right to spoken out anything. This is acceptable to all”. She feministically voices out the grievances of Paraiya women. Characters like VellaiyammaPaati and a small girl and the narrator herself, who learn the story from her grandmother.

Ways of Women and How They are Treated

Sangati examines “the difference between women and their different ways in which they are subject to apportion and their coping strategies”. Bama focuses the protests against all forms of oppression and sufferings faced by Dalit women in the first half of *Sangati*. But later part of *Sangati* moves away from the state of depression and frustration. Instead, it presents a positive identity to Dalit women focusing their inner strength and vigor. The writer attracts our mind towards the education system about Dalit community. She gives the example of Pecchiamma belonging to Chakkili community studied up to fifth class. The girls of that community don’t go to school that much.

Child Birth

This novel is introduced with the capability of Patti in attending every childbirth in the village. She can even handle the most difficult cases “It didn’t matter if the umbilical cord was twisted round the baby, if the baby lay in a breech position, if it was a premature birth, or a case of twins. She delivered the baby safely, separating mother and child, without harming either”. (1-2). Most people know Patti very well and like Patti very much because of this. People themselves feel in and around of villages that she had a lucky hand. However, the upper caste people don’t approach Patti in attending the childbirth even the situation is worst because “ she was a Paraichi”. (1)

Sexual Exploitation

Maarriamma faces sexual exploitation in the hands of the upper caste land owner KumarasamiAyya. One day, Maarriamma gathered firewood as usual and returned home in the burning heat carrying her bundle. Seeing water in the nearby irrigation pump-set, she goes to drink water. When she goes to drink water, KumarasamiAyya seizes her hand and pulls her inside the pump set. However, she escapes and says it to her friends; they said “That landowner is an evil man, fat with money. He’s upper caste as well. How can even try to stand up to such people? Are people going to believe their words or ours?” (20) However, KumarasamiAyya gets afraid of his reputation and so he hurries to the village and complains to the headman of the Paraiya community named the Naattaamai by saying “Just today that girl Maarriamma, daughter of Samudrakani, and that Mnukkayi’s grandson Manikkam were behaving in a very dirty way”. (20) During the inquiry in the village, Maarriamma and Manikkam come to the centre of the circle and then greet the elders by falling down and prostrate themselves at full length. Hence then, they are asked to stand each to one side with folded arms. At last, Maarriamma falls down and asks for forgiveness and so the Naattaamai asks her to pay Rs 200 as fine and Manikkam Rs 100. The Naattaamai ends the proceedings by saying “It is you female chicks who ought to be humble and modest. A man may do a hundred things and still get away with it. You girls should consider what you are left with, in your bellies”. (26)

Suffering of a Young Girl

The seventh chapter portrays the inconsolable sufferings faced by eleven years old little girl Maikkanni. Perhaps she was born unlucky because soon after her birth, her father becomes friendly with another woman and so the family responsibilities fall on her shoulder. Her mother is pregnant for the seventh time therefore she finds very difficult to go for a job. However, if she is laid up at home, the children will starve to death. She says that when “Maikkanni has grown up a bit and can go out to work”. (69) The day Maikkanni learns to walk, she starts to work as well. When her mother goes out to work in the fields, it is Maikkaani who looks after all the tasks at home. “From the time she woke up, Scrubbed the cooking pots, collected water, washed clothes, gathered firewood, went to the shops, cooked the kanji. She did it all, one after the other”. (70) Whenever her mother has a baby, Maikkaani goes off to work in the neighbouring match factory in the town because her mother cannot go for a job. The family is managed on what she earns. After her mother delivered a baby, she goes to work and Maikkaani takes care of the children. “It was Maikkanni who brought up all the five children who were born after her; her mother delivered them into the world and could do no more. Just as soon as one child began to walk, she was ready to deliver the next” (73).

Bama's Feminism

As a feminist writer Bama's feminism is focused in the Dalit community. As women are powerless, they accept the patriarchal role of men in their life. All her women characters are never empowered with education. Therefore, they are treated as social victims and easy to attack by whoever wishes. As Prasanna Sree says "through the centuries, women in Hindu tradition are depicted as silent sufferers; they have been given a secondary status both in the family and society". Maariamamma and Thaayi have faced inexplicable shame in their family life. Their husbands regularly beat them up and also feel that it is their birthright to humiliate and kill their life partners. Maarriamma is unlucky in her whole life. When she was with her parents, she didn't get the love and affection that she expected for. She began to cry when her marriage was arranged with Maanikkam who is a drunkard and does not go for a job and often goes to jail.

When Maariamamma knew his character, she refused a lot to marry him. Finally, she was compelled to accept him. Since she got married with Maanikkam, she suffered with beatings every day. She was completely made as a scapegoat that people watched helplessly. The Paraya men were speechless when she was victimized for molestation by KumarasamiAyya. They get afraid of losing their favours especially jobs and don't have the power to question the upper class person. So, Bama Says in her book *Sangati* "we must be strong. We must show by our own resolute lives that we believe ardently in our independence. I told myself that we must never allow our minds to be worn out, damaged, and broken in the belief that this is our fate, just as we work hard so long as there is strength in our bodies, so too, we must strengthen our hearts and minds in order to survive" (59).

To Conclude

This paper presented the sufferings faced by Dalit women from their childhood. Women are considered inferior to men and given less care. Their consciousness of ignorance burns in the heart of Bama. Samundrakani and Pechiamma are the prime victims of marginalization. From the readings of *Sangati*, the similar issues have been identified in the form of sufferings in many chapters. Through *Sangati*, Bama holds the mirror up to the heart of Dalit women and makes an appeal for a change and betterment of the life of Dalit women in different fields including sex, gender discrimination, equal opportunity in work force, education rights, etc.

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Remnants of Caste within Catholic Church in India

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Velankanni Basilica, Tamilnadu

Courtesy: <https://www.pinterest.com/thecatholicmuse/pilgrimimages-india/>

Abstract

Caste is one of the most dominant social hierarchies that plague India. It works its way through myriad channels surpassing all shields of ethics and reform. Christianity as a religion is based on the fundamental equality of all human beings - it merits righteousness and shuns discrimination. However, Christians in India occupy a rather 'liminal' space – either converted from other dominant religions of India or descended from a colonial past, they retain a good amount of religious and caste practices from their previous ways of life. Caste relationships provide a cultural feature which, within the new structures, still reigns over certain frontiers and gives rise to divisions. In this paper, we will be looking at the extent of these influences within the Catholic Church and focuses on the visible and normalised caste practices within this body. The method used for analysis is qualitative and the relevance of this paper rests with the space occupied by caste within the cultural studies, postcolonial studies discourses.

Keywords: Caste, Church, Dalit, Hierarchy, Catholic Church

Introduction

India is a secular nation by virtue of its constitution. However, it's one of the most overtly religious spaces in the world. Known across the world for its plurality, India is home to a wide variety of vivid devotional practices. Unique for its way of balancing diversity, India has neither privatized nor limited any religion. It has always considered religion as a seminal feature of the free Indian existence. The history of Catholicism in India is coloured by intense rituals and practices that belongs to Hindu, Syrian, colonial Portuguese and contemporary Catholic practices. Though the boundaries between religions are multi-layered and indefinite, a tolerance, rather acceptance of differences acts as the cohesive element. In *The Saint in the Banyan Tree: Christianity and Caste Society in India*, David Mosse observes that in the practices of ordinary Catholics, "Christianity [is] not merely a 'thin veil' over an underlying autochthonous South Indian 'folk religion.' "It has its own independent and synthetic identity." A good number of Indian Latin rite Catholics are of Dalit origin, the class once understood as "untouchable."

The foreign missionaries who arrived with the European tradesmen and subsequently colonisers, were chiefly effective along the coasts, amid the lower-caste fisher folk. Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Catholics, often trace themselves back to the high caste-class Namboothiri Brahmins evangelised by Saint Thomas by which they assumed a special place in the Kerala caste hierarchy superior to the Dalits. Such origins are further echoed in the point that Syrian Christians in Kerala incline to be better off than other Keralites in the faces of education, employment status, housing quality, land ownership etc. But, this explanation given for the casteist divide is widely debated on due to the lack of evidences to prove its validity. As we examine history, we understand that there were no Namboothiris in Kerala during the first century (such a section is said to have emerged with Sanskritization around the eighth century) when St. Thomas is said to have come to Kerala. There are also claims of Jewish and Assyrian descent for the Syro-Malabar community in Kerala. However, it is an indisputable fact that caste-wise divides are rampant within the Kerala Catholic communities i.e. between the Syrian and Latin rites as there are generally known. This is evident from the debates that still go on to establish a 'proud' legacy to their history before conversion.

Despite the colonial excuse of civilizing the natives by giving them a renewed faith, caste was retained within the religious system in order to utilize it for further divisions. Therefore, a superficial model of the original Christianity was offered to India. In turn, such divisions and the thus arising lack of unity within the religion is used to marginalize the third most followed religion in the country as 'foreign'. Indian Catholics commonly trace their origins to St. Thomas, the Apostle of Christ who is said to have arrived in India around 52 AD. Further, waves of missionaries, under Portuguese rule in the 16th century, designed the dynamics of Indian Catholicism. Portuguese Catholicism particularly shaped the spread of the religion in Goa, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and parts of Karnataka. Despite being a minority religion in Kerala, Catholicism has very deep roots in the state. Kerala is the major strength for the Syrian rite Christian churches, the Syro-Malabar and the Syro-Malankara, and is also home to a great Latin rite following. According to the 2001 census, Christians constituted 19% of the population of the state, a much higher ratio when compared to the rest of India. Caste has plagued the Indian society since an indefinite excess

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of time. Any number of theories have been proposed to explain the onset of such an exceptional form of discrimination, but never without speculations. But what we know for sure is that caste does exist and that it infests every nook of the Indian being. For a very long period of time, caste was accepted and imbibed as the most normal of practices.

When Christianity spread in India, caste seeped into the system and handicapped it of the principles of equality and love for all. In the process of adaptation, social stratification and injustice rising out of caste owing to the accident of birth became a part of Christianity in India. As a result, never did the goodness of the religion fully benefit the Indian followers. The situation prevails even when we consider other dominant religions in India like Islam or Buddhism. Interestingly, the word ‘catholic’ means ‘universal’ implying equality for everyone. Therefore, what Christianity became by imbibing the evil of casteist discrimination was certainly most uncatholic. This power struggle prevails across the plane of rituals, customs and marriage thrusting it heavily upon the people. It hinders any form of social mobility for the ever oppressed. The gravity of this issue is heightened by a solid and thoughtless carryover of oppression through generations. Though such discrimination remains an undercurrent in some areas, it rules over the life of many who happen to fall into classifications by merit of birth. Discrimination based on caste therefore defies the very essence of Christianity. Voices raised against this evil have been forcefully silenced by the ones who benefit from the hierarchies.

Caste and Catholicism

Caste practices within Catholicism are deeply rooted in the history of conversion. When people embraced Christianity in India, the then existing practices and rituals were adapted to suit the Christian principles. Caste was so strongly ingrained in the Indian psyche that it remained within the system. However, the importance of caste in Catholic life in the Indian context is deeply contested. Similar to the discussions of race across the world, people of upper caste birth comment that caste is a matter of the past that comes into view only to receive reservations. Quite contrarily, people affected by it can recall myriad incidents that suggest that caste is a significant element of the so-called Indian culture. Thus, caste has like in every other realm of Indian living plagued the interpretation of the verses from the Bible. This situation is quite ironic as such attempts to establish superiority fall against the teachings of Jesus Christ. The Bible, which is the core text of Christianity portrays Jesus as a simple man who loved all humanity devoid of biases. His disciples were the common folk and not once is it known of him discriminating based on any sort of social hierarchies. The sharp turn of events that led to the transformation of Christianity into a casteist religion in India shows the influence of local social practices. Such adaptations to meet the requirements of the Indian society bent the teachings of Christ to accommodate caste discrimination.

Situation in Kerala

Kerala being one of the most literate states of the country, discrimination towards the Dalits is generally not very violent. However, they are discriminated at by denying them opportunities and means to rise up in the social hierarchy. Though converted to Christianity, the traditionally lower caste communities remained as daily wage labourers and were allowed to do menial jobs only. A similar bias was shown by the wealthy converts (generally Syrians) towards Latin Catholics owing to the unnecessary stigma attached to their fisher folk community legacy. The

discrimination was carried out by making them sit or dine separately, not allowing them to use plates or glasses used by the others and not allowing them to receive education. Inter-caste (even after conversion to Christianity) marriage was treated as taboo or even as sacrilege. Caste names such as Pulayan, Parayan, Chovan etc. were added to their Christian names after conversion, thus making it clear that conversion did not change their status within the social structures.

Other Major States in India

However, in the other states of India caste based discrimination among Christians was quite vicious. Here, conversions did little to remove the caste based structures. Ample evidence is available of such accounts in the form of anecdotes and experiences. Segregation in worship places supported by the clergy led by non-Dalits continue to this day. The common belief that caste ceased to be one's marker of identity after conversion could not be more flawed. Caste remains as a social institution that invades life in multiple spheres. Marked by birth and lineage, a Dalit continues to be nothing but his caste. Caste boils even become terrifying riots where the upper-caste Catholics attack Dalit families. Their complaints though are not considered as atrocities against Dalits as they are Christians technically. Renowned Tamil author Bama's autobiography *Karukku* is a manifestation of her multi-layered identity – as a Dalit, a Christian and a woman. Her life as a Christian and a nun showcases the real face of Dalit Christianity in India. Though some sections of Dalits are recognized and receive reservations, most of the sections remain suppressed. Goa too which is known as the most westernised area in India is notorious for the age-old caste practices. Its Catholic community retains the traditional Hindu caste hierarchy. The Brahmins became Bammons, Kshatriyas became Chardos, Shudras became Sudirs and the Dalits remained as Mahars and Chamars. They maintain most of the caste practices but on a Christian plane. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), the top policymaking body of the Christian community in India made a frank admission that it is vulnerable to caste-based discrimination. The document is a well-studied analysis of the influence of caste in its power structure and activities. This will support the demands to extend the positives of reservations to Dalit Christians.

Arranged Marriage

Another manifestation of the caste discrimination is associated to the arranged marriage scenario. Matrimonial advertisements seeking 'suitable' alliances mention the caste, sub-caste and all such details that are required to discriminate. There is a trend of preference Dennis 6 to marry within one's caste and religion, further upholding the caste practices. A general assumption that the Dalits are inferior is propagated through such acts. In the Kerala Christian setting, there is a very obvious preference for the Syrian rites to marry within their caste. There is a silent reluctance to marry across the rites of Syrian and Latin traditions, though it is not uncommon. Thus, caste invades the matrimonial realm paving way to its inheritance into the next generation. Caste relationships provide a cultural feature which, within the modern societal structures, still reign over certain frontiers making space for more divisions. While examining caste in various spheres, i.e., rituals, marriage and everyday life, we discover that the expanse of this evil handicaps the integrity and virtue of the church. This paper tried to focus on the visible and normalised caste practices within the body of the Catholic Church. With voices rising against this evil catalysed by the advent of education and upward mobility, the case of casteist Catholicism has emerged as a major issue. No more a problem of a minor community, it has been embraced as a case of Dalit oppression.

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Rising of Dalits: We Will Rebuild Worlds

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Meena Kandasamy

Courtesy: <https://www.outlookindia.com/people/meena-kandasamy/13868>

Meena Kandasamy: Voice of the Voiceless

"They tried to bury us but they didn't know we were seeds" said anonymous. "Angry young man" is a phrase often used to describe male youth who stood against all the social injustices. But how often do we see an angry young woman comes out of her family, social, and cultural and gender cocoon to fight the injustices imposed on her?

Here we see an angry young woman, Meena Kandasamy. She can also be called as a voice of the voiceless. She is vehement angry with the two thousand years old suppression by the upper caste community on her community, Untouchables or Dalits.

We Rebuild Worlds

In the poem, "We Rebuild Worlds", she recollects the sufferings of the Dalits. Like the phoenix rising from the ashes, she hopes that one day, Dalits will build their world from the remnants of their hardships.

In the slightly modified words of Langston Hughes,
Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am,
And be ashamed-
I, *too*, am human.

Complex Beings

Human beings are the most complex animals on earth, they enjoy the luxury of being called as “the intelligent species”. They have something that no other animal or plant species have on this earth, the sixth sense. In every species, survival of the fittest is common, every animal family has its own alpha and determination of alpha is not predefined but determined only after birth. Only in human, alpha is predetermined even before birth through family, gender, race, caste, creed and complexation. And in modern day India one thing still prevails, caste.

Dalits

Dalits mean “oppressed” or “suppressed” in Sanskrit. Dalits are the people who belonged to lower caste. They are oppressed on the basis of their birth. They are denied their basic rights and made to do menial jobs for their livelihood for generations. Some of the outrageous practices are imposed on them such as two tumbler system. They are not allowed to enter the temples. They are not allowed to take water from public pumps. Every village has an outcaste colony. Dalits must reside in those colonies. They are not allowed to enter the lanes of higher caste colonies. They must call out their arrival to avoid ‘polluting’ the higher caste people.

One of the atrocious practices is the shadow of a Dalit person must not fall on higher caste person. The children of these high castes are not allowed to play or befriend lower caste person. The Dalits are not given proper jobs nor sufficient amount of salary to run the family. The young Dalit girls and boys who fall in love with the higher caste persons are killed in the name of honor killing. When the Dalits try to fight their oppressors, they are beaten up and killed mercilessly. The caste segregation begins from the time of birth till the time of death. It is irremediable curse that follows the generations.

Pioneers of Dalit literature

Mahatma Pule, Savitribai and Dr. Ambedkar are the pioneers of Dalit literature. They brought socio – Cultural Revolution through their writings. Many followed their footpaths and Dalit literature was established as an important aspect of Indian writing. Though higher caste authors touched upon the untouchability and caste discrimination, they gave minor reforms and solutions and largely supported the continuation of this evil practice. So, it led to the emergence of Dalit literature and writing which stressed upon their identity and challenged the higher caste writers. They unapologetically expressed their anger in their words and lashed out the caste based patriarchal society. One such writer is MeenaKandasamy. She established herself as Dalit writer who cries out against this depraved institution in her writings.

Ilavenil Meena Kandasamy

Ilavenil Meena Kandasamy (born 1984) is an Indian poet, fiction writer, translator and activist who is based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. Most of her works are centred on feminism and the Caste Annihilation Movement of the contemporary Indian milieu.

As of 2013, Meena has published two collections of poetry namely, *Touch* (2006) and *Ms. Militancy* (2010). Two of her poems have won accolades in all-India poetry competitions. From 2001-2002, she edited *The Dalit*, a bi-monthly alternative English magazine of the Dalit Media Network. She has also represented India at the University of Iowa's International Writing Program and was a Charles Wallace India Trust Fellow at the University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom.

Apart from her literary works, she is vocal about various contemporary political issues relating to caste, corruption, violence, and women's rights in more ways than one. She has an influential and regular social media presence, through her Facebook and Twitter handles. She also writes columns for platforms like *Outlook India* and *The Hindu*, occasionally. This was primarily brought to light during the beef controversy at the Osmania University in Hyderabad in 2012.

Beef Eating Controversy

In this poem “We will rebuild worlds”, Meena Kandhasamy like Kali, the destroyer of evil forces wants to destroy the evil forces of casteism. She tells how the passion of Dalits is murdered by the higher caste people. She tells, “but the crimes of passion/our passion/ your crimes/ poured poison and pesticide through the ears-nose-mouth” (12-14). Higher caste people committed barbarous act passionately like pouring acid on Dalits or hanging them publicly to protect their caste. She also accuses, “you wanted / to teach / other boys and other girls / the lessons of / how to / whom to / when to / where to / continue their caste lines” (15-17). The children of higher caste people are encouraged to continue the caste fanaticism by promising heaven when they die. They attain peace in these sadistic acts. Due to their cruel acts, the Dalits are reduced to voiceless whispers and are treated lower than animals.

Learn to Fight with Spontaneity

She believes, “We will learn/ how to fight/ with the substantial spontaneity/” (31). Their counterfeit smiles seek to sell out the Dalits into soulless worlds. Writer warns that Dalits one day will singe their many skins like caste, race etc. They will burn their filthy rich skin which the higher caste people hope to carry into their death. She hopes, “So / now/ upon a future time/there will be a revolution.” (33-34). There will come a revolution. Dalits will learn to fight for their rights. They will express their anger and encourage the coming generations to show their anger until the caste system is got ridden off. The thunder and lightning is the indicator of the approaching storm. The wrath of these dalit writers is also an indicator of the revolution of the Dalits. Dalits will never rest. “It will begin / when the oppressors will wince/ every time they hear our voices and their sparkly silence will never be taken for a sacrament.” (49-50).

Two Questions

Dalits will ask two questions, “India, what is the caste of the sperm? / India, what is the cost of life?” (53-54). Their words will flood the whole nation in rage. They will fight for their

ancestors. They will fight to give a better place for their children to live in. They will fight to live, to be treated as humans equally.

In the Minds of Uneducated and Educated

This caste system dwells not only in the minds of uneducated but also in the minds of educated. City is considered as the place where caste discrimination is not or less practiced. The couples who cannot beget children seek for sperm donors from their castes. Though the donor's identity is kept anonymous, their identity is still sought out for the identification. The practice of carrying their caste as sur-name is considered as pride. The villagers discriminate others only on the basis of caste. But the city people discriminate others not only on the basis of caste but also on the basis of class. Hence, the fellow dalit is discriminated by the person from the same community.

The Dalits are denied the freedom to be educated. The practice of communal reservation is targeted now more than never. Dalits are considered as thieves and are accused that they are stealing the seats of 'deserved' person. Their freedom of expression is suppressed. However, more Dalits question this outrageous practice which gives hope for the future where every human is treated equally.

The Dalits should no more be denied of their basic rights of education and respectful living. Everyone must start to consider Dalits as human beings. Every good change begins with a fight and revolution. Everyone must revolt against this evil system and must create a better place for the generations to come which is cruel free and everyone is treated equally. It is moral and social responsibility of every man born on this earth.

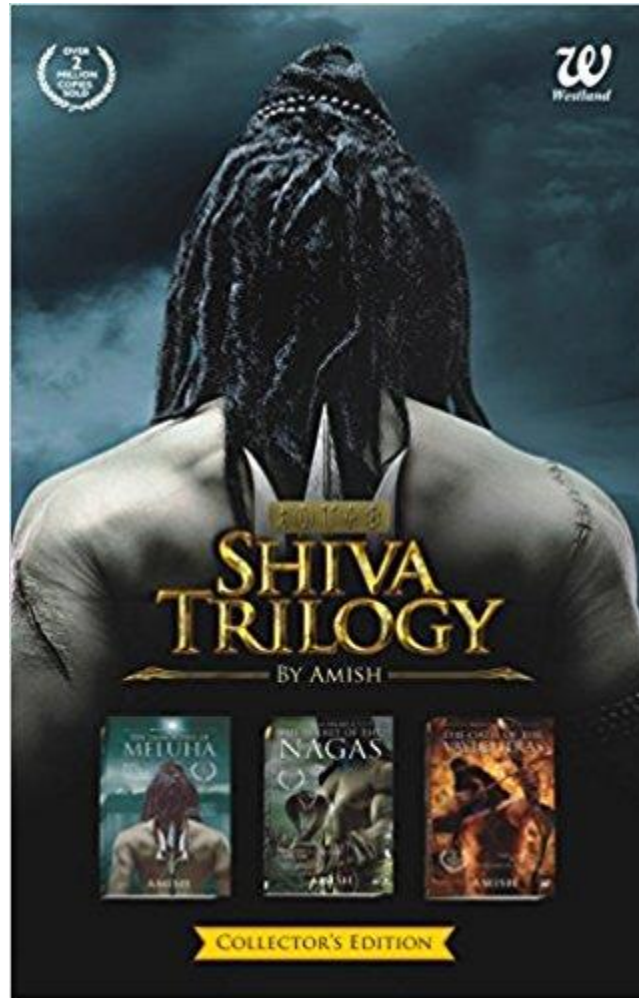
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From Heaven to Earth:
Rewriting Myth - An analysis of Ki Longfellow's
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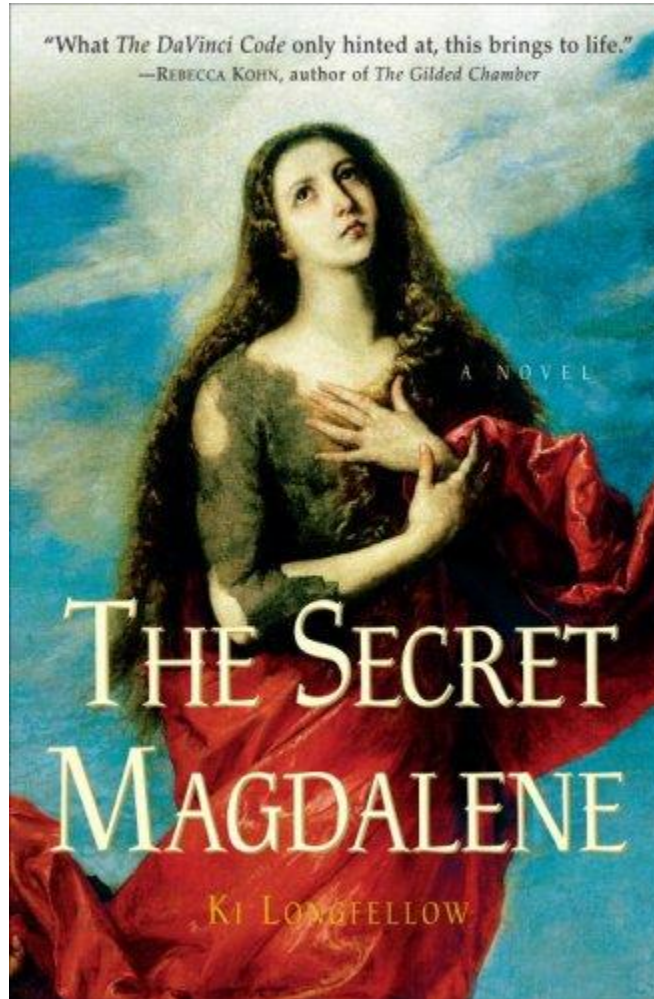
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Abstract

The basic idea behind rewriting myth might be to establish the concept that all gods were once normal human beings. This concept, when expressed as a rewriting of myth, will automatically create interest in old myths. This concept, which had been considered blasphemous in the years past, is now well received. Both Longfellow and Amish speak the god figures with

reverence but succeed in establishing their human sides too. In tracing their evolution, from mere ignorant human beings to gods, both the writers have projected their ascent from the earth to heaven. My paper focuses on analysing, how as beings ingrained with their human aspects, and there by realize their descent from heaven to earth. A typical paradigm shift takes place when these myths are retold in a new light and deserves a special study which I propose to undertake in this paper.



Introduction

Literature is study of human nature. It teaches us to analyse the characters accurately. It provides confidence and motivates us to raise our voice in myths and beliefs. Through this confidence, we can get the in-depth meaning of our life and it enables us to lead a purposeful life. Human mind is always searching for different experiences and it can be possible by a quest of myths. A myth is the collection of ancient stories which talk about beliefs and cultural traditions with historical facts. The characters are often supernatural beings such as gods and unusual creatures, and extraordinary human beings. People always had questions about the world, the universe, religion, gods and evils. All myths have a meaning and advocate some morals. It teaches us the perfect way of living our life. All countries have their own myths and it

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is connected with their culture, lifestyle and natural phenomenon. The retelling of myths for children is probably the easiest type of juvenile fiction. They are naturally interested in mythology. Children like to see old stories especially the story of kings and gods with colourful portraits. These stories teach them moral values. When kids read myths, they learn a lot about the important narrative traditions of the world, including how people are differentiated from cultures and historical traditions. These stories make them more practical and ready to face the world with confidence.

Myths

Myths are also exciting for young students because they often draw on intense themes like power, love, and the conflict between man and nature. The main reason for writing myths are to teach values, unify the group's identity, and explain social and religious rituals. These mythical stories are exposed through fiction for example, The Shiva Trilogy a series of three fantasy myth novels by an Indian author Amish Tripathi and Kid Longfellow's The Secret Magdalene. This is the story of how a normal human being turned into an extraordinary being and how the society projected him as God.

Shiva Trilogy and The Secret Magdalene

The Shiva Trilogy tells about the warrior Shiva, a normal human being and it explains how he turned into an extraordinary being called Neelkanth. On the other side, Ki Longfellow's The Secret Magdalene shows Yeshua, the preacher, a normal human being turned into an extraordinary Messiah and got crucified because of his moral truth and the society projected him as God. Shiva has the image of both God and human.

Hindu Mythology

According to Hindu mythology, Lord Shiva is a ferocious god, and he has another mysterious side as a normal being and also the image of peace, and meditation. When we look at him from several angles, we are always struck with the nature of Shiva. It is believed that he was a normal human being and later on considered as god. As a normal human being, people believed him to be a warrior and it is reflected in Amish's Shiva Trilogy. It consists of three books namely The Immortals of Meluha, The Secret of the Nagas, and The Oath of the Vayuputras. The story tells the life of Shiva and how from being a warrior and tribal leader, he later turned into God. It is an adventurous story that happened before centuries. Today, people remember him as Mahadev, God of all Gods. In this book, Shiva accepts the request from Daksha to save their land from enemies. Shiva and his tribe are impressed with the Meluhan way of life. He comes to know that the princess of Meluha lived her life with no companion as she is a Vikrama, the punishment for her past life sins. He loves Sati, the Princess and decides to marry her, and break the Vikarma law and the associated taboos. Once, the inventor Brahaspati invites them to Mount Mandar, where the secret potion Somras is manufactured, with the water from the Saraswatiriver.

According to this ancient myth, we can understand that the potion did not affect him but his throat turned into blue. He tries to lead the Suyavanshis to victory against their arch rivals Chantravanshis who were accompanied by the evil assassins – the Nagas. Unfortunately, Sati is

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attacked by a Naga and a gold coin leads Shiva to Branga. In the third book, he meets the Chief of Vayuputras, Mithra, who convinces the Vayuputras that Shiva is the saviour. He gives the Pashupathiastra a special weapon, like the Brahmastra, to attack them. The war ends with Sati's death and shiva banishes the Somras and hide it from human vision and secure it under the city. Shiva retires to Mount Kailash where he spends most of his time with the memories of Sati. Sati's death is not forgotten and she is later renowned as Goddess Shakti. Creation and destruction are the two wheels of life. This is common for everyone.

Yeshua

On the other side, the birth of Yeshua as a normal being who grew up to become the greatest man who ever lived, is shown by Ki Longfellow in his *Secret Magdalene*. Yeshua taught people everywhere he met them. He taught them at the seashore and on boats. He taught them in homes and when travelling. Yeshua walked from place to place, teaching people. We learn many things from other people, but we can learn the most important things from a Great Teacher, like Yeshua. He was different from other men. Yeshua is a model for Christian because he was sinless. He was born, lived and died as a Jew. Yeshua taught eternal truth that lasts forever. He gave us principles to live by, and to master every area of our lives. He is an incredibly positive role model. His messages and teachings are evident in all aspects of Christianity. These include Christian beliefs, behaviours and rituals. Each of these have been developed from the way Yeshua carried out his life. He performs many miracles and many people believe in him. He had selected 12 men for his followers, later to become his closest disciples. During the reign of King Herod, they lived in the cave and protest against the brutal law of the kingdom. Some people called them as Sicarii. His closest followers are Peter, Magdalene, Judas, Andrew etc. Longfellow explains a few miracles of Yeshua.

The most important miracles of Yeshua are the raising of the dead to life, healing of Peter's Mother-in-law, healing of a paralytic, healing two blind men in Nazareth and resurrection. The fiction covers the relationship between Yeshua and other disciples. He is a rescuer of Jerusalem. He saves an innocent stone carver Addai from the Fortress of Antonia, and Stephen the disciple of John the Baptizer. The laws of John the Baptizer and Yeshua is different. He wants to act as a common man and does not want to become a king or leader of the group. He started telling moral stories when he observed the impact of telling stories in the street. He knew that the country believes in bad faith and omen. During this period, women were not allowed to get education, even not allow to participate in public prayers. Peter Kreeft said, "Jesus was anything but a male Chauvinist. He liberated women more than anyone else in His time. But he was also a Jew. He believed that Judaism was the revelation of the true God" (Kreeft, 15). Although, Yeshua tried to change it through the good moral stories and belief of God. At the same time, Rome had occupied their land and turned them into slaves. He helped them to get freedom. He taught ignorance is the darkness and love is god and he never ask any offer for it.

In the beginning, none of them accepts his words because it is against the Romans. Later people accompanied him and raised their voices. He knew, he will die in the hands of Romans but he continued to become a rescuer. He preached love, tolerance and he also performed miracles by healing the sick and raising up a man from the dead. In the book *The Secret*

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Magdalene, Yeshua used some herbs to cure the blind man in Bethsaida. It shows that Yeshu had a good knowledge in medicine too. He advised them, knowledge is the power of kingdom and love is God. Samuel A. Odeyinde said, "Indeed, love is one of the most integral aspects to the Kingdom of God" (Odeyinde, 50). People believed him to be the Messiah who would bring them to the kingdom and to destroy the Roman rule. The Romans order them to worship the emperor as God, and occupied their land, and used them as a slave. People worshiped only one God Yahweh. As a result, they were killed by Romans brutally. Yeshua believed that there were no kings and Queens to control them and he motivated them to feel as a king individually. He liked to walk with people and refuse to identify himself as a leader of some community or the country. He just commands them hopefully. However, the miracles are always miracles but on the other side history projected him as a normal human being who turned into an extraordinary being, and later projected as a God. While reading a book and analysing it in depth, we can get more truth and meanings.

Amish's Shiva

Amish portrays Shiva as a normal being and convinces the reader to accept the possibilities of this myth. The trilogy covers on religion, truth, fantasy and the battle between the good and evil. The language is simple and unique and easy to understand the plot of the story. The first book, *'The Immortals of Meluha'*, begins with the introduction of Shiva as a Tibetan warrior. He enters into the city of Meluha to rescue the people from the attack on Chandravanshi. He realised himself as the Neelkanth which literally means the blue-throated, an incarnation of Mahadev, after he takes the Somras, a potion which makes his throat turn blue. It signifies that we do not always need to suppress or react to the vices. We sometimes need to modify the negativities and make them ineffective. He broke the system of Vikarma by marrying Sati, the Princess.

In the second book, *The Secret of the Nagas*, Shiva acts as a rescuer and fights against evil. At the end of the book, the battle is not only to banish the evil but also destroys our mentality based on evilness. The symbol of Naga is fear, it should be destroyed otherwise reaching our goal is difficult. Lord Shiva is often shown with a snake curled three times around his neck and looking towards his right side. The snake holding the neck of Shiva represents the power of venomous speech, as it hurts others too. Through the writings of Amish, the projection of Shiva as a human being, who once lived among us, makes us to think spontaneously. We should appreciate the extensive research by him on specific Hindu mythology and ideals. Shiva accepts that ignorance is the evil and he suggests them to love each other and it is the only solution. No one is bad, it is just that they are different; their thinking and their lifestyles are different. Shiva is the perfect role model for leadership. In the second book, he commands that, we should not judge anything or anyone and realize that every good have some bad in it, and every bad has a few good qualities with it. Our consciousness is the only one to differentiate and find them. Amish said, " Our greed in extracting more and more from Good turns it into evil" (Tripathi, 70).

In the third book, the idea that excess of everything is bad, even excess of goodness can be bad is expounded. Life is a journey of every man towards the righteousness. It motivates us to

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think deeply. Amish creates Shiva as a normal man and he makes us to think. People believe, the right way to reach God is to choose the right path and realize the righteousness of humanity. It is very comfortable and easily holding its grip over the story line and makes us all realize that the writer tried to find the answers to all those hidden questions inside us.

The Secret Magdalene

On the other hand, Longfellow's *The Secret Magdalene* tells the life journey of Yesua and his followers. In the fiction, he turned into an extraordinary being and got crucified because of his law. He spends most of his time alone in a cave, and sea because sea is the symbol of freedom and knowledge. Symbols and their greater meaning are something that requires careful consideration when studying the Bible. It tells us about the life and death. In this Fiction, Yeshua is a silent listener and waiting for his time to reveal himself as a rescuer for people. Historians are confident he was also a religious preacher and healer, and was seen as a miracle worker. It is common to hear Jesus compared with Socrates because they were both executed for standing up for their ideals.

In the "Synoptic Gospels" of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, however, most of his teaching takes the form of parables, which are as stimuli to deeper thoughts and also philosophical devices. Yeshua was a brilliant thinker, who used logical arguments to refute his critics and establish the truth of his views. When Jesus praised the faith of children, he was encouraging humility as a virtue, not irrational religious trust or a blind leap of faith in the dark. Jesus' public mission started with his baptism by John the Baptizer. He lived during the reign of King Herod who hated John because of his principles. During his period, high priests of the temple supported the kingdom and as a result they were killed by Sicarri, for their unfaithfulness. Yeshua is against the punishment of killing them. His follower Peter did it for John the Baptizer. Yeshua felt disappointed on his faithful disciple, Peter, his Rock. Yeshua taught them to love their enemies too. Meanwhile, Herod was waiting for the ideal opportunity to kill the prophet John and he used the situation to imprison him in the Fortress at Machaerus. While he was in the prison, he heard the activities of Yeshua and his ministry. Finally, he was killed by the Romans. This led Yeshua to begin his ministry in Galilee. On the night of the last supper, Yeshua was imprisoned because of a traitor and one among the follower of twelve. His disciples were only small minority and crowds demanded crucifixion for him. Crucifixion was a tortuous means of execution employed by the Romans, and it was typically reserved for lower-class criminals, traitors, and others that the Roman authorities deemed undesirable. Death by crucifixion was considered a disgrace and a curse by Jewish people at the time. Yeshua was beaten and crucified. He sacrificed his life for the freedom of the people. On the third day, Yeshua's tomb was found empty and the miracle of Yeshua was happened. The resurrection is not believed by all. According to the gospel accounts, an angel told the women that Jesus had risen. The women then left and excitedly informed the disciples. In the next few days, the risen Jesus appeared to the disciples, as well as to hundreds of other people. From that point, the disciples began their mission to spread the Christian message. Both writers declare that the two legends were once human beings. They had lived the life of a normal man. Both have tried to fight against darkness and to rescue people from danger. They had focused on uplifting all the people without any bias. It is because of their nobility that they rise up to the level of Gods. The society always praises the unexpected help from someone, if the

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same person did the miracle they happily called them as God. The concept of mythology converted into a tale enhanced the beauty of the re-telling and makes it more interesting. This is the brave attempt of epic proportions and descriptions. According to the view of a religious follower, it is difficult to accept Shiva or Yeshua as a normal human being rather than a divine figure. We knew that God is Divine but this book contains what really God is and what is Good and evil. The definition of right and wrong is very difficult to justify, because something which is right for me can be wrong for someone else.

The work became famous because the writer tried to find out some unanswered questions. It is applicable to compare the book to today's world through strength, fate, pain, sorrows and corruption. As a result, the perspective and situation of a person makes something appear to be right or wrong. According to human faith, they are the messengers of Heaven to earth and dedicate their life for us. Even today we try to show off our normal nature as an extraordinary one and imagine ourselves as a brainy kind or good. The human knowledge is different from divine knowledge. We are very familiar with human knowledge, but when we dedicate ourselves to the completeness of eternal thinking and self-realizing, we can get the divine knowledge forever. Thus, human beings also can achieve the peak of divine knowledge. They can accept the universal truth by self-realization. The retelling of the myths and the alternate history that they project enable us to achieve this self-realization. Instead of looking upon the God figures with doubt and indulging ourselves in customary practices of worship, it is better to identify the earthly elements in them. Such as identification will enable us to see the man behind the god, the earth behind the heaven, and give us an insight into those noble acts that enabled them to rise up to the statue of a God.

Focus of Both the Texts

Speaking of noble acts, both the chosen texts *Shiva Trilogy* and *The Secret Magdalene* strive to uphold the basic virtues needed to lead a noble life. In *Shiva Trilogy*, Shiva is able to understand that people are different from the ideology, doesn't mean that they are wrong. Devad and Asuras are different. Asuras are not evil because they are different.

It is the fact that Devas who judge them wrongly. Similarly, Nagas are not evil, they are the exploited who seek reversal and their just appraisal is labelled evil by the Devas. In *The Secret Magdalene* Yeshua declares that there is no true Messiah. He clearly explains that the kingdom of the father is within us. When people do not hear him, he decides to enact a plot according to their belief. The betrayal and arrest of Yeshua followed by his crucifixion, and he knew it. When things go wrong at the end and Yeshua really dies, they change the plot accordingly. The philosophy advocated by Yeshua is nothing other than self-realization. Gnosis is Self-realization. The real philosophy of these two God figures become visible to us only when we look at the possibility of their human existence. Identifying and accepting the differences between people and acquiring Gnosis through self-realization. This is the essence of these two works. This clarity is achieved only when their figures come down from Heaven to the Earth through these rewritings.

