

Sufferings and Duty Consciousness of Women Projected in the Poems of Kishwar Naheed and Maya Angelou

M. Ajitha, II M.A. English
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai

Abstract

This paper throws light on the poem I am not the women and women work, which talks about the women who are dominated by male, women population takes half of the world women should be in same position as men in all areas like politics, society, economy and should take own rights in the family and in getting her education. There must be culture and official protection towards the women rights, but all women are treated in lower way, even by their husbands women's are kept as inferior to men and women is exploited and oppressed both mentally and physically. I am not that women and "women work" talks about the struggle of two black women in different culture. Women in these poems are dominated by the male and they were forced to do all household works, take care of their children and was not allowed to be free as male.

These poems highlight the lives and difficulties of women from others culture and tradition. Maya Angelou is educated black American who writes about the daily struggle of working class women. These poems talk about the man who aims to trap women (his wife) at home and make her to do housework.

Keywords: Domination, politics, economy, exploited, oppressed, traditions.

"Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently"

-Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou is the highest rank Afro-American author, poetess, singer and dance. In the poem "woman work", Maya Angelou, depict the sense of identity and self - acceptance of women in the society. Before becoming an author and poetess, Maya Angelou was a mom and a car driver in San Francisco. She grew up her child and come up in her life in the society without her husband, which means she is not with her husband and she married a man after ten years. This poem gives on inspiration to the readers. It is very hard to get an identity as an individual for a normal person, so, it is really hard to an women to have an individuality, when a women enters into the family and when she becomes as a wife of a man, at that time, She had thrown away all her self - happiness, and she is working for her family goodness.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 20:3 March 2020

Prof. Dr. S. Chelliah, Editor: Select Papers of the International Conference on Human Praxis and Modern Configuration through Literature -- VOLUME 2

M. Ajitha, II M.A. English, Sufferings and Duty Consciousness of Women Projected in the Poems of Kishwar Naheed and Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou “women work” is also the same, in this poem Maya Angelou exposes the life of an Indian women and daily routine work of black women in southern states of America. This poem makes the reader to think about the life of housewives. We can visualize the responsibility of a women as a mother, as a wife and as a housewife.

“I’ve got the children to tend”

Through the very first line of the poem we came to know the voice of the mother which exposes the responsibility of a mother. She says that she got children and so, she had to bring up her children and take them to right place in their life.

“The cloths to men

The floor to mop

The flood to shop

Then the chicken to fry

The baby to dry”

Through these lines Maya Angelou exposes the life of the housewife and daily routine work of woman. I have got shirts to press. This line describes how much woman is responsible to her husband. Though she is doing it in out of love, Maya Angelou show this as a woman as slave.

“Shine on me sunshine

.... and cool my brow again”

These lines exposed that the woman in the society are considering that the natural object as her only true companion. This shows that the woman is working for all the people in her family but no one is caring her.

“Storm blow me from here”

The poet proved that women want to be attached with the nature. The poets have exposed the sufferings faced by women in society is described. She limited to the domestic domain and household chores.

This article spots lights on how women were depicted by male in the society. It also explores that how women were treated as a material to serve man. This poem “I am not that woman”, was a strong response to male dominating society. The woman started to raise their voice against men

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 20:3 March 2020

Prof. Dr. S. Chelliah, Editor: Select Papers of the International Conference on Human Praxis and Modern Configuration through Literature -- VOLUME 2

M. Ajitha, II M.A. English, Sufferings and Duty Consciousness of Women Projected in the Poems of Kishwar Naheed and Maya Angelou

and they want the equal status as men in society. This paper explores the importance of women and her pride in the society.

***“I am not that woman
Selling you socks and shoes!
Remember me, I am the one you hid”***

This poem states the oppressed nature of woman the poet takes the part of women and raised her own voice against men. She rejects the women who sell shoes and socks. She should not be a slave to man rather she should enjoy her own freedom and desire. She must not act as a model or actress to earn money. Women must be praised and appreciated for her sacrifice. Naheed spots light on oppression of women in society and evokes the women to bring out their self-identity.

***“I am the one you crushed
With the weight of custom and tradition
Not knowing
That light cannot be hidden in darkness”***

In olden days women were bounded by tradition and custom and they were not allowed to participate on the other activities. Men forced women to stay inside house and do all household activities. They protect women to stay inside house and they banned their freedom and desires. This was the miserable condition of women in society.

***“I am the one in whose lap
You picked flowers
And planted thorns and embers”***

In childhood the child gets attached to mother and enjoys sleeping in the lap of mother but after growing older, they do not value the mother who brought them up. This was harsh attitude of men towards their mothers.

Women have ability and capability to shine in the society. They were not given chance to explore their talents. Their parents also consider their daughter as a burden, after their maturity. In eastern culture the women were forced to married to someone. They do not get any jobs but after marriage they completely depend on her husband. Though their marriage life is not good, they were compelled to stay there. Women were married by men because of dowry. The parents of women give dowry like cloths, furniture, gold etc... the women were not valued much than their dowry. The women were drowned by the system of dowry and marriage. Some women were used to sell products as commodities because they of their beauty. But Naheed strongly dislike those

=====
Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 **20:3 March 2020**

**Prof. Dr. S. Chelliah, Editor: Select Papers of the International Conference on
Human Praxis and Modern Configuration through Literature -- VOLUME 2**

M. Ajitha, II M.A. English, Sufferings and Duty Consciousness of Women Projected in the
Poems of Kishwar Naheed and Maya Angelou

portrayals of women. Rather she respects the women as loyal mother, sister. So, women were the pillars of society. So, they must be respected and valued.

“No, No I am not that woman!”

The poet says that, she is not that type of women who is typically bounded with tradition and culture. And also, she is not the women who are under the domination of man. She is like a butterfly with all its freedom. The society exploited women; this poem is to give pride and respect to women.

Work Cited

1. <http://asuddenline.tumblr.com/post/4834518949/i-am-not-that-woman-kishwar-naheed-i-am-not>
2. <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/woman-work/>
3. <http://www.biography.com/write/maya-angelou>