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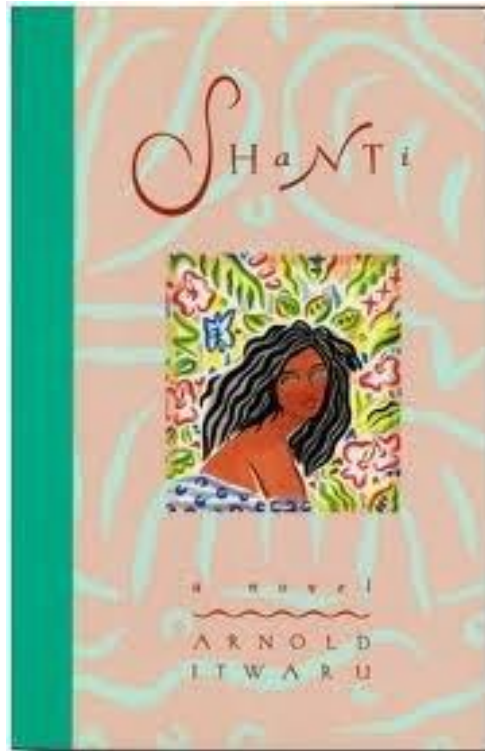
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Imperialization of Female Body through Sexual Encroachment: An Analysis of Arnold Itwaru's *Shanti*

Soumy Syamchand and Dr. A. Selvaraj

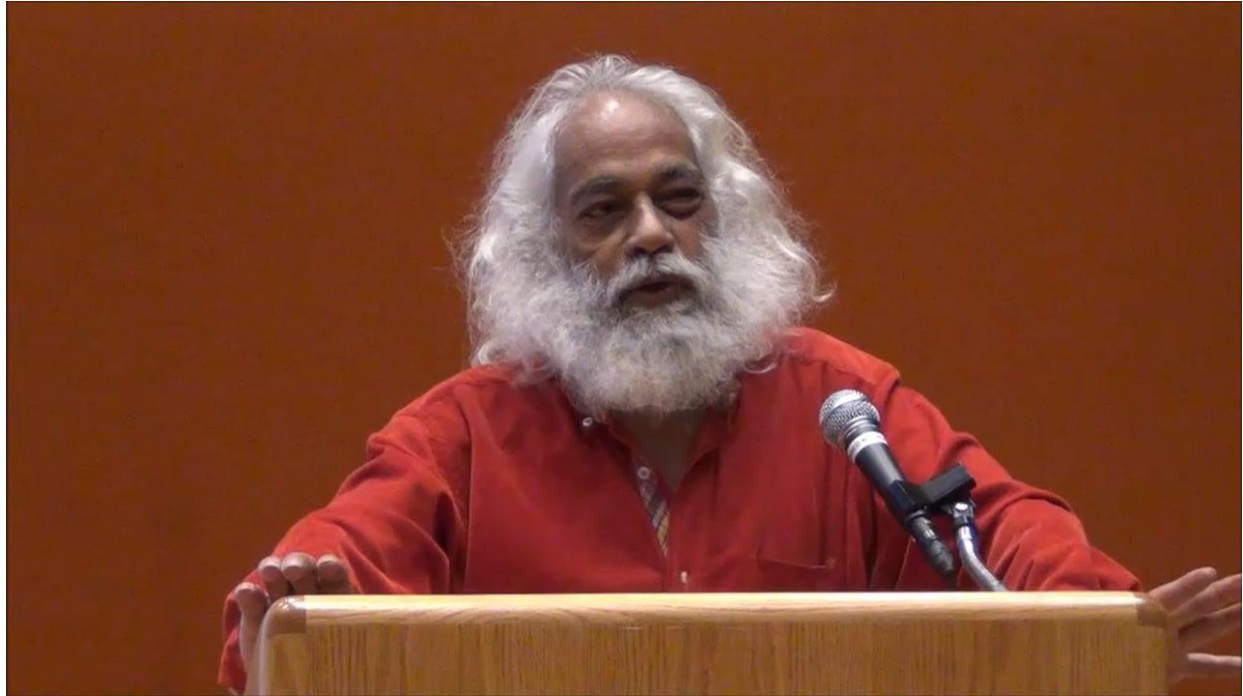
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Abstract

The politics of marginalization and the colonial hegemony are the central concerns of Arnold Itwaru's works. *Shanti* goes back to the world of colonial Guyana and traces the exploitation of the indentured workers on the plantation, where the majority of the population are the descendants of the people of India who came there to work in the sugar plantations. The novel is more about the eponymous heroine Shanti than about any other characters. It depicts the ways in which women have simultaneously experienced the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy and how Shanti, the subaltern, has been a victim of it. The novel exposes brutal rapes and sexual atrocities victimized by the majority of the girls of the plantation from the colonizers as well as their own people. Here, rape cannot be read as mere a physical violence against females rather it is the enactment of power and domination. This paper tries to explore and analyze how rape or sexual act becomes in the novel as the strategy of dominating and subordinating the female body. Exploring the theoretical frame works of Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan and Laura Mulevy, the study delineates how power is translated through sexual act and rape.

Key Words: Arnold Itwaru, *Shanti*, marginalization, power, domination, identity, female body, victimized



Arnold Itwaru

Courtesy: <https://vimeo.com/190584341>

Politics of Marginalization and Colonial Hegemony

The politics of marginalization and the colonial hegemony are the central concerns of Arnold Itwaru's works. *Shanti* goes back to the world of colonial Guyana and traces the exploitation of the indentured workers on the plantation, where the majority of the population are the descendants of the people of India who came there to work in the sugar plantations. The novel is more about the eponymous heroine Shanti than about any other characters. Her very name Shanti is ironic in the sense that a daughter of peace became a daughter of shame. "But for Shanti, named after and within the Om, indivisible syllable of the self in tranquility, the speech of peace, Shanti, peace, daughter of peace—there was shame" (1988: 4). Both her men and colonizers equally stare at her with lusty eyes. Almost all the young girls of the plantation are the victims of colonizers sexual harassment. The study delineates how power is translated through sexual act and rape.

Masculine Phallic Desire

Masculine phallic desire purposefully mystifies the female body as something to be explored and analyzed for quenching the curiosity. The masculine desire converts the body by transforming and translating it into the "segments of a puzzle, riddle or enigma" (1966: 54). Thus, the female body becomes an object for masculine curiosity and exploration, an object for fetishism. The novel recodes typical instances, "The men would stare in open lust at her exposed thighs, her back, her buttocks, her belly, wherever the torn fabric of her tatters exposed her

innocent and personal flesh” (1988: 4). As a result the body does not want to be overlooked but to be conquered by phallic penetration to the inner most labyrinths of the body. Thus, Nicholas Groth states in his *Men Who Rape: The Psychology of the Offender*:

It is an effort to counteract feelings of vulnerability and inadequacy in himself and to assert his strength and power – to control and exploit. Sexuality is not the only-nor the primary- motives underlying rape. It is however, the means through which conflicts surrounding issues of anger and power become discharged. Rape is always a combination of anger, power and sexuality. (1979:60)

The colonizer very often expresses his power by seducing females, here sexual acts nothing but the enactment of power and domination. In order to perpetuate power over the females, there is no appropriate method other than transforming them as “docile bodies” (1977:136) through the sexual encroachment to their body. Loyd. T. Booker, the loathsome overseer was a typical colonial figure and his ways typified how some of the colonialists directly raped and harassed the girls. He was always on the lookout of female bodies and his lusty eyes found them “fuckable female animals at his disposal and pleasure” (1988:15). Thus, the novel depicts:

The pleasure of power charged through him. Stop whimpering, you fuckable bitch! You won’t die. It’ll do you good to have a white man. You should be happy! He noticed with growing curiosity the vulnerable deep pink through which his rejected discharge was seeping out. Goodness, he thought, these Indian bitches have pink cunts too! And he attacked Gladys again (1988:16)

The power seeps out from the colonizer’s phallus to the colonized female body which enables to conquer the female body as colony. The irresistible impulse of power energized Booker to rape the victim several times. Here, rape cannot be read as mere a physical violence against females rather it is the enactment of power and domination. There are many instances perceptible in the novel:

He followed the young woman into canes when she went to urinate unseen by the others. He pounced, his superior strength quickly over powering her, pinning her under, smothering her shock, her rage, her sobs, her humiliation as he raped her in his empire urgency (1988:15)

Raped Women

Women who have been raped in most instances are filled with feelings of shame and many have a bad self-esteem, furthermore, anxiety, sadness and guilt are also very common feelings. When women should be extremely angry and feeling hatred towards the offender they both are feeling ashamed and guilty. It is perceptible in *Shanti*, “she corrected, covering her face in shame. Booker stood tall and proud and manly. (1988:15) This sounds strange, but the reason could be that some women do not have a high self-esteem and thus put the blame on themselves instead of the offender.

Women are expected to assume a subordinate relationship to men. Consequently, rape can be seen as a logical extension of the typical interactions between women and men. Mr. Booker was an impatient, fierce, arrogant man, a proud representative of Great Britain and symbol of

magnificent power. Here, female bodies are colonies to be conquered and subordinated and sexual penetration is nothing but the encroachment of power to the colony. Thus, *Shanti* represent this predicament:

Shanti stiffened at the touch of Mr. Booker’s hand on her hair. She tried to push him off but her tearful resistance was of no use. his powerful hands drove up her skirt, her panties, her tender personal flesh, pinned her on the ground in colonizing force and violations the fire devoured her screams and horror ... and assault of Mr. Booker’s conquering empire lust. (1988:8)

It comprises all sexual violence where somebody penetrates another human being or tries to, and in that fashion completely breaks this person’s say in that matter. There are to be found attitudes such as competitiveness, relentlessness, good staying power, efficiency, effective virtues

Lacanian Psychoanalysis

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, phallus stands for power and domination. Phallus is associated with men, so men are privileged to dominate the female. In the novel the murder of the colonialist Booker by castration is very symbolic and suggestive, here, cutting the penis symbolizes capturing his power of subordination. Thus, the novel describes his murder as, “Booker’s khaki pants had been pulled down and his penis was cut off” (1988: 21). His power associated with his phallus by which he brutally raped many females, by removing his penis he became powerless that is equal to his death. Thus, phallus is a static image of completeness and power.

Power Imbalance

The high incidence of rape in the novel is a result of the power imbalance between men and women. The novel depicts the ways in which women have simultaneously experienced the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy and how Shanti, the subaltern, has been a victim of it. The novel exposes brutal rapes and sexual atrocities committed against girls of the plantation from the colonizers as well as their own people. Here, rape is cannot be read as mere a physical violence against females rather it is the enactment of power and domination.

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342

Imperialization of Female Body through Sexual Encroachment: An Analysis of Arnold Itwaru’s *Shanti*

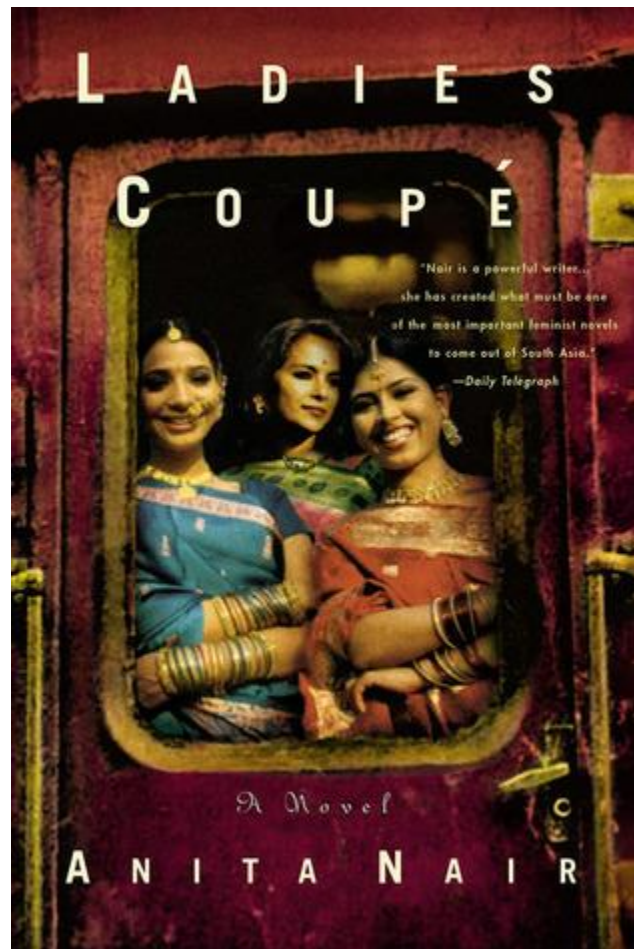
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Protagonist of Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupé* as a New Image of Woman

P. Tamil Selvi

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Abstract

Anita Nair in her second novel *Ladies Coupé* broods on the empowerment of women from the female bonding that occurs within the ladies' compartment of a train. Six women share the ladies compartment, a place where each of them can express their oppressed feelings and sufferings that they have never shared with anybody before. The problems and the way out that they have followed shows how these women have worked hard for their quest for independence. Along with the protagonist Akhila, the other women who travelled in the same coupe are Janaki who voices out for her desire to rebel against her husband who has attempted to control even her

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grown up son. Next important character is Margaret Shanti who is a victim of her husband's domination he had controlled her body, mind, and spirit and had never allowed her to be herself. Marikolanthu is another occupant who has suffered rape and has been the victim of no mistake of hers. The stories of all the women show that all of them are sufferers of patriarchal society and have transformed into repressive forces of the society. Education and financial independence has made them establish themselves and emerge as new image women.



Anita Nair

Courtesy: <https://mbrady.wordpress.com/2014/02/06/ladies-coupe-by-anita-nair/>

Introduction

Colonialism and the concept of patriarchy have become dominant factors that paved way for the feminist discourse that accentuated the relationship between inequality and injustice. Though colonialism has been brought to end 70 years before, the impact of colonization can be felt in the form of patriarchy. However, men have taken the role of colonizer and have started to oppress women. As a result, women are subjected to persecution by men. At this situation, education and financial independence has helped women to fight against patriarchal system. This new image of woman has helped various writers depict the change of status of women in this 21st century. When analyzing the works of Indian writer, Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe* depicts the exploitation of woman protagonist by the family and the society at large, and also shows how she and her five co-passengers work hard to evolve from patriarchal oppression into a new image of women.

Akila

Akila, the protagonist of *Ladies Coupe* can be called the new image woman, breaks free from the dictates of her family from the strength she has gathered from the female bonding in the ladies coupe of a train to Kanyakumari. Her family disregards all her desires and expects her to

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afford them monetary support throughout her life. Though Akila attempts to prepare herself for this sacrifice, the oppression that she suffers makes her revolt and emerges as a new woman who is searching for her freedom and identity. Akila's knowledge, expertise, and exposure to the world empowered her with agency and a sense of purpose.

Feminism

Feminists work hard at changing the reality in terms of female-centric system so that the oppressed women are liberated from the patriarchal system and emerge as new women breathing free. Usha Bande in her *Writing Resistance* states that "feminist resistance is shown through articulation; the most important aspect of it is to break the silence and to re-discover the female self" (15-16). Anita Nair in *Ladies Coupe* depicts the protagonist's dilemmas, requirements, and uncertainties with a charming manner. The novel attempts to figure an answer for the question- Can a woman stay single and lead a happy life, or does she need a man to lead a complete life? In the process of finding an answer, Akila searches for her freedom and liberty and also questions the taboos that were laid to restrict women from being independent. *Ladies Coupe* moves from past to present and present to past. This novel attempts to show how suppression and oppression are forced upon women in the guise of love, protection and the promise of security.

Ladies Coupe is the story of six women who come from varied walks of life who have experienced oppression in the past and how as new women they have attempted to overcome such painful domestic oppression within their familial milieu. The novel slowly develops against the background of a train journey where the six women who share the ladies coupe relate their stories to the others as the train moves towards its destination. The ladies coupe has become a comfort zone for all the six women, a place where each one of them can express their problems and sufferings and voice their feeling of oppression so that each of them develop courage and strength from the others to evolve as a strong independent woman.

Analyzing each of the woman characters helps to understand how they have worked to fight the patriarchal oppression. Akhilandeshwari or Akhila, the protagonist of this novel, is a forty-five year old spinster and one among the six women in the coupe. She forms the link between the other women to narrate their way to win the oppression that they once experienced and they also provide a new perspective to the question put forth by Akila: "Can a woman be happy alone, without a male protective presence in her life? (LC 4). All these six women through their discussions about the role of women in society express their thoughts on their emancipation and how to cope with life.

The first woman to narrate her story was Akila. She begins her story from the time she was nineteen, the time her father died and her family starts to put all the responsibility on her. She gets her father's clerical job in income tax department. The family burden makes her shun away all the romantic thoughts that all girls will usually develop at that age, and takes away the entire burden with any regret. However, the family demands and commitments start to eat her vitals that she starts longing for freedom and independence even though she is the breadwinner of the family. As she is the eldest daughter of the family, the family considers her as a money mending instrument and forgets to consider her desires. Even her mother never spared a thought for her well-being. This is clear when the author says: "When Akhila's father died, two things happened: Sundays became just another day of the week and Akhila became the man of the

family” (75). Over the period of time, when Akila’s family takes control over her, she starts to think of a family for her own thereby rebelling the control exerted on her by her family.

The thoughts of each member of the family were clearly explained by Anita Nair. This quote also explains how all of them never thought of Akhila’s marriage and they assume that she is happy with her situation:

Amma had Akhila to replace her husband as the head of the household. Amma had her-Akhila. Akhilandeswari. Mistress of all worlds, Master of none. What Akhila missed the most was that no one ever called her by her name any more. Her brothers and sister had always called her Akka. Elder sister. At work, her colleagues called her Madam. All women were Madam and all men Sir. And Amma had taken to addressing her as Ammadi. [...] So who was Akhilandeswari? Did she exist at all? If she did, what was her identity? (LC 84)

Even though Akila is considered the head of the family as she has become the earning member, she is not given the designated status of being the actual ‘head of the family.’ Traditionally money gave the power but that equation was undermined by patriarchal forces in most of the families. All the people that Akhila encounters are rooted in patriarchal thoughts. The men and elders in the family, who practice patriarchy, always wanted the money that women bring in; however, they fail to accord the status that they actually deserve. Even Akila’s sister Padma refuses to respect her desires and thoughts and after a long dilemma, Akhila realizes the need to find an authentic life and happiness on her own. As a first step in her mission for an independent life, Akhila makes up her mind to acquire an education:

Instead, on her thirty-fifth birthday, she decided to get herself an education. She enrolled in the Open University for a Bachelor of Arts degree. Akhila chose history as her main subject. ... To study the intricacies of what made a certain dynasty behave in a certain manner. To watch the unraveling of life from the sidelines. To read about monarchs and concubines; wars and heroes; to observe and no more (LC 85).

Akila also thinks of the vanished hope of marriage in her life which occupies her psyche largely. When she believes that her life has become a vacuum with marriage, motherhood, and child-rearing, she starts to realize that her life is empty and has led life without any goal. This is evident from the following lines, “The world of the householder was not hers. From the Gurukula stages of life, she had moved directly to the Vanaprastha. And she wanted no part of someone else’s karmic flow” (LC 85-86).

The passion that Akhila yearns for gets a focus when she meets Hari. The encounter with him marks the next phase of Akhila’s transition, the breaking off of oppression that is imposed on her by her family and the baby steps towards the freedom that she has longed for. She breaks away the traditional norms imposed on her and subverts the societal norms of being a virgin until marriage, and enjoys being touched and fondled by her lover. In short, she experiences “a vein of strength” (LC 210). As sexuality is a significant part of human life, Akhila flouts the societal norms and goes to the extreme of experience which had been denied to her.

Akhila starts to break the boundaries when she begins to nurture her relationship with Hari who becomes Akhila’s world when she starts to think only about him. Thoughts of Hari start to rule Akhila and she begins “to braid them into a future” (LC 203). In return, Hari was able to generate a sensation in Akhila which stands as a testimony for the love that each of them

cherish. There is a healthy male-female relationship that develops between them. Akhila starts to bloom after the arrival of Hari in her life. However, she once again gets into her shell when she calls off her relationship with Hari when he expresses his interest in marrying her. This makes Akhila think of her future life being married and leading a life of oppression as she believes marriage as a source of oppression for women. Her bitter past makes her believe marriage as an body used by men to control women. Therefore, she rejects being in relationship. All she wanted is a free and liberal world. She does not want sex to oppress the freedom of woman by dominant man. She refuses to marry him saying that he is younger than her. The love and passion that Akhila has on Hari brings them closer that they get physically close which is a revelation for her. As a result, she lets their relationship die away which is yet another milestone in her evolution as an independent woman.

Akhila developed the ability to take risks and it is this courage to manage risks that motivates her to take a trip to Kanyakumari. She gradually attempts to find answers to all her questions regarding her loneliness. It is with this thought that she takes the train to Kanyakumari. She takes the train to discover her strength, independence, and answer to her questions in the ladies coupe, a perfect setting to unburden her memories. The atmosphere in the ladies coupe is very intimate. When Akhila opens the conversation and narrates her life, all the co-passengers join the conversation hoping to give their life example on where women need men. When Akhila says “as far as I am concerned, marriage is unimportant. Companionship, Yes. I would like that. The problem is, I wish to live by myself but everyone tells me that a woman can’t live alone, what do you think? Can a woman live by herself?” (LC 21). Each character shares their thoughts the last as she arrives at an insight into her condition after delving into the lives of the others.

The first person to narrate the story in the ladies coupe is Janaki. She was married and has a son and a daughter-in-law. She said that when her husband tried to control everybody, including their son, she felt “queer rage uncoil within her” (LC 30) and expressed her anger to her husband. When thinking of the importance of a man in a woman’s life, initially, she stated that “Why should a woman live alone, there is always a man willing to be with her?”(LC 21); however, after continuous discussion, Janaki continued to say that

First there was my father and brothers; then my husband. When my husband is gone there will be my son, waiting to take off from where his father left off. Women like me end up being fragile... I thought if I were to lose it all, I would cope. If I ever became alone, I would manage perfectly. I was quite confident about that. I think I was tired of being this fragile creature... ‘Now I know that even if I can cope it wouldn’t be the same if he wasn’t there with me’ (LC 22-23).

The words of Janaki makes it clear that role of men is not important in her life. Next character to share her life was Margaret Shanti who has become the victim of male domination. Her husband Ebenezer Paulraj had controlled her body, mind, and spirit and is the typical example male patriarchy. He uses marriage as a weapon to control her. Her academic excellence goes for a waste as he refuses to send her work. When she is interested in pursuing Ph.d, her husband forces her to do B.Ed. He has forced her work where he works. She continues to live with him and take control over him. As Ebe is proud of his physical appearance, she started to take control of him using flattery. She takes revenge on him by providing him with rich food and sex, the things that he likes the most. As a result, she started to control him completely. By, this she has started to find a way through which she has got a family which she dreamed off. Thus,

Margaret Shanti can be called a representative of all women who seek some kind of appreciation from their spouse.

The next important character who travels with Akila is Marikolanthu who has suffered rape and has suffered immense problems throughout her life when compared with others. She is from humble family background and male domination is forced heavily on her. Marikolanthu is employed to look after the Chettiar house and take care of child in that house; however, she hates her own son who was born as a result of her rape by Murugesan. She was vexed as the rapist was not punished; instead she was punished to make her living by being a helper in the Chettiar house. Lack of education and employment makes her a sufferer throughout her life. Her anger subsides only after seeing the corpse of Murugesan burning on the pyre. From the story of Marikolundu, it is clear that she is worst sufferer because of social, familial and financial repressions. Marikolundu can be called a true feminist as she wanted to uplift her standard from the false life imposed on her by the patriarchal society. She realizes that the boy born to her is innocent and starts to love him. It is through her story that the problems of rape, virginity, motherhood, heterosexuality are clearly brought out in the novel.

The stories all the women in the ladies coupe clearly brings to light the repressive forces of the society and how women are struggling to revolt against those oppression and establish themselves to the society. The stories create a change in Akila and she starts to think about Hari and wishes to lead a married life with him. This is evident from the thoughts of Akhila:

Perhaps, it is not too late, Akhila thought. That while what she half lost might be irretrievable, life would toss forth a second chance. Like it had for Janaki. And for Margaret too in some convoluted way. And then Akhila remembered that there had been the makings of a second chance, but she had not known it to be so at that time... (LC 154-155).

Akhila stays in the hotel and starts to think about her freedom, independence, and her future. When she was on the beach, she picks a conversation with a man and calls him to have sex with him. She does so in order to take control over men. When the man asks lots of questions on her, she cuts short the conversation and refuses to answer him. She starts to enjoy the assertiveness and continues to have a physical relationship with an unknown man. Bande in her *Writing Resistance* states has stated that Akhila wants to use her dominance by calling a man to have sex with her and does not want man to control her. This physical relationship can be said to

The intercourse that Akhila had with the unknown man has paved way for her to discover her true self. She experiences the pure sensations that have been denied to her for years. As a result, she emerges as a new woman that is manifested in her body language. Also, the new-found freedom and liberty gives her self-assurance which is visible in her energy and liveliness. This shows that Akhila is a 'new woman' who has evolved from her cocoon with her new found courage to liberate herself from the traditional customs. In the words of MalashriLal in *The Law of Threshold*:

For the 'new woman,' the courage of her convictions is all she can rely upon. In repudiating convention and the protections offered to her, she has also separated herself from other women who habitually authenticate their passivity by giving value to a common belief of socialization. Being outside the complicity that indirectly supports the ongoing patriarchal arrangements, the woman outside the threshold has to devise a world of her own. (20)

Thus, Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe* helps in empowering women and also provides space for them to liberate themselves from the social constraints and emerge as a new image of women.

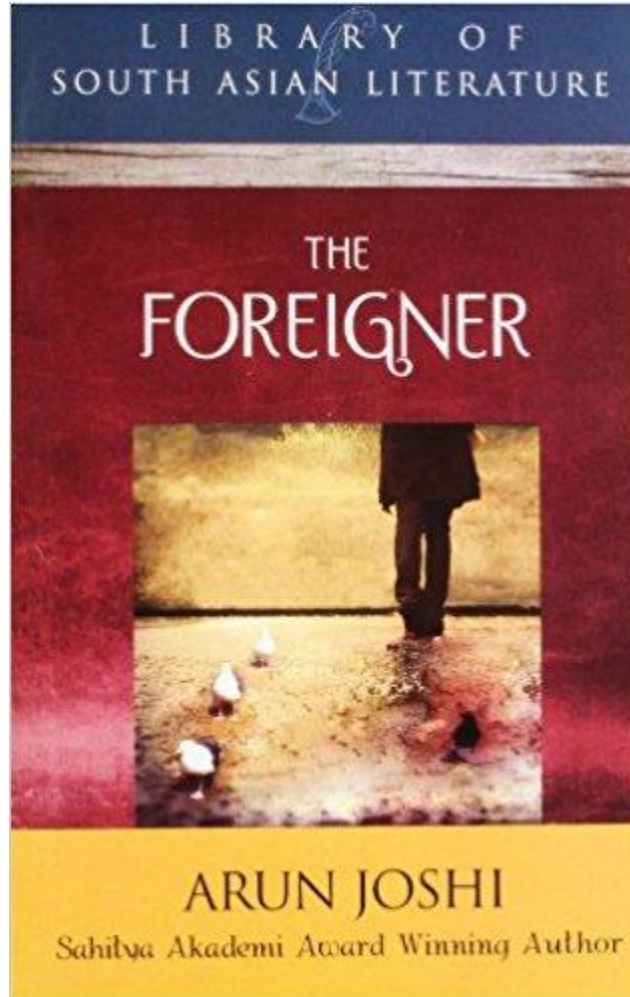
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Emotional Estrangement in Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner*

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Abstract

Arun Joshi, in his maiden novel, *The Foreigner*, highlights modern man's anxiety, identity crisis, alienation, rootlessness, existential quest, meaninglessness of life, and dilemmas that emanate from his cultural, social, and emotional estrangement. The protagonist of the novel, Sindi Oberoi, an Indian immigrant, is continually in a quest for some purpose and meaning in his life. His "hybrid identity," owing to his mixed parentage, makes him feel rootless, detached, and emotionally estranged wherever he goes. He remains a "foreigner" to the world and perceives himself as a stranger. This paper attempts to focus on how Sindi Oberoi's notions of non-

involvement and detachment land him in a state of emotional estrangement. Through the protagonist, the novelist drives home the message to the modern man that detachment “consisted of right action and not escape from it” (204).

Key words: Arun Joshi, *The Foreigner*, hybrid identity, identity crisis, emotional estrangement, detachment.

The Foreigner

Arun Joshi, in his novel, *The Foreigner*, depicts the pitiable predicament of the protagonist Sindi Oberoi, who is constantly in a quest to seek some kind of remedy for his sense of estrangement and identity crisis. The author has successfully presented the isolation of modern man, who becomes an alienated soul not only amidst his fellow beings but an outsider to himself too. Globalization has indeed opened avenues for modern man to exhibit his talents and thereby has paved way to materialize his dreams. Hordes of people for want of better job opportunities, monetary benefits, higher studies, and to realize their dreams, dislocate from their homeland and relocate themselves in the host land. However, in the process of survival, they are often entrapped between the traditional inherited culture and the new, unfamiliar, antagonistic host culture. Modern man’s incapability to attune himself with the new existing social, psychological, cultural, linguistic, and spiritual situations, has forced him to shed off the positive human traits like love, brotherhood, hope, compassion, spirituality etc... It is indeed true that globalization has shrunk the whole world into a “Global village” with its technological advancements, nevertheless, it has left man bereft of his values and thus, modern man remains alienated, homeless, frustrated, culturally alienated, socially isolated and emotionally estranged.

Alienation

Alienation, “a very common theme in Indo-English novel” as Meenakshi Mukherjee rightly points out, forms the dominant theme in *The Foreigner* too. Generally, diasporic writers give expression to their diasporic experiences – bitter or pleasant, in their literary creations. Arun Joshi, who has garnered rich experiences during his stay in the US as a student, is successful in giving expression to his diasporic sensibility. His migrant characters, like their creator, become “the confused wanderers between two worlds” (29) as K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar terms them. They straddle cultures and become a victim to rootlessness. The feeling of rootlessness drives modern man to the state of self-alienation. The inability to acclimatize oneself with the existing situation creates inner crisis in modern man and thus lands him in self-estrangement.

Human Dilemmas

Arun Joshi, one of the most renowned thought-provoking novelists, in *The Foreigner*, addresses issues related to human dilemmas. In an interview with Purabi Banerjee, the novelist admits the fact that he himself has led the life of an alienated man: “It is largely autobiographical. I am... somewhat alienated man myself... some parts of *The Foreigner*, my first book, was written when I was a student in America. I gave it up then and completed it later in 1966” (4). The author also states that the protagonists in the novel appear to be his mouthpiece conveying the twinge of self-estrangement that their creator has experienced. In this regard, R. S. Pathak in “The Alienated Protagonist in the Indo-English Novel,” observes the different manifestations of alienation:

Alienation is one of the greatest problems confronting modern man. Its corrosive impact can be seen in the form of generation gap, the anti-war movement, the hippie phenomenon, the credibility gap, the compartmentalization of our lives, the stunting of personal development, the conspicuous absence of a sense of meaningfulness of life, and so on. (68)

Sindi Oberoi

The story of *The Foreigner* revolves around the psycho-somatic evolution of such an emotionally estranged modern man, Sindi Oberoi, who leads a detached life wherever he goes. Hence Meenakshi Mukherjee rightly claims that “*The Foreigner* is the first Indo-Anglican novel to deal with a genuine human predicament without compromise and without clichés” (4). The novel is narrated in a series of flashbacks highlighting the blossoming of human relationships in the beginning of the novel and the withering of such relationships in the end. Sindi Oberoi, who is of mixed parentage – English mother and Kenyan-Indian father, is born in Kenya, gets educated in England and in America, and finally settles in India. Having lost his parents in his infancy in an air crash, he could hardly recollect his memories about his parents and his childhood from “a couple of wrinkled and cracked photographs” (12). Fated to be a foreigner from birth, he does not have any emotional support to cling to. He could not trace his roots and feels himself incomplete and rootless. Hence he confesses his pitiable state to grow as an orphan having no family ties, no country to be called as his “home” and thus suffers from identity crisis: “My foreignness lay within me” (55). Homelessness, loss of cultural identity, and personal history make his life a purposeless existence:

Somebody has begotten me without a purpose and so far I had lived without a purpose... I hadn't felt that when my uncle was living... the thought that he moved about in that small house on the outskirts of Nairobi gave me a feeling of having an anchor. After his death the security was destroyed. Now I suppose I existed only for dying. (FOR 55-56)

Unable to adapt himself to the alien socio-cultural matrix, he is conscious of the “foreignness” of his spirit and thus eventually becomes “a perennial outsider” as Meenakshi Mukherjee aptly points out. He “goes round in circle in a whirl, going everywhere and getting nowhere” (128). Persistently obsessed by the impermanence of things and human relationships, he withdraws himself from the society and asserts: “I have no roots” (42) and “rootless, restless and luckless in a mad, bad and absurd world” (152). Thus he remains “an alien everywhere physically as well as metaphorically” (202) who often suspected that he “was going mad” (137).

Having garnered immigrant experiences from London, Boston, and India, Sindi Oberoi undergoes a series of transformations. Yet, his detachment and sense of foreignness, the by-products of spatial dislocation, compel him to contemplate on suicide. He himself admits that he “was tired of living” (174) and “existed only for dying” (65). In London, when Anna, a minor artist of “thirty-five with dark hair and finely chiselled features” (176), reveals her liking for Sindi Oberoi, he fails to reciprocate Anna’s love. Instead, he reveals his love for Kathy, who deliberately rejects him. Such broken relationships trouble him intensely and make him believe in the impermanence of human relationships and fickleness of human emotions, and thus add on to his sense of detachment. His discussions on religion and mysticism with the Catholic priest

reveal his perceptions on the absurdity of love, relationship, and existence: “All love – whether of things, persons or oneself was illusion and all pain sprang from this illusion. Love begot greed and attachment and it led to possession” (180). Hence, when he arrives to America, he remains determined not to entangle himself in any kind of relationship and hence refuses to establish any kind of relationship with June Blyth, who approaches him with genuine love: “One should be able to love without wanting to possess ... One should be able to detach oneself from the object of one’s love” (60). Though he continues his affair with June Blyth for a long time, he does not want to marry her when she requests him, “Let’s get married, Sindi. For God’s sake, let’s get married” (107). To her, he reveals his philosophy about love and significance of detachment in love:

Absence of love does not mean hatred. Hatred is just another form of love. There is another way of loving. You can love without attachment, without desire. You can love without attachment to the objects of your love. You can love without fooling yourself that the things which you love are indispensable either to you or to the world. Love is real only when you know that what you love must one day die. (FOR 145)

Sense of Insecurity

Probably, Sindi Oberoi’s sense of insecurity, his notions about the transitory nature of relationships prevent him from establishing emotional bonds with people. He reveals his detached attitude towards life to June Blyth:

I have loved people as much as I love myself. It isn’t much but that is not my fault. And then to be in love in your sense requires one to take things seriously, assume that there is a permanence about things. Nothing ever seems real to me, leave alone permanent. Nothing seems to be very important. (FOR 92)

June Blyth

When Sindi Oberoi meets June Blyth in Boston, she seems inquisitive to know more about him and hence raises many questions about him. Feeling embarrassed, he switches over to another topic for discussion. June Blyth could notice Sindi Oberoi reacting eccentrically to the questions asked. Observing him keenly, June Blyth identifies the “foreignness of spirit” in him: “There is something strange about you, you know some-thing distant. I’d guess that when people are with you, they don’t feel like they’re human beings. May be, it’s an Indian characteristic, but I have a feeling you’d be *foreigner* anywhere” (33).

An Ostracised Man

Sindi Oberoi is portrayed as an ostracised man who eschews himself from the society. Factors like the unexpected death of his parents, his uncle, who was his guardian, and the demise of his friend, Baburao Khemka, the son of a wealthy Indian industrialist, lead to his ostracism. Probably, he is petrified about the notion that attachment and involvement may consequently lead to loss in one form or another. He regards life meaningless and deems that “death wipes out everything for most of us anyway. All that is left is a big mocking zero” (114). He believes that life is illusory and inescapably excruciating.

Straddling Cultures

Straddling cultures also contributes to Sindi Oberoi's feeling of purposelessness. His mixed parentage lands him in a dilemma of which culture to follow. The variations in the codes of morality from country to country land him in a chaotic state. The writer aptly contrasts Indian culture with American culture regarding the notions of marriage, chastity, and genuine love:

You had a clear-cut system of morality, a caste system that laid down all you had to do. You had a God – you had roots in the soil you lived upon. Look at me. I have no roots. I have no system of morality. What does it mean to me if you call me an immoral man... I don't even have a reason to live. (FOR 144)

Baburao Khemka – Forgetting Roots

Arun Joshi presents Baburao Khemka as a young man who forgets his roots and is fascinated by the sophisticated American life. However, his Indian psyche conditioned by Oriental fixations does not allow him to accept the fact that his lover, June Blyth once loved his friend, Sindi Oberoi. When June Blyth pleads Babu to marry her, Babu is reminded of his stringent father's attitude towards love and marriage: "He sent me here and I promised him I'll never marry in America" (100). Though Babu is fascinated by American culture, he does not completely disown his inherited Indian values. His orthodox family background and inherited cultural values curb him from marrying June Blyth. When June Blyth conveys Babu the news that she is carrying his child, he becomes suspicious about her earlier affair with Sindi Oberoi, gets tensed, and lamentably meets with a car accident. When Sindi Oberoi comes to know about Babu's demise and June Blyth's death while undergoing abortion, he realizes the misleading notion of detachment: "Detachment consisted of right action and not escape from it. The gods had set a heavy price to teach me just that" (193). Such heart-breaking episodes in Sindi Oberoi's life compel him to undergo a series of transformations. After Babu's death, Sindi Oberoi visits India to explain the cause of Babu's death to Khemka and Babu's sister, Shiela, in Delhi.

Meanwhile, when Khemka invites him to work in his firm as his personal assistant, he readily accepts the offer. Nevertheless, the situation that prevails in the factory and the materialistic nature of the people disgust him. However, Muthu, a low-paid labourer in the firm, makes him understand that the true meaning of detachment lies in getting involved with the world: "Sometimes detachment lies in actually getting involved" (239). Sindi Oberoi understands the distinction between detachment and involvement. This message revitalizes him and helps him to emerge from his identity crisis. Finally, he decides to take charge of Khemka's business, as Khemka gets arrested for his fraudulent business ethics. With involvement and attachment, he decides to devote his life for the betterment of the factory workers.

Truth about Migrants

Thus, Arun Joshi has successfully depicted the truth that migrants struggle hard to shed off their Oriental roots and to acclimatize themselves to the Occidental influences. *The Foreigner* is a remarkable novel that bristles throughout with ruminations on various issues encountered by modern man. The novelist beautifully delineates the pitiable plight of the emotionally estranged Sindi Oberoi, who, due to his philosophy of detachment and non-involvement becomes a foreigner to the world and sees himself as a stranger. His "foreignness of spirit" makes him suffer from the maladies of modern man – cultural, social, and emotional estrangement. At the

end of the novel, Arun Joshi brilliantly conveys the message that detachment lies not in withdrawal but in involvement.

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Women as Doubly Subaltern: An Analysis of Mahasweta Devi's *Rudali*

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Abstract

The oeuvre of Mahasweta Devi falls in the postcolonial era. There are many writers that belong to the postcolonial literary world of India. Despite the contrary, studying Mahasweta Devi in a postcolonial context is thought over more rewarding, hence the inclined topic for the present research paper. She adopts various techniques to proceed in her creative explorations. Use of black humour is a unique implement deployed by her to represent the subalterns. The text like *Rudali* (2008) gives an expression to the predicament of the subalterns and to black humour. *Rudali* is a touching anecdote of the old and the baseless whose life is fraught with destitution of multiple kinds. The woman suffers as the bereaved: wife, mother, grandmother and friend. The women from the established fabric are just given to fun. They wait for deaths in their families so as to celebrate the funerals in so grand a fashion. The competition of celebration between them gives rise to black humour. This is where humanity loses its grounds. Mahasweta Devi has dealt with it with great success. Her fiction shares multifarious dimensions. Marginality subalternity and dehumanization are the key themes occurring in her fiction. She exercises all her capability to connect the periphery to the mainstream.

Keywords: Mahasweta Devi, *Rudali*, Marginality, Subalterns, Subalternity, Black Humour and Dehumanization

Mahasweta Devi

Mahasweta Devi is a unique blend of writing and activism. In her opinion, literature cannot be separated from the joys and sorrows of common man. She is not an armchair scholar sitting pleasantly in her home and making fictitious pictures of the sufferers. She has always used her writing as a weapon to attack any exploiting agency and unveil the ugly faces of the exploiters. The plethora of novels, short-stories and plays by Mahasweta Devi matchlessly portray the unwritten tragic lives of the landless farmers, tribals, labourers and suppressed women. She is certainly one of the influential writers in India writing in English and also fighting for and about subalterns. The splendid portrait of our country progressing by leaps and bounds appear to be totally fake after realizing the trauma of the downtrodden portrayed in her writings.

Truly great and really pure (Maha - sweta) Mahasweta Devi surely deserves a salute for her selfless and tireless dedication for the upliftment of the marginalized. When asked in an interview what she planned to do the rest of her life, Mahasweta Devi answered that she wanted

to fight for the downtrodden and write creatively if and when she finds the time. True to her words, she has consistently been fighting for the cause of subaltern communities. For her activism and writings, this octogenarian has been awarded with the Sahitya Akademi Award, the Bhartiya Jnanpith award, the Ramon Magsaysay award and the Padma Vibhushan. But all these awards together cannot recount the glory of who is the true example of woman empowerment, who has heard the voice of the voiceless people so far, who has lived and thought and fought and worked and written for the upliftment of the downtrodden, who has shaken the soul of many, who has shown a mirror to the so-called shining India, she is really an ideal for those who want to use their skills for the betterment of others.

Mahasweta Devi's Feminism

Mahasweta Devi's feminism is based on the opposition of denial of woman as an equal human being by the male-dominated society. Among the subalterns a woman is doubly suppressed. She is seen as a commodity not as an individual. The elites as well as the members of her own society cause this suppression and exploitation. Even in the middle-class society a woman does not get equal opportunities. All these voiceless women of almost all sections find voices in her works.

In fact, Mahasweta Devi's feminism is so mingled with other sorts of oppression that she does not see it apart but in the memory of a reader, her female characters stick more deeply to the memory than her male characters. A reader cannot forget the valour of Dopadi in front of Senanayak towards the end of the novel. One cannot stop shedding tears over the terrible death of Doulati, Jashoda and the suicide committed by Josmina in "The Fairytale of Rajbhasha." AnjumKatyal rightly says in her introduction to her translation of *Rudali: From Fiction to Performance*. She says,

There is no doubt that the text does privilege class and community over women's issues in isolation. And yet it has a special significance when read as a feminist text. The common accusation of those who privilege a cross class gender perspective to those who position gender issues within those of class is that the woman's position tends to get marginalized or elided over in the 'general' interest of the class. Perhaps because Mahasweta Devi writes from a 'class point of view' but is herself a woman, there is no sign of this in her text, not even through slippages. In fact, her text shows us that gender and class need not be viewed as polarities; this one's discourse can be informed by class and simultaneously be gendered. One political stance need not rule out the other. (17)

Rudali

In her feminist text *Rudali*, Mahasweta Devi shows the zeal of a subaltern woman to survive. She says: "Rudali is about... 'how to survive' 'bread and mouth.'" It is very important in my story. The whole system is exposed through this" (Katyal 9). The protagonist of the story Sanichari evolves from a voiceless subaltern to a voiced, empowered female who knows how to snatch bread from the mouth of the exploiting devilish system. Hunger is the greatest concern among these low-caste ganju people. When someone blames her inauspicious name for her misfortunes, she refuses the blame stating that everyone in the surroundings is no better than her: 'Muh' because I was born on and named after a Saturday, that made me an unlucky daughter-in-law! You were born on a Monday - was your life any

happier? Somri, Budhni, Moongri, Bishri - do any of them have happier lives?
(*Rudali*54)

Sanichari

In Sanichari's life there is no end of the deaths of her loved ones. When the novel opens, we see her mother-in-law dying with the cry 'give me food.' Her brother-in-law and his wife die in the next coming years. Her husband dies due to cholera in a religious fair. Her son is a great solace for her since he is very caring and understanding but he also dies due to Tuberculosis. Her daughter-in-law leaves the home and becomes a prostitute. She looks after her grandson with the help of the other people of her community.

The trauma of a dying son in front of a mother's eyes is very painful as the author says: Scorching heat blowing about her day and night. She could see that he was going to die, and realized that her dreams of building a life around Budhua would never be fulfilled. Even her more modest dreams have never been realized. She had wanted to buy a wooden comb for her hair, to wear shellac bangles for a full year - neither of these dreams had materialized. With time, her dreams had changed shape. Her son and daughter-in-law would earn enough, they would support her, she imagined sitting in the winter sun sharing a bowl of gur and sattu with her grandson - Had this last dream been overambitious? Had she sinned by wanting too much? Is that why Budhua was wasting away before her eyes? (59) When her grandson grows up, Sanichari finds a job for him in the market for two rupees a month. For the first few months, he works hard but gradually he gets bored and one day he also runs away deserting his grandmother and goes away with some magic-show fellows.

When Sanichari is all alone, she meets her childhood friend Bhikni. Bhikni is also all alone and hearing the story of Shanichari, she thinks, "Is there no caring left in the world? Or is it just our fate, yours and mine?" (65) Thus, the two desolate women find the support of each other. With the help of cunning Dulan, they start working as 'rudalis,' ladies who cry loudly when some rich person is dead. They do well in their profession and gradually their demand grows rapidly. How these two ladies are able to survive on the deaths of the rich can be understood from these lines in *Rudali*,

Just for wailing, one kind of rate. Wailing and rolling on the ground, five rupees one sikka. Wailing, rolling on the ground and beating one's head, five rupees two sikka. Wailing and beating one's breast, accompanying the corpse to the cremation ground, rolling around on the ground there - for that the charge is six rupees. At the kriya ceremony, we want cloth, preferably a length of plain black cloth. This is the rate. Over and above this, you people are like kings, can't get the goddess Lakshmi captive at home, you won't miss it! And Sanichari will sing your praises everywhere she goes. (75)

Satire on Hypocrisy

The author also makes a satire on the hypocrisy of the rich people who start a competition to flaunt their status on the deaths of their elders. Dulan tells about one such landlord,

His mother's left to lie in her own excrement all day. Once every evening Moti the dushad woman cleans her up - no one is concerned about loss of caste or defilement any longer, it seems. They've kept a maid to sleep beside her at night.

He's not willing to spend a paisa on trying to care her, but plans to spend thirty thousand on her funeral. (77)

Once again, Sanichari is alone since Bhikni, who goes to a relative's wedding never returns. She dies of Asthama in Ranchi. Now the question of survival stands before Sanichari. She is reluctant to go to Tohri red-light area to bring prostitutes with her to work as rudalis since her daughter-in-law is also there. At this critical time, Dulan once again empowers him saying, "Don't weigh right and wrong so much, leave that kind of thing to the rich. They understand it better. We understand hunger" (90). Sanichari feels no hesitation in going to red-light area of Tohri now. She calls everyone including her daughter-in-law. The voiceless Sanichari becomes voiced, is evident from the last lines of *Rudali*:

Move, move, and let us get on with our work. The Malik belongs to us now. Gambhir's corpse stank of rotting flesh. The randirudalis surrounded his swollen corpse and started wailing, hitting their heads on the ground. The gomatha began to weep tears of sorrow. Nothing will be left! Cunning Sanichari! Hitting their heads meant they had to be paid double! He and the nephew were reduced to helpless onlookers. While hitting her head on the ground and wailing loudly, Gulbadan turned her dry eyes in the direction of the nephew, cast him a leering wink and grinned. Then, listening to Sanichari's cry she rejoined the chorus. (91)

To Conclude

Thus, *Rudali* is about the empowerment of a downtrodden woman who not only survives despite of many calamities but also finds ways for other downtrodden women. The work can be said a saga of class and caste oppression by the system in which women find themselves doubly oppressed. The work gives a realistic presentation of the inevitable struggles of countless women among the poor and low caste people. But like 'mother-earth' women have immense capacity of tolerating sufferings. Although feminists opine that characteristic of tolerance among women, makes them weak. It is also true that our Indian society comprising of the rich and the poor is sustained by this quality.

All the women characters in *Rudali* are the example of life-affirming values. Although they are caught in the grimmest of situations, they strive to maintain their existence. Caught in the web of the double oppression of class and gender, they stretch their arms towards life. The end of the story aptly shows that given a chance, they can make the exploiting system extremely vulnerable. They have seen the worst in their lives and now they can enjoy every moment, they are given among the harsh realities of their lives. The oppression of the downtrodden and inequality between male and female is not a new phenomenon in recorded or unrecorded times. Supremacy of the male and the powerful has been taken for granted over thousands of years. Before independence it was easy to endure this injustice since we could blame the foreign rule for it. But after independence it is certainly a slap over the face of modernization, development and equality.

For Mahasweta Devi, the oppressed and the downtrodden people of India are neither figures nor a mere percentage of this fat subcontinent. They are her India the real India to her, their slavery is sufficient proof that the war of independence is still to be fought and won. Thus,

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Women as Doubly Subaltern: An Analysis of Mahasweta Devi's *Rudali*

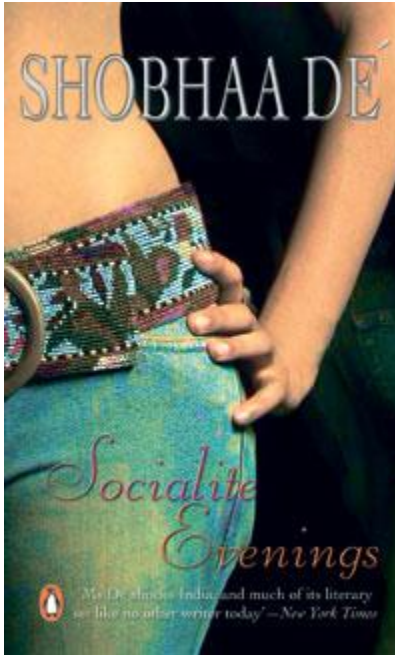
all these works present different issues of subalternity in the lives of ‘doubly subaltern’ women. From Jashoda to Sanichari of *Rudali*, all force us to think whether women will ever be able to enjoy the equal status as of men in society? Will the day ever come when women will not have to pay the price for their being women? The day seems to be far away but the writer is optimistic since in her opinion women have greater strength, greater tolerance and greater power than men who make them survive in this cruel world.

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Protest Against Male in Shobha De's *Socialite Evening*
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Shobha De

Shobha De is one of the modern Indian women novelists. Her cares and worries in the fictions probe into the reverberations of the inner self of the modern woman. She explores against the contemporary urban woman as her novels are the slice of urban life. The novel *Socialite Evenings* deals with the current disputes correlated to subjugated and marginalized women. She presents an intimate side of urban woman's life in her novels and at the same time realistically it reveals her plight in the present-day society. It is a fact that the woman is a victim everywhere of the prevalent social norms. She gets trapped within the set of moral codes and social norms of the society and consequently leads an unhappy life. Urban woman's life is also no exception to it.

Born To Be As Free As Man

As a matter of fact, a woman is born to be as free as man, but she is victimized and subdued by the male community everywhere in patriarchal culture. She has been the subordinate sex, 'the second sex' and has to conform to male standards. The term 'man' usually reveals the entire human race, while 'woman' is silent and not mentioned. In the male-dominated society woman is still a second person and does not enjoy equal status with men. Even an educated

woman cannot pursue her career without performing domestic duties. She has to pay attention to her career as well as home at the stake of her potentialities. This is one of the reasons why the conflict between tradition and modernity finds a prominent place in the portrayal of women by the women novelists.

Portrayals of a Variety of Women

Shobha De's concern with the different aspects of woman's life makes her portray a variety of women and it is this portrayal of women that brings out the different ways the women are subjected to male hegemony. In most of her novels, she has focused on the marginalization of women in Indian society. It is the fact that the majority of women in the last century were content with their lot of subordination in the home and society. But recently numerous women have expressed their discontent with their inferior status and strived for equality with men. They protested and agitated for equal fundamental rights. Being a woman, Shobha De through some of her women characters presents a very vivid picture of the inequality between men and women prevalent in the society even today. She draws our attention to women's exploitation, discrimination and commoditization. It is very apparent that women in this male dominated society are treated with double standard. Talking of women Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* says:

Imaginatively she is of the highest importance. Practically she is completely insignificant ... some of the most inspired words, some of the most profound thoughts in literature fall from her lips; in real life she could hardly read, could hardly spell and was the property of her husband. (45-46)

Subjugation and Marginalization

At one end, women are opting for careers in space research and undertaking many important scientific and technical projects and at the other end they are the targets of sexual exploitation. Though this seems contradictory there is nothing strange because in reality subjugation and marginalization are the vital factors in the lives of women. The calculation is simple: if patriarchal society is to survive, woman as a person cannot. Indian society has been and is even today a male-dominated society. In the Indian social structure woman has been practically granted a subordinate position. Naturally she does not have independent status and is supposed to perform all the household duties but has limited rights. Her main job is to manage the house and rear the children. She is on duty for eighteen hours a day with no leisure of any sort. Though she performs honestly all household duties, she does not get financial freedom. Moreover, it is woman who is victimized and discriminated at each and every stage and is never regarded as an autonomous being. She has always been assigned a subordinate and relative position in all spheres of life. As Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* says:

Man can think of himself without woman. She cannot think of herself without man. And she is simply what man decrees.... She appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him she is sex- absolute sex, no less. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her, she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute- she is the other. (16)

Integral Part of Human Civilization

Women are an integral part of human civilization. No nation or society can progress without active participation of women in its overall development. Woman in society has differed from culture to culture and from age to age. In all societies the woman has never been considered as equal to man her status depends largely on the simple biological fact that she is inferior to man and that is why she is usually restricted to the assigned roles. A woman has been the victim of male, is treated like a beast and an object for pleasure. Man has always looked down upon her as the weaker sex and his sole property. Many religions in the world have given sanction to the female's subjugation to the male members of the society.

Socialite Evenings

Socialite Evenings is about the journey of a prominent Mumbai socialite Karuna, from a middle-class girl to a self-sufficient woman. Karuna's life can be divided into three phases – life before marriage, married life, and life after the separation from her husband. In all these three phases of her life readers notice the rebellious instinct. In her childhood days she was the only child with a discipline problem both at home and at school. For example, she didn't like going to school by train or a double-decker bus. While other girls dressed in smart terrycloth uniforms, she wore her sash hipster-style. Her sisters preferred to concentrate on their percentages whereas she preferred to discover Bombay and Bombay ites. The following words of Karuna clearly reveal how she protested to follow the traditional path of etiquette and manners and the ways that come in the way of her total development as a woman. She says:

In the house- not jumping at the sound of Father's voice booming out some command. Not putting my stuff away after school. Leaving a dirty thali on the dining table, whistling in the bathroom, backcombing and teasing my hair, refusing to fetch trays of tea for boring visitors, being cheeky with relatives and, mainly, not cowering in the presence of 'elders'. (6-7)

Naturally, as she grew up there developed in her the emotional urge to identify with the outside world, the modern crowd and the fascinating world of affluent girls who had everything. She was not interested in her studies like her sisters and other classmates. She was associated with her college friend Charlie and also acted as a model for ad agency much against her father's will. It has been the desire of Karuna to get rid of her middle-class background and shabbiness of her life as the daughter of a middle run government official. At this juncture she meets Anjali a prominent socialite and the wife of a wealthy playboy. Anjali is an independent lady, rich, confident and beautiful. She has everything the modern woman needed: French perfumes, Impala in silver grey and a fancy place in Malabar Hill. Moreover, she belongs to the world of fashion designing and advertising. This example of Anjali makes Karuna to think that the fashion world can bring wealth, freedom and status in her life and would help her to fulfil all her desires. So she freely indulges in the fashionable world of modern life introduced to her by Anjali, the middle-aged prominent socialite. Karuna's very entry in the glamorous world of modeling and friendship with her boyfriend Bunty, is the act of rebellion against the established traditional norms of patriarchal society. Throughout the novel, Karuna's psyche develops through protest and defiance. In other words, she appears as 'disgustingly self-assured and revoltingly self-sufficient'.

Karuna

De portrays Karuna as a capable woman, able to circumvent her lot in life and launch into a kind of life style of modeling and independent journalistic essays that is still not acceptable in conventional Indian society. In this patriarchal society, man can only think about his life without woman, but a woman cannot do the same. What a wife can do when she is ignored and neglected for all her feelings? Her's is apathetic condition. Some women mutely tolerate this situation and spend their whole life in suffocated atmosphere. But Shobha De's women are different as they do not meekly accept their subordinate position. In *Socialite Evenings*, for instance, Karuna's marriage is a complete failure. She has only a formal relationship with her husband. Even she never calls her husband by his name but in a derogatory term such as a 'Black Label'. There is no intimacy between them. The relationship between them is totally deprived of mutual understanding, love and affection. Here is an example of how she protests about her meaningless marital relationship:

You really make me sick. I think our marriage was over the day our awful honeymoon started. We have got nothing going. I don't love you – never have. As for you– I really don't know to this day why you chose to marry me. I don't think you even know who you married. You don't have a clue what sort of a woman I am. I am tired of your smugness, your irritating mannerisms, the way you take me for granted and expect me to fall into your overall scheme of things... so just get off my back. (176-77)

Meets Krish

Karuna's incompatible unhappy married life leads her to boredom. And at this stage that she meets Krish, an old friend of her husband. This association and company of Kris makes her mind to revolt against her insensitive husband. Her emotional and psychological needs started getting satisfied by him. This results in developing an extra-marital relationship with him. Karuna is very similar to Rosie of *The Guide* who also turns to Raju, the guide for emotional fulfillment. Karuna's husband and Marco are most insensitive, inhuman persons who are completely engrossed in their own worlds and unaware of emotional demands of their sensitive wives. Both have unexciting, uninspiring attitude. Being a head of family, they are expected to look after everyone and should take care of everything but contrast to this they are most negligent and least bothered. In the beginning, Karuna tries to adjust and make a compromise to save her marriage. But her open rebellion comes forth when she admits her extra-marital relations just in front of her husband. She tells her husband very frankly :

I love this friend of yours, and I want to be with him – in Venice. There is a good chance that I will feel thoroughly disillusioned after that. May be he will have some truly foul personal habits that will disenchant me. In which case it will really be *A Death in Venice*. You know by now that I am not the flighty sort. I don't flirt at random like my other friends. I am steady and grounded. It is the Taurean in me that is surfacing these days. Treat this as a short-term mania that will wear itself out – and then we can go back to business as usual. (178)

Indulges in Promiscuous Sex

Henceforth, she indulges in promiscuous sex, and makes her husband either to tolerate or ignore it. She openly accepts her deviant behavior and challenges her husband. She further points

out to her husband that his failure to understand her as a woman is the real cause of her unusual and unacceptable behavior. Even she goes a step further by giving divorce to her husband. She decided to lead a single life because she wanted to assert her individuality. The struggle of Karuna, therefore, does not remain confined only to her but becomes representative struggle of the modern women to be free and self-reliant. After her divorce, her husband meets her to express his regret and ask her to come back and live with him. He is prompted to visit her by the typical patriarchal understanding and expectation regarding women's response in such situations. It is traditionally believed that finally woman ignores the cruelties of her husband as she thinks he has certain privileges over her. But Karuna's response is shocking and unexpected because she firmly asks her husband to go away. It is a powerful jolt to the patriarchal man. She even verbally abuses her husband when he comes with the proposal to remarry her:

‘And you waited all this while to tell me. Just get the hell out of my house and life. I don't ever want to see you again. I let you in this time – but never again. I will call the cops if you try and invade my house in future. You are even more of a worm than I thought. You deserve Winnie – I hope she has got a wax doll of yours. I will send her some extra pins to stick into it. Now take your frigging pipe and OUT !!’ (256-57)

Rejects the Idea of Her Second Marriage

Thus, she reacts and rejects the idea of her second marriage. Now she prefers ‘friendship’ to permanent subjugation and hence also rejects the proposal of Ranbir Roy. There is a contrast between Karuna and her mother in their attitude towards the institution of marriage. Her mother stands for traditional Hindu woman while Karuna is modern in her attitude. The women like Karuna's mother have subordinate status in the society for they accept passively everything that comes to them by fate or tradition. Karuna's traditional mother advises Karuna to marry the right person. A woman cannot live alone; it is not safe. But this view of her mother is full of improbabilities because is it possible for the girl to marry ‘the right one’ and is it possible to attain ‘security’ and ‘peace’ in modern society, particularly in the urban setting of Mumbai? No. Hence, the feminist voice is raised by Karuna when she questions her mother:

‘But mother, why does security rest with a man?’ I am earning as much as any man. I have a roof over my head. I don't really have any responsibilities. I am at peace with myself. I am not answerable to anyone. I don't feel like complicating my life by getting into a second marriage. I like and respect Girish. We share a lot of common interests. But I am not sure I will make a goodwife to him. Or he a good husband to me. Perhaps we are both far too selfish for marriage. I can't make any “sacrifices” – not now?’ (268).

Karuna refuses to conform to the traditional image of woman anymore that's why she rebels against the patriarchal system. She resents, resists and rejects male dominance. Her statements reflect her desire for the affirmation of herself. She wants to destroy the gender discrimination – the real source of women's oppression and create a new society in which there will be no place for inequality between men and women. But she is a lone rebel who passes from bondage to freedom, from indecision to self-assertion, and from weakness to strength. It is at this stage she takes decisions on her own, free of all influences, for example, with her hard earned money, she buys a “cheapie round trip-ticket” to go to America. It is in this respect that Karuna differs considerably from Anjali and Ritu, the two other important women characters in the

novel. They, like Karuna, do not challenge the patriarchal system. Though Anjali defies the traditional norms of moral values and rises to the social status of upper classes, she cannot live without husband. First she marries Abe, to get exploited and later get divorce from him. Then she marries Kumar Bhandari. However, this second marriage of Anjali changes the course of her life completely because her husband turns homosexual. In spite of this fact she does not break it. Ritu, a friend of Karuna, also leaves her husband for Gul, the underworld don, which turns her into a whore and a pimp. Thus after having suffered mentally and physically at the hands of her lover, she returns to her husband. But Ritu on the other hand invents a strategy to keep her husband within her control. She tells Karuna about this strategy:

The trick is to make them feel you have done them a favor by marrying them. Once you achieve that, the equation works out. ... Make them feel insecure. Let them think you will walk out on them if they don't toe the line. That is what keeps them in their place. (78)

She further tells Karuna: "men, like dogs, could be conditioned through reward and punishment" (79). The only thing is one has got to play the game. According to Ritu the women, by using the weapon of sex, flatter men and can easily exercise control over them. This clearly indicates that these women are liberated individuals in search of their self-identity. R. Morgon (1983: 143) observes, "De's women like Anjali and Karuna project their power on others, to deconstruct the male ego. They like to be "eroticized as objects" and to view themselves as "erotic objects", not subjects". The novelist presents these modern women having courage to revolt and refuse being puppets in the hands of men in the name of tradition and society.

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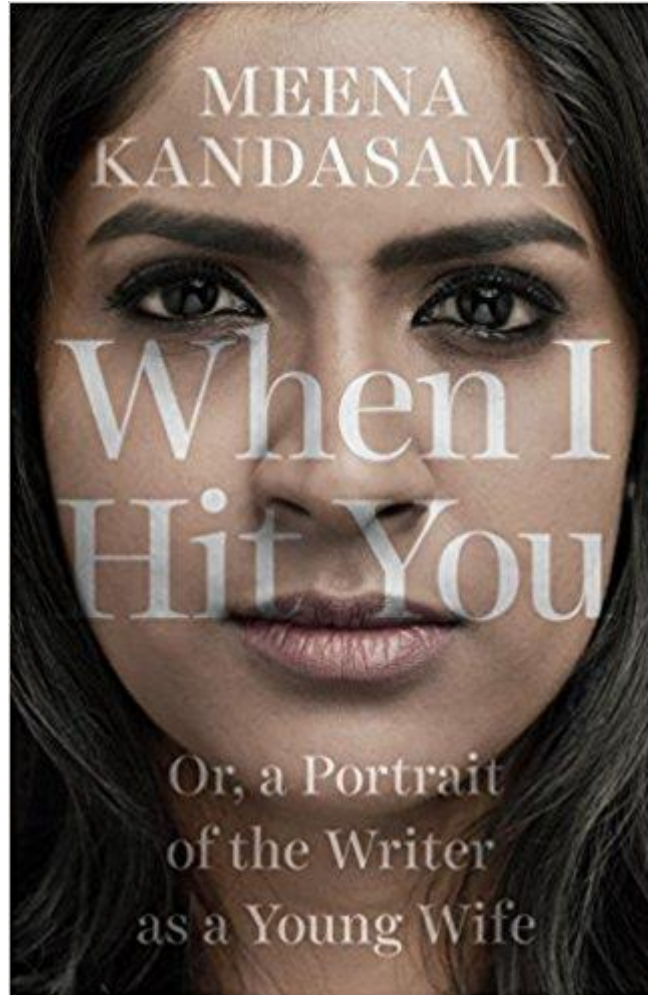
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**Conquering Toxic Masculinity through Words:
A Critical Study of Meena Kandasamy's *When I Hit You***

Ms. V. Koguilavardhini

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Abstract

Meena Kandasamy's *When I Hit You or the Portrait of the Artist as a Young Wife* (2017) is the survival story of a writer in seclusion. The nameless narrator is a woman in isolation after her marriage. This piece of work illustrates how gender-oppressive ideology and behaviour can be kept alive, irrespective of one's education, social class and political leanings. It warns people of how a seemingly "successful" marriage could be violent, oppressive and abusive without anyone around being aware of its brutality. The novel proves that a once upon a time feminist can get

trapped in an abusive marriage and domestic violence. She is informed time and again by her husband that it is her feminism that is the problem and not his abusive behaviour. At this juncture, she uses her only advantage as a writer, that is, her language to be free from the confinements. After battling the silence forced upon her, the speaker attains liberation through her fierce use of language which she uses sometimes to play along with the abusive husband in order to avoid possible violence and some other times to provoke him. To cope, to escape, she dons the role of a writer marking plot points from her own abusive marriage. Her words are her only shield weapons. *She 'slips her words between his ribs like a stiletto knife' as she says herself.* In the close of the novel the speaker portrays the new role of modern women in the contemporary society. In total the entire book travels around the life of the writer.

When I Hit You or A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Wife

Meena Kandasamy's *When I Hit You or A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Wife* (2017) is the survival story of a writer in seclusion. *It is a dazzling and provocative novel of an abusive marriage. Seduced by politics, poetry and an enduring dream of building a better world together, the unnamed narrator falls in love with a university professor. Moving with him to a rain-washed coastal town, she swiftly learns that what for her is a bond of love is for him a contract of ownership. As he sets about reducing her to his idealised version of an obedient wife, bullying her and devouring her ambition of being a writer in the process, she attempts to push back — a resistance he resolves to break with violence and rape. At this juncture, she uses her only advantage as a writer (i.e.) her language to be free from the confinements. After battling the silence forced upon her, the speaker attains liberation through her fierce use of language which she uses sometimes to play along with the abusive husband in order to avoid possible violence and some other times to provoke him. To cope, to escape, she dons the role of a writer marking plot points from her own abusive marriage. Her words are her only shield weapons. She slips her words between his ribs like a stiletto knife.* When the novel reaches its end the speaker portrays the new role of modern women in the contemporary society. This paper aims to dissect and display the male chauvinist consciousness that aims to overpower women in a domestic environment. In total the entire book travels around the life of the writer as a woman.

The Narrator

The narrator, a young woman, who is also a writer moves with her newly married husband to an unfamiliar city where an assault on her tongue, mind and body begins. The novel begins with stripping of the narrator's autonomy after her marriage to a university lecturer, Marxist and a one-time revolutionary in south India who uses communist ideas as a cover for his own sadism. In the beginning of the novel the narrator describes Primrose Villa, her husband's place, as a place of kept secrets, an enclosed space of unheard and unvoiced secrets of her marriage. To escape the after-marriage difficulties she imagines her life to be a film in which she is trapped. She confesses she became an actress in real life even before she faced cameras. Her movement is restricted within the walls of Primrose Villa which becomes her setting to act. The language barrier limits her further to speak only the words of wifely domesticity when she shops for vegetables or buys cleaning products etc.

Initial Days of Marriage

The First few days of marriage has its own charm as she suits her tastes and her dressing style according to his taste. She transforms herself into a blank paper which is ready to be written with new words and commands. Her husband is a man who is kind to strangers but can't extend his kindness to his wife. He frowns upon what he perceives as his wife's vacillating petit bourgeois poet-prostitute-female-writer ways. He finds mistakes with everything that she does. Like any coward, he uses small failures as an excuse to hit her. To manage the situation she satisfies her husband with a "requisite Humility" (Kandasamy 19) that makes his male mind satisfactory. She becomes the actress, the self-anointed writer and the cinematographer of her role. She was bestowed with a creative freedom when she falls out of her role of a wife. But that's just a temporary escape as the story, the situation and the role change every day, every hour and every time she sits and contemplates.

A Communist Lover

Being a communist lover the writer-wife marries a communist-professor-husband who, after marriage, changes himself into a husband-teacher to teach his wife-student the ways of a typical, obedient wife. A few days into marriage the husband starts to shed his mask of a perfect husband when he burns himself in the kitchen as a preventive measure to get herself out of Facebook. The reason he gives is that he can't go along with the narcissism and exhibitionism of Facebook and says that his wife's "peep show" (50) will endanger him. In the next ten minutes she cuts off her lifeline to the outside world by deactivating her Facebook account. She commits a temporary "career suicide" (52) and bids farewell to the world with a final message which says that she was busy with a writing project. She pretends to live a writer's life masking her loneliness. Next torture comes in the form of sharing her email password with her husband and arguments follow continued by periodical checking of her mobile phone. He manipulates her into the surrender of her email accounts, the suspension of her Facebook page and he polices even her mobile phone.

Robbed of Her Identity

She feels nauseous and robbed of her identity when she comes to know that her emails have been replied by her husband. So she decides to be open and give up her privacy so that her husband's world can revolve around her. She begins a pattern of obedience which fits well to his personality. As a result of this she was restricted to not share her phone number with anyone. Her parents do not realise the collapse of her world as a writer when they come to know this. The justification and denial by her parents further deepens the wounds inflicted on her. She's told it's for her own good and is instructed to be patient. She's advised to have a child to mend the brute. She fights for the rights of an imprisoned wife with silence and when she questions beatings and rapes follow, with everyday middle-class implements weaponised: the hose of the washing machine and the power cord for her laptop. Shame, pride and a society in which everyone from parents to police expects a woman to put up and shut up force the realisation that only she can save herself.

Empire Never Writes Back

Teaching post-colonialism to escape the loneliness she realises that the empire never writes back because within the classrooms the oppressed are still the products of the same empire, carrying their bags of shame and sin. When she discusses this with her communist husband his

interpretation is different. He says in the past the ‘whores’ are the links between the coloniser and the colonised but today the writer who writes in English, who is the link, the bridge is the ‘whore’. She is stopped from preparing her articles saying that she is not allowed to be a writer-whore. He stresses on that he owns her and she has to follow his wishes. Her current situation makes her hesitate even to make a call for the fear of being discovered midway.

Reduced to Nothing?

The writer who gave up the job of a teacher to be a writer is now reduced to a position where she has nothing else to do. She is a writer just in front of the mirror as she has more important duties than writing (i.e.) household chores. Fear engulfs her as she finds herself incapable of writing even a single word. She compares herself to the women in her novels that are stronger than her and she feels ashamed. She finds an outlet for her thoughts by writing poetry. She buries her anger in words. According to her husband she imprisons their differences within a poem which becomes a poison and creates trouble for their future. But to her, it is the ointment which heals her and through which she can get over her problems of domestic oppression. He even finds differences between him writing poems and the poems written by her. He says that his poem struggles to move past his weaknesses and her poems are fuelled by hatred. So he becomes the poet of a marriage in which she is brutally beaten. ‘The institution of marriage creates its own division of labour’ (84) and the divider is the husband.

Writing Letters to Imaginary Lovers

She was gifted with slaps for writing poems which marks her cheeks with painful memories. In order to escape the present hellish world of slaps, hits and torture by questions she starts writing letters to imaginary lovers to whom she discloses all her feelings and her unanswered questions. She gets the sheer pleasure of writing without his knowledge when she writes the letters even though they are temporary. She gets revenge by writing to the word lover again and again and rubbing salt on his wounded pride which reclaims her ‘right to write’ (88). The words in the letters give wings to her lone injured self. It heals her and fills her with courage and makes her fly with word-wings. Language shapes her worldview and the worldview shapes her languages. Language makes her a prisoner. In Mangalore, Kannada language makes her a mere housewife oppressing her other self. Whereas English makes her a lover, a beloved and a poet and Tamil makes her a word huntress and a love Goddess. Whatever language is used by her husband to insult her, it always retains its charms. The wife swings on the pendulum of choice. One moment she is alive and another moment she is dead. She is kind of alive that feels dead. She transcribes her memories of love using her long forgotten words which makes her feel safe and loved. She indulges in the thought-crime, in the words of her husband, and never feels guilty.

Battered Wife

Her image as a wife and a writer is converted into a battered wife who erases her memories as a writer when the evening stalks her doorstep. She functions as a writer only when she has a brief snatch of time in the make-believe situation of happy marriage. In the field of marriage the only place where she has her upper hand is the area of kitchen where she cannot be insulted or overcome by his hurtful words. In her tiny world called kitchen, the food overshadows the domestic insults and abuses. She becomes a part of the structure of a so called happy marriage which has its own forms and functions. She becomes like the peg on the clothesline, the gem clip

on the table, the woman in the kitchen who transforms into the submissive between the sheets. The following lines make her to keep count of her days' routine:

Three four
Sweep the floor
Three four
Do the chore
Three four
Come here whore

Completely Freed?

One fine day the husband sets the wife completely free by deleting all her emails erasing everything from her past. That's how a once upon a time feminist becomes a battered wife. The history of her past is gone forever which leaves her in a blank state; a state of nothingness. The narrator's only escape from the brutality and the curfews imposed on her is by writing letters. Though the narrator is a feminist she gets trapped in an abusive marriage.

At one point of time she is forced to climb the incredible sadness of silence. She conceals all her shame within the folds of her sari and censors her conversation by staying silent. She erases her individuality completely and punishes herself by staying silent when the words flood her with their presence and refuses to dislodge themselves from her tongue. She never understood violence until it happened to her. She never understood that sex is disgusting and painful until she was raped by her husband. Marital rape was a concept of savagery, of violence of violation and of disrespect. It revealed her that she was involved in a marital game of chess where she plays the King who was under constant threat by her husband who plays the role of drama Queen. She realises the sickness of a man's mind which allows him to take a woman for granted, after marriage. She understands the unwritten male supporting marital rule that a woman belongs to him after marriage and he is the owner and he has the right to do anything to her. She has no rights to talk or to say no for which she is punished in an instinctive, animalistic manner. The husband speaks in his brutal language which makes the woman physically mute. Her scream never reaches his ears to make him stop. She feels like a corpse which is devoid of all the senses when it is fed with rice. The husband uses rape as a weapon to tame her. It becomes a fight which makes it difficult for the woman to win. Her husband tries to control her body, but he will never control her mind. The narrator cringes when she realises how well language is used by men to insult women. She feels disgusted that her body is used as a spittoon where the repellent words are spat out hot from a man's mouth. She tries to reconcile her world with the linguistic theory she learnt.

It was your tongue in your mouth that forced me into silence. It was your tongue in your mouth that forced me into submission. And then, it was your tongue in your mouth that forced me. (173)

To Keep the Womb Empty

The husband aims to fill her womb by forcing himself on her, but she bravely decides to keep the place of peace, the womb, empty. She transfers the emptiness of her life to her womb and doesn't want to carry a man's child who beat her, raped her on a bed where a 'no' held no meaning and called her a whore. She uses her skills in the kitchen to secure her womb's liberty. So she begins a plot to escape. She becomes what he wants her to be: the good housewife. She cooks food

that pleases him. She allows him sex when he wants it. She wears the clothes that he wants her to. She learns Kannada, as her husband does not speak the language of love. She also begins to use language to conquer his venomous masculinity. Since the writer in her is stronger than the woman, she begins her act with pity when he opens up about a comrade from his revolutionary days. She makes him fall apart emotionally, starts taking notes of his weaknesses and plays with him. She becomes a strategist and lets her writer self take in charge. She controls the narrative as she realises the basic notion of a writer.

Mounting Defiance

Their brief existence of her temporary letters powers her mounting defiance. This power leads her to strip his manhood away when she explodes him with her word bombs that real men never hit women. She makes him impotent of acting on his threats and creates the space she always wanted. She becomes deaf to his detestable calling names and for the first time in her life after marriage, she pierces his male ego with her word daggers. She is not afraid of the consequences of talking which brings the end of her marital life with the man who has been rendered as a husband by the society. She takes everything that has been stripped off her by him- Passport, ATM, laptop, phone and most importantly her freedom. She leaves the miserable city at night shedding it like a second skin.

She transforms into an anti-fragile and unbreakable woman who is not afraid of men. She faces the disbelief, the shock and the shame from her kith and kin post marriage. She restores her courage and lost habits acting alongside like a black widow. Finally, she enters the world of books; the world which welcomes her with willingness; the world created by her in words; the world where she burrows word-tunnels to bury herself. She begins her writing career by writing a post-mortem analysis of her marriage for a magazine. She is astounded when she receives written statements from thousands of women all around the world saying that her pieces of writings reflect their stories, their voices and their tears. She slowly climbs up the ladder of life and wakes up to social media picking every single thread of her life. She turns to the police, to the lawyers, files for divorce and answers the people who want a balanced picture of her past marital life. She starts meeting different people. She matures enough to understand everything and everyone; the difficulty of being a woman; a writer; of getting into an arranged marriage; of walking out of the marriage; of hearing the judgements of the judgemental people and not caring about them. Even after walking out of the marriage, forgetting everything seems a forlorn, unattainable dream. She is still caught in the web of bad marriage as she and her parents face the questions posed by the society post marriage. But still she likes the peaceful niceness of life sans domestic violence and the chokehold of marriage. She begins the process of forgetting and healing and indulges herself with her world made up of words, sentences and books.

Hiding Pain through Language

She makes up a beautiful world with the dimension of her language and hides her pain. She hides her scars behind her neatness in dressing. She hides her real worn out physical self behind the body she makes up with words which is perfect and invincible, devoid of any scars. It's completely under her control. She wraps her body with words which is protected against the prying eye, against inspection and against the hands of others. Most importantly the written body is rape resistant. Her fingers capture poetry and song, music and dance and she hides the roughness of the

girl's fingers spoiled by housework, behind words which trace butterflies in the air. Words allow her escape the real and cruel world; words give birth to another woman; the woman who was hidden inside the wife. Though she left his world she never forgot his words which buried a part of her soul. With the help of words she creates the woman at whom the society cannot spit or throw stones because she is completely made only of words on a page and her speech is heard by everyone in their own voice. Words released the strange, rebellious and ecstatic woman hidden inside her. Words gave her wings to fly at her will and smuggled her out of the oppressive situation, a situation where she struggled so hard and so long to wriggle out of the problems and found shelter within the words which gave her wings and courage to fly. She conjured a brave self out of words to take on the life of a woman afraid of facing her own reality.

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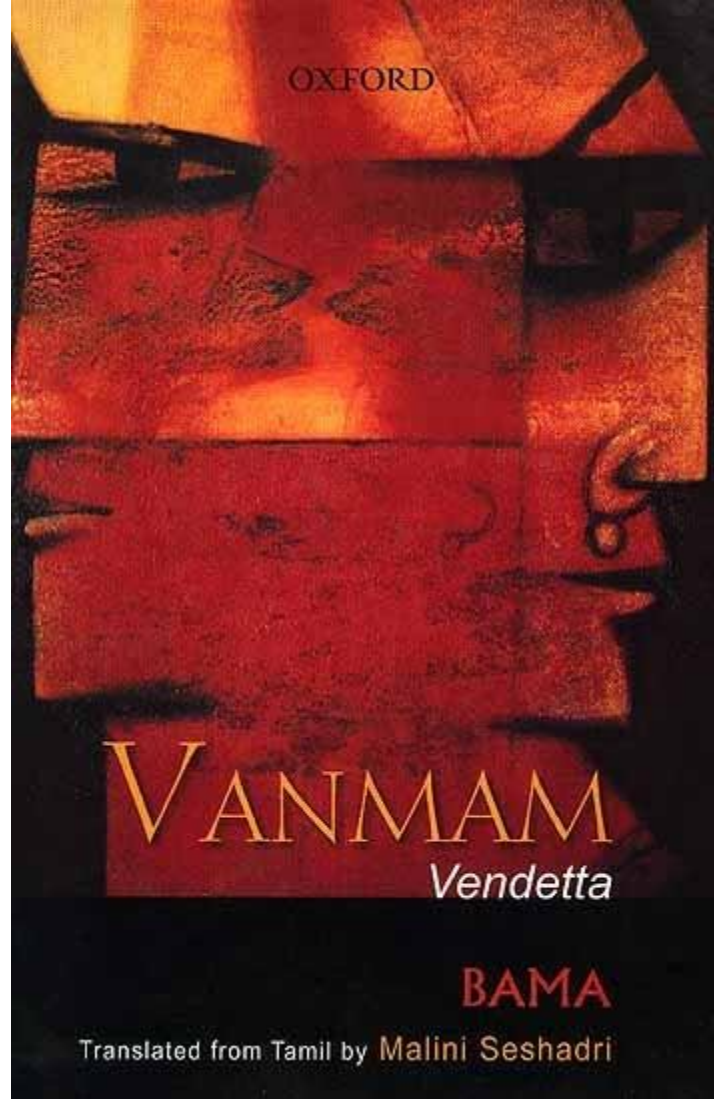
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Struggle for Empowerment: A Critical Study of Bama's *Vanmam*

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to analyse the literary representations of Dalit women in Bama's *Vanmam*. The present study aimed at probing the dynamic intersection between gender and caste in *Vanmam* with a specific focus on their representation of Dalit women. The second half of twentieth century, marked by a vibrant production of literary works by Dalit writers in

Tamil, is considered to explore the writers' response to issues pertaining to caste identity of Dalit community and its traffic with a gendered social matrix. The novel under study reflects a decade of active intervention in Tamil literary discourse that engendered a new, vibrant voice that interrogated literary, cultural stereotypes, setting up new yardsticks and forging fresh views on literary paradigms. Dalit women are shown to be constantly lamenting, shedding tears, yearning for male protection, cursing their womanhood, bemoaning their inability to guard their chastity on their own. They are shown as victims rather than as fighters as in the novels of Bama. Sexual violence against Dalit women is documented at great length in her novels. She focuses on sexual violence against Dalit women in society as well as violence against them by Dalit men.

Keywords: Dalit, Cultural Stereotypes, Victims, Sexual Violence

Dalit Women as Workers

Bama's novels represent Dalit women primarily as workers - honest, hardworking, poorly-paid and exploited workers. Her novels record economic and sexual exploitation of Dalit women and argue that their Dalit identity renders them more vulnerable to injustice than other women workers. At the same time, they also point out that Dalit women are subjected to violence, brutal oppression not only by upper caste, male landlords or state administration but also by Dalit men. There is thus a see-saw movement between their characters' Dalit identity and their position as women in a stratified society. Bama critique patriarchal structure as much as they protest against casteist division in society.

Beating Women

In Bama's fiction, Dalit women are beaten-up by their husbands or brothers at home and ill-treated at work by upper-caste landlords. She presents a spirited fight put up by Dalit women against male-highhandedness. While she locates violence against women as an essentially patriarchal mindset, she also shows how Dalit women can subvert it through their humour, hard work or more importantly through access to education. She celebrates shrews who use their tongue to overcome male brutality or single women who rely upon education to carve out a life free from male authority. She also posits education and collective organized efforts to counter a violent, casteist structure.

Valorizing Women Who Opt out of Marriage

It is significant to note that Bama valorizes educated women who opt out of marriage to escape violence and subjugation. The writer subscribes to feminist thought and Marxist analysis but significantly; argue for enlarging received theoretical orientation to include, specifically, caste related ground realities in contemporary Indian society. In *Vanmam*, intra-caste strife among Dalits is discussed and strategies are debated to resolve the same. In many aspects, *Vanmam* is a less intense or moving tale in comparison to *Karukku* or *Sangati*. Certain issues, even incidents narrated or discussed in her earlier two works are taken up again in *Vanmam*, without, however, adding a new or different dimension to the quality of discussion. The narrative is less; gripping, at places, rather tepid.

Repetition as a Deliberate Narrative Strategy

Even though Bama had employed repetition as a deliberate narrative strategy in *Karukku* and *Sangati*, she had used it to add a fresh interpretation or reveal another critical reading of the narrative material than given in her earlier treatment. This engaging trope is missing in *Vanmlam*. Disappointing as this may be, a critical study of *Vanmam* is warranted as she subjects Dalits - both Paraiyars and Pallars - to an objective scrutiny and calls for forging of unity among Dalits on social and more significantly political grounds. This aspect is explored further in an objective, social milieu in her *Vanmam* (2002) where she analyses the intra-community conflicts, caste hatred and resulting violence and mayhem among Dalit communities.

Dalit Internal Division and Caste Hierarchy

Vanmam shows how Dalits have internalised the given social system of segregation based on caste. If Paraiyars and Pallars are outcastes in the eyes of Naickers, Odaiyars, Chettiars, Naidus and Nadars, Pallars and Paraiyars treat each other as outcastes within their own social habitat. While Paraiyars have embraced Christianity, Pallars remain within the Hindu fold. This fact is played up by Naickers and other upper castes to keep the two Dalit communities divided. This results in Paraiyars and Pallars getting into arguments and tiffs over whose lands should be watered first. While Paraiyars and Pallars remain landless, they go to the extent of killing each other over an argument over whose landlord's lands are irrigated better.

Vanmam

Vanmam opens with an account of murder of a Paraiyar farmhand, Mariyasu at the hands of Karupasami, a Pallar farmhand, over distribution of water to their respective master's lands. As Karupasami's master protects him, he gets away with Mariyasu's murder and surreptitious disposal of his body. In this way, the enmity between the two communities is nurtured and kept alive by Naickers. "God knows when we, Paraiyars and Pallars, would stand united," exclaims a Paraiyar woman, Mekelamma (27). Mekelamma's lament becomes the central refrain of the novel. One incident leads to the other. If a member from the Pallar community becomes the aggressor in one incident, a Paraiyar becomes the aggressor in another. The upper caste landlords stoke the fire of hatred and prejudice, call in the police and settle scores with the Paraiyars. The novel is written from the Paraiyar's point of view although an objective analysis is undertaken to demonstrate that Pallars are used by Naickers for their own political gain.

Paraiyar vs Pallar

The Paraiyar community, thanks to education accessible through missionary-run schools, is considered advanced socially and economically. There is a greater political awareness among them and they are highly resented by upper castes for emulating Ambedkarite ideology. *Vanmam* depicts how Paraiyar youth, most of them college-educated, pursuing a post-graduate degree, organize cultural activities, sports competitions and awareness campaigns to spread Ambedkar's thought in their community, when they return home from their hostels during vacations. Hope for political unity among Dalits rests on this segment. Pallars are mostly school dropouts and their youth are shown to be either working for Naickers or unemployed but always envious of their Paraiyar counterparts. But in spite of the best efforts of Paraiyar youth, caste strife between the two communities does not get stalled, resulting in rampant police brutality, forcing young men and adult males to either flee and live incognito or rot in jails.

Paraiyar youth, although they fashion themselves as radical, are yet orthodox in their attitude towards their women. After the cultural programme, the young men want to hold a meeting at the *chavadito* discuss future action plan. But they do not invite or want women to be present. Jayarasu announces, “We shall continue with our cultural programme. As a meeting is scheduled to be held at *chavadi*, women are asked to return to their homes quietly” (80). The educated girls protest, but to no avail. Selvarani observes, “these boys call themselves great reformists. But if there is a ‘village meeting’, they ask us, women, to go home. What kind of justice is this?” (80) Older women explain to the girls, “Oh, come on. Men shall be men and women shall remain women” (80). However, when the police swoop on the men, killing them or arresting them indiscriminately, Paraiyar women, young and old stand but them, protect them, nurture them, take over their chores, run the household single-handedly and also arrange for their bail or professional help.

Similar to Cemetery Feud

In fact, the section in *Vanmam* on Paraiyar women’s management of the crisis following Paraiyar-Pallar riot is almost a re-narration of Bama’s representation of women’s response to cemetery feud between the two communities in her earlier works. Young women accost the police, drive carts to carry their dead and dig up a mass grave and bury the men. Police excesses on women during the raid on the village are largely sexual intimidation, molestation and physical violence. When women are not allowed to leave the village for work, they survive and nurture their children by selling milk of their cattle. They also stay together at one house by turns and subvert police repression through their gendered bonding. But when the situation normalises, while Dalit boys return to their college by borrowing money, girls are forced to give up their studies and stay at home. Thus, the impact of caste-strife on women is more acute. Even pregnant women, lactating mothers, old women and school going girls are rounded up, jailed and severely beaten up by the police. When Paraiyar boys plan a counter strategy to avenge the Paliars’ murder of innocent Paraiyars, Rosamma points out,

You men will kill and run away and dodge the police. Here, we women are beaten up by the police and intimidated by the Pallars as well. We can neither go to work nor cook and eat in peace... lord... what a life... worse than a dog’s... we can neither live... nor die... (134-35)

Punishment Meted Out to Women

Vanmam depicts how women get punished and suffer on account of caste-strife engendered by men. They do not want it. They do not precipitate it. Yet they become its worst victims. *Vanmam* posits an important caveat to the issue of identity of Dalits. Non-Dalits tend to homogenise Dalits, erasing out differences, contradictions and anomalies that prevail among various Dalit communities. To the outside world, they are dumped as a common heap - a homogenised, monolithic category of untouchables.

Inability to Overcome Caste Divisions within Dalit Group

Vanmam alerts us to this disturbing facet of Dalit life, where while they accept a unified, singular political identity as Dalits, culturally, they are unable to overlook or overcome differences that exist amongst them. While the upper castes mock at them and use this dimension of their social identity to exploit them politically, it is worth remembering that the heterogeneous

character of Dalit community is a reflection and extension of our pluralistic society where homogenisation is unwelcome as well as unfair. However, for purposes of political empowerment, Dalits would have to sink cultural, regional differences and work together under a common banner. Unity among Dalits is a pre-condition to a successful overthrow of upper caste hegemony in society.

Vanmam reiterates this in each of its twelve chapters. Paraiyars initiate negotiations to arrive at peace between the two communities. Paraiyars have lost more in terms of human loss, economic set-back and pending court cases. While Naickers fume, Pallars and Paraiyars agree to withdraw cases against each other and put up a common candidate for the panchayat board election. The newly elected Dalit president Kaalaiyan (belonging to Pallar community but voted to the post by both Paraiyars and Pallars) foregrounds the need for unity among Dalits if they wish to defeat upper-castes' domination over them. He also promises to work for victory for Dalits at the State assembly and Parliamentary elections.

Seeking Political Power

A democratic resolving of intra-caste differences becomes the accepted mantra at the end of the novel, much to the discomfort of Naickers. Kaalaiyan comments, "As Ambedkar pointed out, we need to capture political power first. Let the Panchayat election be the first step towards that goal" (158). The novel concludes with a typically Bama's optimism, hoping for a result-oriented future for "though there are fears lurking in our minds, there exists clarity of thought and a strong will as well." (157)

To Conclude

Bama's fiction has won critical acclaim steadily over the years. If initially, her use of Dalit vocabulary and unconventional use of language was criticised by mainstream writers and critics. Bama's reformulations of genres, narratorial innovations are attacked by critics. In *Storylines: Conversations with Women Writers*, Bama recounts,

In literary circles there were some who discounted it as not being literary enough... not keeping to the generic definitions of novel or autobiography. Some of them were upset by the obscenities used and found them un-parliamentary. But there were also those who welcomed it as new and experimental... once they commented on the language and called it vulgar and obscene, I was all the more convinced that it was my language, our language. (15)

Bama's writing indicates a conscious choice in terms of form, language, mode of narration, tone, characterisation and content. The primary motive of Dalit literature is the liberation of Dalits, in particular, and the liberation of the oppressed, in general. It is fundamentally a cultural activity coming under the broad movements of Dalit political liberation. It is cultural politics. It takes the form of protest.

Bama's writing embodies an activist agenda. As a Dalit, writing has empowered Bama. Her entry into academy, her presence at literary meets, conferences in Indian metros and abroad, her continued contribution in the sphere of education as a school teacher are various facets of her social empowerment. In turn she employs her writing to implore Dalits to adopt education as a

sure strategy for self-empowerment and acceptability in society. Her writing while using spoken Dalit women's vocabulary is addressed to non-Dalits who need to be educated and sensitised about Dalits' struggle for a dignified existence. At the same time it also shows possibilities of success to her Dalit reader.

In all her works, a feminist narrative on Dalit women's lives, *Vanmam*, a novel, Bama reiterates and calls upon Dalits to organise and help themselves, who would come forward to aid us? We would have to help ourselves is her repeated reminder. In *Vanmam* forging of unity among Dalits is stressed upon most forcefully. Education for Bama is not limited to formal education. She lays equal emphasis on spiritual education but wants this to be free from interference from ecclesiasts and officialdom. Dalits have to gain enlightenment in a political sense, rather than merely accumulate university degrees.

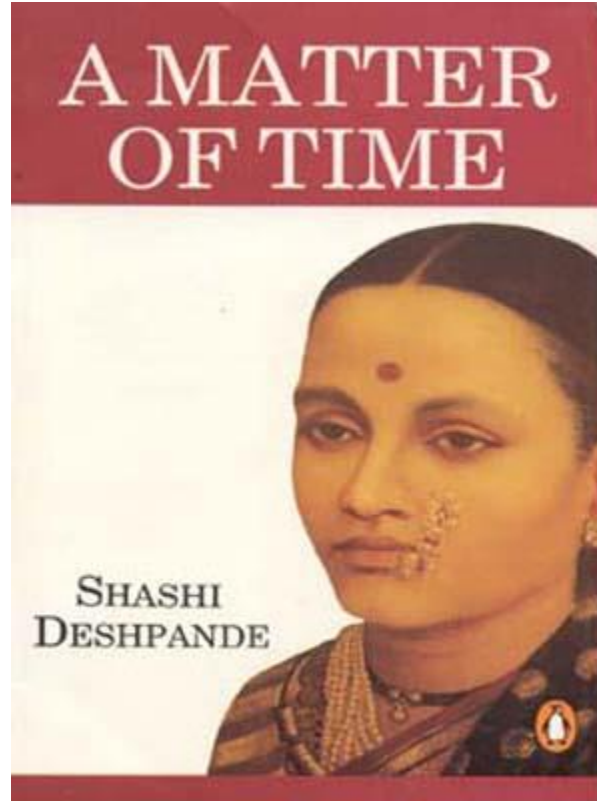
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Victimization of women in Shashi Deshpande's Novels

Dr. K. Ashok Kumar and A. Selvananthan



Abstract

Shashi Deshpande is an award winning Indian Novelist. She is an eminent novelist with a deep insight into the psyche of middle class Indian women. She has presented in her novels modern. Indian women's search for the definition of "the self and society and the relationship" that are central to women. With more than a dozen fictional works to her credit she has successfully captured the true emotions of Indian women. She writes of the conflicts and predicament of the Indian middle-class women. She published her first collection, of short stories in 1978, and her first novel. She is a winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award, for the novel '*That Long Silence*'. *Shashi Deshpande's* novels present a social world of mammy complex relationship. This paper presentation focuses on a study of suffering of woman in the works of Shashi Deshpande. Life is full of suffering, full of choices, full of compromises and an adjustment. Even a silent self-

suffering, becomes a survival strategy. This paper also throws light on the different aspects of suffering the woman undergoes.

Indian Women: Socially and Psychologically Oppressed

Indian women, unlike their western counterparts, have always been socially and psychologically oppressed, sexually colonized and biologically subjugated against a male-dominant social set-up. Any attempt by a woman to rise above the oppressive forces rooted in the middle-class margins has either been curbed mercilessly or ignored in the name of social dignity. Shashi Deshpande all through the gamut of her ever-expanding creative horizon always makes it a point to provide a separate space for her characters.

Shashi Deshpande Focusing on New Indian Woman and Her Dilemma

Shashi Deshpande portrays the new Indian woman and her dilemma. She concerns herself with the plight of the modern Indian woman trying to understand herself and to preserve her identity as wife, mother and above all as human being. Girls are a silent part of the family and society. What they think or feel about their social eclipse does not interest most writers or social thinkers.

Shashi Deshpande is an award winning Indian Novelist. She is an eminent novelist with a deep insight into the psyche of middle class Indian women. She has presented in her novels modern. Indian women's search for the definition of "the self and society and the relationship" that are central to women. With more than a dozen fictional works to her credit she has successfully captured the true emotions of Indian women. She writes of the conflicts and predicament of the Indian middle-class women. She published her first collection, of short stories in 1978, and her first novel. She is a winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award, for the novel '*That Long Silence*'. *Shashi Deshpande's* novels present a social world of mammy complex relationship.

Focus on Feminine Issues

Most of her novels '*The Dark Holds no Terrors*', '*That Long Silence*', '*The Binding Wine*' and '*Roots and shadows*', deal with feminine issues. In her novels she presents a sensitive portrayal of Indian womanhood with a rare gift for sharp psychological insights. The women in her novels are subjected to continuous physical and sexual assaults in the society. But the writer feels that a woman has her own existence and place in the society and therefore she should not be reduced to the level of a breeding machine. She also dares to "expose, question and challenge the age old traditions and prejudices in the male dominated society.

My Focus

Through this paper, we want to present the condition of suffering women middle class of India. I would like to present that the women belong to Indian middle class are brought up in a traditional environment and struggling to liberate themselves and seek their self-identity and independence in the novels of Shashi Deshpande.

Marriage – Set as a Vital Goal for Girls

Marriage is set as a vital goal for girls. Women have to accept, accommodate and convert themselves to go well with the interests of their male counterpart and in this process suppress their

self-identity. In the Indian context, once a girl is married –it may be a love marriage or an arranged one, husband has full control on her. Whether the husband is right or wrong, the wife has to follow him blindly. A woman is never free according to old traditions.

Shashi Deshpande's Characters

In her novels many men and women living together, journeying across life in their difference age groups, classes and gendered roles. The old tradition bound world consists with modern, creating unforeseen gaps and disruptions within the family fold. Women's understanding becomes questionable as the old patterns of behaviour no longer seem to be acceptable. These struggles become in tense of quests for self-definition, because it would not be possible to relate to others with any degree of conviction unless one is guided by clarity about one's own image and role.

Suffering means the act of distress, pain. Shashi Deshpande gives minute details of development of girl-child in her novels. She has displayed a series of girl-children, where each girl faces a different problem within the family. Violence against women, whether physical, mental or emotional, is an issue that crosses all borders and all classes of women. Feminism and its crusade against a male dominated society are of special importance in the Indian context.

Novels of Shashi Deshpande

The novel *Roots and shadows* projects the educated women who are unable to enfranchise the traditional background in which they are reared. The cruse of all the prevailing problems of women is their subjugation which is always present in the form of silent servitude. In *That Long Silence* she retrieves facts from the depth of the past to reconstruct the missing links in the chain of women's suffering, self-discovery by all means is a mature act, act and also a cathartic one. In *'The Binding Vine'* Mira's poems and diaries engage her attention.

Shashi Deshpande's novels highlight the image of the middle-class women sandwiched between tradition and modernity.

The novel *A Matter of Time* moves beyond feminist concerns in that it raises the existentialist question itself. The important truth revealed is that self-pity is not the answer. It is only through a process of self-examination and self-searching, through courage and resilience that one can change one's situation from despair to hope. The novel highlights the image of the middle-class women sandwiched between tradition and modernity.

The novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* deals with the problems of career women and her martial constraints. The Indian women has for years been silent sufferers. It is reflective of the feminist aspirations. The situations in which Sarita has placed herself is rather unwarranted. The lack of perfect understanding emotions between husband and wife causes of domestic life, there should be a blend of acceptance and rejection, flexibility and rigidity and above all revolt if the occasion demands and compromise for peaceful life.

In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Sarita achieved position and the ascribed position of her husband. The financial ascendance of Sarita, renders another less significant and important. But his action at nights terrifies and humiliates Saru.

In *Root and Shadow*, Akka's desire to educate her was not because of giving her an independent stand but because she feels that educated girls get a good match and Indu experiences disillusionment in sex and suffers a silent sexual humiliation.

The novelist brings out powerfully the psychological problem of a career woman and discusses it artistically without crossing the barriers of art. Shashi Deshpande's novels deal with the women belonging to Indian middle class. She deals with the inner world of the Indian women in her novels. She portrays her heroines in a realistic manner. As *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, the novel reveals the life of Sarita, who is always neglected and ignored in favour of her brother, she is not given any importance.

Root And Shadow explores the inner self of Indu who symbolize the new women, who are educated and married to Jayant but her feminine instinct for articulation is suppressed and Mini inculcates in her all the traditional feminine qualities since her childhood. Akka got married to a man who has much older than her. She has to tolerate the scathing and bestial sexual advances of her husband. In the novel *That Long Silence* Shashi Deshpande reveals that consciousness of Jaya is not totally a silent and mute sufferer. In *The Binding Vine* Mira's poems and diaries engage her attention.

Urmila establishes a communion with her and tries to reconstruct the tragic tale of an energetic girl, who suffered and write poems in the solitude of an unhappy marriage. In the novel 'A Matter of Time' is an exploration of a woman's inner life. Kalyani's fears are based on patriarchal oppression that condemns women to the margins of silence. Sumi like her mother is a suffering oppressed and wronged woman. Yet she does not question the man; her oppressor.

Shashi Deshpande is one of the famous contemporary Indian novelists in English. Basically she writes about the situation of women and their failures in the fast changing socio-economic milieu of India. She writes about the conflict between tradition and modernity in relation to women in middle class society. In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* all the characteristics are inextricably blended in Saru who represents a reaction of society. Saru is brought up in a traditional atmosphere but the education she receiver makes her a changed person with a rebellious attitude towards tradition. In *Roots and Shadow* through the character of Indu, who is educated and who lives in close association with society, brushing aside all narrow social conventions. Akka , the strict and disapproving matriarch of the family.

In the novel *That Long Silence* through the character of Jaya, who adjusts and accommodates unlike the modern women who themselves "forced into the background by the claims of culture" and hence they adopt " an inimical attitude towards it" . She is not the structurally patterned woman of the traditional Indian society. In the novel *The Binding Vine* Normally Urmila's meeting with Shakeitai would not have happened as Shakeitai belongs to different strata of society. *A Matter of Time* focuses on social control, and the site of violence, exclusion and abuse. Aru asks

Gopal “why did you get married at all, why did you have children. The whole novel us devoted to silent, brooding women, unhappy, yet lively clinging to their past, yet living in the present society.

Female Identity

Shashi Deshpande’s novel deals with the theme of the quest for a female identity. The complexities of man-woman relationships, especially in the context of marriage, the trauma of a disturbed adolescence. The Indian woman has for years been a silent sufferer. While she has played different roles-as a wife, mother, sister and daughter, she has never been able to claim her own individuality. In the novel ‘*The Dark Holds No Terrors*’ Manohar’s male ego tries to dominate Sarita which ultimate results in disintegration, that Sarita is an individual not a dependent but a being capable of withstanding trials in life alone. Her identity is no longer been in terms of the identity of her male counterpart. In ‘*Roots and Shadow*’, Indu accepts that she throttled her desires not because of Jayant’s pressure but because it was her own decision with which she had given her identity. Akka too has to endure and submit to insults, injuries, and humiliations with a stoic patience and never complain.

In ‘*That Long Silence*’, Jaya is being renamed as Suhasine after her marriage is not a care of the loss of identity. In ‘*The Binding Vine*’, Urmila understands that even as a child, Mira has hated the way her mother has been surrendering herself to her husband and ever she has not herself identity. In ‘*A Matter of Time*’ it is here that in a flash Kalyani realizes that Gopal and she must now move an alone and she reconciles herself to their separation. Kalyani who emerges as the most powerful character in the novel. Here is a pitiable story, but one of deep endurance and strength.

In ‘*That Long Silence*’ Jaya comes to recognize herself as a failed writer because when had continued writing, her stories had been rejected for lack of genuine feelings which she had laid aside. After all she came to accept herself as a failed writer and so she depends of her husband. We see in the novel ‘*The Binding Vine Urmila*’ is one who is ahead of her predecessors by her endeavours to help other women. She is an upper middle-class carrier woman. Anu consequently has become mighty sensitive to the suffering and despair of others. In the ‘*A Matter Of Time*’ is a composite study in human relationship. The most striking example of silence is Kalyani who spends nearly forty years in total silence with her husband, Shripati but all women’s depended of themselves.

Deep Insight into the Female Psyche

Shashi Deshpande has emerged as a writer possessing deep insight into the female psyche. Focusing on the marital relation she seeks to expose the tradition by which a woman is trained to play her subservient role in the family. Her novels reveal the man-made patriarchal traditions and uneasiness of the modern Indian woman in being a part of them. Shashi Deshpande uses this point of view of present social reality as at is experienced by women. To present the world of mothers, daughters and wives is also to present indirectly the fathers, sons and husbands the relation between men and woman, and between women themselves. Her young heroines rebel against the traditional way of life and patriarchal values.

Ideal Woman

The words which we always associate with what we consider to be the concept of an ideal woman are self-denial, sacrifice, patience, devotion and silent suffering. As in *'The Dark Holds No Terrors'*, the life of Sarita who is always neglected and ignored. *'Roots and Shadow'* explores the inner self of Indu, Mini, and Akka and Shashi Deshpande shows in the *'That long Silence'*, Jaya is not a silent sufferer. In *'The Binding Vine'* Mira has hated the way her mother has been surrendering herself to her husband and ever she has not herself identity. *'A Matter Of Time'* is an exploration of Kalyani, Sumi and her daughters Aru. Shashi Deshpande's fiction is an example of the ways in which a girl child's particular position, social reality and identity and psychological growth determine her personality.

The new Woman is primarily characterized by the spirit of rebelliousness, visibly exercising its influence on all relationships, the boundaries of time and space not with standing. This spirit is manifested through diverse means and modes. A women's rejected of her assigned role inside the family and society, refusal to follow the traditional paths, inherent revulsions to the idealism associated with normal physical functions of the body such as menstruation , pregnancy, childbirth/procreation which often act as catalysts for sexual colonialism, aversion to the practice of favouring the male child over and above the girl child and disrespect for the social taboos concerning the human body are some of the challenging issues that Deshpande comes up with as the new woman.

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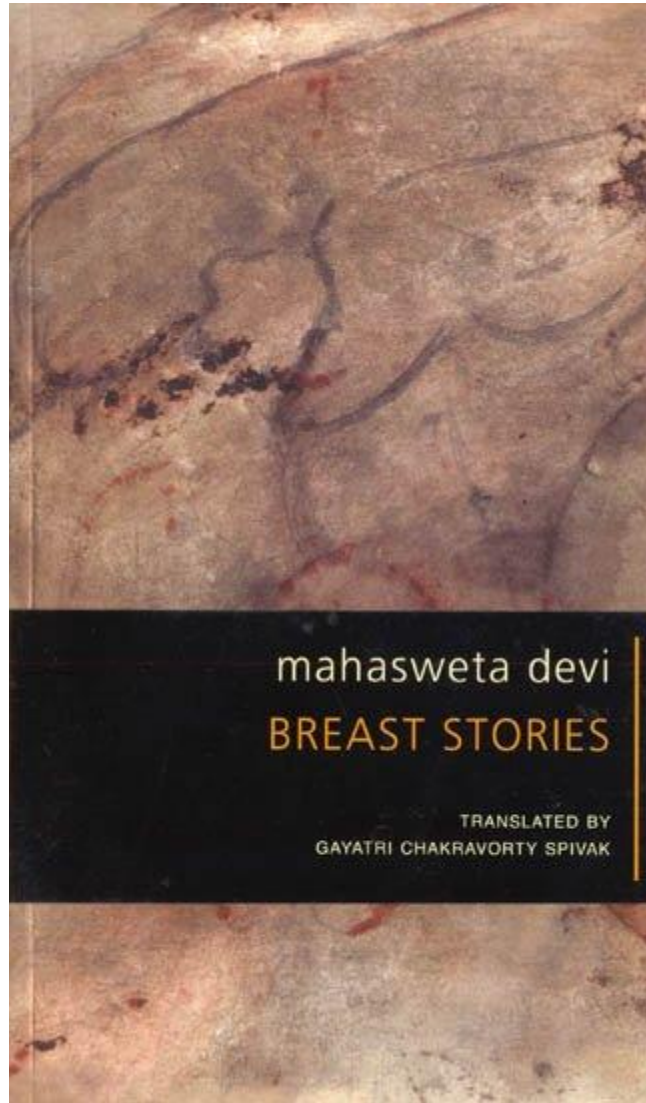
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Echoing the Repressive Power of the Marginalized Women in Mahasweta Devi's *Draupadi*

P. Ananthi and Dr. K. Ganeshram



Abstract

Mahasweta Devi's novels and short stories comprise of the dehumanized and exploited. Mahasweta has written many activist essays that offer one vision into realizing the nature of exploitation inflicted upon the tribals and untouchable by the money-lenders feudalists, local politician and the police. Mahasweta Devi has quite lucidly presented the case of economic,

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social, cultural, physical and political exploitation of the tribals and untouchables. Once they enter the bonded situation, there is none in the world that can come to the rescue. “Draupadi” seems to be an outcome of such a circumstance. Women’s position in the society, particularly those of marginalised and peripheral one’s positions are very pro occupied with the sense of docility and negligence. The marginalised woman are those who are living in the peripheral line of living in terms of their gender discrimination, class differences and caste position, particularly as indigenous woman. These kinds of women are usually unseen in the ‘common’ society. Their sufferings have long been avoided and are not considered as ‘wrong’ but the usual consequences of everyday life. Mahasweta Devi’s stories are not only about her surroundings rather it reciprocates marginalized women’s voices. Mahasweta Devi’s tribal Dopdi is fighting for her survival, food and water. In the story “Draupadi”, Dopdi Mejhen was a bonded labour who turned into a tribal revolutionary. She was arrested by the police officer under the instructions of the army officer Senanayak and was gang raped in police custody. She was continuously raped and was not given food and water. Dopdi faced a situation which no woman could face and showed her resistance in quite an unusual way.

Introduction

Literature has always remained the incessant source of all the feelings, sentiments and emotions. We all have always co-related ourselves and our situations with literature sometimes through novel, drama, short story or poetry. It is the law of nature that every source inspire and originates something and every origination is the result of the inspiration and so is the case with literature. Literature inspires society and society inspires literature thus, enhancing the growth and efficiency of each other. However, in this mutual contribution of development of literature and society we often forget politics, which acts like a catalyst in the relation of literature and society.

Mahasweta Devi is among those rarest writers who dare to build her reputation for integrity and fearlessness by standing her ground and speaking her mind in the face of displeasure and pressure from those in power. Mahasweta Devi has made important contribution to literary and cultural studies in this country. Her empirical research into oral history as it lives in the cultures and memories of tribal communities was a first of its kind. Her powerful, haunting tales of exploitation and struggle have been seen as rich sites of feminist discourse by leading scholars. Her innovative use of language has expanded the conventional borders of Bengali literary expression. Standing as she does at the intersection of vital contemporary questions of politics, gender and class, she is a significant figure in the field of socially committed literature.

A prolific writer of over one hundred novels and numerous (estimated 350) short stories, Mahasweta Devi pinned her thoughts on socio-economic aspects which indeed need a revival. And she believed that radical change is possible if the so called ordinary people for whom she waged a struggle all along her life are stirred up. It was for and about those people that she wrote with an eye to rewriting a realistic chapter of history. It is said that her visit to Palamu in 1965 was a turning point to have opened her eyes before the stark reality of our rural ambient. Still, it was not the earthy attraction or sylvan beauty of forest areas but the struggle for existence of the tribal people that moved her.

Her works include to name just a few, *Hajar Churashir Maa*, *Rudali*, *Aranyer Adhikar*, *Jhansir Rani* (novel) and short stories collections like *Agnigarbha*, *Murti*, *Neerete Megh*, *Stanyadayani*, *Chotti Munda Evam Tar Tir*. Many of her works have been translated in different languages in India and abroad making her “a celebrated icon of third world literature in the First world academia.” Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has translated Devi's short stories into English and published three books *Imaginary Maps* (1995, Routledge), *Old Woman* (1997, Seagull), *Breast Stories* (1997, Seagull).

Mahasweta Devi, one of the leading women writers of India, has been the winner of several national awards like Sahitya Akademi, Jnanpith, Padmashree, Raman Magsaysay and many others for her plays, novels, short stories etc. She has been a social activist fighting for justice to the marginalized, dispossessed, tribal communities in India. Her writings portray women as sufferers of the politics of gender, class and caste played at various levels of social relationships. Her stories are a study in brutality and degradation wreaked on women for centuries. She is one of the great Indian writers of our time who write with a view to exposing the evils inherent in the socio-economic and political system of the post-colonial India. Her writings are marked with social-consciousness and commitment with a strong urge to improve the situation. She in a way emerges as a champion of the proletariat landless labourers, peripherals, the poor and the subaltern class of Indian society. Women in our society are always looked down upon and are considered as inferior human beings. Since ages, they have been crushed by the male-dominated society. Women always experience a continuous trauma under male subjugation.

Breast Stories

In her book, “Breast Stories”, Mahasweta Devi, as an Indian intellectual known for her feminist, deconstructionist, and subaltern criticisms in cultural texts, literature and her own radical writings, tells the stories of the women of India who are caught endlessly in the cycles of holiness and self-abnegation. Although it was originally written in Bengali, “Breast Stories” was translated into English by feminist critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in 1997. The three stories are titled: “Draupadi, Behind the Bodice, and Breast Giver”. They have one connecting thread- the breast, a metaphor for the exploitation of women from marginalized communities. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak points out in her introduction, the breast is far more than a symbol in these stories- it is the means of harshly indicting an exploitative social system.

Draupadi

Interestingly, in most of her short stories, Mahasweta Devi has been vocal about the marginalised, dalits, tribals and the flaws in our socioeconomic system. But a ray of hope is always there to wake up our conscience. One such is “Draupadi”. As in the epic, the *Mahabharata*, so also in her story Draupadi, Dopdi Mejhens’s undaunted spirit of resistance is exemplary. The story tells how a tribal woman, named Dopdi, had to pay the price for her involvement with the Naxalite movement. And even being brutally raped, she stood firm on her stand till the end.

Dopdi Mejhens

It depicts the story of the capture and the horrifying brutal rape of a tribal insurgent named, Dopdi Mejhens who, along with her husband Dulna, is on the list of most wanted

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criminals in West Bengal. Devi uses both the versions of her name, juxtaposing 'Draupadi' and 'Dopdi' to make the story multi-dimensional. Dopdi and Dulna cleverly manage to evade the law several times but Dulna is one day gunned down by policemen. After her husband's death, Dopdi continues the incomplete job of her husband by helping tribal fugitives so that the violent message of her husband 'Ma-ho' come true. She is finally caught and put in police custody where she is brutally raped and tortured several times by the police to extract information from her. Her breasts are bitten raw, her nipples torn. Her swollen lips blued profusely. She becomes unconscious, but as soon as she gains her consciousness she hears the mockery of the guards who again resume their duty of 'making her'.

Initial Meek Surrender – Then Protest

When Senanayak orders that Draupadi should be presented before him, she first surrenders meekly, but suddenly she tears off her cloth and insists on going to him without clothes. Her refusal to be clothed stands as a symbol of political resistance as well as the challenging of the Patriarchal norms. As Jyothi Rani and K. Katyayani opine in their article "Violence on Women in the Context of Indian political Economy – A Study of Mahasweta Devi's Sri Ganish Mahima and Drapadi", "The protest is against the insults her and tortures her sexually". She refused to drink and when she was about to say the word water, she caught her lower lip in her teeth. When a soldier gave her water, she poured it in on the ground refusing to satisfy her thirst. She showed her thighs meted with dry blood to Senanayak. With bruises and gaping wounds all over her body, Draupadi mocks at Patriarchy in her shrill, Sarcastic tone and Challenge him.

"Draupadi's black body comes even closer. Draupadi shakes with an indomitable laughter that:

Senanayak simply cannot understand. Her ravaged lips bleed as she begins laughing. Draupadi wipes the blood on her palm and says in a voice that is as terrifying, sky splitting, and sharp as her ululation, what's the use of clothes? You can strip me but how can you clothe me again? Are you a man? She looks around and chooses the front to spit a bloody gab at and says, there isn't a man here that I should be ashamed. I will not let you put my clothes on me. What more can you do? Come on, Kounter me-Come on, Kounter me? Draupadi pushes Senanayak with her two mangled breasts and for the first time Senanayak is afraid to stand before an unarmed target, terribly afraid.(Draupadi 33).

Able to Question the Power Structure

Thus, even while even was suffering, she was able to question the power structure. A baffled Senanayak looks at the consequence of his orders, whereas a naked Dopdi laughs at his angered expression and says that there is nothing more he can do to hurt and humiliate her. The story ends on a powerful note when a naked Dopdi, with her courage and stubborn refusal to cover her naked body renders several guards and the arrogant officer helpless, scared. Spivak remarks in her forward to this translation may be highly justified: "It is when she crosses the sexual differential into the field of what could only happen to a woman that she emerges as the most powerful 'Subject', who, still, using the language of sexual 'honour' can derisively call herself 'the object of your search' whom the author can describe as a terrifying super object – an unarmed target.

Stressed Her Femininity

Dopdi stressed her femininity and refused to surrender due to abuse and physical suffering. In the article “Art as Protest Social Commitment in the Novels of Mahasweta Devi”, Urmila Chakravorty quotes Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s words that “Draupathi is a revolutionary feminist material”. 174 She also quotes Mahaswetha Devi’s word in an interview. ‘I’m not a feminist. I consider women as an integral part of society, and I think that women are equally oppressed as men in the present social set up’.

Names of Classical Characters

Mahasweta Devi names her protagonist after the classical character but makes these illiterate, poor, tribal women more powerful than her counterpart from the great epic. The modern counterpart shows an indomitable courage and is silent no more. The story goes beyond the realm of mere bodily exposure where the ‘fully clothed officer stand ‘exposed’ in every way’. Dopdi turns her mangled breasts into an instrument of violence with which she disarms her opponent. “Draupadi” is one of Devi’s most powerful tales for it urges the marginalized to dissociate from the norms for respectability and modesty mapped out by the patriarchal caretakers, for it is the only way to weaken the enemy and gain freedom from the clutches of Patriarchy.

In their attempt to subjugate the revolutionary groups, the government uses all forces available to them, including kidnapping, murder, and rape, and any tribal deaths in custody are invariably reported as “accidents”. The story ends with a magnificent final scene in which Dopdi faces her abusers, naked and bloody, but fiercely strong.

To Conclude

We read about the resistance shown by such women as attachment to land that they inhabit and their refusal to be dispossessed, displaced, disinherited, etc. We can understand the manner in which ‘tribals’ might relate to the land they labour on, and whether ‘tribal’ women in particular display specific structures of attachment by a close reading of this story in the background of Indian epic the Mahabharata. This paper would highlight the life of the tribal Dopdi and the mythic Draupadi of the Mahabharata as both seem to have struggled for their legitimate rights, snatched by the establishment, throughout their life. The depth which she has touched in dealing with the females is not the only salient feature of Mahasweta Devi’s work rather I must say that she was capable enough to touch and feel the pains of every class, community and religion. Throughout her literary career she had always been a bold speaker for all those social and human aspects which were in the real sense supposed to be the responsibility of the government.

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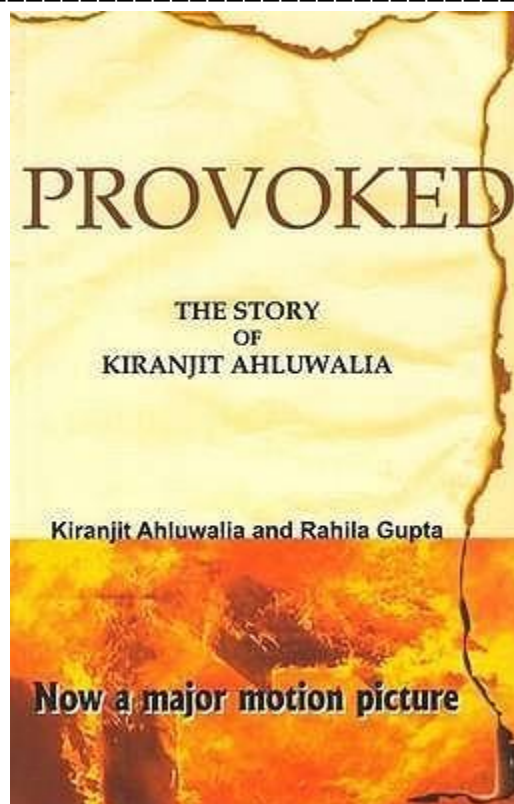
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Domestic Viciousness in Kiranjit Ahluwalia's *Provoked*
A. Evangeline



Abstract

Domestic Viciousness is a common problem that may affect more than a quarter of women. It is a complex area in which to undertake research. Studies often focus on selected populations and exhibit a diversity of design, making comparison difficult. This review focuses on physical Viciousness by men against women partners or ex-partners and exemplifies important issues for general practitioners. Domestic Viciousness frequently goes undetected. This may be the result of doctor's fears of exploring an area perceived as time-consuming, where knowledge is lacking and where they feel powerless to 'fix' the situation. Women may not reveal that they are experiencing Viciousness, sometimes because doctors are unsympathetic or hostile. Women experience a range of health and social problems in association with domestic Viciousness, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse and pregnancy complications. However, none of these features is specific enough to be useful as an indicator of Viciousness. If progress is to be made in tackling domestic Viciousness, action within primary care is just one part of this: a fundamental change in the attitudes of men towards women is required. Today the heartbreaking actuality with domestic Viciousness is genuine because we have or had an encounter with these ourselves. We also know

someone that has or has come across with domestic Viciousness. Domestic Viciousness is a prototype of sadistic actions exemplified by the intention to acquire or sustain authority and domination over an intimate partner or other family members.

Keywords: Kiranjit Ahluwalia, *Provoked*, Domestic viciousness. Abuse, Emotional, Relationship, Coerce.

Introduction

Domestic Viciousness is an abuse that happens in a personal relationship. It can happen between past or current partners, spouses, or boyfriends and girlfriends. Domestic Viciousness affects men and women of any ethnic group, race, or religion; gay or straight; rich or poor; teen, adult, or elderly. But most of its victims are women. In fact, 1 out of 4 women will be a victim at some point. The abuser may use fear, bullying and threats to gain power and control over the other person. He or she may act jealous, controlling, or possessive. These early signs of abuse may happen soon after the start of the relationship and might be hard to notice at first. Traditionally domestic Viciousness was mostly associated with physical Viciousness.

Domestic Viciousness

Domestic Viciousness is now commonly defined to include all acts of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional abuse and economic Viciousness:

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is the most recognizable form of domestic Viciousness. It involves the use of force against the victim, causing injury e.g. a punch or a kick, stabbing, shooting, choking, slapping, forcing you to use drugs, etc. Remember that the injury doesn't need to be a major one. Consider, for example, that your abuser slaps you a few times, causing only minor injuries that don't require a visit to the hospital. Is that domestic Viciousness? Yes. The slapping would still be considered domestic Viciousness.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse involves the destruction of the victim's self-worth, and is brought about by persistent insult, humiliation, or criticism. Emotional abuse can be a difficult type of domestic Viciousness for many people to understand. Since, on the surface, it appears to be quite common in unhealthy relationships. As a victim, you should know that in most states, emotional abuse is not enough on its own to bring a domestic Viciousness action unless the abuse is so persistent and so significant that the relationship can be labeled extremely coercive. Most commonly, evidence of emotional abuse is combined with other abuses like physical, financial, sexual, or psychological to bring a domestic Viciousness action.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse is a common form of domestic Viciousness. It includes not only sexual assault and rape, but also harassment, such as unwelcome touching and other demeaning behaviors. Many victims don't realize how broadly sexual abuse is interpreted. Domestic Viciousness cases are most frequently brought for physical or sexual abuse, so if you think you've been sexually abused, you may have a good claim for domestic Viciousness.

Financial Abuse: Financial abuse is perhaps the least obvious. Financial abuse may take on many forms, such as a husband preventing his wife from obtaining an education or a job outside the

home. Financial abuse is extremely common, particularly when families have pooled their money into joint accounts with one partner controlling and where there's little or no family support system to help. Financial abuse is simply another form of control, even though it is usually less obvious than physical or sexual abuse. Often, the victim is completely dependent on his or her partner for money. With no access to money except through the abusive partner, the victim is completely at the abusive partner's mercy. The abusive partner may withhold money for food, clothing, and more.

Psychological Abuse: Psychological abuse is basically a catchall term for intimidating, threatening, or fear-causing behavior. This behavior must be persistent and significant. One-time event generally won't be enough to bring a domestic Viciousness action. A wide variety of behaviors fall under the umbrella of psychological abuse. Some common examples include: preventing the victim from talking to people unless they have been given 'permission,' preventing the victim from leaving the house, threatening the victim with Viciousness or emotional blackmail for doing something

Impact of Domestic Viciousness on Children

Children who witness domestic Viciousness may develop serious emotional, behavioral, developmental or academic problems. As they develop, children and teens who grow up with domestic Viciousness in the household are:

- More likely to utilize savagery at school or community in reaction to seen threats
- More likely to endeavor suicide
- More likely to utilize drugs
- More likely to commit violations, particularly sexual assault
- More likely to utilize savagery to improve their notoriety and self esteem
- More likely to gotten to be abusers in afterward life ugh to bring a domestic Viciousness action unless it's especially severe.

Provoked

In the novel *Provoked* there are so many examples for physical abuse. Kiranjith was tortured by Deepak physically. Deepak would beat her in streets often for her mistakes. Every time he blames Kiranjith for her mistake. When Deepak goes out for work, she felt happy and relieved. One day she told that to him, as a result he lost his temper and started to hit her hardly and tortured her. From that day on wards he fought with her with no reason. Kiranjith wanted to go for work but he refused to send her out. Deepak started demanding money from her as he was in affair with a white woman and wanted to spend money for her.

He refused to talk unless I gave him the money. I knew it was only because he was winning and dining with his white woman. He caught me by my hair and threatened to rip my mouth apart if I keep talking about his white woman. He was waving the hot iron about his other hand, and the tip of it burnt my right eye. I started screaming. I was frightened by the Intensity of his hatred for me. I ran into my bedroom, but as there was no lock on the door there was hardly any protection (202).

Deepak's Aggression

Deepak wouldn't let her eat her food too. He was always demanding something when she was eating. She always left her food half finished. She was cautious to escape herself from her husband's torture. Kiranjith feared to lie in the bed next to Deepak. She felt she was sleeping with a demon and that he would eat her up if she wasn't alert. Deepak always threatened to kill her and blamed her saying that she has made his life a nightmare. Kiranjith felt that she was trapped by her husband. She felt alone and dejected. Life seems to have become one endless cycle of abuse, beating and mockery. For 21 years she had lived such a sheltered existence that she thought these things happens only in films. Deepak had controlled her completely. She was not allowed to do anything without his permission. He wanted to have complete control even to hit him, to have sex, to watch television, to eat and to drink. She was even forbidden to talk to her family members. Kiranjith was longing to be a good wife but she wasn't given an opportunity.

Pregnant Kiranjith

In the time of pregnancy Kiranjith felt very sick but Deepak wouldn't care about her. She was not allowed to eat her food until he comes home. She survived only with black coffee many days. So she wanted to commit suicide. She believed that she couldn't live in this world. Kiranjith wanted to divorce but she was afraid of the society because the society would condemn her. Her age and experience did not make her strong but weak. She wanted to live her own life but was unable to do so. She was cursing herself for that. She lost her confidence. she was in dilemma.

I was so confused. I wanted to go to the solicitor's to get a divorce,
I wanted Deepak to come back, so we could live together normally
I wanted to kill myself
I wanted to run away
I wanted my family to bring reconciliation.
I don't know what I wanted (196).

Viciousness against Women

Viciousness against women is a problem around the world. It affects women of all races, classes and nationalities. It is a life breathing problem for the Individual and a serious problem for the society. Domestic viciousness is one of the major crimes against women. This book is a real journey of women who has some dreams in her eyes but was married to a psycho person. In this novel abuse is in different forms. The physical & mental torture which she has experienced by her husband seems to be pitiful which women cannot handle. Good balance can lead to a mental strength, but she lost it at its base. She had no one to help her, She always remained aloof with full of agony. Since women are so sensitive by heart than men, it is difficult for women to bear the pain.

Every coin has two sides. But in Kiranjith life, she has experienced only pain in her life. The mental and physical weakness has paralyzed her life. The whole life seems to be a hell. Her life was just filled with thorns and stings.

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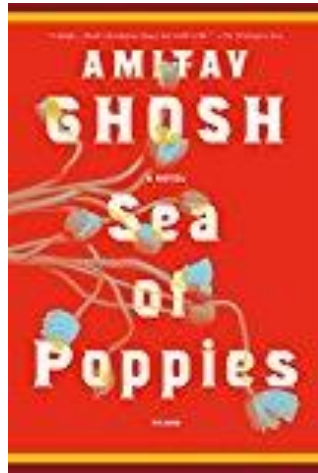
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The Voices of the Voiceless: A Study of Ibis Trilogy by Amitav Ghosh

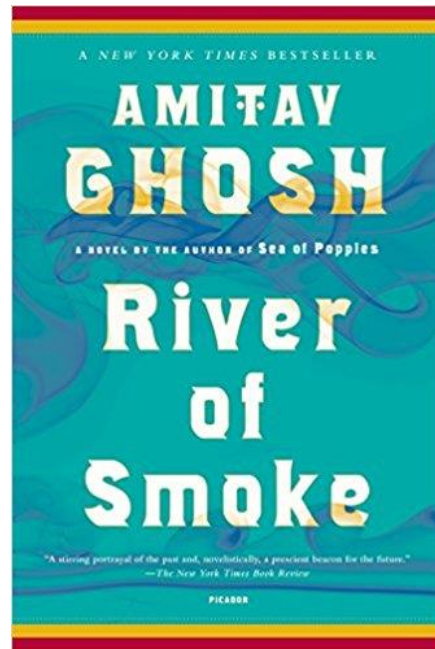
S. Sreehas, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. C. Santhosh Kumar



Subaltern

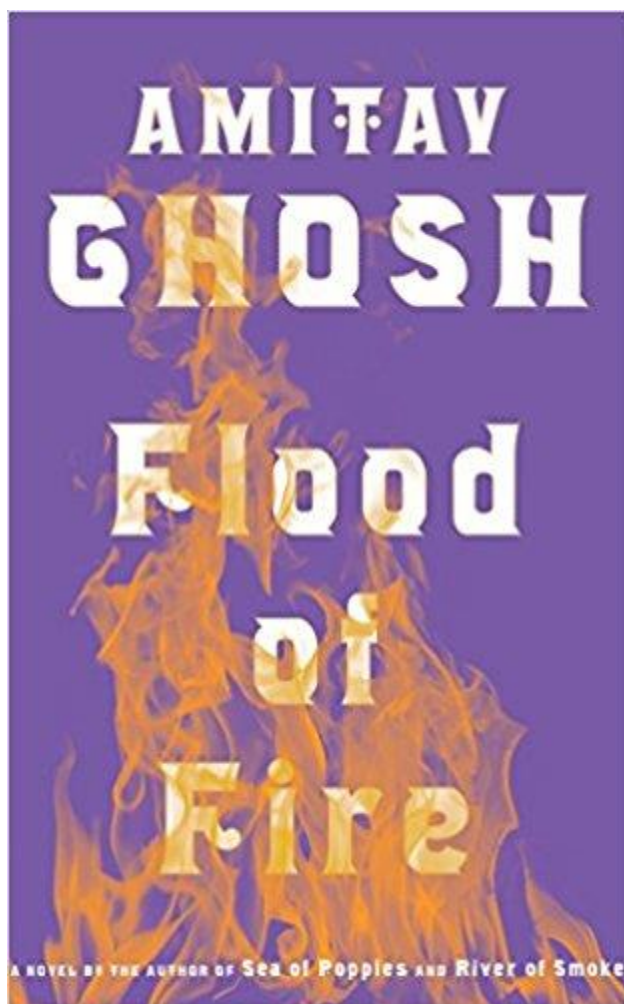
In post-colonial literature the term ‘subaltern’ means socially, politically, and geographically outside the hegemonic power structure of the colony. These subaltern people can be considered voiceless in one way or other. Subaltern studies become prominent in the field of postcolonial studies through the writings of a group of artists known as Subaltern studies Group. The writers in this group addressed the issues of the society from among the masses of the low levels of society rather than giving preference to the upper class. The term subaltern was coined by the Marxist intellectual Antonio Gramsci in his work *Cultural Hegemony*, which speaks about a group of excluded people from a society’s well-established institutions thus become voiceless in their society.

The Subaltern has become a standard way to designate the colonial subject that has been constructed by European discourse and internalized by colonial peoples who employ this discourse; “subaltern” is a British word of someone of inferior military rank and combines the Latin terms for “under” (sub) and “other” (alter). A current topic of debate is how, and to what extent, a subaltern subject, writing in a European language, can manage to serve as an agent of resistance against, rather than of compliance with, the very discourse that has created its subordinate identity. (Abrams 238)



Amitav Ghosh

Amitav Ghosh is one of the most prominent Indian English novelists of our time. He began his career in writing with *The Circle of Reason* (1986), which fetched him the Prix Medici Estranger Award, one of the France's top literary awards. His other works are *The Shadow Lines* (1988), *In an Antique Land*(1992), *The Calcutta Chromosome*(1996), *The Glass Palace* (2000), *The Hungary Tide* (2004), *Sea of Poppies*(2008), *River of Smoke*(2011), *The Flood of Fire*(2015) and his nonfictional works, *Dancing in Cambodia*, *At large in Burma*(1998), *Countdown* (1999), *Imam and the Indian*(2002). In all these works we can analyze his well-versed knowledge in the disciplines of sociology, anthropology and post colonial issues. These qualities make him prominent in each and every aspect of writings, especially in the field of subaltern studies. His characters in the novels convey a lot of information regarding post colonial aspects. "The characters in Ghosh's novels do not occupy discrete cultures, but 'dwell in travel' in cultural spaces that flow across borders - the 'shadow lines' drawn around modern nation states" (Khair 10).



Ghosh's Ibis Trilogy

Ghosh's Ibis trilogy consists of three novels namely *Sea of Poppies*, *River of Smoke* and *Flood of Fire*. All these three novels are beautifully picturises some historical incidents like opium war and trade as settings. Ghosh made a ship called Ibis as a microcosm of culture in which people from different nations, cultures and castes were forced to intermingle with each other, ignorant about their future destination. In these novels history is no longer a dominant stratum of society like kings, queens and some eminent personalities, but also for poor Lascars, outcasts and people from other nationalities like Africans, Arabs etc. Thus, Ghosh successfully provides a platform for this voiceless section to raise voice against the atrocities committed against them by the colonizers.

The ancestry of postcolonial criticism can be traced to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* Published in French in 1961, and voicing what might be called 'cultural resistance' to France's African empire. Fanon (a psychiatrist from Martinique) argued that the first step for 'colonialised' people in finding a voice and an identity is to reclaim their own past. For centuries the European colonising power will have devalued the nation's past, seeing its precolonial era as a pre-civilised limbo, or even as a historical void (Barry 186).

Ibis trilogy is a story set in the first half of the 19th century. It speaks about the opium war and trade and trafficking of coolies to Mauritius. The first volume of Ibis trilogy, *Sea of poppies*

speaks about the stories of Deeti, an ordinary village woman of higher caste and her husband Hukum Singh, an opium addict worker in Gazhipur opium factory. Here Ghosh picturises Deeti, one of the central character in the novel as doubly marginalized because being a woman and a wife of an opium addict. Throughout the novel the reader can analyse the emotional pangs she was forced to withstand. At first she was seduced by her husband's brother, when she was unconscious then she was forced to attain sati from which she narrowly escapes with the help of Kalua, a down trodden man of low caste. Her husband's relatives chased them furiously. All through the sufferings one could notice Deeti and Kalua undergo their difficulties voicelessly, but towards the end of the novel there emerges a new man and a woman in Kalua and Deeti. They began to raise their voice against the atrocities leveled against them and poor Lascars by the colonial authorities. Deeti's courage is clearly shown when she raises her voice against the cruel Bhyro Singh, an Indian born British officer "What does this mean? She said, in a show of defiance. Why did you want to see me alone?" (Poppies 475).

Sea of Poppies

Throughout the novel we see Kalua, a low caste man with well-built physic voicelessly bear all pains, but towards the end of the novel he broke out all his silence and kills Bhyro Singh, when he physically manhandles Kalua. "With a flick of his wrist, he sent it snaking back so that it looped itself around Bhyro Singh's Ox like neck." (Poppies 489). The novel also portrays the life of Neel Ratten Halder, a rich raja of Raskhal, who is cheated for forgery by Mr Benjamin Burnham, a rich British merchant. Thus, Halder become a victim of colonization, his life inside the jail moulded him into an ordinary man from the life of the rich king. The jail authorities suppressed his voice through harsh treatment. When he entered inside the jail the jail authorities asked him to remove his dress, he protested but his voice was forcefully suppressed. "Without a glance in his direction, the sergeant issued another order, in Hindustani: Kapra utaro ... take off his clothes" (poppies 288). Through these kinds of characters Ghosh tries to convey the difficult situations through which characters have to evolve. Here Halder became a voiceless prisoner of the rich powerful king.

Ghosh in his novel *Sea of Poppies* presents certain characters of foreign nationals like Zachary Reid, an American sailor who at certain occasion support the poor Lascars of Africa and Asia.

The River of Smoke

The second volume of Ibis trilogy, *The River of Smoke* concentrates more on opium trade and how it remained the root cause of the financial bankruptcy in China and India. Ghosh introduced certain new subaltern characters like Ah Fatt, an illegitimate son of a rich parsi opium trader Baharm Modi and a Chinese boat woman in Canton Chei Mei. Ah Fatt symbolizes the pathetic conditions of Chinese opium addicts who lose their life and belongings because of the illegal flow of opium inside China. The horrific life of Ah Fatt is exposed when he speaks about his useless and aimless life to Neel. For him there is no value for Canton fishermen boy inside China "What use was calligraphy to him when boat people were banned by law from sitting for Civil Service examinations?" (Smoke 89).

Flood of Fire

In the third volume of the trilogy *Flood of Fire* Ghosh speaks about Kesri Singh, brother of Deeti who joins British service as an Indian soldier at the rank of a sepoy. He became a sepoy against the wishes of his father who wants to join him in Mughal Badshah's army. Joining in British government jobs are considered as something great. The majesty of the British army was picturised through the conversation between Ram Singhiji, father of Kesari Singh and Bhyro Singh.

But why Ram Singhiji? Bhyro Singh protested. The boy is young and you are his father. You should explain to him that Delhi is not what it used to be; a soldier who wants to rise in the World needs to go to the East India Company's capital - Calcutta. There is no army in Hindus than that can match the terms offered by the British (*Fire* 67).

Thus, it is very clearly evident that the British agencies are successful in tactfully trapping the resourceful youngsters in Asia and Africa. These youngsters who don't even processes in depth knowledge about the concerned department enter the service and are forced to serve the British government like a subaltern. After entering into the English East India Company as a soldier, Kesari Singh experiences a sense of isolation. For the white officers he is something other "The colonizers were the centre, 'the self', and the colonized were the margins, the other" (Nagarajan 186).

To Conclude

In short Ghosh's Ibis trilogy can be considered as a work with plenty of subaltern elements. It is not just the story of three ships namely Ibis, which starts its journey from Calcutta carrying indentured servants and convicts to the Island called Mauritius. Another ship called Anahita, a vessel carrying opium to Canton, and Redruth which is on botanical expedition, also to Canton. The novel depicts lots of characters from different nations, castes, religions, poor Laskers, etc., which arise a sense of universal humanism. Ghosh raises his voice against the subjugation of the marginalized in the society.

Ghosh also gives voices to women by introducing certain powerful characters like Deeti and Paulettie Lambart, thus creating a sense of identity for women secessions. Paulettie though being a white woman was suppressed by her step father Burnham, but she destroyed all the shackles and entered into the ship called Redruth, which is on its voyage to Botanical expedition. Ghosh as a prominent writer acknowledges about the importance of women in each and every aspect of the society

A critic Anne McClintock observes in the book *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*, 'In a World where women do two-thirds of the world's work, earn 10% of the world's income, and own less than 1% of the world's property, the promise of post colonialism has been a history of hopes postponed (Nagarajan 189).

Thus, it is very clear that Ghosh's Ibis trilogy is about the history of commons, downtrodden voiceless section of the society like poor Laskers. It is a well-known fact that every great movement and accomplishments are not possible with the help of certain high-class sections like Kings, Queens and land lords. But it is possible only through the help of people from the lower strata of the society. It is this section who has to raise their voice so that there will be a great change. India got her freedom in 1947 not with the effort of a few leaders but by the continuous

and deliberate efforts of millions of Indians. Ghosh in his Ibis trilogy explicitly used his narrative technique in order to create characters left with no voice with the intention of supplying them with the strength to speak out their difficulties and remain like the majority.

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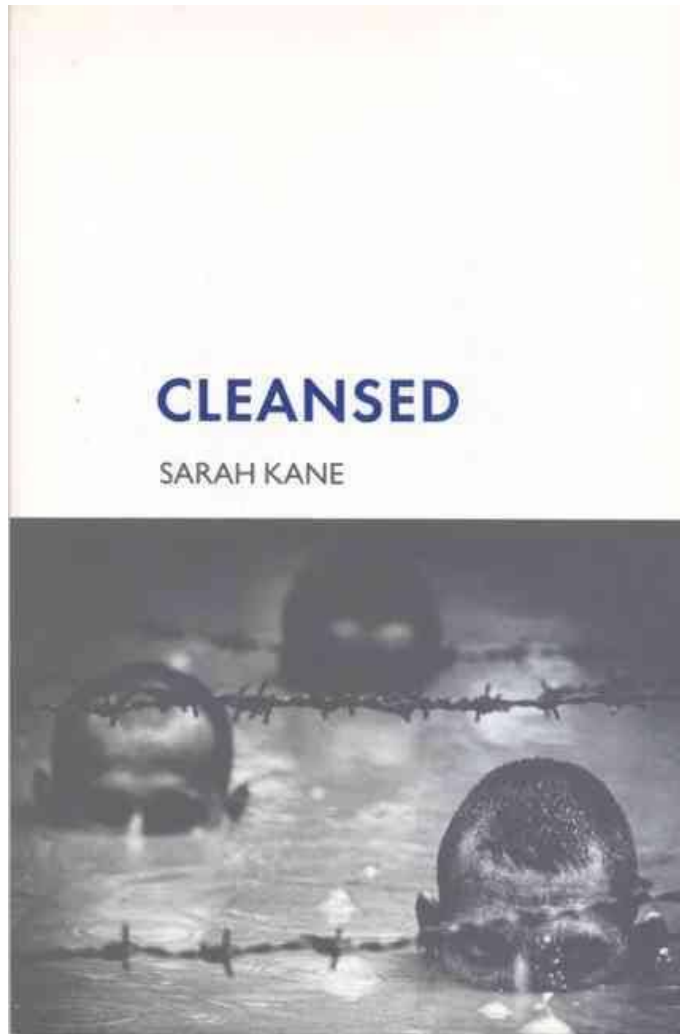
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**The Center within Margins:
A Study of Transgressed Boundaries in Sarah Kane's *Cleansed***

Abhijith M.S.



Cleansed

Cleansed, the play at focus in this paper was written by Sarah Kane and directed by James Macdonald and premiered at the Royal Court's theatre in April 1998. *Cleansed* is set in what is described as a university but which functions more as a concentration camp, supervised by the merciless Tinker. The play presents social outcasts like sexually committed siblings with

the male partner being a drug addict, a troubled boy, a gay couple and a peepshow artist. The play *Cleansed* focuses on multiple areas in which didacticism operates. Some of the most pressing issues discussed in the play are education, sexuality, religion, social institutions, politics, materialism and language. Kane subtly integrates these fields and discusses how the individual is entwined or entrapped psychologically and physically with scant scope of liberation in sight. In fact, the characters of the play willingly reject the need for liberation. This paper aims at providing an understanding into how the process of didacticism works and the environment that is created to germinate the seed of willing submission.



Sarah Kane 1971-1999

First Scene

The first scene of the play is set in the premises of a university. A university denotes a place of learning and maturation. After pulling the audience psychologically into this setting, the playwright abruptly throws them askew by showing that the characters in the scene are involved in the manufacture of drugs.

Tinker

Tinker is the instructor or the person in-charge of the university premises. It also presupposes the fact that Tinker has been assigned the duty of institutionalizing the in-mates of the university, probably the students or the recruits. The medium used to achieve this act is drugs which can affect the person physically and psychologically. Most often, the addicts develop a sort of subordination towards the dealer to obtain regular doses of the particular drug. In this case, Graham is loyal to Tinker. Also, Tinker admits that he does not use the drug himself but only supplies to the inmates. This leads the reader to question as to why he is exempted from the use of the drug. It is evident that he is only a dealer which signifies that he is employed under a higher authority.

Probably, Tinker has excelled in his job of disciplining the inmates according to the dictates of the authority due to which he is uplifted to the position of a dealer. Thus, the university becomes a place where particular ideologies are propagated. Graham by asking an increase in the dose of the drug shows that he is enslaved to the ideology without understanding or perhaps, ignoring the consequences of the implication. This drugging can be compared to the fashioning of an individual by the society using institutions of religion, family, education etc. the

process of fashioning removes the inborn energy from a person and replaces it by an expected and accepted social behavior.

Moreover, there is considerable empirical evidence that there may well have been less autonomy in self-fashioning in the sixteenth century than before, that family, state, and religious institutions impose a more rigid and far-reaching discipline upon their middle-class and aristocratic subjects. Autonomy is an issue but not the sole or even the central issue: the power to impose a shape upon oneself is an aspect of the more general power to control identity—that of others at least as often as one's own. (Greenblat 1)

Customer/Student

Another interesting detail that strikes the readers is the relationship that the dealer shares with the customer/student. Tinker lives within the premises of the university; however, he does not share any cordial relationship with any of the inmates. Graham asks Tinker the nature of their relationship and if they are friends. Tinker admits that they are not friends and that he is a dealer and not a doctor. Since they are not friends, it is evident that Tinker need not work for the benefit of Graham. Yet, Graham complies with Tinker. Moreover, despite confessing that he is not responsible for the consequences of the increase in the dose, Graham accepts the drug. The drug is injected near his eyes thereby signifying a distorted vision with an overdose of the ideology.

The Second Scene

The second scene of the play looks at another set of inmates who share a homosexual relationship. It is seen that Carl and Rod “sit on the college green just inside the perimeter fence of the university” (3). They are shunned to the margins of the university premises nevertheless they are within the boundaries. Their position can be related to physical elimination in totalitarian societies as stated by Giorgio Agamben:

Modern totalitarianism can be defined as the establishment, by means of the state of exception, of a legal civil war that allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system. (2)

Scene Three

Scene three of the play introduces Grace, the sister of Graham who had been killed in the first scene. As the scene progresses, it is seen that Grace shares an incestuous relationship with Graham. On reaching the university, she meets Tinker who lies to her that he had not been present when Graham died and that Graham’s body had been incinerated. Graham had been dead and none of his family members other than his girlfriend-sister had come in search of him. This also points to the negligence of families to understand how their children become indoctrinated. Therefore, the family inadvertently caters to the needs of the hierarchy that demands loyal submission.

On questioning Tinker, Grace realizes that Graham’s clothes had been given to a teenager inmate of the university by the name Robin. Overwhelmed with grief, Grace asks Robin to undress and hand over Graham’s clothes to her. She instantly wears Graham’s clothing and weeps profusely while Robin is left naked. Kane subverts the notion of gaze in this scene by

juxtaposing a naked male body with a female body. She subverts the existing power relations in “gaze”- a tool used by men as opined by feminists like Laura Mulvey:

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. (19)

Notions of Sexuality

Notions of sexuality dictate the individual to derive pleasure from a naked female body whereas the naked male body cannot become a source of pleasure. Due to this reason, a naked female body on stage is blasphemous while the naked Robin would only invite a trivial discomfort. This shows how sexuality and the propriety associated with it is didactic in nature. It is also seen that during the moment of extreme grief, when Grace is mourning the death of her beloved, Tinker handcuffs Grace and injects the drug into her. History has often shown that the proliferation of a particular ideology and its immediate acceptance is mostly during the peak moments of discomfort and loss. Dictators have always excelled by manipulating the masses during such moments of betrayal, loss, failure and even poverty. As soon as the drug is injected, Grace takes a voluntary decision to stay in the university.

Scenes Four and Five

Scenes four and five are the most crucial chapters of the play as it discusses didacticism through religion and language. Tinker who had observed the relationship between Carl and Rod arrests Carl and tortures him for his misbehavior. Despite being furious with Carl, Tinker tells the henchmen, “Don’t kill him./Save him” (10). This statement made by Tinker has got religious undertones. Tinker in the beginning of the play says that he is only a dealer and not a doctor. But, the mannerism of Tinker shows that he is a ‘doctor of the society’ officiating a cleansing of the so called ‘ill elements’ of the society. As a healer he is destined to save the people. By injecting the didactic notions in the inmates, he is saving them; thereby becoming a savior.

Subsequently, while torturing Carl, Tinker asks him “What’s your boyfriend’s name?” (11). Carl’s answer is, “Jesus”. This reply made by Carl is highly ambiguous. It could mean that he is made to believe in Jesus forcibly or it is probable that he had just called out to Jesus in great pain. There is also a possibility that he considers Rod, his lover as his ‘Jesus and Saviour’. As Derrida says in another of his coinages, the meaning of any spoken or written utterance, by the action of opposing internal linguistic forces, is ineluctably disseminated... There is thus no ground, in the incessant play of difference that constitutes any language, for attributing a decidable meaning, or even a finite set of determinately multiple meanings (which he calls “polysemism”), to any utterance that we speak or write.(Abrams55)

Further, Tinker says, “Close your eyes. Imagine it’s him”. For which Carl replies, “Please God no I” (11). This sentence is syntactically incorrect, but the playwright has deliberately used this language to propel the readers into the confused state of mind in which Carl is in. “Please God no I” could mean 1) If I please (give satisfaction) God, I do not exist 2) I have not pleased God 3) Please(request) God, don’t do this to me 4) Please(request) God, annihilate me. This

ambiguity is extended when Carl says, “ROD NOT ME” (11). Kane, through this game of words is showing how language can become futile when one desperately needs a ‘single’ and ‘universal’ meaning. Kane also suggests the arbitrariness of language which is also shown in the seventh scene where Grace teaches Robin to read and write. Robin is confounded when he realizes that the alphabets do not resemble the sounds. Kane thus reveals how ideology is dependent on a medium which is highly unstable, plural and arbitrary.

Ambiguity in Language

The ambiguity in language slips into the ambiguity of the plot when the dead Graham converses with Grace. In the next scene Grace is being taught how to talk and walk like Graham. She learns quickly to survive in the university environment. The playwright, by introducing a scene that is highly surreal is also hinting at the resurrection of Christ. Surrealism in art is scantily tolerated while surrealism in reality is revered. This reveals how religion is didactic and how it has successfully manipulated and enslaved generations.

Tinker enters a peep-show booth where he slips in tokens to become a voyeur. While looking at the dancing woman, he masturbates. Tinker tells the woman that she is in the wrong place for which she replies that she likes the place. He tells her that she is doing something wrong in being in this environment. The woman is completely aware of the mistake she is committing. This seems to have shaken Tinker because he instantly asks the woman if he could be her friend. He also tells the woman that he is a doctor and he will “be anything you need” (16). This throws light upon three important issues discussed earlier: the ability of the savior to transform according to the needs of the ‘hopeless’, the mental and physical doctor/healer who injects ideology into the trapped individual and gives punishment for committing a mistake and the hidden humanistic passions of Tinker who drops coins in a peep-show booth. It should also be noted that Tinker is seeing to his sexual pleasure while befriending the woman. This shows how relationships are built on personal gain which is unethical. This scene concludes with Tinker addressing the woman as ‘Grace’. The audience is unsure if the woman is Graham’s sister or if Tinker is just calling the woman as ‘Grace’, probably hinting at how he generalizes all women as objects of voyeuristic pleasure.

Scene Seven

In the seventh scene of the play, Kane explores another set of illegitimate relationship between a man and a woman. The conversation takes place between Grace and Robin who has fallen for the charm of Grace. Graham is also seen as observing the couple. Robin proposes to Grace and asks her personal questions regarding her previous romantic relationships. Grace says, “He bought me a box of chocolates then tried to strangle me” (18). It is evident that Graham had left Grace to join the university. In the first scene of the play, when Graham talks to Tinker, he also mentions about his sister but Tinker forbids him to speak. So, the separation between Grace and Graham would not have been mutual. This hints at the feasibility of incestuous relationship in the society. While talking to Robin, Grace calls him ‘Paul’. Nevertheless, she tells Robin that she did not share any ideal emotion with her boyfriend yet had often made love to him. Kane is showing how the love making can become an activity for satisfying bodily needs. Grace is evidently speaking against the norms of the society that demands sexual relationship only after the legalized marriage between a man and a woman. Her reference to Paul may also hint that she

would have had another sexual partner apart from Graham. The consequence of such relationships is seen in the succeeding scenes where Grace is beaten up and raped by henchmen upon the instruction of Tinker. Also, Carl and Robin are further tortured cruelly for not learning and complying with the dictatorial system. Despite being amputated, Carl still shows his love for Rod and asks his forgiveness.

Scene Eight

In scene eight, the audience is presented with a dumb Carl who is trying to apologize to Rod. When Carl writes on the mud, begging Rod for forgiveness, Tinker is watching from a distance. Tinker waits till Carl has finished writing and then cuts off both his hands. Tinker waited till Carl has finished making a ‘mistake’ or a sin and then punished him. Tinker acts like an almighty god, who watches over the people and gives them free will to act and punish them once they have sinned. Towards the end of the scene, Rod reads Carl’s apology, wears the ring removed from the amputated arm and says “I won’t lie to you Carl” (23). Rod is not ready to sugarcoat his words or console Carl. He has accepted the existential crisis that Camus’s Caligula felt, “Men die, and they are not happy” (13)

Scene Nine

Scene Nine shows that Tinker has obviously started feeling emotions besides sexual desires for the anonymous lady in the booth. This shows that no matter how much Tinker tries to separate himself from the normal desires of life, he feels natural temptations. The dealer, the priest who had dedicated himself to a life in the asylum to correct those who are abnormal according to social standards has fallen in love with an outcast. Scene ten is an allusion from the Biblical story of the stoning of Mary of Magdalene. Grace is being beaten up by unseen and unnamed entities. In the script, it is given that “Grace is being hit by an unseen group of men whose voices we hear” (24). The voices represent the society, for whom the incestuous Grace is a sinner who deserves punishment. We see Grace calling out to Graham as if he is her saviour

GRACE. Graham Jesus save me Christ
VOICES. He can never (crack) never(crack)...Save you (crack). (25)

Language Devices

The deliberate omission of punctuation marks makes the dialogues ambiguous and multiple meanings become valid. Grace’s cry of pain could also mean that Graham is called out to as if he is Jesus. Graham tells Grace to shut herself off, and to be prepared for what is coming. As the scene follows, Grace is brutally raped to which she does not react but instead shuts herself off and avoids acknowledging what is happening to her. Graham teaches her how to be prepared to receive death “If you know it’s coming you’re prepared” (26). However, Tinker appears at the end of the scene and tells the wounded Grace, “I’m here to save you” (27). This shows that the individual is forbidden to choose death, further creating a parallel with religions like Christianity where suicide is a sin.

Scene Eleven

In scene eleven, Robin visits the Black Room and uses his one and only coin to watch the lady in the booth dance. But unlike Tinker who masturbates, Robin sits and cries and we can assume that he is impotent. Robin had already expressed his love for Grace, but he knows that he

cannot please her sexually. This desperation must have led him to try himself in front of the dancer. As an impotent person, Robin represents another section of the social outcasts. The following scene shows Tinker offering Grace a chance into a new life. But as the scene progresses, both the audience and Tinker realize that Grace is only interested in being with Graham or as he is dead, be Graham herself. Tinker gives her an electric shock and the script says that “bits of her brain are burnt out” (29). Considering what happens towards the end of the play, we can assume that the part burnt out is her feminine side which includes her love for Graham and care for Robin. She will no longer be Grace but a body in transition which has lost all its feminine qualities and yet to acquire male qualities. In scene thirteen, Rod is found promising to Carl that if it was him that was caught, he would never have said Carl’s name. Rod makes a statement that characterize what society is doing to outcasts. “Can take away your life but not give you death instead” (30). This is what is happening to social outcasts; they are deprived of their right to live their own life and are forced to follow the norms of the society. The violence of didacticism has forced them to a situation where their identity is lost and they live as zombies, neither alive nor dead. The scene ends with Carl’s legs being cut off as a punishment for the love dance that he performs for Rod.

Scene Fourteen

Scene fourteen presets a final attempt from Tinker to hold himself together as he was. He tries to face the dancer as if she is just a prostitute to him. The scene ends with his confession that “I’ve always known” (32). In the coming scenes, Robin is fed the chocolates that he had saved for Grace by Tinker. Tinker knows that Grace has changed and that she will not care for Robin or his presents. When Robin cries and urinates out of fear, his books are torn to soak the floor. Grace, who comes in watching the torn papers ablaze, does not react to Robin, instead warms herself in the fire.

Rod makes another statement for Kane that “There is only now” (36). If there is neither a glorious origin nor a promised heaven, then there is no meaning in didacticism. If life has only a meaning in the present, then all that needs to be done is to live it. Rod decides to open himself up in front of Carl and accept his love whole heartedly. And they reject all norms and make love then and there. When Tinker pulls them away and asks which one of them is to be punished, Rod accepts death at the hands of Tinker. Thus after Graham, Rod becomes the character who finally gets what he wishes. In the very next scene, Robin follows through suicide. Tinker has given up his control over the inhabitants and their desires are approved. Rod gets to die. Robin, whose earlier attempts to suicide had been interfered with, resulting in his stay in the asylum, has finally killed himself. And in chapter eighteen, both Grace and Carl gets their sex changed through surgery. Carl, the homosexual wanted to be the wife of Rod and his penis has been surgically removed. That penis has been stitched on to Grace, whose breasts are also removed, making her Graham as she had wished. In the following chapter, Tinker gives in to his feelings for the dancing girl, and the man in charge of the asylum for correcting social outcasts makes love to a stripper.

Final Scene

In the final scene of the play, Kane uses Grace/Graham to state how important feelings are for a person. Both Grace and Carl raises their hands to the sky and the play ends with whole

place blinded in bright light which stands for freedom and hope, which was something not expected out of Kane's play.

Criticism of Oppression

Cleansed is analyzed as a criticism of the oppression and torture performed in the name of fashioning and disciplining. The play has in its center the character Tinker, who represents any authority and in a wider sense all totalitarian ideologies and grand narratives which claim the right to use violence to discipline the other. All characters in the play experience unconventional love, restrictions on their right to love and the pain of it being taken away from them. Kane brings on stage homosexuality, incest, love for a prostitute and haunting of the dead lover. These outcasts are held in the asylum in order to exorcise their behavioral deformities. Through their suffering Kane point fingers at the society, reminding them that they are either afflicting or assisting the same torture while trying to normalize those who move outside social norms. Freedom becomes just a sugarcoated word when people become subjects and are fashioned according to the discourses set by the authority and violence becomes the tool when hegemony fails to produce the expected results.

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The Center within Margins: A Study of Transgressed Boundaries in Sarah Kane's *Cleansed*

Feminine Existence in the Novel of *Ladies Coupé* by Anita Nair

Dr. V. Gnanaprakasam



Abstract

Indian women novelists have contributed more for the development of Indian literature. The Indian literature has gifted several talented women novelists who present the Indian version of such books and that too within the limits of dignity and decency. Most of the female novelists are known for their bold views that are reflected in their novels. Among them, Anita Nair is one of the feminist writers. Her novels explore the disturbed psyche of the modern Indian women. Her primary focus of attention is the world of woman and the struggle of women in the context of modern Indian society. She has created ripples in the society of male domination by narrating women and their plight, fears, dilemmas, contradiction and ambition. She also strikes a perfect balance between their instinctual needs and their intellectual aspects. Most of her works deal with women's suffering, subjugation, oppression, frustration, sexuality, freedom, identity crisis, survival, caste discrimination and social issues especially in her novel *Ladies Coupé*.

Keywords: Anita Nair, *Ladies Coupé*, Women's suppression, existence, male domination, subjugation and suffering.

Feminism

Feminism is a powerful tool for voicing some of the basic concerns and aspirations of women. One of the Primal concerns of feminism is to declare that a woman is a being. A woman is not the other, she is not an appendage to man. She is an autonomous being capable of, through

trial and error, finding her own way to salvation. The attempts to create female enclave are extremist reaction, but the recent trends in feminist literature are an indication that it is possible for women to live independently in the world where men also live.

In the twentieth century, women's writing is considered a powerful medium that brings out some features of feminism. Their novels speak of certain burning issues related to women as well as those issues that exist in society. Their writings speak about the psyche of the female. The majority of these novels portray the psychological sufferings of frustrated housewives. Women novelists reflect in their novels the predicaments of today's women who have realized that she is helpless and not independent. Among them, Anita Nair is one of the notable novelists who portrays the condition and status of women and how they suffer in the patriarchal society. The aim of this paper is to study the feminine existence in Nair's *Ladies Coupe*.

Anita Nair

Anita Nair is a popular English writer who was born in Kerala. She is a living postmodern Indian woman writer in English and one of the remarkable female writers. She explores not only the feelings and sufferings of her characters, but also describes about their happiness and enjoyment in their everyday life. Nair is a powerful writer and shows a great understanding and compassion for all women through her tender stories especially in her novel *Ladies Coupe*. The title of the book gives a sneak preview of what it is all about. It makes a point how the Indian society treats women. The novel deals with multiple lives and multiple voices that every woman would have faced in her life. The women characters of the novel *Ladies Coupe* suggest courageously new patterns of feminine existence. The novel redefines the lives of women. Anita Nair has done a commendable job in bringing out the positive role transformation of women in the ongoing battle of establishing female selfhood.

Ladies Coupé

Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe* deals with the stories of six women as they travel in the ladies' compartment. The main theme of this novel is the development of the protagonist's mind and character. In *Ladies Coupe*, this formation of character and the development of the women into mature individuals make them aware of their identity through a painful course of repression, revolt and resolution. The six women characters relate their stories and one realizes that all have suffered at the hands of the repressive forces of society.

The repressive forces are varied in their manifestation- a patriarchal society and paternalism; sexual politics in marital relationships; sexual stereotyping with its imposed code on female sexuality and an imposed definition of female roles; the repression and marginalization of women effected through traditional institutions in society. The final outcome of this process of an awareness of repression and a sense of revolt leads the characters on to certain resolutions which are bold and lead them to happiness. The whole process finally leads to an exploration of the dilemma of the new woman who is caught between traditionalism and modernity.

Mood to Rebel and Deviate - Akhila

Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe* is a novel depicting the suffering woman with a mood to rebel and deviate from the fettered living. Akhila, the Brahmin heroine is a forty-five year old spinster

who burns herself like a candle for the welfare of her family. The character of Akhila presents a tragic scenario in the Indian family tradition especially in the middle class where the eldest first daughter has to sacrifice her life for the sake of others especially her parents and brothers as she is the first born in the joint family. No love is shown to her or no proposal for marriage is taking shape as she is the cursed member of the family, who is responsible to shoulder the entire family and sacrifice her life for their welfare.

All the responsibilities were shouldered by Akhila after the death of her father. She has been offered her father's post as a clerk in the income tax department. She has played different roles in her family such as sister, a daughter, an aunt, and a caretaker etc. While caring for her family, her own needs are shelved and put in cold storage. The author narrates: "When Akhila's father died, two things happened: Sunday became just another day of the week and Akhila became the man of the family" (75). She was originally Akhilandeswari, innocent care free and independent but she was reduced to Akhila the bread winner and care taker of the family.

A woman according to Akhila's mother is born only to take care of her husband and children. She could cherish only the interest of the family and should not go beyond it. Rightly Akhila should have been influenced by the view of her mother. But the death of her father makes her the head of the family. Akhila is thrown to the world of profession, dominated by ambitious men and women and she slowly realizes the difference between her family and the society. Even Akhila's mother does not think of her daughter's marriage but Akhila sacrifices her life and money for the sake of her brothers and sisters who become well settled in life.

In her family Akhila is taken only as a provider- a provider of all comforts to the family. Her brother takes her only for a spinster and not for a sister. Nobody in the family understands her emotions or care for her feelings and take her only as a earning machine for them. Akhila's life thus becomes solitary, melancholic, and discontented. She has become forty five and there is nothing in her life to look back. The mental suffering of being a spinster all through her life torments her mind; she takes a decision to live alone and to live for herself. She is only called Akka by her brothers and sisters and Ammadi by her mother and they never want her to be called as Amma by bestowing her to the status of marriage.

Love Between Akhila and Hari

The love story between Akhila and Hari can be analysed in terms of middle class morality and compromises. She gives gift to Hari but is taunted by the thought of what the society will think of their relationship- middle aged woman seeking the friendship of the young boy and once for all goes away from Hari to an unknown destination. What Akhila longed for was "The entwining limbs, an arm thrown round her waist, a chest to rest her head upon and the blossoming of her wombs, the waiting for her husband to come home and the sharing of an ordinary poiument" (160).

She was not given any opportunity for this and her family never took any step for her marriage. Instead they were anxious that Akhila should never get married because all their comforts and luxuries of life will be lost. The final outbursts come when Akhila understands the real intentions of her family members. When they resist her attempt to go alone Akhila retorts:

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

Dr. V. Gnanaprakasam

Feminine Existence in the Novel of *Ladies Coupé* by Anita Nair

For Twenty-six years I gave all myself to this family. I asked for nothing in return. And I wish to make a life of my own do any one of you come forward and say it's time you did this. Akka you deserve to have a life of your own instead you worry about what it will do to your individual times. (205)

A Total Organic Unity

The individual story of Akhila has a total organic unity, where the individual woman rediscovers herself and the title itself suggests to organize a coupe not a revolution to overthrow any country or empire but work for a transformation of people's mind and attitude. It is the resolution that takes place in their psyche not to be put out, but fight out till the end. They create a coupe in a do or die situation as it becomes a metaphor for a utopian world that is liberated from patriarchy, one that is not characterized by false binaries. Hence, Akhila decides to alienate herself from the traditional world and to live for herself.

Now Akhila is totally transformed, highly independent, and not bothered about what others think of her; she wants to live, live all alone for herself. She is free to do what she wants, attach or detach herself at her will and never live for others or allow her life to be dictated and conditioned by others. She rediscovers herself and it is expressed by Anita Nair as follows:

Akhila discovers that she likes being alone. She has no more doubts what her life will be if she lives alone. It may not be what she dreamt it to be at least she would have the effort to find out. And perhaps that is all the needs to ask of life now. Then she is allowed to try and experience it. (277)

Free and Liberated Bird

Akhila is only a free and liberated bird. Coming out of home to escape from the selfish centered household Akhila has seen and experienced the world in her own and therefore has developed different attitudes towards her life. She thus presents the image of the new Indian women, who can enter into successful and harmonious relationship with men, anchored in mutual freedom and respect without allowing themselves to end up as subjugated sex mates and glorified housekeepers. Akhila tastes power and "...knows what it feels like to be a cat and mouse game" (271). Akhila learns to live by her own rules. She is able to throw her head back and voice her triumph over oneself and culture.

In the Coupé

In the *coupé* the first person to narrate the trajectory of her wedded life is Janaki an older woman, who lives through myriad life experiences only to realize that she loves her husband more than she imagined, even more she loves her son. She is a pampered wife and mother. She marries him to protect her. In the beginning, she is protected by her father, now by her husband, after her husband, her son will protect her. According to her, her duties are to be a good wife and a mother. Janaki had become aware of a certain rage creeping in her and had found everything her husband did is irritating. Her initial response to Akhila's query was "Why should a woman live alone, there is always a man willing to be with her?" (21). Janaki tells Akhila that:

I am a woman who has always been looked after. First there was my father and brothers; then my husband. When my husband is gone there will be my son, waiting to take off from where his father left off. Women like me end up being

fragile...I believed in that old cliché that a home was a woman's kingdom. I worked hard to preserve mine. ...And then suddenly one day I didn't matter anymore. My home ceased to interest me, none of the beliefs I had built my life around had any meaning. I thought if I were to lose it all, I would cope (23).

As for Janaki, she develops a friendly love for her husband in the autumn of their lives to find some peace from her son who accuses her of egoism. Her spiritual crisis was short lived and she changed to a fragile creature forever. Anita Nair narrates the story skilfully. Her descriptive skills and capabilities of storytelling can be seen in the life of Janaki.

Next, we have Margaret Shanti. She is another example how women are dominated by men. She is a chemistry teacher, who compared people with chemicals. Margaret's life goes through many physical, mental, and spiritual crisis. She keeps on changing till she feels happy. She marries the principal of the school where she works as a teacher. Her marriage is a love marriage. He loved her but she has no individuality. Margaret's husband Ebenezer Paulraj is an example for male chauvinism. Margaret's repression can be called as one of sexual stereotyping. She is forced to live as a model wife and daughter.

Sheela is the teenager who accompanies Akhila in the train. She explains the act of challenge to make up the face of her dying grandmother whose exceptional perceptive observation makes her understand even the subtle things around her. Then Prabha Devi shares her own tale. Her imagination raises by self-confidence. She seeks sexual liberation in an extramarital link. To escape from everything, she learns swimming which gives confidence to her.

Finally, the last quiet passenger is Marikolanthu who is dressed poorly but the expression on her face said that, "She had seen it all, human fickleness and fallibility, and there was very little that would take her by surprise" (18). Her body becomes the site of violence in the case of raping. Her life had been ruined by one dark night of lust.

Akhila and her fellow passengers argue that marriage is not imperative. Their independence helps them to get over a dominated existence in the hands of men or society because each of them as a spinster older sister, once the breadwinner of the family, still the cash cow. But Akhila is certain that she will not let her family use her anymore.

To Conclude

Conclusively, Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupé* is an examination of the psyche of the women characters. The coupe proves to be a close, packed comfortable and warm environment for the women to speak freely about their experiences. She paints her women as they are with their protection and she is ready to open their hearts to other women. The predicament of her characters is covered with a faint existential shade.

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416

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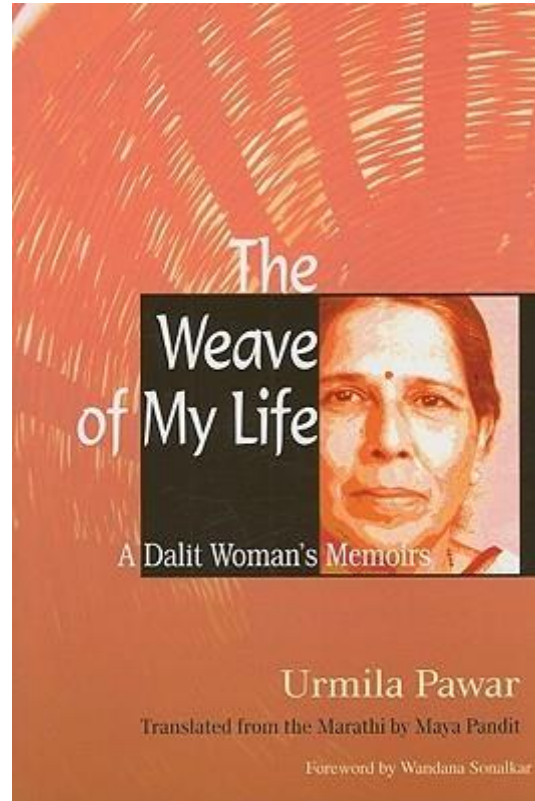
Dr. V. Gnanaprakasam

Feminine Existence in the Novel of *Ladies Coupé* by Anita Nair

417

**Portrayal of a Dalit Woman –
A Study of Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life***

N. Pavithra



Introduction

Literature is one of the important literatures in India. Dalit literature gives voice to dalit people. The word Dalit is derived from the Sanskrit word " Dalita " which means crushed, broken to piece and suppressed. The word Dalit refers to a particular group of people or community who are economically and educationally backward. Dalit people are dominated and isolated by the upper caste people. During the Vedic period dalits were treated as slaves. Rig-Veda describes that all human beings have descended from God. Rig-Veda tells the Brahmanas were his mouth, the Kshatriyas becomes his arms, the Vishay's were his thighs and the shudras were his feet. The interpretation and belief give space to caste system. These Shudras later came to be known as dalits.

Dalit Movement

Dalit literature emerged during the period of writers like Madara Chennai, Kalavee and Santkabir have raised their voice for Dalits. The Dalit modern movement emerged around 1960s in Maharashtra in Marathi language. During 1960's Dalite Sahitya Sangh was established and Jyotiba Phule and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar actively participated in it. They are the inspiration for other writers and activists. Later Dalit literature has spread to other languages like Gujarati, Kannad, Punjabi, Hindi, Malayalam and Bengali. Chitkara said, "India will awake again if anyone could love with all his heart the people of the country- bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, downtrodden, ever starved, quarrelsome and envious" (Chitkara 54).

A Literature of Reality

Dalit literature is not a literature of imagination rather it is a literature that projects the domination, exploitation and atrocities over Dalit by upper caste people. Dalit literature is a voice against social injustice. Dalit literature projects the life of dalits as it is. Dalit people suffered under caste people for centuries. During the medieval period there were many Dalit writers who came forward to voice against the social injustice. A. P. Nirmal said:

The term Dalit Sahitya refers to the body of literature which gives expression to the feelings and experiences of the writers representing the people who are broken, downtrodden, crushed, etc. More narrowly the term represents the body of literature produced by the writers and poets belonging to the so-called outcaste communities, the untouchables. (Prabhakar 79)

During the 1960's there was a movement called Dalit Modern Movement in Maharashtra from which emerged activists like Dr. Ambedkar. He and his followers started to protest against the atrocities of upper caste people.

Urmila Pawar's *The Weaves of My Life*

Urmila Pawar's *The Weaves of My Life* is an autobiographical novel that projects an empowered woman. The protagonist Urmila Pawar is the representation of modern dalit women. She got good education, job and has created her own identity. This auto biographical novel is entirely different from other dalit works. While all the other works deal with the negative aspects, the unbreakable suffering and exploitation and thereby project hopelessness and despair, this work projects the positive. The portrayal of dalit women in Urmila Pawar's *The Weaves of life* which is an autobiographical novel can be compared to the autobiographical works of other Writers like Baby Kamble and Bama. Bama in her autobiographical novel *Karuku* has pictured the dalit community and its troubles. She has also spoken about the challenges that she faced in life. Throughout her life, she suffered and was dominated by upper caste people.

Expression of Multi Dominations

In Bama's novel *Karuku*, we find expression of multi dominations. When Bama stayed in the missionary, she was discriminated by the nuns because Bama is a dalit women. Bama was frustrated and never uttered a word against them. Bama strongly believed that education will improve the life of the dalit someday. Bama believed in education. Bama expected that dalit people will educate themselves and improve their life. Bama's desire is to achieve equality between boy and girl. They should be given proper education, freedom and respect. In *Karuku*, Bama depicts her childhood and womanhood. She described about the sufferings of herself and

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N. Pavithra

Portrayal of a Dalit Woman – A Study of Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life*

other women in the community. She had a strong desire and hope on the development of her community.

Baby Kamle's *The Prisons We Broke*

Baby Kamle's *The Prisons We Broke* talks about the Mahars. In this autobiographical novel, she portrays the dalit women facing exploitation by upper caste men and dalit men. The *Prison We Broke* portrays the dalit women who all suffered from their superstition, hunger and poverty. There is no hope of education in a dalit women's life. Baby Kamble described the poor condition of the dalit women and their anger against the upper caste the upper caste and Brahmanica patriarchy. Baby Kamble's ambition is to get freedom for dalit women.

The Weaves of My Life

The Weaves of My Life is an autobiographical novel of Urmila Pawar. She is the protagonist of the novel. She was born in the village Conk near Ratnagiri in Maharashtra. As an autobiographical novel, it focus on Urmila Pawar's childhood and her growth Urmila Pawar has undergone many difficulties throughout her life. When she studied in a school, she was isolated by her classmates and school teachers, because she was a Dalit by birth. One day she was forced to clean the cow dung in the school because she is a Dalit girl. She passed in her matriculation exam and finished B.A in Marathi literature. She had a love affair with Harish Chandra, an educated man. Later, Urmila Pawar married Harish Chandra. After the marriage she applied for M.A meanwhile she attended many public speeches and presentations about the Dalit movement. In her personal life, she was dominated by her husband. Urmila Pawar suffered the problems faced by every working woman in India. She is accused of being an irresponsible housewife and mother, because she involved herself with dalit welfare organization. But Urmila Pawar overcomes her courage and organized welfare organization for Dalit women.

Later, Urmila Pawar started writing short stories. Through her short story she started to reveal her inner thoughts and anger in a frank and direct manner. She organized a literary conference to bring dalit writers forward. Throughout her life she voiced for dalit people and especially for dalit women. The Laxmibai Tilak Award was given to Urmila Pawar by Maharashtra Sahitya parishad for Aiden. In Urmila Pawar's *The Weaves of My Life* she describes about her childhood memories. She talks how the village women have to cross the two hills to sell their rice, firewood and so on. After the heavy day they have to work hard in the house. They have to give food to the children and serve to their husband. They were frequently beaten by their husbands. But Urmila Pawar was not like the village women though she was also born in that same village. Urmila Pawar had an education. She got M.A degree in Marathi literature. She actively participated in public speeches. Though her husband dislikes his wife's public engagements, she managed to come out and work for dalit women. She later started writing and was recognized as a good writer. Though her husband felt proud of his wife, he never showed it in front of her. This shows his male ego. She was never encouraged by her husband. Her own 4 sufferings and the discrimination she faced, being a dalit girl aroused her to protest against the social injustice. Urmila celebrated 25th December Manusmriti Burning Day as Women's Liberation Day and she organized a women welfare organization. Later she arranged a literary conference to bring dalit writers forward. All these activities proved that Urmila Pawar is a feminist and activist. She not only writes and imagines about the community development. she worked hard in the field to achieve women's empowerment.

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N. Pavithra

Portrayal of a Dalit Woman – A Study of Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life*

A Comparison with Other Dalit Novels by Dalit Women

A comparison of Bama's *Karuku*, Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke* and Urmila Pawar's *The Weaves of Life* reveals the difference in projection by these women writers. Though all the three are autobiographical novels, they lend different perspectives to the problems inherent in the life of the dalit women. While Bama and Baby Kamble had concentrated on hiding a mirror at their problems, Urmila has shown the situation to those problems. Her work can be considered as the next step, a positive move towards true liberation and justice for the dalit women. Bama and Kamble show their own success which can serve on a good role model but Urmila leads the way to the success of every one of the community through her community endeavors like organizing conferences and running welfare organizations. Thus, Urmila's novel is a feather in the lap of dalit writing.

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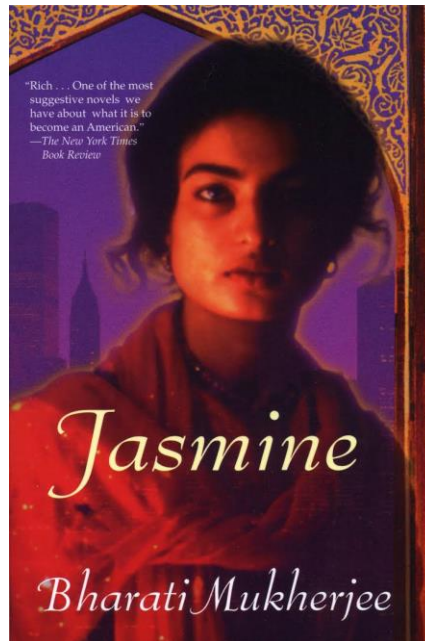
Identity Crisis in Bharathi Mukherjee's Novels *Jasmine and Desirable Daughters*

P. Preethi, M.Phil. Research Scholar

Bharathi Mukherjee

Bharathi Mukherjee is a writer who deals with the problems of the Indian immigrants mainly, women. She writes about the struggles and Problems faced by Indian women. The problem of cross cultural crisis and the decisive search for identity is also one of her important themes. In the novel *Jasmine*, Bharathi Mukherjee writes how the female protagonist tries to tackle the problem of loss of culture and endeavors to presume a new identity in the U.S. The protagonist Jasmine leaves her country to accomplish her wishes. On reaching the U.S., she begins to search for self-independence. She struggles hard to achieve it and at last she realizes that self-independence is not to be an Indian or American but to be at peace with herself.

Jasmine



Protagonist Jasmine Search for Identity

In this novel the main protagonist Jasmine's search for identity and her true self began from the day she was born. She was born as Jyoti in the village of Hasnapur. As a girl child she was almost strangled to death so that her parents might free her from the problems of marriage. But she survived that attack. In fact, her childhood memories became the instrument in her fight against fate and her search for self-identity. She was predicted of widowhood and separate by an

astrologer when she was only seven years old. She was not troubled down by fate. She always tried to raise herself above blind beliefs and fallacy. *“Fate is Fate, When Beulah’s bridegroom was fated to die to snakebite on their wedding night; did building as still fortress prevent his death? A magic snake will penetrate solid walls when necessary.”* She learnt identifying “permissible rebellion” against the standard of the society which she would later use to her own advantage. In spite of the strength and willpower Jyoti had, she was threatened by dangers, challenges and many barriers in her quest for identity. And this was the main reason which made her to disguise her true identity most of the time and live accordingly to the images fashioned by others. But the eruption of her father to comply with rules did not discourage Jyoti from expressing a small part of her dream or ambition. She achieved a small part of her dream by falling in love and marrying Prakash, a very young and ambitious engineer. He wanted Jyoti to shed off her past and make a new kind of woman. To break off the past, he gave me a new name: “Jasmine”. And this was the beginning of a new journey for her. After getting a new identity, Jasmine also took care of her husband’s driving goal. Renamed as Jasmine, she was looking forward to going to America with her husband to pursue his further education. She was sharing the ambition of her husband happily. But her husband Prakash was killed by the terrorists on the eve of their departure. This made Jasmine grief-stricken and frustrated. And her dream was shattered. Instead of spending the rest of her life as a helpless widow at Hasnapur, she decided to go to America. This kind of inner will in such kind of situation helped her to fulfill her mission successfully.

Jasmine Went to America

Then Jasmine went to America on a forged passport. She left India to survive against the forces of destiny but unfortunately her American journey began on a sad note. She was raped by Half-Face who had *“lost an eye and ear and most of his cheek in a paddy field in Vietnam”*. (P.104) Half-Face was the captain of the ship in which Jasmine reached America. But after reaching America, Half-Face raped Jasmine in a hotel. After Half-Face raped she did not kill herself as she felt that her mission was not yet over. And she killed Half-Face by becoming Kali, personified, the Goddess of Destruction. She also performed a kind of death for her by burning her dishonored clothes symbolically. It was the death of her old self and the birth of a new self. Thus, she began her journey into America. From that journey of Jasmine to America to fulfill her mission came out her interior pursue – to unfold her true self and identity. Jasmine was modern girl who faced the challenges of life boldly and struggled hard to survive against all odds. Then Jasmine met Lilian Gordon who entered into her life as a hope. It was Mrs. Gordon who educated her, made her free from her past memories and strengthened her will to survive.

Professor Vadhera

With her help, she went to meet Professor Vadhera who helped Prakash in securing admission in an engineering course. In the beginning, she stayed at Professor Vadhera’s house. She was not earning by the strict ethnicity in the house that she was to follow as a widow. So she decided to leave that house. This move indicated that self-actualization was developing in her life and it might be due to the acculturation to the American way of thinking and dressing. After a short time, Jasmine worked in the house of Tylor and Wylie Hayes in Manhattan as a care giver to their little daughter Duff. There her name was changed from Jasmine to Jase. While she worked as a care-giver, she also took up part time jobs like answering phones and tutoring

graduate students in Punjabi in the University. She absorbed the alien culture rather greedily. At this phase of her life, Jasmine had been able to gain a personality and became very confident about her personality.

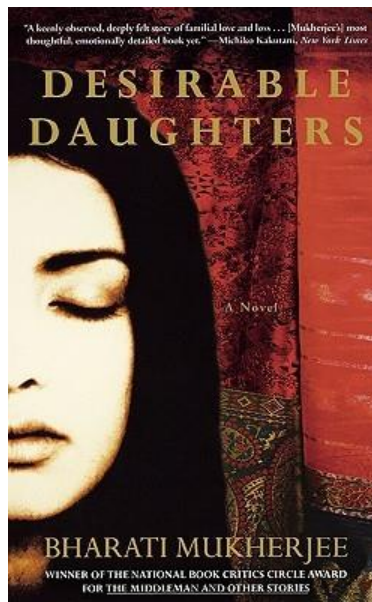
Two Opposite Forces

The pulling between these two opposite forces, i.e., the Indian and the American did not frighten her, but it made her thrilled. The alien country taught her to live with ease and confidence. There she got a job in Iowa's bank. She also made a place in the heart of the banker Bud Ripplemayer. Jasmine had a peaceful life in Bud's house. There she assumed a new identity and she became "Jane" from "Jase". She considered herself to be a catalyst and not the reason for the divorce of Bud and Karin. She tried to comfort him and make him confident. And she became pregnant carrying Bud's child but did not wish to marry him she made Karin understand that she was not her enemy but it was Bud's happiness that mattered to both of them. Jane had fully accepted the American family, but she was waiting for real love. Then suddenly she got a letter from Taylor informing her that he would shortly come to take her. And it was a welcome surprise for her.

Achieving True Identity

Hence, Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* is the movement of Jasmine's life towards achieving **true identity**. Her journey to America is a process of her quest of true self. At every step of her life, Jasmine is a winner, she does not allow her troubles and struggles to frustrate her progress in life and she is finding a place for herself in the society. In other words, she is a true feminist who fights every challenge in life to establish herself in the society. Jasmine realizes that the true identity of a person does not lie in being an Indian or an American but it lies in the inner spirit of the person to be at peace with her. Bharati Mukherjee has employed metamorphosis transformations in the life of Jasmine in the process of her search of her true identity.

Desirable Daughters



The novel mainly focused on how the women faced many obstacles in other country. The identity of the protagonist is highly assimilative, can adopt and hold herself both to her traditional Indian way of life and to her newly adopted American ethos. She tries to move away from the constrained identity and vacillates between two lives: “*maybe I really was between two lives.*” Tara reconstruction of identity is rooted in her nostalgic and romantic recollection of her past. It is based on her thoughts about the past coming to her mind in the past coming to her mind in the present but in fragments, and not whole. She tried to reconstruct her identity through her diasporic experience. She was attempting to redefine the importance of cultures through space and time. Loneliness had made Tara a little wanton and wantonness had made her very lonely.

Home and Migration

The concept of home and migration is very much embedded in the narratology that Bharathi Mukherjee presents in *Desirable Daughters*. It is the sense of migration which brings about a change to the identity of Padma, who has finally made New York her home, her land of choice. But her indisputable attachment to her home makes her the sustainer and preserver of Bengali tradition in America. The alien culture thus fails to subvert her traditional identity

Portrayed in the Liberated Form

The characters in the novel are not portrayed in the liberated form, they are trapped into different set of emotions trying into different set of emotions trying to carve out a new identity for themselves. Tara is projected as a character who more of a status conscious tries to uphold the values of traditional society although falling for different allurements in the present. In the end, the novel, tries to come back from where it started, where and the legend of Tara Lata the tree bride, but this device doesn't quite work either. The denouement somehow goes slack and does not yield a satisfying end to the story. The novel seems to be a family which could not bring out the desirable characteristics in the characters of the novel, that portray them as a dominant in any sphere. The end is quite dynamic and complex where the description of motherland may be magical but symbolic purpose was lost.

A Liquid Society

Bharathi Mukherjee depicts a liquid society in her novels, a society in her novel, a society in flux. It is a society of constant flow, the flow of migrants, the flow of power structures, flow of people and supplies. In the novel *Desirable Daughters*, Mukherjee has struck a balance between tradition and modernity by representing past and present which is achieved through the female protagonist- Tara, who served her links with tradition but remains tied to her native country. Tara influenced by ancient customs and traditions, but is rooted to modern customs. Tara is alienated from the society as she oscillated between the nostalgic fascinations of a traditional past and the romantic and daring allurements of the present. The Diasporic qualities exhibited by Tara establish the merging of the East and west which shows the clash.

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**A Study of Enslavement and Liberation in Taslima Nasreen's
Selected Poems**

M. Pushpavalli, M.Phil. Research Scholar



Taslima Nasreen

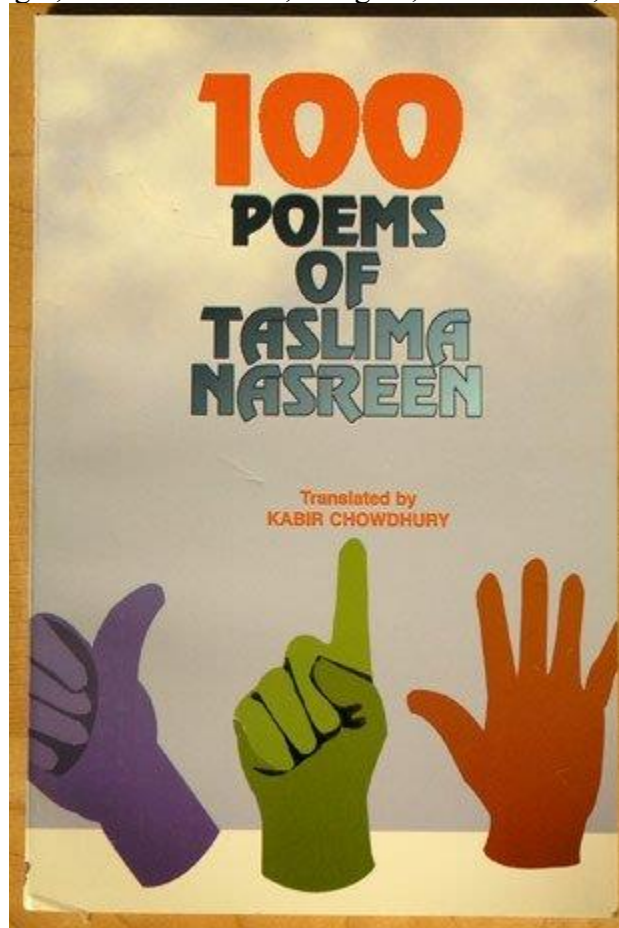
Courtesy: <https://www.indiatoday.in/mail-today/story/taslima-nasreen-bangladesh-blogger-killed-jehadist-islamists-249474-2015-02-14>

Abstract

Taslima Nasreen is considered as a controversial feminist writer in the world. Her works depict the condition of women in a society governed by a fundamentalist attitude forms the subject matter of her poems. Nasreen fights for women's rights and against patriarchal society, which she

holds responsible for the oppression of women in Bangladesh. This present paper is an attempt to reinterpret Nasreen's selected poems from her collection of poems 'All about Women.' She reveals the realities of a women's life throughout her poetry. Being a feminist, she discusses several issues connected to women and provides solution in this poetry.

Keywords: Women's Right, Fundamentalism, Religion, Enslavement, Liberation.



Taslima Nasreen

Taslima Nasreen is a poet, novelist, short story writer, essayist, columnist and fiercely independent feminist. She is a recipient of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought (1994), Madanjeet Singh Prize for the promotion of tolerance and non-violence by UNESCO (2004) and Humanist Laureate from International Academy for Humanism, USA (1996).

"She is either the bravest or most foolish person I've ever met," Nasreen's friend quoted (Weaver 49). There is no question about the bravery of Taslima Nasreen. She is appreciated as a feminist, who fights for women's rights and against male dominated society, which she holds responsible for the oppression of women in Bangladesh. This paper is an attempt to reinterpret Nasreen selected poems from her collections of poems 'All about Women.' In her opinion, Women live in a state of oppression in Bangladesh and political freedom has not done much to alleviate it. Since 1975, the male dominated society of Bangladesh has been emphasized and women's rights have been constantly violated.

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A Study of Enslavement and Liberation in Taslima Nasreen's Selected Poems

On Enslavement of Women

Nasreen employs the enslavement of women in her new episteme, it is important to define female subalternity in the Bangladesh context. There is a wide range of subjugation among Bangladeshi women. A poor woman is a subject to extreme male domination since her lack of education severely limits her access to power; male violence is also relatively more common among the poor. Nasreen has expressed her experience regarding violence, exploitation, oppression, subjugation and discrimination of women in the patriarchal society. The term 'New Women' was used at the end of the nineteenth century to describe women who were punished beyond the limits which society imposed on women. Today we might be called 'liberated woman' or a 'feminist.' The 'New Women' typically values self- fulfillment and independence rather than the stereotypically feminine ideal of self- sacrifice.

Suffering In and Outside the Home

Nasreen said women suffered all over the world both in and outside the home. There are so many developments happened in the society, but the situation of women remains the same. The exploitation and maltreatment exist at all levels. But there is no end to the oppression and suppression of women. In the poem "At Back of Progress", the employer is describing thus: "the fellow goes home and beats his wife/ Because of over ironed a handkerchief/ or a shirt collar". (40) Here it seems that the poet seeks to draw attention to the common act of wife beating which seems to pervade the cross section of the society in her country.

The system of dowry encompassing all classes very effectively sums up the different degrees of subalternity devaluing women. The custom has survived with extraordinary might and resilience. Although nobody calls it dowry, a bride's status in the in-law family is directly related to what she brings from the parental family in terms of money and goods. Lack of security in women's life may arise from the absence of dowry.

The Poem Dowry

The poem "The Dowry" expresses the poignancy of this aspect in Hindu society. Samiran Mandal sells his field's crops and his house for his daughter's dowry but all this is not enough.

The bride is cursed everyday
Gets slaps and kicks
Gets whipped
The flowers in her garden wither and fall
And only thorns blossom there. (8)

The bridegroom beats the bride to death because of her father's delay in giving the dowry. After marriage women become a slave and possession of her husband, totally under her control. He can spit in her face in contempt, beat her, wound her and even kill her.

Happy Marriage

The concept of marriage is sublimated as an eternal bond. In her works, marriage represented as exploitative and it inevitably ends in divorce preceded by the husband's polygamous marriage. In "Happy Marriage" the poet describes ironically how a woman accepted love from her

husband in spite of all maltreatment, because she is dependent to him for her subsistence. She is also completely faithful to him. “Not turning my eyes towards any other man/ I will give proof of my chastity all my life.” (21)

Quest for Women’s Identity – *The Women Breaking Bricks*

There is quest for women’s identity. Much of the gender specific crises of women seems to be not God-made but man-made and in a traditional country like Bangladesh. In the patriarchal society of her country, women are regarded as a commodity. They dress themselves, adorn themselves and use different hair styles and cosmetics just to please men.

Women are suffering in the sphere of wages too, as they are not paid as much as men or equal quantum of labour. This theme is described in the poem, “The Women Breaking Bricks”
For breaking bricks the whole day she

Receives ten taka
Only twenty one, she has seven children
Besides her, a man under an umbrella is
Breaking bricks
He gets twenty taka a day
Double because he is a man. (18)

The poem is going to show the pathetic condition of women before and after marriage. Women are oppressed in marital relationship both in subordination and economic exploitation. This poem clearly pictures the male chauvinism and child marriage. Here the woman who is breaking bricks under the sun has seven children, toils all day not enough to buy food for one. There is a man seated beside her, breaking the bricks but under an umbrella earning more money than her. The poet uses allusion of Martin Luther’s ‘I have a dream.’ But her dream is not come true. The last line of the poem is connected to the new women as they explain the resistance to suffering and accomplishment of dreams which are parts of her life.

On Sexual Assault - *Bad Omen*

If women are sexually assaulted, they can only be a mute spectator. The assaulter manages to go scot free. The victim does not get any sympathy from the callous society including her family. The poem “Bad Omen,” is about a girl called Kalyani is abducted and raped. Nasreen asks the rhetorical question

And if she loves and stands at the
Door of her house
With her wounded, bloody chewed-up
Torn and mangled body, will her
Grief-distracted mother lovingly touch
And nurse back to health her daughter’s
Man-defiled form? (25)

Female Goods

In the poem “Female Goods” Nasreen mentions satirically the qualities of bride which is sought by the bridegroom he wishes to marry. She should be fair skinned, tall, slim-waisted, firm

and sharply figured, with long hair to the knees and should have pierced nose and ears. She should be a virgin, shy and modest. She should be good at cooking with all such qualities; the woman's lot is to be almost a slave to her husband and his property.

This female can be used in any way as you like
If you wish, chain her feet chain her hands
Put her mind in chains
And if you wish divorce her. (35)

To Conclude

The above poems are clearly portraying the women who are treated as a slave in male dominated society. Nasreen wants to change this position. Women would have to live with full freedom. The 'New Women' is well educated and reads a great deal, has a job and is athletic or otherwise physically vigorous and accordingly prefers comfortable clothes to traditional female grab. This aspect representing the New Women are clearly visible in Nasreen's poem "Sad Girl" in which, a girl of sixteen forgets her sorrow and live with joy. "Dance in the whirlpool of light and air as you please." She would savour the joy of youth, far in later life. She exhorts girl to be careful and shows character.

This paper concludes that the real liberation of women can be achieved only when women themselves stand up for their rights. It is a universally accepted one. The empowerment of woman is needed not only in Bangladesh but also in all South-Asian countries. Women raise their voice against all oppression and create spaces in various fields.

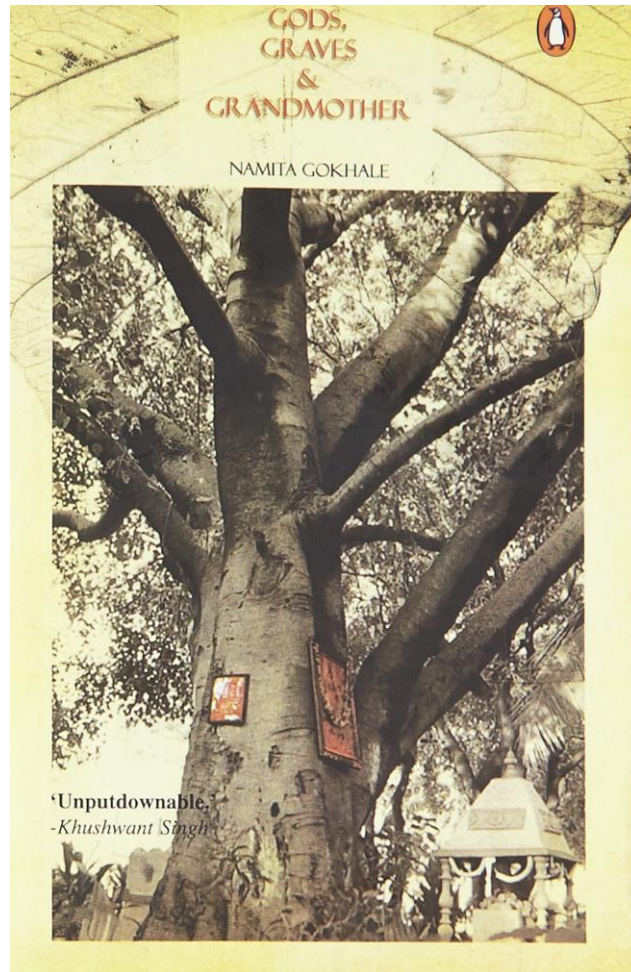
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Treatment of Death in Namita Gokhale's *Gods, Graves and Grandmother*

Dr. J. Rajalakshmi



Abstract

This paper explores Namita Gokhale's treatment of death through the novel, *Gods, Graves and Grandmother*. It basically attempts analysis of predicament of Gudiya, the woman as silent sufferer, forever waiting for emotional support and creative release. She is the woman, who loses her real identity for sometimes and begins to think herself as a wife. But finding her husband irresponsible and uncaring, she has hardly anything common with him. There is a wide psycho-emotional gulf between the twos and at this stage; she has no one to share her agony with. In true sense, the art of the novelist has the power to transmute the most ordinary, common place, every

day experience into everlasting expression of artistic form and value in this novel. She portrays the various shades of human nature with deftness, reigning true to life, making her readers loud her works. The compelling question that the paper raises is about the fate of women who find themselves almost destitute and helpless in the cruel hands of the callous world. It tries to give the picture of female characters cut out from the roots. They are not adjusting easily. It is the main reason of their being alienated.

Keywords: Namita Gokhale. *Gods, Graves and Grandmother*, Death, Alienation, Pain, Predicament, Fate of Women

Namita Gokhale's Fiction

The novels of Namita Gokhale are a harmonious blend of pain and relief, joy and misery, meeting and departure, attraction and repulsion, experience and innocence, comfort and rage. Gokhale conceives her characters from the present day society and one can freely see them in the roads of India. As she pens for the magazines too, she characterizes the people she encounters every day in different parts of the country. Like modern psychologists Gokhale examines different shades of conflicts that she notices in society. Characters acquired from various levels of society in her novels affirm the fact that she examines the overtones of their inspiration and problems. Her Bombay is explicitly the Bombay as she has viewed it with her own eyes. Her Kumaun region is also the Kumaun in which she has spent her childhood. She learns about the austere realities of the Ghats of Kashi and interprets them as they are. Genuineness of Gokhale's art remains undisputable like that of John Keats. She finds beauty with truth; she asserts her conviction in the generative power and the vision of the artist. With her knowledge and perception she discovers the truth about the people she portrays very lovingly. This is the secret of her success as an artist in Indian English literature.

Human Life from the Perspective of Women

Gokhale has perceived human life in her fiction from the view of the woman. She has attempted to reconsider the feminine role in society. Gokhale portrays human passions such as fake pride, greed, vanity, anger jealousy, lustful attitude and perverted love in her novels. The art of story-telling of Gokhale, her acute perception of human nature and her intense portrayal of the landscape of Kumaun Hills and surrounding plains have acquired for her an enduring place in Indian English fiction. She will be remembered as an honest, gifted and genuine writer, who regards her characters, with sympathy and indulgence. It is this combination of sympathy and simplicity that accounts for her appeal to a broad range of readers. Gokhale enjoys an immortal and unique spot among the Indian English women novelists.

Apt Words to Recount

The craftsmanship of Gokhale is magnificent. In imparting the ideas she employs apt words to recount. Sometimes she employs a sense of irony with biting humour, but whatever be the mood the motive is always subtle. She shines in clicking all the scenes from the panorama either of her own life or from observations made from actual life. She might have used her imaginative technique to cast the text according to the need of her novel. Her narrative style is both traditional and modern. According to the demand and theme of the story, she adopts first-

person narration, second-person narration, and flashback. She tries to forge a close relationship with her readers and as a result most of her novels are in the first-person narration.

Gokhale is a woman of values. She is committed totally to her craft. Honesty is a trademark of her art she always believed in clarity and evocative power of description. She is a versatile personality whose motive is to entice the imagination of her readers by telling interesting incidents through her characters. She has splendidly depicted the life of aristocratic class as well as the pains of lower class. She has immortalized the Indian people by portraying them, their manners, their interests, their curiosities, their quirks, their philosophies, their dilemmas and their refinement in her fiction.



Namita Gokhale

Courtesy: <https://markmybook.com/author?author=Namita%20Gokhale>
Gods, Graves and Grandmother

Gokhale's second novel *Gods, Graves and Grandmother* (1994) is the tale of Guidya and her almost aged grandmother (Ammi), who, along with Guidya's mother, fled from their small-town to the suburb of Delhi. It is of course, on account of, some scandal and disgrace they has to suffer in their original place. Ammi settled along a solitary roadside corner in the suburbs of Delhi and gradually became a famous Bhajan singer. Subsequently, temple is raised and numerous devotees permanently started to live and function as astrologer, beggar, merchants selling flowers and other pooja items around the temple there. After few years when the temple became a famous religious site, one-night Ammi is found dead. Gudiya and people concerned are dejected and disappointed. Her devotees however, gracefully buried her remains. Later on, Gudiya married with Kalki who later on, deserted Gudiya with her infant. Superstition, tradition, trade, intrigues and muscle power among the greedy devotees ruled the scene there after.

Illness and Death, Love and Passion

The experience of illness and death, love and passion, has moulded Gokhale's novel. For the author, the act of writing signifies not only a therapeutic act, but also a general expression of

experience in different spheres of life of various characters of her *Gods, Graves and Grandmother*. In the novel, Gokhale portrays the agonies and deaths of Magoo, Mamajee, Shumbhu, Ammi. Mrs. Roxanne, Lamba, and Sunder Phalwaan. Gudiya's grandmother lived in a kothi comprising one hundred and thirty rooms. Her mother, Mamaji lived in separate annexe with the kothi and a courtyard, a mango tree in it. Various Nawabs and Englishmen used to visit her to relax and enjoy the aristocratic shows of singing dancing and merrymaking in the evening there. Meanwhile her Mamaji and other persons committed suicide by hanging himself from a mango tree Gudiya narrated herself about it as under: "Then I remember the mango tree in the court yard, the one on which my Mamaji hung himself" (6). Gudiya adds:

Then something very bad happened; nobody ever told me what. I know that my Mamaji died. He is found hanging from the mango tree in the shady courtyard with the raat-kirani and chameli bushes. Somebody else died too, someone my mother always referred to as "Him." In the long late mornings, when my mother and grandmother thought I am asleep, they discussed 'Him' in tragic whispers. "He" died, and the police got suspicious. (7)

This stopped the festivity at the kothi altogether and Gudiya's mother fell critically ill and visits of police investigating the deaths and the subsequent court case depleted the entire riches and the entire family shifted to old Delhi with the aid of Riyasuddin Rizvi. Shambhu the tea-vendor attracted towards Saboo's wife Magoo. Subsequently, after much infatuation between them Magoo's husband Saboo murdered his wife. His husband Saboo chased Shambhu and succeeds in murdering Shambhu. Magoo's husband left the blood-spattered axe behind and disappeared into the cool night, headed indeed for the shack behind Shambhu's tea-stall where the liquor is brewed. After fortifying himself, he made for Shambhu's room and tapped softly on the door. Foolish Shambhu opened it. His visitor knocked him down and dragged him to the bushes behind the peepul tree. There he smashed a rock upon his head and killed him. Then he returned to the temple, breathing heavily.

Malicious Romantic Activity

Shambhu is killed on account of his malicious romantic activity with Saboo's wife Magoo. The terrific scene of murder of Shambhu made a deep psychological horror upon Gudiya. Saboo made Shambhu lie in the grave nearby. After burying Shambhu, murderer Saboo appeared before Ammi and asked to be forgiven for the grotesque crime, he committed and also pleads to absolve. So, as an admirer of *The Gita*, Gokhale refers to the theory of death as the body dies and soul remains immortal. On the occasion of Shambhu's Sharaddha, Ammi remarks that life is only a passage. Shambhu is not dead, as he exists in the mind of Phoolwati. However, all are strangers on earth. One has to leave this worldly life one day. In the novel *The Age of Reason*, Jeal Paul Sartre gives the theory of existentialism and Gokhale has the same in her psyche. Indeed, Shambhu is dead even while he is alive, as he did not bother for Phoolwati at all.

Service to the Handicapped

Later, Gudiya also joins St. Jude's Academy meant for the socially handicapped on Good Friday, when Gudiya is planned to leave for Simla with her school-mates. Ammi Gudiya's dearest guardian is found dead on her bed. Her death too appears not a natural one, as is clear in Gudiya's narration.

Gudiya

Apart from the anguish and frustration Gudiya suffered because of Ammi's sudden death, she has also decided to quit her studies. Pandit Kailash Shastri compares Mataji with Goddess Durga. Phoolwati, Pandit Kailash Shastri, Lila, immediately, resolve to confine further activities around the corpse by closing the door of room for themselves for about an hour. After they re-emerged, the posture of the dead-body stood changed altogether. Now the dead-body of grandmother no longer lay on the trundle but propped up and seated on the ground with one hand raised as if warding off any attack. Ammi's granddaughter, Gudiya, who lived with her to the last, could not understand the changes made. As Gudiya has admitted in the following lines:

I knew very little of the rituals surrounding death. Perhaps all dead people were made to sit upright after death; perhaps it is a part of the decorum.

The public, who were by now thronging the temple precincts, were informed that my grandmother had not died, which is something mere mortals did. She had attained maha-samadhi, by voluntarily relinquishing her consciousness to the larger universe. (74)

Guidya further adds:

Ammi's body is propped up, surrounded by lamps and camphor and incense. Their eyes seemed to be asking some questions, begging some hope, from grandmother's lopsided figure and raised arm. (76)

A Super Spiritual Person

As Ammi is considered as supreme presiding mother of the temple and it is claimed that she has not died but she has attained maha-samadhi by voluntarily surrendering her consciousness to the larger universe, termed as mahasamadhi.

Only mortals die but Ammi is shown as a super spiritual person who can relinquish consciousness of this world and pass on to larger universe. Hindu religion has a vast treasure of literature right from Vedas, Upanishad, Puranas and hundreds of other holy books like Ramayana and Mahabharata.

On Pandit Kailash Shastri's instruction Ammi's last rites continue. The ceremonies continued. Pandit Kailash Shastri filled up the hole with salt until it reached grandmother's neck, pressing it down until the head is immovable. Lila also addressed devotees about the blessings from cosmic powers where the departed saint Ammi has gone. Ammi has also described from heaven to her about the congenial atmosphere prevailing for its dwellers there.

Roxanne Lamba

Meanwhile Mrs. Roxanne Lamba who has a very generous and benevolent attitude towards Gudiya falls critically ill with choked throat despite frantic assistance, offered by her husband, Mr. Lamba, and her nephew, Cyrus. But, death had its toll. Gudiya rightly states:

Death is no stranger to me. I had seen my Mamaji dangling from the mango tree in the courtyard and one-eyed Shambhu sprawled under the peepul tree. And then my grandmother, seated in her grotesque and unnatural Samadhi. Now Roxanne

Ma'am too had joined the other world. She had become an Uravashi. The spirit had departed from her body. I could not imagine her rubbing shoulders with Magoo and Shambhu and the man with the laughing red mouth. It suddenly struck me that I had no real proof that I is alive; perhaps I too is dead. The dogs had not stopped baying. Everything else is still and silent. I pinched myself a check if it hurt. (196)

Sundar Phalwan Stood also Murdered

Phoolwati's second husband Sundar Phalwan stood also murdered at his doorsteps by some mysterious person. At end of the story Gudiya is shown in a very sober mood because she is also the witness of several other characters in the story as is clear by her statement below:

I often dream about my mother, but she is elusive even there. Grandmother is dead, Roxanne is dead, Sundar is dead. Even Kalki is gone, but the end of the world is nowhere in sight. (240)

To Conclude

Gokhale writes *Gods, Graves and Grandmother* after she has recovered from long illness. She accepts the past and yet ponders of present and future. Gokhale has viewed human life in her novels from the view of the woman. She has attempted to redefine the feminine role in society. Gokhale portrays human passions such as false pride, greed, anger jealousy, vanity, lustful conduct and perverted love in her novels.

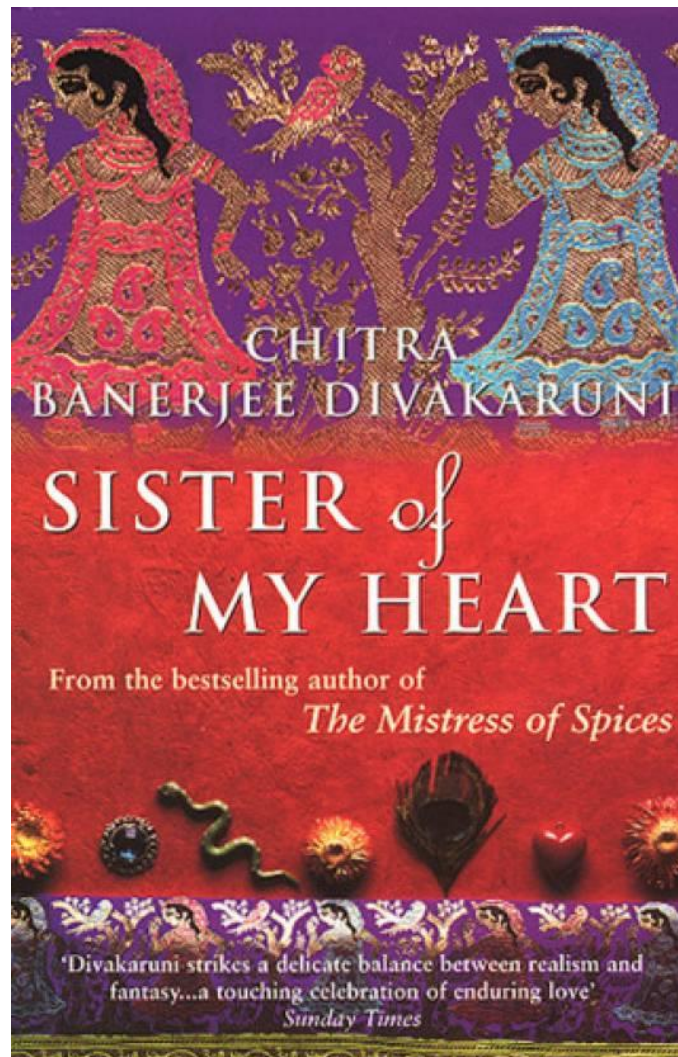
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Women's Dilemma and Confrontation in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Sister of My Heart*

A. Rameshkumar and Dr. S. Bhuvaneshwari



Abstract

The present paper entitled *Sister of My Heart as a Diasporic Novel* analyses the Diasporic issues which the central characters encounter in the novel *Sister of My Heart*. The aim of this paper is to show Divakaruni's Women dilemma and confrontation in the novel *Sister of My Heart*. In the age of globalization, immigration has become an important stage in human evolution. As the

immigrants are able to absorb the best of both native and alien, they grow into international citizens. Such people make negotiations with the acquired new culture and tradition. This could be viewed as a sign of growth, independence and adventure in an individual. In them a gradual replacement of their ethnic culture by the host culture takes place. The Diasporic people who originate from Asia but live in western countries provide an interesting example of the new hybrid cultures. Thus, it emerges as an Immigrant Literature as part of migration.

The common concern of diasporic literature is acculturation of immigrants. The immigrants plunge into the present and are able to accept changes. This is evident in Divakaruni's novel *Sister of My Heart*. One can see the conflict in terms of culture, identity and existence as soon as they leave their lands. In Divakaruni's novel, Anju and Sudha immigrate to USA. It is Anju's dream to migrate to America in order to have better prospects, freedom and marriage. But Sudha is driven to USA by the burning traumatic homeland realities, which she faces in India. The author highlights that the pressures on the Indian female make them move out of India, seeking better life and freedom.

The novelist and short story writer Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is known for her portrayals of immigrant Indian women. When Divakaruni, who was born in India, immigrated to the U.S. in 1976, she re-evaluated the role of Indian women. She draws on her own experiences and those of other immigrant Indian women. *The Mistress of Spices* revolves around an Indian girl with magical powers. Divakaruni's second novel, *Sister of My Heart*, is a realistic treatment of the relationship between two cousins, Sudha and Anju who narrate alternating chapters of this modern drama that develops over decades.

Sister of My Heart

Sister of My Heart is based on her short story 'The Ultrasound' (Arranged Marriage 1995). It portrays the emotional journey of love and friendship between Sudha and Anju who were born on the same day, the day their fathers Gopal and Bijioy died on a ruby hunting expedition. The story narrated by Sudha and Anju ends when they reunite in America after a separation of a few years. The story thus narrates the beginning of their existence in India, their homeland, and ends with another beginning-that of their diasporic experience. *Sister of My Heart* differs from all other novels in that it throws light on homeland realities rather than on diasporic realities-social, cultural, familial, economic-that more or less lead to the exile of her female principals to an alien land.

All the major characters in the novel are females. Male characters are not prominent, and they appear as and when the situations warrant. The female characters in the novel form a mosaic of Indian character types-the young heroines representing early childhood, to maturity and marriage, the matriarchal figures represented by Gaury and Nalini, the vindictive mother-in-law by Ramesh's mother and Aunt Pishi in her old age is one who has suffered the stigma and discriminations of a widow from very young age. By telling these interrelated stories, Divakaruni uncovers the social and familial position of the Indian female, their dreams and aspirations, their precarious position in the scheme of things, the social forces, the mores that keep them under subjugation and the need and the final urge to break those fetters to freedom and to America.

Chatterjee Household

The story revolves around the Chatterjee household. The male members of the elite family had perished in a gold hunting expedition, and how the family is run by Gaury and supported by two other elders—Aunt Pishi and Nalini. In the delineation of these matriarchal figures, Divakaruni throws light on the tradition of an aristocratic family in Calcutta of the 70s and 80s.

At the Chatterjee's Anju and Sudha are surrounded by a host of people who are hardcore traditionalists living in a world full of mystical tales and magical occurrences. Gaury Ma, Aunt Pishi, Nalini, Ramur Ma Singhji, and the servants live in a crumbling old mansion. Everything about their lives and situations is traditional and conventional. All these characters endure tremendous pressures of their own—either personal or related to other family members—and transform to different personae at a later stage.

To top the order there is Gaury Ma who has become the matriarchal head of the Chatterjee's after the unfortunate and untimely death of Bijoy during ruby hunt. She represents the protective mother; she is also an archetypal mother to all the children in the family, a mother equally to Anju and Sudha. Even before Bijoy's death, Gaury acted with great responsibility and commitment. She was clear visioned and was very concerned about the recklessness in Bijoy's thoughts and actions. She was very apprehensive of Gopal, his cousin's vaulting ideas and ambitious in life. She was worried that Bijoy had fallen victim to Gopal's whims and fancies. She refused to believe when Gopal promised her big things: "This time it will work. I know it Biju-da. I will return you double money within two months". She would point out to Bijoy how their bookstore had been running at a loss and warn him about the failure in collecting proper revenues from their manager Harihar. She said, "You've got to go and check on him. He is stealing from us with both hands". Gaury, according to Aunt Pishi, is a perfect Wife, and her perfection lies in the goodness deep in her heart. She was magnanimous enough to accept her sister-in-law Pishi when she returned to the Chatterjee's after her husband's generous beard.

Even Bijoy knew that Gaury was right that "the fortune of the Chatterjee family was like a moon spinning towards eclipse". She was vehemently opposed to Bijoy taking to the expedition for rubies. She disbelieved the stories of Gopal about the rubies and caves. Gaury cries, "Are you mad? It's some kind of a trick, can't you see? And even if it weren't it sound terribly dangerous". She told Bijoy and Gopal that they could not leave them when there was hardly a month for their babies to come. Gaury is very practical not to believe the fairy-tale stories and princes on a magic quest.

The parting words of Bijoy indicate the kind of trust and faith he has in Gaury. In the event of them not returning from the ruby hunt, he says, "Then I expect you to bring up my child as befits a descendent of the Chatterjees. Will you promise me that?" And she never forgets that promise. After the funeral she would not allow herself to break down as Nalini did. When others trying to get her to weep, to let her sorrow out of heart, she said, "I don't have the luxury. I made a promise and I must use all my energies to keep it". It is scandalous for a Chatterjee wife to run the bookshop. When family members made comments like that she looked at them with hard eyes and replied that she would do whatever was necessary to ensure her daughter's future as she had promised to her husband.

Gaury

Gaury remains unusually brave at the death of her husband and later at her acceptance of every tragedy that has come her way and in the way of the Chatterjee family. Her potential as the head of a joint family, her resolve to run the bookshop without forgoing traditional values, her plan for Anju and Sudha, her heart attack she does not give into, her resolve to marry off the girls are all indicative of her motherly protectiveness. These are all typically Indian concepts of matriarchy, elevating her to the mythical grandeur of the protective *Druga*.

The story of the elder females is not complete with that of the protective mother, Gaury. Aunt Pishi, the sister of Bijoy, represents the victimized female of a bygone era a victim of the rigid patriarchy that denies a young widow another chance to build up a life of her own. Perpetual widowhood is imposed on her say from fifteen to sixteen years of age by society. But she grows as a person. It is she who stood by the Chatterjee family in all its hard times, and acted as a moral force to come out of sinister experiences and tragedies. She also supports the idea of selling the ancestral home; she grows from the fire and heat, even the cold of her experiences.

Nalini

Nalini, the mother of Sudha, is the third character in the elder trio. However, she is different from Gaury and Pishi. She is a prototype of the multitudes of Indian females who are captivated by the romantic, handsome, adventurous young men. She has wild dreams about a life of splendors/comfort and aristocratic affluence. Readers get a glimpse of her secret life from the narration of Pishi to Sudha. Nalini came to the Chatterjee's newly-wed, bare-necked and un-jeweled. Gopal met Nalini as she washed clothes by the village river and promised her riches and honour. It made her forget years' worth of cautions and she slipped away from her parents' home. Sudha often suspected how that runaway adventuress could become her mother. She was built of sighs and complaints. They were married at the Kali temple, which was popular with lovers who eloped. She made complaints constantly about her poor husband who failed to keep his promises of riches and honour. She thought that she could not even claim the food she ate regularly.

She is at the Chatterjee's on charity, a poor cousin by marriage. The truth of her situation gnaws at her endlessly. She feels cheated and lines of discontent take over her face. The face that an unhappy more is said to pass on her sorrow to the body in her womb did not bother Nalini much. Sudha believes that this attitude of her mother is one reason for the sorrows and unhappiness in her life.

The discontented and selfish attitude of Nalini prompts Gopal to take on the misadventure and later the doom. She says, "Are you a man or a ground crawling insect? How long are you going to beg your daily food from your brother just because he is kind? Running after no good schemes like a dog chasing his shadow. Why can't you get a job in an office like all other men?" All her protests are only a device to cover up her sense of inferiority. She always feels a sense of insecurity and humiliation for being a dependent on the Chatterjees.

Anju and Sudha

It is in such an adult world that the two aspiring sisters of heart. Anju and Sudha are destined to grow up. Naturally, the two girls-especially from their entry to girlhood cherish a set

of new values and concomitant dreams-their urge for freedom, their craving for adventurous experiences, and their eagerness to have a stronger experience of the world beyond the overprotected home all are typical of the young women of the time. Despite the traditional ambience of the household, there is a speck of revolution in the young women, conflicts in their thoughts and deeds. Sudha says, "I'm tired of these old women saris you make us wear. You would think we were living in the Dark Ages, instead of in a while?".

Their protest against the old ways of living is manifest when, as convent schoolgirls, they escape to the cinema un chaperoned. They express their anger at being cocooned in the patriarchal household and criticize the restrictions on them. Anju, their rebellious bookworm, is angry at the world. She always questions the society that dictates how women should behave, dress and act. She rages that deny Pishi the right to be an active participant in festive celebrations because she is a widow. She says, "I hate Pishi when she puts on her patient smile and sits in the back of the hall on feasts days, not participating, because windows mustn't."

Twin Aspects of the Composite Young Female of the Times

The two girls together represent the twin aspects of the composite young female of the times. Sudha and Anju are not two unique identities; they represent the dual aspects of Indian woman hood of the 80s. What they suffer and fight together are the sum total of the female experience kept under patriarchal/matriarchal control but giving out sparks of enlightened revolt. In this split of the female composite, Sudha is the submissive half of Anju's revolting half. (This is reverted after Sudha's arrival in America where she becomes assertive and follows her individuating self-concept of herself). Their premarital existence offers the varied experiences of growing up in the Indian society of the 70s and 80s. Despite being rebellious and protesting, both of them agree to an arranged marriage at a time when Sudha has an affair with Ashok. But Sudha bound by duty to the sister of her heart must make a decision that will haunt her for years. Anju marries Sunil and moves away to America to lead life of her dreams. She is off to a world of cherished freedom and liberation. The novel then turns on to the lie of Sudha and focuses more on the fortunes of Sudha's homeland experiences.

Sudha as Daughter-in-law

Sudha's dire experiences as daughter-in-law bring about a lot of transformation in her character. Sudha, the rebellious girl in her teens, is confined to a traditional household in Ramesh's family. She acts as keeper of cupboard, pantries, and storerooms; she serves food, supervises servants, and is at the helm of all traditional affairs at the in-laws. While being confined to the strict traditional role as wife there is commotion with her because marriage has not only brought physical separation but also emotional separation from Anju. Communication between them is nil.

The conflict within her whether to accept the role of a traditional orthodox wife or modernist remains an enigma until she becomes pregnant with her daughter. Her mother-in-law asks her to have an abortion and tries for a son. She reacts evidently hard to the infringement upon her being and existence. She bails out from marriage and drags herself to single motherhood, dishonor and poverty. The sacrifice and suffering she made for Anju has not paid. The post marital reality, the traumatic experiences at her-in-laws, the exploitation, the mental torture, the antipathy towards the girl-child, the female feticides, the stigma of sterility when she delayed getting

pregnant, and finally her been treated as an outcast are all reasons for Sudha's decision to emigrate to America.

These were serious social problems that generally affected Indian womanhood even in the last quarter of the twentieth century. However, she knows that life in America will not be easy so long as Anju's husband Sunil keeps a passion for her, which glows like a wedge between the two sisters. She breaks all these challenges and offers to move on to America to graver situations of trials and suffering.

Agents of Persecution

The agents of persecution in the homeland are the mother-in-law and her spineless husband who is better called the mother's boy. Sudha's mother-in-law is the typical mother-in-law in any traditional Indian family; Ramesh is the typical spineless husband at the beck and call of his mother who cannot stand up to his mother. Divakaruni might have decided against featuring a living father to Ramesh because a father-in-law usually is not a party to persecuting the daughter-in-law. Sudha decides to return to mother-home and protection. A girl brought up under the strict discipline of a traditional family, takes a decision singlehandedly to return home. She thus breaks all marriage fetters considered sacred by society. In this single act she metamorphoses from the timid Calcutta household girl/bride to the rebellious woman. Now she plans her final strategies towards staying in the homeland.

At this juncture her earlier paramour Ashok appears with fresh promise of marriage and support. Gaury Ma, Nalini and even Aunt Pishi act as moral forces for their union in marriage. Nalini says, "Go ahead and agree to whatever he asks now. You can always change a husband's mind, especially if you're giving him what he wants in bed." Ashok might appear for some time the worthy man to take Sudha's hands. But he too miserably fails Sudha when he insists that all he wants in few years alone with her and wants Dayatia her daughter to stay with the grandmothers. Ashok here represents the conventional Indian made-even the ideal male still holds certain narrow male interests. He is for practicality in emotional life, which is not practical with Sudha. With Ashok's failure in rescuing Sudha in life, she has no options left in Indian. Not only that she has bailed out form the marriage, but the situation now warrants her to bail out of the homeland. The experiences in the homeland are so traumatic, painful that stay in India becomes impossible despite her protective mothers. All these homeland pressures lead to exit to America. And Anju becomes a facilitator. She represents one case study. She immigrated to America because it was her one time dream for better prospects, freedom, and marriage. On the contrary, Sudha is driven by the burning traumatic homeland realities a female confronts in India, and the homeland even reminds her of terrible fire, heat, and trauma.

About Displacement and Alienation

Sister of My Heart is about displacement and alienation, and it portrays the psychological claustrophobia and the emerging and conflicting tendencies in that conditions of a few Bengali women who are sensitive to feel the pain, and all of them are intelligent enough to make seems out of family situation's and break out. Anju and Sudha are first caught between their orthodox of a Hindu elite family and the modernist feminist thoughts of freedom that set the tone of youth in the 70s and 80s in Bengal. Later they are between the American culture, society and the native

constraints surrounding Indian women. To be precise they are caught between a feminist desire to be assertive and an Indian need to be submissive.

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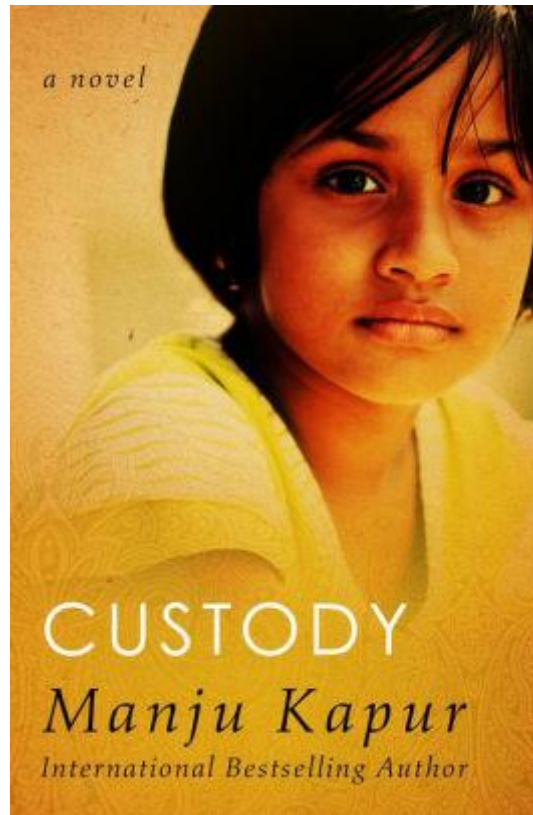
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**An Analysis of Identity Crisis of Arjun and Roohi:
A Study of the Novel *Custody***

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Abstract

Manju Kapur's fifth novel *Custody* is highly considered about thriving, upper middle-class people in Delhi. It also dealt with the changes in people's life style due to the Foreign investments in India and as a result of the westernised foreign investments and its influence, Manju Kapur finely presents the nuances of family relationship. *Custody* deals with the life of decent young couple Raman, and his wife Shagun. In course of the time their relationship started to scatter because of Shagun illegal relationship. Manju Kapur presents the emotional fight and imbalance in the minds of the couple and their two children. When the couple decides to travel on their own wish, Kapur beautifully presents the children's fears of loneliness, deprivation, dejection of the two children. Children were taken to various places like commodities from one place to other.

When the parents got divorce, separation took place even physically and mentally with the brother and sister. At the very young age the children have to take decision of their own life,

whether to stay with father or mother. Mnju Kapur beautifully depicts the disastrous effect of the bitter fight for the children’s custody, the tyranny of blood and their trauma torn between two mothers and two homes to continue. Thus, the paper focuses the identity crisis of the children in the novel *Custody*.

Introduction

Manju Kapur’s fifth novel CUSTODY explores the modern city life where people have become victims to modernity. Due to the importance given by them to modernity, they never value the relationships. This paper focus on the married life versus freedom, extra marital affairs, manipulation of children in the hands of their divorced parents and indifference of Indian Judicial system. When the novel begins we see a sincere couple loved couple Raman and Shaghun. Raman married Shaghun and they lived in Mor Vihas. Raman was a sincere hard working ambitious obviously talented company worker. Raman and Shaghun have a son named Arjun. Shaghun stayed as a very good house wife until she met Ashok Khanna, the manager of Raman. Ashok Khanna and Raman worked together. Raman was a very sincere man dedicated himself for his duty. At the same time, he gives his weekend time for his family. Their weekend starts with family freinds, clubs, and parties. Raman entertained Shaghun and children. Shaghun was pregnant for the second time and she gave birth to a girl named Roohi.

During her eleven years of married life many men had looked at Shaghun, looked and looked but none had ventured across the boundary line of matrimony expect Ashok Khanna. Shaghun from her young age wanted to live a life where she will get popularity. She wanted to try her life as a model. She loved it. But her mother, who is a widow, compelled her to marry Raman. Shaghun mother liked Raman more. For her Raman is like a son to her. Ashok Khanna understood the mindset of Shaghun. Ashok encouraged Shaghun to act in ads. Ashok told Shgahun if she acts in ads she will get popularity and she can fulfil her dreams. When Raman visited so many places officially, Shaghun visited different places for her ads. Ashok took the absence of Raman for granted. He tried to exploit Shaghun in so many ways.

Illegal Relationship

Shaghun started an illegal relationship with Ashok Khanna. Her love and passion for Ashok grew stronger. She left her children to the care of her mother and she spent the night with Ashok Khanna. Raman suspected Shaghun behaviours. Whenever he phoned home from office Shaghun will never pick the call. Only the servants who are in home attended the call. They will inform Raman that Shaghun has gone out.

Raman’s suspicion towards Shaghun grew more. He with the help of detective agency founded that his wife Shaghun had illegal relationship with his boss. Raman understood that when he was sincerely working for long hours, so grateful to his boss, his boss sincerely screwed and destroyed his family. When Raman showed the picture of Ashok and Shaghun found together, Shaghun was shocked. She informed Raman hat she needs divorce. Shaghun applied f’or divorce and she thought she will be happy with Ashok Khanna. When her mother worried about her daughter behaviour

and advised her she didn't listen. She feels that she needed freedom. At the same time she fought for the custody of her children.

Crestfallen Crux of Arjun and Roohi

Crisis of identity is a very big problem of an individual. People in this materialistic world go in search of all things including identity. If there is no individual identity for a person, he cannot live in this society. The plight of Arjun and Roohi is very miserable. When Shaghun applied for divorce and she decided to live with Ashok. As Ashok got a new job in the United States, she decided to leave for US. Before leaving for US, Shaghun and Arjun lived with Ashok. Arjun has no interest with the new house he lives. He remembered his father and his support for him in his studies. In the new house, Ashok never cares for him. Arjun hated the atmosphere existed in Ashok's house. Arjun felt reluctant to attend his regular school. Shaghun and Ashok decided to join him in boarding school. The judge said that Arjun should be allowed to go to boarding school and the father will have access in the weekends.

Raman took care of Roohi. He found difficult to bring her without mother. Later he played well the role of father and mother. Separation took place between brother and sister. In boarding school Ashok has been introduced as his father. When Raman visited him, Arjun was not happy to see his father. Thinking disturbed him that his friends will mock at him by saying that he has two fathers. Thus, two children got affected in their personal life. Roohi, two-year girl, may not express her feelings through words, but her behaviour clearly reveals that she suffers because of the fight between parents. Arjun grown up boy understands the problem between his parents and cries within himself.

Ishitha's Craving for Identity

Ishita married Suryakanta. Their married life was happy, until they met gynaecologist because Ishita has not conceived in their five years of married life. Ishita got her divorce because of her husband's conventional approach for her barrenness. She was insulted for her infertility. After her divorce she was living with her parents. Ishita was more worried about her identity. She considers herself as a burden to her family. Change came to her life when she met Raman. Ishita had close attachments with Raman and Roohi. Ishita and Raman had ex in their life. They never seemed to be guilty about what they did because Raman doesn't want to be faithful to his unfaithful wife and Ishita doesn't want to remain loyal to her husband who never loves her. They both decide to marry. Roohi had close attachments with Raman. Ishita took care of Roohi like her own mother.

State of Imbalance with Arjun and Roohi

Arjun started to stay in Ashok's house because of her mother's compulsion. Arjun was found to be so different in his character. He never showed his interest in his studies. He was so adamant and violent in his behaviour. He hated Ashok and he longed to see his sister. Though there was age difference between him and his sister he loved her so much. He started to cry saying that he hated going to school. Ashok and Shaghun decided to send Ashok to boarding school. Ashok and Shaghun went to the United States. In holidays Arun was asked to visit US. He visited twice and Roohi once. After returning from US, Arun was much worried by saying that mother was there alone in US. Roohi also cried by saying that wolf will come and kill her mother. Raman understood that this story was told to facilitate such a separation. Because of Shaghun's dream of

living a modern life, her children suffered a lot. Shaghun can enjoy only with Ashok. But she couldn't enjoy with her children. Fought for the custody of both children.

Conclusion

Shaghun asked for legal judgment of both the children, particularly for little girl. She also informed judge that only to get divorce from Raman she has given custody. Ishita informed Roohi that she has to tell judge that she is her mother. Judgment day came. As Arjun is about fifteen and a half he has the freedom to decide with whom he has to stay. Judge informed that he wanted to talk to Roohi alone. After twenty minutes Roohi emerged and she told that she informed to the judge that she wanted to stay only with her mother Ishita. Later Raman informed that judge has given Roohi to them and Arjun to Shaghun. If the children wanted there would be visiting but not otherwise Ishita felt that she couldn't help Raman with the boy, but she would make up to him as much as possible with the girl. Arjun and Roohi got separated because Shaghun was adamant and thought of living a westernized life style. Claiming for Custody started when Roohi was three years old. Now she was eight years old child and missed the brotherly and sisterly affection with them. They faced lot of mental worries and disturbance at their very young age.

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

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An Analysis of Identity Crisis of Arjun and Roohi: A Study of the Novel *Custody*

The Tragedy of Immigrants in Anitha Rau Badami's
The Hero's Walk

K. Sathishkumar and Dr. V. K. Saravanan



Anita Rau Badami

Courtesy: https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/83925.Anita_Rau_Badami

Abstract

Anitha Rau Badami is a prominent Indian Diaspora writer, living in Canada. She has written four novels in her credit, dealing with the complexities of Indian family, cultural gap, and immigrant problems that emerge when Indian move to the western country. This paper deals with agony, sorrow, pathetic state of immigrants, and their family in *The Hero's Walk*. The novel deals with serious themes such as grief and loss of immigrants. In this paper is about a middle-class family living at Thoturpuram in India. Maya is the protagonist and lives in abroad. Her father had received a phone call announcing the death of his beloved daughter. Due to the phone call, elderly parents live with anxiety. This will resonate with many immigrants and expatriates. In the novel, *The Hero's Walk*, she was born in a Brahmin family in Thoturpuram, and migrated to Canada for her higher education, and fell in love with Alan. Maya after got married with Alan, unfortunately the couple are killed in a road accident by leaving alone their daughter Nandana, who is unknown in a foreign land. Through this novel, Badami skillfully portrays the tragedy of immigrants.

Keywords: Anitha Rau Badami, *The Hero's Walk*, Expatriates, Agony, Sorrow, Immigrants, Diaspora.

Indian Migrants and Migration

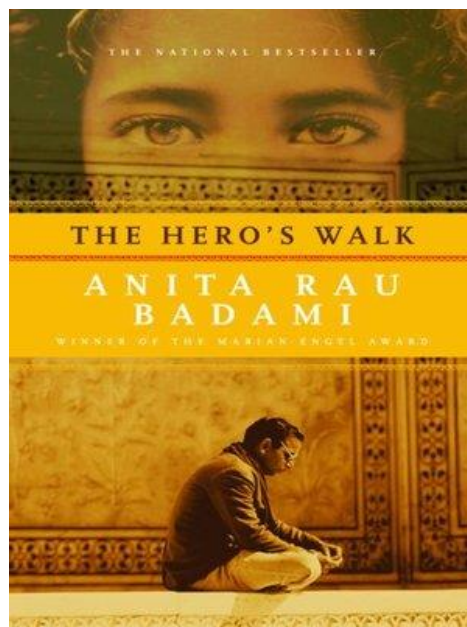
The Indian diaspora of around eleven million people is smaller than its Jewish, Chinese, African, British, Canadian and other counterparts, and represents just over one percent of the population of India, it is unique in several significant respects. First, it is far more widespread than any other, covering over seventy centuries and a significant economic and political presence in over a quarter of them. The Indian immigrants are more varied than any other. Its members represent half of a dozen religions, are drawn from even different regions for India, belong to dozen castes, over a wide variety of occupations ranging from labours and factory workers to professionals and industrialists, earn both highest and lowest percentage capital income in the world.

The major Indian migration occurred after the Second World War, at first to Britain, then to the USA and little latter to Australia, Canada and continent of Europe. The labour-hungry British industries recruited Indians mainly from the Punjab and Gujarat, the peak period of migration bring between 1956 and 1965. The professionals, mainly doctors, came a little later, joined in the late 1960s. In Indian population in Britain today is around one million, of which just over a third are Hindus, about forty percent of Sikhs, around sixteen percent Muslims the rest Christians, Parsis and Buddhists. Although their percentage is small, the number of Indians such countries as Canada, Russia and Netherlands is quite large.

Anitha Rau Badami

Anitha Rau Badami is a prominent Indian Diaspora writer, living in Canada. She has written four novels in her credit, dealing with the complexities of Indian family, cultural gap, and immigrant problems that emerge when Indian move to the western country. This paper deals with agony, sorrow, pathetic state of immigrants, and their family in *The Hero's Walk*. The novel deals with serious themes such as grief and loss of immigrants.

The Hero's Walk



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Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*

K. Sathishkumar and Dr. V. K. Saravanan

The Tragedy of Immigrants in Anitha Rau Badami's *The Hero's Walk*

The Hero's Walk is straddles two worlds: India and Canada. This novel is beginning with a long-distance call from Vancouver from Toturpuram, somewhere in Tamilnadu, south India, the narrative goes back and forth, the ring of the telephone aptly symbolizing our globalized world where national identities and national literatures are porous and multivalent.

Focus of this Paper - Impact of Maya's Death on Her Family

This paper traces the many-faceted tale of the impact of Maya's death on her family; her father and mother, her spinster aunt, her grandmother her brother and finally her daughter. The narratives move forward mainly through the voice of an omniscient narrator, replenished by the memories of the characters. Sripathi and Nirmala, both in their fifties, are the two main characters whose points of view are privileged. In Sripathi home shrill ringing of the telephone in Big House in Toturpuram is the harbinger of bad news. Sripathi and Nirmala's daughter Maya and her Canadian husband Alan die in a car accident. The news interrupts the day- to- day life of the Toturpuram household during the filling water containers, the morning coffee. Ironically, the rangoli pattern of at the front door of the house, which is supposed the ward off evil, has failed to avert the disaster.

The death of their daughter would have been terrible under normal circumstances, but it causes a crisis in Sripathi and Nirmala's marriage because of the unfinished business of Sripathi's refusal to accept his daughter decision to break of her engagement to an Indian and marry a white man she met in her university. For nine long years, Sripathi has refused to speak to Maya on the phone or read her letter, let alone write her, and he had forbidden to visit her. So the first thing that happens after the news of her death reaches Toturpuram is Nirmala's anger against her husband. She blames him for Maya's death. Sripathi, while maintaining a brave face for the outside world, begins to crumble inside, feeling responsible for Maya death because he withheld his blessings from her. Meanwhile, he must travel to Canada to bring back Nandana, his granddaughter, who has stopped speaking because of the shock caused by her parent's sudden death.

A Moving Tale of a Tragic Death

Badami tells a deeply moving tale of the aftermath of a tragic death. The memories of the dead daughter haunt the couple and imbue their lived space with her ghostly presence. We see her through their eyes, as a young child and young women. Nandana, the child, provides another version of the lives of Maya and her husband Alan. Because she no longer speaks, what we hear are her interior monologues. Her visit to the eerily empty family home in Vancouver with Aunty Kiran is a powerful portrayal of grief and loss.

But life goes on. Sripathi brings Nandana to Toturpuram as stipulated by maya's will. From this point on, it is Nirmala who is centre-staged as Nandana's primary care-giver. Picking up the pieces, so to say, she heroically goes on, providing day-to-day sustenance to Nandana and to the rest of the family. Her experience also causes a psychological transformation in her. She feels that she should not have obeyed her husband so docilely, that she should have demanded that Maya be allowed to visit.

Sripathi's and His Friend Raju

The novel juxtaposes Sripathi's and his friend Raju's relationship to their daughters. While Sripathi distanced himself from Maya because of her love marriage, Raju has devoted himself to his severely disabled daughter. However, the burden of caring for her all by himself proved too much for him and the reader is left with the impression that he may have killed his daughter. Then there is the deranged Mrs Poorna, who kidnaps Nandana, thinking her to be her own daughter who did not return one day. It is being locked in Mrs Poorna apartment that Nandana finally accepts the finality of her parents' death and begins to speak.

Transnational Grief and Loss

The Hero's Walk tackles serious themes of grief and loss in transnational migratory context, when a large number of Indian middle-class families have relatives living in abroad. Many of us, part of South Asian diaspora, have received that phone call, announcing the death of loved one. And those of us elderly parents live with elderly parents live anxiety of receiving such a call. Badami's theme, therefore, will resonate the many immigrants and expatriates, not necessarily the South Asians alone.

Language Challenge to Indian English Writer

In terms of language, Badami faces challenges similar to other Indian English writers: "how to portray the experience of the character who is speaking Indian language". Through her language, Badami try to convey the lexical and syntactic nuances of Indian English. Her language is richly textured. For instance the description of Nirmala's grandmother's gold-threaded sari with peacock pattern is beautiful. She does good job of evoking textures, sounds and smells of the worlds the narrative unfold in. One can describe her battle with cancer. Drastic life-changes laced together with eternal ordinary. Aimed to move more easily between the two, with a sense of proportion, *The Hero's Walk* achieves a balance between joy and sorrow, death of old and beginning new, aptly beginning with sea, ending with sea, the origin of all life, and the place where we end up as ashes after death.

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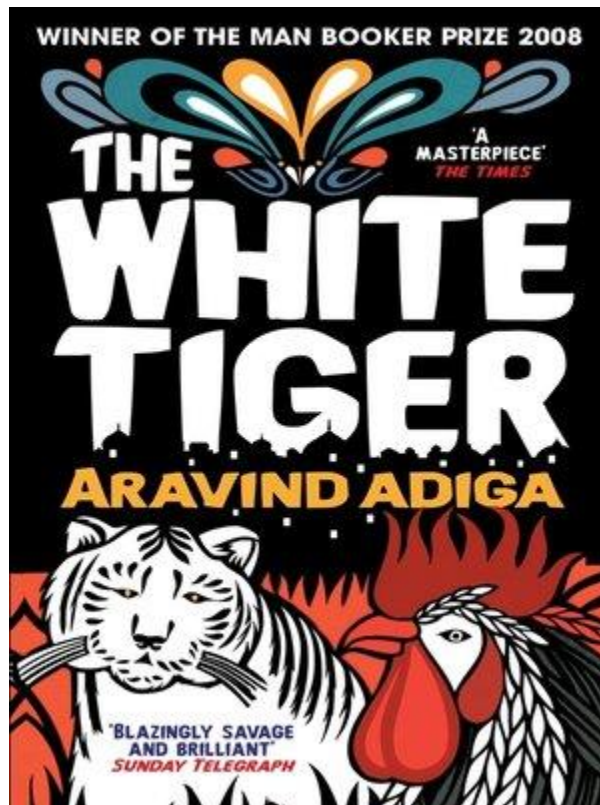
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The Protagonist Balrama, a Subaltern in Aravind Adiga's Novel *The White Tiger*

M. Evanjaline Nightingale



Courtesy: <https://www.overdrive.com/media/869087/the-white-tiger>

Abstract

This paper deals with the dominance of upper class over the marginalized, the illiterates and their emergence from the bondage of the power structure also dealing with their exploitation during the liberation in Aravind Adiga's novel *The White Tiger*. With the help of Antonio Gramsci's theory on subaltern consciousness, the paper also focuses on Balram, the protagonist of the study as a subaltern who continues to accept the ill treatment of the upper-class dominants. He is confronted with issues that triggered his subaltern consciousness, the pressure which pulled him out of the bourgeoisies' confinement brings forth his implicit consciousness that was within him which was kept in control by the ideology internalized within the minds of those who have been subjugated under the hegemonic domination.

Introduction

The meaning of the term ‘subaltern’ can be traced back to the writings of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist who first introduced the term in his work called cultural hegemony. Since then the term is associated with many connotations. The concept of subalternism starts with the treatment of the Europeans over the non-European nations. In post-colonial theory, subaltern is anyone who is labeled as an inferior and uncivilized by the west. But in the twenty first century, the writings of authors such as Antonio Gramsci, Gayatri Spivak, Ranajith Guha, E.P. Thompson and various others brought this concept of subalternity to the forum and enlarged the perspective of how one views it. Now the term comes to mean those who have not been given space to articulate their voice or express their feelings or opinions as well as people who have been easily influenced and manipulated without their knowledge and consent especially in terms of cultural domination.

India was under the control of the Europeans until 1947, which got India freedom from the Britishers and it was independence for all the citizens of India. But the ground reality was entirely different. The poor and lower-class citizens who were at the margins of society did not gain freedom from the upper classes who continued to dominate them by making the lower classes believe that their rule is legitimate. Though they achieved freedom from the Britishers, they lost their freedom to the upper-class citizens with whom the power rested and mechanism of control. Through literature, they are trying to get back their freedom, their voice and all that was lost to them. Subaltern literatures give a detailed picture of the upper-class discrimination through class and caste and how they are always subjugated by them with no voice to speak for themselves.

The White Tiger

In the novel *The White Tiger*, the protagonist Balram is seen as a subaltern and emerges as a representative of all those people who have been subjugated around the world under the hegemonic domination and the way they unwillingly abide themselves to their consent thereby secretly fantasizing freedom from this age-old bondage. While many people whirl in the murky pit of this cultural system built by the hegemonic rulers, few of them try to break free from it sacrificing their precious life in the process. It is only during this process of striving to attain freedom, Gramsci’s said that consciousness is made to be visible. Gramsci brings out his theory of subaltern consciousness by stating that the capitalist states use cultural institutions as weapons to dominate and exert control over others to maintain its power in the society. Being a Marxist, he replaces economic determinism with cultural determinism where culture determines everything and acts as a base from which the superstructure such as caste, class and religious divisions arises. Thus, it is understood that the capitalist-maintained control not just through violence, political and economic coercion, but through cultural ideology. In this process of creating ideology, the bourgeoisie developed a hegemonic culture, which propagated its own values and norms so that they became the common values for all. As a result, the people of working class identify themselves with that of the bourgeoisie and helped to maintain the status quo of the dominant class rather than revolting against them. In other words, the term cultural hegemony refers to the ability of a group of people to hold power over social institutions, and thus, to strongly influence the everyday thoughts, expectations, and behavior of the rest of society by directing the normative ideas, values, and beliefs that become the dominant

worldview of a society. Thus, Cultural hegemony functions by achieving the consent of the masses to abide social norms and the rules of law by framing the worldview of the ruling class, and the social and economic structures that go with it, as just, legitimate, and designed for the benefit of all, even though they may really only benefit the ruling class.

Gramsci further defines the implicit and explicit consciousness that results in the opposition to common sense. Implicit consciousness as an activity which lies inherent and invisible in all those who are subjugated by the dominants as they are not will fully obliging or yielding to the norms and values of the dominants. Explicit is verbal which he has inherited from the past and uncritically observes as he is forced to confirm himself to the societal ideas and beliefs. Gramsci states the evolution of the two contradictory consciousnesses is the reflection of the contradiction between opposing social groups.

Gramsci's implicit and explicit consciousness can be determined easily based on the way the subaltern reacts to the treatment in the hands of the ruling class.

Protagonist Balram

In the novel *The White Tiger*, the protagonist Balram is seen as a subaltern due to the ill treatments he receives from the upper-class masters he worked under. He falls victim to the cultural institutions in terms of class, caste and religion thereby exhibiting his explicit consciousness as he continued to take the oppression until his time of liberation breaks in revealing his implicit consciousness.

Firstly, Balram falls victim to the hierarchical system of class which brings disintegration in the nation as a whole. Class is usually predicted upon one's caste. There are three main classes—upper classes, middle class or working class and lower class. Accordingly, the higher classes correspond with the higher castes and generally have access to better and more numerous options than the other classes. The upper class is the social class composed of the wealthiest members of the society who wield greatest political power. Accordingly, the upper class is generally distinguished by immense wealth which is passed on from one generation to other. In many countries, the term upper class is associated with hereditary land ownership. This suggests that land means wealth and power.

With the help of these two in hand, they were able to satisfy their wants and fulfill their wishes. When their voices rose above the voices of the poor, ultimately the voices of the poor went unheard. It is in this process marginalization begins towards the working-class and lower-class people. Even in the novel, the protagonist Balram hails from a village called Laxmangarh, a place that lives in absolute Darkness, and a place dominated and controlled by the superior class landlords where the productivity of the poor and fertility of the land are forcibly taken away from them by the landlords. Balram shows how these landlords feed themselves on these poor people by demanding one third of the people's production.

Thus, it is shown in the novel that the entire village is deprived of good health, employment, freedom and became a place of poverty-ridden society. Not only this, before Balram could complete his schooling, he is forcibly stopped from pursuing his education as his family had taken a huge sum of money from one of the landlords as debts to get their cousin

married away and it is to clear those debts he becomes a school ‘dropout.’ Thus, Balram becomes furious on the upper-class elites who thus have denied him the right to have education as the same people have mocked at him for being an illiterate. If he had given an opportunity to pursue his education to accomplish the wishes his father had for him, the plot line would have been different and he would not have become the murderer of what he appears to be at the end of the novel.

Hence it is understood that neither Balram nor any of the villagers in Laxmangarh could question these upper-class elites who wields power over the entire village and thereby exploiting the lives of everyone residing in that village.

Thus Balram is pushed to such an extent where he had to leave his school to work in a tea stall to do all the menial jobs. Balram is praised by the school inspector who named him as ‘The White Tiger’ for his intelligence but he could not strive after his goals due to the capitalistic dominance and finds himself in an awful situation when he is unemployed. The trauma of not being able to reach his goals makes Balram a serious subaltern since he has not been given space to pursue his education nor to articulate his voice. The pathetic condition of illiterate Balram is continued even when he is employed in the Stork’s house as a driver.

Linguistic Hegemony

Linguistic hegemony, has been used to make Balram a victim and a tool to oppress him. He is looked down and mocked by the master and his wife just because he does not know the English language. Since he is a school dropout, Balram did not get the opportunity to complete his schooling and he remembers little of what he had acquired in his school. When he fails to give the right answers to the questions put forth by his master, he is cornered as half-baked citizen of India by the same people who denied him the means of education. In another circumstance, Balram is made a laughing stock of the master and his wife Pinky Madam and is humiliated for mispronouncing words. This ill treatment sparks his subaltern consciousness and thus in the beginning of the novel it is shown as Balram showing excessive obsession towards English language and aspires to learn the language by eavesdropping, reading roadside pamphlets and books at a cheap cost.

Religion

Religion is another institution that acts a weapon in the hands of the upper classes and it is no different than the hierarchical system of caste and class. Though India is claimed to be a nation of diversity rich in heritage and culture, there are three major religious sections that dominate above all. They are Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Since most of the Hindus belong to the privileged class, the oppression is more on part of the lower-class people.

Another instance in the novel is that when Balram is employed in the landlord’s house as a driver, he learns that the co-driver who is a Muslim claimed to be a Hindu because of dire need to feed his starving family knowing full well the landlord Stork is a religious fanatic employs those who are Hindus and rejects people who do not belong to his religion which pulled him to such an extent of hiding his religious identification as a Muslim because he very well knew that he would not be provided a job if his identity as Muslim, revealed.

Here again fanaticism drives this driver to such extent he had to disguise his identity to pretend all his life. If the landlord finds out this secret, either he would have lost his job or he would have been punished for cheating them this far. Hence, he leaves the place without informing anyone. But Balram manages to escape these religious traps only to fall prey to caste and class system. Since he is a Hindu, he manages to acquire a job in the landlord's house; else his life would have been worse.

Explication of Ideologies

The issue of Subaltern could evidently be understood by an explication of the prevailing ideologies in Indian society because the essence of India lies in the 'caste system' that governs the citizens all their life. It has provided India with a very simple maxim that wherever one lives in India, he will be surrounded by the world of caste, whether he is a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian or any tribal group.

In the novel *The White Tiger* too, the world of Darkness has rigid caste distinction, superstitions, caste and culture conflict. Man is known and recognized by his caste. When Balram is interested to learn driving, there again he is confronted with the evils of caste system to define his identity in the society. Balram is faced to answer caste related questions to prove his identity in order to learn driving to survive in the society. The old driver who teaches driving denies teaching Balram driving because of his prejudiced nature that driving could be learnt by people who belong to the caste of warriors and thus he enquires Balram's caste to teach him driving. It is very clear that even to learn something to reach one's goals in life, caste plays an important role and here Balram too suffers the same problem as he is denied to be taught to drive as he comes from the caste of Halwai meaning sweet makers.

Though the issues related with caste and religion triggers his consciousness, it is after moving into the city (Delhi), Balram is confronted with many issues that strikes his subaltern consciousness in varying degrees. In the beginning he accepts his role as a driver but coming in contact with his master Ashok's family, Balram's consciousness varies and he strives after a life that is free from poverty, bondage, exploitation etc. Therefore he dreams of becoming a successful entrepreneur in the near future. The treatment he gets in his masters house challenges his consciousness as a subaltern and triggers him to break free from the shackles of age old slavery under the dominance of the upper-class elites.

Gramsci's implicit and explicit consciousness is more visible in the class divisions. The rich people are influential and powerful enough to escape punishments for their criminal deeds readily through the power of their position and money. On the other hand, the poor get for any crime, be it very minor or major whether they have done it or not. In the novel, when Balram is pressurized to surrender for a crime which he had never committed, it is at this peak his implicit consciousness is shown in the highest degree. Though the accident took place due to the negligence of Pinki madam, who was driving the car at that time still Balram was framed for it. He had no option but to take the blame on him because he was a poor man whose value of life and reputation has no existence in front of his masters.

Thus, it is very clear Balram has been victimized by the cultural institutions such as class, caste, and religion which obscured his equality and his place in the society thereby making him to confirm himself to the societal norms and structures (common sense) at the cost of sacrificing his freedom, privacy and independence. Throughout the novel, Balram is forced, coerced to accept his role as a driver and made to believe it is his duty to serve the masters with complete faith and devotion. He is made to be convinced of the situation taking place in his society due to his low caste and that he should adjust with it as long as there is food for his stomach. This helps to understand that Balram's explicit consciousness had been on work so far as he simply observes the societal norms borrowed from his generations. He had been coerced to follow and give in to the demands made by the upper-class bourgeoisies rather than to revolt. But the moment Balram realised when his life felt nothing in the eyes of the landlords who asked him to take the blame of killing a child when he had not committed it. It is during this point in his life, he realizes the sly and cunning nature of his masters and understands their humiliation and ill-treatment starts to rebel against their cultural hegemony by breaking free from their shackles. It is at this point he plans to kill his master and to steal his money to lead a life his master had been living so far. Here Balram's implicit consciousness is revealed as he contradicts with what the society orders him to do. The reason is that he has acknowledged he suffered enough and that it is high time he breaks free from the rooster coop before he is slaughtered by the elites. His implicit consciousness is revealed in the activities he does to satisfy the wants he has been longing as well as to equate himself with the upper-class landlords to prove them he is no less to them in anyway. He drinks high quality of liquor, wears good clothes and visits to mall to see the world of 'light', and collects money by cheating his master just to experience the enjoyment and satisfaction one can get by sleeping with high profile prostitutes.

To Conclude

Thus, the novel, focussing on Balram Halwai, a son of a rickshaw puller, destined to make sweets becomes Ashok Sharma who is the son of a wealthy landlord. His transformation from Munna, Balram Halwai, White Tiger, to Ashok Sharma is the sketch for rising from underclass.

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Demarcation in Bama's *Sangati*

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Bama

Courtesy: <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/first-person/karukku-was-my-healing-bama-faustina>

Abstract

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". The survival of the fittest is not easy as saying it. Preaching is easier than practicing. In this novel, we could see senseless over powering society providing an ill treatment to a particular community people and being more than mean to them. The elements present are realistic as the reality could never be hidden. One day or the other it will come to the light. Every fall has an opportunity to rise. Similarly, the elements of revoking aspect into the individual is the uniqueness of the novel. The subjugation parallel with the subaltern view itself is enough to remove the inner self and happiness. The equipment of one's own wit only could make one brave and remorse for revolution. Pitying things is shown by many writers in their writings but they do not put forth solutions for the problems. Bama sets herself as an example that her novel proceeds with pain and a solution too. The paper also eludes the unseen fringes of the society, which on regular basis they are brought down to suffer.

Key Words: Dalit, discrimination, fighting, revolutionary, women.

Dalit Women Subjected to Oppression Also by Their Own Men

Dalit women have been subjected to oppression not only by the men and women belonging to the upper castes but also by their own men. Dalit women face double oppression, that is the patriarchal oppression and the caste oppression in its varied manifestations. Bama's Dalit perspective eludes the patriarchy works in case of women. Women are wage earners as much as men engaged in diverse forms of arduous, underpaid and unpaid jobs- ploughing, manuring, sowing, weeding, harvesting, digging wells, collecting firewood. More paradoxical is that men can be set free after work, meanwhile parallel to it is the woman who are forced to do work at the home also with no help by their men.

Physical Torture

There arises the issue of the physical torture such as sexual harassment and abuse in the place where they work. The superior caste people who are their employees often indulge in these lowly job. The rule within a boundary differs for both the opposite gender. The women are restricted. The women should not laugh or talk loudly; they are supposed to consume food only after their men consume the food. The highest form of suppression is she does not have the liberty to choose or marry the person she likes. The community and caste matters there and not the heart. The power of the name and fame resists which is predominant to the people.

***Sangati*, as a Narrative of Personal Experience**

This novel *Sangati*, capsulate the author's own experience of working within a heterogeneous and oppressed society. This book itself stands as an autobiography of itself. The book is not voluminous but it throws its intensity within the heart of the readers. The imprints of the characters are not narrated. The house and home are the central and social identities and a community cultural form. The novel does not deal with a single person or their identity but the importance of domestic and material realities proceeds the peak of awareness in the minds. In this work *Sangati*, Bama blatantly renders the experiences of Paraiyar women including their gender discrimination, humiliation and also the abuse in something uncommon in the writings. Bama brings the Dalit writing not as a monotonous way but through a rise of agony and pain. The absolute essence of the pain could be only said by the sufferer, which is proved by this art as a rise in anger. This text opens up new perspective on the Dalit Women. She explores the image of her woman, a Dalit, a subjugated one. The elevation of lifting from low to high peak, the transformation in a female's life is been explored here. Every woman has trouble but these Dalit women are brought to the in-depth of agony and pain.

Husbands Oppressing Wives

Other community or society women survive with certain limits, but these women have to survive along with their husband, within their caste and a cruel fenced circle. Here their depth of pain cannot be expressed in words too. These women are subjugated both in home and in society. She is a caste victim of the patriarchal society. Paati, Bama's grandma projects her radical views and resentment when she narrates the life story of her daughter who was beaten to death by her lustful husband. At the same time, the marginalized woman

rebels and raises as a reaction for the trauma she undergoes. This is something new and the voice of the voiceless is heard. The pain at the final level is not concentrated. From the childhood the pain is experienced and stated in this text. This protest is not a straight flow like water flowing through pipes. It's a stream line flow of river, has ups and downs. The depiction of the downtrodden subaltern people is pathetic.

Young Girls Forced to do All Household Works

The young girls are forced to look after all the jobs at home, "cleaning vessels, drawing water, sweeping the house, gathering firewood, washing clothes and so on" (Sangati 7). They are denied the right of education unlike her community boys who study in school. Gender roles are inscribed in the children right from their childhood. The girl child takes after the feeding. When the child falls ill the male gets special love and utmost care, meanwhile the girl child are not paid attention. Bama arises in anger questioning her society's tradition when she asks, "when Patti, aren't we human beings?". When Sappani says, "In these days, neither the girls nor the boys are going to look after you. If we work hard, we earn or own kanji(food)" It is an indication of the psychology of the philosophical transactions into a mind. Only when these people work hard to the core they are able to get a porridge, which could feed their daily stomach that would help them to survive.

Education – Agent of Change

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Bama with her construction of the work states the inability of a woman to not free herself from the clutches of the society and they are dominated. Their survival is hard yet they balanced them and tried to keep themselves happy. The spirit of searching happiness in what we do, even in suffering is something which every human has to learn. This may even create the positive vibe within the mind. Dalit woman is amazing because she manages to do all the jobs at a stretch. Her sustained consistent of energy and dedication is unlike men who do a monotonous job. When they return home they don't do work at home instead they move out to meet their friends for chatting. Bama exclaims, "Even machines can't do as much" (Sangati 78).

Story of Mariamma

Sangati traces the reality of the oppressed society by the upper castes towards Dalit women in terms of labor, exploitation and threat of rape. The story of Mariamma, Bama's cousin, speaks volumes of the helplessness. The Dalit Women always have the unsecured feel because of the upper castes people's torture where it is her own duty to safe guard herself. It is her responsibility to keep herself safe. The identity of a women is her purity. Once when her purity is collapsed or disturbed everything is shattered.

A Journey for Dalit Towards Rebuilding Self-Esteem

Sangati is different perception from rest of the writings. Because the Alma Mater of suffering is not the concentration but the result for the suffering the rise after the fall is credential here. The subjugation is not appreciated or accepted any more. The sense of questioning is evoked. This is a tool which helps to seek their own identity. It is elevating, motivating and inspiring for themselves. It is like adding ingredients for a dish which has to

come out successful in a servable consumable manner. The descriptions in the novel stands as a journey for Dalit towards rebuilding their self-esteem, from feeling a sense of shame at their own birth as Paraiyar, a downtrodden caste to a sense of pride and confidence in their breed. The lifting after so much of burden of ill omen from their shoulders is compared to supernatural elements because of unbelief in liberation of Dalit women.

Bama through her narrative technique expresses her 'survival-of-the-fittest' capability from the horrid experience is thought provoking. As the Sangati is a handmade reinforcement of revolution and it is an outcome of empowerment through education and introspection. The book is essentially subversive in nature and it brings a new equal better world from a Dalit women's hope.

"Be the change that you want to see in the world."

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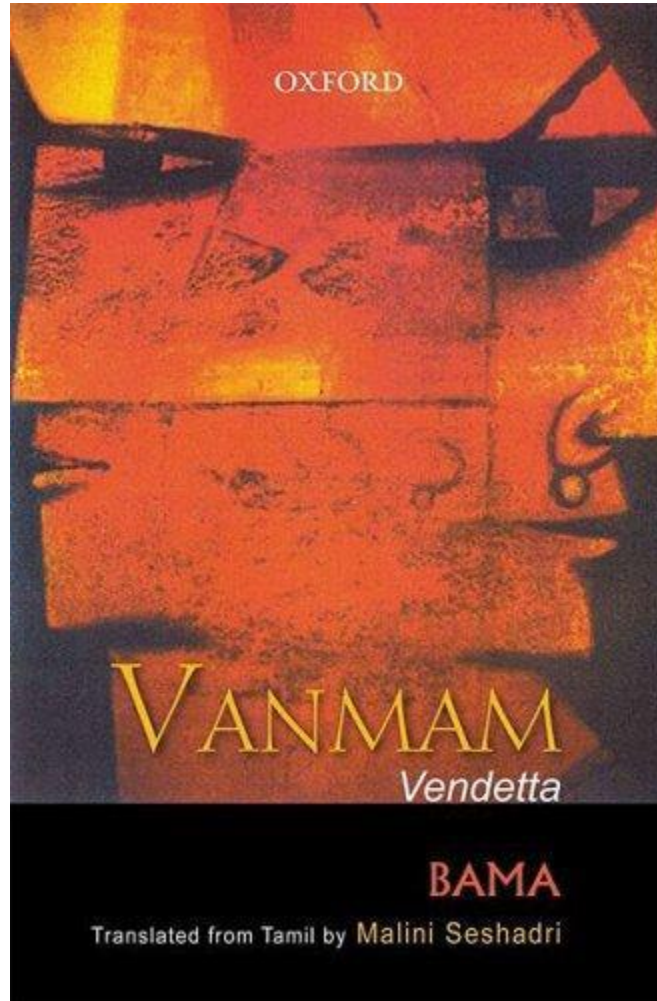
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A Study on Caste Clashes Among Dalits in Bama's *Vanmam*

Dr. Ch. Radhika



Abstract

The present paper focuses on Bama's *Vanmam*, which depicts the most forceful resistance to the caste-ideology that operates so vigorously in India. The dynamics of caste and Dalit issues are closely linked with our ideas of identity and the self. Unlike her earlier works, in *Vanmam*, Bama, instead of blowing up the agonies and sufferings of the downtrodden, loudly raises her voice and vehemently asserts the need for the unity and solidarity of the suppressed for a better future. *Vanmam* delineates the story of Dalits and their struggle for existence. It also deals with the internal animosity between two castes within Dalits. Pallars and Parayars are the two Dalit castes discussed in the novel. The paper throws light on the explosion of muffled voices and how *Vanmam* calls for unity among Dalit communities.

Protest against Domination of Upper Castes

Dalit literature protests against upper caste system and their domination on Dalits. It represents a powerful, emerging movement in the Indian literary tradition. It is a genre established in the 1960's and 1970's. Ambedkar, the leader of anti-caste movement in India, used the term to characterize the exploitation, suppression and marginalization of the lower castes by the social, economic, cultural and political domination of the upper caste Brahminical order. Hence 'Dalithood' as a kind of life conditions that characterizes suppression, defines the status of the individual by birth and not by deeds that portray the strong caste system in India. Dalit literature helped in promoting cultural consciousness amongst the downtrodden class. The primary motive of the writer is to liberate women through giving voice to their suppression women through giving voice to their suppressed feelings. Bama expressed her agony and gave her voice to all oppressed women.

Vanmam – Focus of This Paper

The present paper focuses on Bama's *Vanmam*, is the most forceful resistance to the caste-ideology that operates so vigorously in India. *Vanmam* published in 2008 in Tamil, translated into English as *Vendetta* by Malini Seshadri, strikes a chord in Dalit writing. Bama, instead of blowing up the anguish and torment of the subjugated, loudly raises her voice and passionately affirms the need for the unity and harmony of the suppressed for a better future. It is exciting that many of the writings of Bama have been translated into French before English.

As Bama says,

“Oh, the French have so much regard for literature. They treasured my writing for its own quality. They didn't think 'she is a woman writer' or 'she is a Dalit.’”
(*Vendetta*, interview with the author, 156)

Centrality of the Issue of Caste

Vanmam outlines the story of Dalits and their struggle for existence. Dalits are being humiliated even today. Dalits are still humiliated in many places. Dalit's usually facing multiple oppression- economic, political, social and cultural rights. For many years, Dalits have been struggling from the problem of caste system which existed in the society. Azhgarasan remarks that “*Vanmam* occupies a unique place as it brings to the fore, the centrality of the issue of caste and not simply the atrocities against Dalits.” (2008)

The novel also deals with the internal enmity between two castes within Dalits. Pallars and parayars are the two Dalit castes discussed in the novel. Mangalam remarks that: “of animosity between them also the upper-caste men of Kandampatti preserve their prestigious caste status not only by keeping the low-caste people under their control, but also by keeping Dalit community divided.” (2008)

Detonation of Muffled Voices

The paper throws light on detonation of muffled voices and how *Vanmam* enjoins upon unity among Dalit communities. Pallars identified themselves as Hindus, and Parayars are mostly Christian converts. According to Gail Omvedt, a Dalit scholar, “In almost every region of India there are two main Dalit castes, often at odds.” (Indian Express: 2008) Away from the Dalit streets are the streets of Naickers, Nadars, Thevars and Chettiars. Agricultural land owned by the landlords is in the western part of the village and therefore both Parayars and Pallars have to walk through the streets of the upper class to arrive the fields. The Parayars and Pallars

of the village are labourers in the fields of the landlords and they are destined to lead a deplorable existence with the shell thrown by them. Despite their hard struggle they have to remain half-fed with porridge. Bama says that, “the Parayars toiled hard day and night to turn even barren land into fertile fields.” (6)

Modern Society and Its Contradictions

Vanmam addresses issues relating to modern society and its contradictions. The root of this novel can be understood in the author’s own words, “marginalized people have to put aside their rightful place in society.” (Author’s note: 7) *Vanmam* is about combating cruelties based on caste system with constructive strategy of empowerment. *Vanmam* begins with a question,

“Every human being should be seen as a human being, and respected as a human being. That is their goal . . . a society in which every person is equal. Will it ever be a reality?” (Author’s note” 8)

Society Portrayed in *Vanmam*

Vanmam is situated in the village called Kandampatti where people of different castes live. The houses of people are huddled based on the caste they belong to.

In order to depict the real situation, Bama gives a glimpse of Saminathan’s house which is a thatched house. They don’t even have place to sleep properly in their house:

“not all of them can stretch out to sleep inside that tiny space. Usually, Saminathan and his father go to chavadi to sleep.” (6)

Marrasu and Coworkers

The condition of Dalits is low they don’t even have two meals per day. After completion of their lowly jobs they brought only Kanji and pickle to stay alive. Marrasu, a Parayan and Kuruppusamy, a Pallar earn their living by working in the fields of Naickers. There are regular quarrels between Marraasu and Kuruppusamy, Pichamurthy, a Pallar helped them to understand that it is useless to fight for this,

“Why all this fighting amongst us? Whether the fields are dry or watered, what is the gain to you? It’s someone else who is going to reap the benefit, but it’s you two who are fighting! Let it go both of you” (10)

As things took its worst stage Kuruppusamy lifted the spade he was holding, and with the shaft of the spade he struck hard blow on the head of Marraasu. Marraasu fell to the ground with a cry of utmost agony. Saminathan felt troubled whenever he thought of how his uncle Maraasu had been murdered. The memory also aroused wrath in him.

“Because we have no money, no education, they killed and buried Chitappa in a ditch . . . As if it was all in a day’s work, as if he were a mere dog or something.” (11)

Police Atrocity

Under the guise of searching for men, police “enter the house of Parayars and talk vulgarly to the women and even misbehaved with them.” (88) The women also were dragged

to street and they were beaten brutally, “with no regard even for the infant and the aged, they kept and swirling their lathis down hard again and again.” (89) They got blown everywhere in their bodies:

“All the women had swellings and black bruises all over their bodies as the blood clotted and congealed under the blows.” (89)

The women who were taken to the police station were subjected to more severe torture and abuses. Chellakili, a pregnant woman was kicked in the lower belly by a policeman with his boots:

“Chellakili curled up and collapsed on the floor of the cell. As she lay there on the floor of that police lock-up, she felt a sharp pain in her belly . . . and had an abortion right there.” (86)

Another Murder

In another episode, Pallars killed Sethurathanm and Savariappan. The nasty scene of Sethurathanam being hunted and lacerated to death still loiter in the minds of Parayars. Ultimately Jayaraju, an educated Parayar young man, affirmed in public,

“We were just beginning to progress slowly and now three murders and court cases and police raids . . . all over people scattered about, studies ruined, not even able to attend Church . . . how long can we go on like this? (126)

The two groups resumed discussion which led to a compromise between them. They collectively proclaim “After all, life is short. We work, we eat . . . we die. Why take on unnecessary problems?” (129) But Upper-class people cannot digest this peace agreement. Naickers scoff at both Pallars and Parayars:

“What sort of fellows are these? After so much killing . . . so much wandering around like refugees . . . they are supposed to be uniting again, Shameless fellows!” (132)

To Bring in Harmony

To reinforce the harmony of the Dalits, Bama portrays the election held in Kandampatti after the union of Parayars and Pallars. In the history of Kandampatti, only Naickers competed for the post of President and won. The progressive Parayars and Pallars fielded Kaallaiyan of the Pallar caste as the joint candidate. The Parayars and Pallars campaigned collectively for Kaallaiyan which enabled him to win the election. Bama emphasizes that the success in Kandampatti is emblem of the triumphs of the Dalits at the national level if they stand united. One of the minor characters of the novel Kaalimuthu affirms that:

It’s not enough that we have won in the Panchayat election. The Dalit voice must resonate in the state legislature and in the national parliament . . . we much capture the levers of government power. Let this be the first step towards that goal.” (134)

In the last chapter of the novel, *Vanmam*, there are answers to the questions that are raised by Bama in the author’s note of the novel, “Let the coming generations at least live without quarrels, end fights, riots and vendettas. Let them get along with one another . . . as for

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the future . . . along with the hope there also lurks the old fear. But, in their minds, they know clearly what they have to do . . . where they want to go”. (135)

The novel ends on a note of enlightenment that ‘united they stand and divided they fall.’ It is for forging unity among Dalits. If *Karrukku* upholds education, *Sangati* foregrounds organized agitation, while *Vanmam* enjoins upon unity among Dalit communities. It presents a pragmatic depiction of life and struggle of Dalits and is a bidding farewell to the age old noxious practices of the upper caste people. It is a lesson to all Dalits who fight among themselves in the oblivion that united they stand divided they fall.

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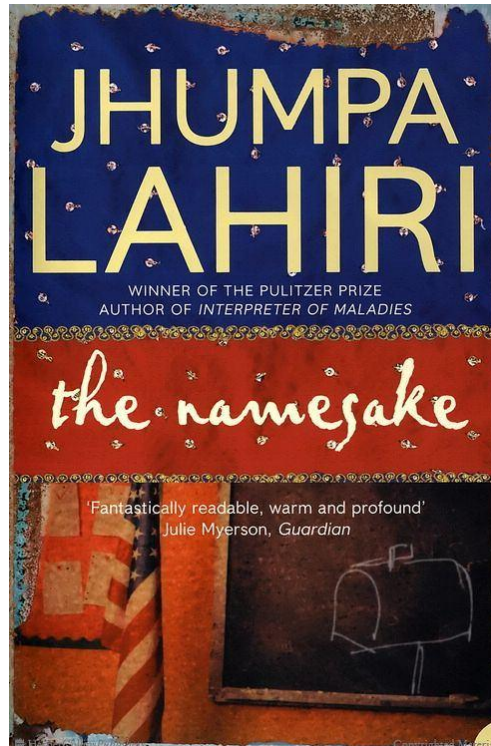
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Dual State of Migrants in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*

Radha Devi. K. and Dr. G. Arputhavel Raja



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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to bring forth the way in which Jhumpa Lahiri, a Pulitzer winner novelist explores the dilemma of name and immigrant's sense of identity and belongingness in the novel, *The Namesake*. The paper discusses the term 'diaspora' and their role in the present-day world. The protagonist of the novel, Gogol belongs to the second generation of migrant struggles for name, identity and belongingness, was pathetically portrait by the author. The Diasporic consciousness manifests itself in a variety of ways - a sense of loss and dispossession, a feeling of remaining straddle between two cultures and anxiety to belong. The condition of a migrant is always in dual state. A migrant, who is the stranger of the new land, also becomes a stranger in his own land. He tries desperately to become a 'new self', without really letting go of 'old self'.

Keywords: Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake*, Immigrant, Diaspora, Dispossession, Straddle, Stranger, Dual state.

Introduction

Diaspora originally refers to the Jewish dispersion from their homeland, but at present, any kind of exile from the homeland is called Diaspora. It disrupts the fix nature of roots with journeys along various roots and reinvention of identities. Indian writers can be grouped into two distinct classes. One class comprises those who have spent their life partly in their homeland and partly to other countries. The other class comprises those who have been bred since childhood outside India. The writers of the former group have a literal displacement, whereas, the latter group find themselves rootless. The second Diasporians face two cultures, two languages, two countries and remain suspended them. The sense of belonging of immigrant writers is worked out through retelling of the past in various ways (using the event but arranging in different manner). They experience the preoccupation with the past, the lost homeland and the loss of identity.

Indian Diaspora

Indian Diaspora can be classified into two kinds - Forced migration and Voluntary migration or Modern Diaspora. Forced migration, people migrated from their own country to other country as a slave to accomplish their own basic livelihood. This was happened in pre-independence India. In the case of Voluntary migration, people are eagerly migrated to other countries for their benefits such as professions and academic purposes, in particular to acquire the contemporary advanced technology and communication. Diaspora Literature comes under the second category. The members of a Diasporic community often link with the past migration history. Even the children of the migrant family are influenced by their past migration history. Homi Bhaba calls it 'a third space' in his 'The Location of Culture'. The Diasporians are non-resident natives of their homeland and resident-aliens of their current place of living. This shows the dual nature of the migrants.

Dual Nature of Diaspora

The diasporic experience can serve as a form of transcultural critique, offering the possibility of reading one culture's space and time from the space and time of another. We can see the strategic value of 'doubleness' in terms of identity constructions and self-reinventions and also the concept of creolisation as a strategy for cultural resistance. Their sense of yearning for the homeland, a curious attachment of its traditions, religions and languages gives birth to Diasporas literature. There are two types of migration one is physical and another one is mental migration. The mental migration is a challenging one for the Diaspora community. The question of settling themselves in foreign countries remains unanswerable to any Diasporas unless they associate themselves with the two lands. Their mind swings back and forth to their homeland and the alienated settled foreign land. This induces their suffering and agony out of cultural change. These are expressed by the Diaspora in different genres of Literature. This kind of trauma was soothed by their nostalgia.

Theme of Exclusion

The theme of exclusion is all-pervasive in literature. But the Diaspora literature particularly is replete with moods, moors and experiences caused by cultural exclusion of the expatriate community. Displaced and dislocated from the roots suffers from spatial, emotional and cultural dislocation revealed in various forms of 'cultural shock', 'cultural cringe' as well as

‘cultural hybridization’. The theme of cultural alienation and loss of identity that immigrant faces in making a new home in a foreign land receives evocative treatment in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*. It stresses the need to cultivate the best of modernity by intermingling of the best in the East and the West. But, at last, the protagonist tries to bounce back to their own culture.

Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*

Jhumpa Lahiri, the representative of Indian Diaspora, born to Bengali parents in London and raised in Rhode Island. Lahiri is British by birth, American by citizenship and Indian by origin. As a representative of Indian Diaspora, she feels a strong sense of loss, displacement and homing desire. When she talks of India, she has a kind of intensive attachment for the country. She expressed these experiences in her works, through her characters. As a daughter of Indian American parents, Lahiri is always living in the shadows of two cultures. She was brought up in a traditional Indian American family; she shares her parent’s sadness of loss and displacement in an exile life. Her writings are always concerned about such issues like belongingness, home and identity. Most of the Diaspora writings reveal certain features that are similar. There are most autobiographical with reference to the narration of self.

Jhumpa Lahiri’s novel *The Namesake* illustrates the lives of both the First and Second generation Indian migrants in the USA. A sense of coming home in distant lands set the tone of Diaspora Literature. The recurrent theme in Lahiri’s writing is the bitter-sweet experience of immigrant to America from India. Her characters are often caught in a cultural indeterminate state - excited about their new home but grieving the loss of their country of origin. Lahiri also belongs to the second generation of Indian Diaspora whose ongoing quest for identity never seems to end.

The Namesake depicts an imaginary homeland created by Indian American couple, Ashoke and Ashima after they moved to America from Calcutta. The imaginary homeland consists of dynamic community of Indian Americans who keep an interactive relationship with each other. The members in this community are Bengali professionals who moved to America as intellectuals. In the midst of white society, their community seems to be minor. So this makes them to feel a sense of dislocation and displacement. To escape from this sense, they often associate with each other by holding parties, celebrating traditional holidays and traveling together.

Gogol

In *The Namesake*, the protagonist, Gogol is the representative of the second generation of Indian Diaspora. His quest for identity never seems to end. The title *The Namesake* reflects the storm in the mind of Gogol goes through to identity with his unusual name. The novel centres around the couple and community of Bengali origin in the USA migrated for various reasons. Narrating the story of Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli, Lahiri focuses on the cultural dislocations of a family, immigrants from Calcutta who settle in Boston to study, work and raise a family. The novel moves quietly, eloquently across its central arc from the birth of a son to the death of a father.

Dual Nature of Gogol’s Mind

The main concern of the novel is the name of the protagonist. He is the representative of the community without a name and misnamed as Gogol. The name itself represents that he is neither belongs to American nor belongs to an Indian. This shows symbolically the dual mindedness of the character. He struggles with a name, he is embarrassed by heritage either Indian or American, he is not sure of either. In order to get self-definition, he abandons the name Gogol and tries to become else. The question of identity becomes crucial when a person is culturally displaced and he cannot co-relate with any of the two worlds in which he is living. While experiencing identity confusion from a change of names, Gogol is nonetheless able to define his identity. Since Gogol is born after his father survives in a horrifying train accident, his father sees the Gogol as a pet name as a gesture of his rebirth. But Gogol does not understand the meaning of his name when he is young.

Cultural Escapism

As he grows up, he recognizes the uncommon nature of his name creates problem with his identity. He doesn't understand the emotional significance of his name. Gogol is a Russian name, he feels uncomfortable with the Russian name. It makes him to detach himself from his family members. Later on, he develops such a kind of resentment towards his name, so he decides to use his legal name, Nikhil, as an overcoat to escape from Indian culture. Although the new name brings him confidence, Gogol is always present inside him. Soon he feels a sense of dissatisfaction about avoiding his roots. "Without people in the world to call him Gogol, no matter how long he himself lives, Gogol Ganguli will, once and for all, vanish from the lips of loved once, and so, cease to exist... It provides no solace at all" (Lahiri, 289). All his effort pays back with confusion about who he truly is. He sees himself as Nikhil striving to be truly American, yet he fails to eradicate Gogol. By the end, he chooses to stick with Gogol is Indian identity. At last he realizes the hope behind Gogol is the meaningful fragment to define who he is.

Immigrants Are in No Man's Land

The Namesake is a perfect reference for Lahiri's story about the strangeness of the Indian immigrant experience in US. The child of immigrants begins in a kind of nowhere place. Gogol is not quite an American in part because he is not recognized as such by others. He desired to blend in American society but American not viewed as of theirs even though he is a native-born citizen. He tries to set a wall between past and present but this is not easy. He adopts the name 'Nikhil' is a part to live only in the present, but Gogol clings to him that he signs his old name unconsciously. He doesn't respond immediately while anyone calling his new name 'Nikhil'. Gogol struggles to carry the burden of two names. He experiences a feeling of being in-between like a person belongs to no man's land. The problem of Gogol's name symbolizes the dual nature of the Indian born American settled migrants.

When Ashima and Ashoke do their utmost to create Bengali ambience for Gogol and Sonia by arranging all Bengali get together, but the two as they grew in hybrid culture, they respond gingerly. This shows that Gogol is always sailing in two boats simultaneously, one with his Bengali speaking parents and living Bengali style and the other of American Indian.

Conclusion

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Dual State of Migrants in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*

The Namesake illustrates the lives of both first generation and second generation Indian migrants in the USA. Alienation is a part of the experience of the Indian Diaspora. The novel shows the immigrants face cultural dilemmas in the foreign system. Not only the first generation immigrants face cultural dilemmas, the second generation also groomed to be 'bilingual' and 'bicultural' face cultural dilemmas and displacement more. Diasporians are like to be standing in no man's land. They neither fully accepted the alien country, culture, etc nor fully give up their own culture, country etc. They faced "Doubleness" throughout their life. Only through their nostalgic mood they try to soothe their minds.

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